



Renewal and Reconciliation: The Codrington Project

EXTERNAL FAQs: FOR SUPPORTER QUERIES AND USPG WEBSITE

What is the project about?

The Renewal and Reconciliation: The Codrington Project was announced in partnership with The Codrington Trust (CT) and USPG in September 2023. The project aims to take reparative action in response to USPG's shameful links to slavery on the Codrington Estate, Barbados.

At present USPG has committed to a programme of work in partnership with Codrington Trust, in Barbados, in response to proposals that the Trust has advanced. USPG has pledged 18M Barbadian Dollars (BDS) (£7M GBP) - to be spent in Barbados over the next 10-15 years to support this work.

Both CT and USPG look forward to the start of this project which will be launching in Autumn 2024, in Barbados. The work will include five key areas:

1. Burial Places and Memorialisation
2. Family Research
3. Historical Research
4. Community infrastructure and enterprise
5. Theology and Spiritual Repair

What is USPG's link to Codrington and slavery?

In 1712, SPG was bequeathed Codrington - two adjacent estates totalling 700 acres along with a population of enslaved African men, women, and children. From then until 1838 SPG owned and ran the estates through local managers. (U)SPG's stewardship of the Codrington Estate ended in 1983, when all land and financial assets were passed onto the Codrington Trust.

During the period between 1712 to 1838, enslaved persons were routinely subjected to physical abuse and severe punishment, as part of the everyday management of the plantation. At any one time there were between 190 and 440 such persons working in the fields or other occupations as part of the industrial process of sugar production from which SPG realised profits. These profits supported its activities as a mission agency within Barbados and beyond. It is likely that between 600 and 1,200 individuals lived and died as enslaved persons.

Please visit our [history page](#) for more details.

Why is this work being undertaken now?

USPG has been engaging in a process of understanding its own responsibility as a colonial actor more fully through an intentional exploration of its archives, and in its dialogue with the CPWI (The Church in the Province of the West Indies), especially since the transfer of the Estate in 1983.



USPG continues to engage in dialogue around issues of justice across the global church. USPG believes this is a unique opportunity to own up to historic truths and use this moment to support renewal and reconciliation for all parties involved.

USPG is being intentional in listening and acknowledges that now more than ever is the time to act. USPG recognises the impact of its history and the effect it has had; it accepts and understand the generational trauma this has caused over the years and unreservedly apologise for this.

Whilst emancipation finally came in 1838, the legacies of the enslaved are extensive and continue to cause harm today to individuals and communities. USPG recognises this and sees this work as a contribution to the wider work of reparative action.

What is Reparative Justice?

There is significant international debate about the meaning of reparations. For many, formal Reparations involves commitments and payments between nation states and has a clear focus on financial compensation owed and paid by one nation state to another to make amends for the damage of the past.

We understand reparatory justice to be complex and multi-dimensional, speaking to issues of human identity and social and cultural history, as well as politics and economics. At its heart, reparatory justice seeks to make amends for past wrongs and to provide redress for the physical, material and moral damage inflicted on individuals, groups and nations. Programmes of reparatory justice have been initiated by a number of independent institutions, most commonly universities and churches. Such programmes seek to address the material and moral injustices of the past in ways that reflect the historic harms inflicted by those institutions with the intention of building a better future.

Why have you introduced a fifth project pillar?

The executive group and board of trustees have recognised the importance of including a theological component to this project in its own right, given the history of Codrington Trust and Codrington College. It is impossible to have renewal and reconciliation as an anchor of this project without acknowledging its Christian and theological heritage.

What role will the Steering Committee play?

The Steering Group exists to receive and scrutinise proposals from the Executive Group and make key recommendations to the Governing Body of the Codrington Trust (the CT) and the Board of Trustees of United Society Partners in the Gospel (USPG); and to provide direction, oversight, advice and scrutiny for the operation of the project.

Who are the members on the Steering Committee?

- The Most Revd Howard Gregory, Archbishop of Church in the Province of West Indies,
- The Revd Canon Dr. Michael Clarke, Principal of Codrington College,
- Ms. Marva Howell, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Labour, Social Security and Third Sector, Government of Barbados
- The Right Revd Dr David Walker, Bishop of Manchester, Chair of USPG Trustees,
- The Revd Canon Dr. Carlton Turner, Anglican Tutor/Theologian, Queens University Birmingham / Codrington College,
- Mr. Peter Weinard, USPG Trustee,



- Prof. Sir Hilary Beckles, Vice-Chancellor of the University of the West Indies, Chair of Caricom Reparations Commission,
- Dr. Annalee Babb, Barbados Ambassador to the United Arab Emirates / Digital Industries & Journalism,
- Dr. Deborah L. Mack, Associate Director for Strategic Partnerships at Smithsonian's National Museum of African American History and Culture,
- Mr. Antonio Roberts, Community Representative
- Ms. Rosanna Springer, a registered nurse and a local resident of the Codrington tenantry area.

In addition there will be a ten person Community Council (2 reps per Codrington Estate District, reporting up to Community Representatives).

How will this project be delivered?

The project will be delivered in partnership with The Codrington Trust and USPG over the next 10-15 years. Further updates on the project will be announced periodically.

How much is being committed from USPG?

USPG has pledged 18M Barbadian Dollars (BDS) - equivalent to £7M - to be spent in Barbados over the next 10-15 years to support this work.

When will it start?

Project scoping and preparation has now been undertaken and the project begins this Autumn 2024.

What can I do to support?

PRAY: Please do keep this work, the project team, and the communities at Codrington in your prayers – your support is invaluable to this work.

ACT: Funds have already been set aside for this project. However, USPG is keen to support churches across Britain and Ireland who wish to actively engage with this history. Please contact the supporter care team on info@uspg.org.uk or 020 7921 2200.

GIVE: You may also want to support some of the other work and projects USPG is doing in partnership with churches and communities [here](#).

How are the Barbadian community being engaged?

It is the intention of The Codrington Trust and USPG that the Barbadian community will be engaged as an integral part of this journey and will help inform on the work. CT and USPG will work in close collaboration with a range of groups in Barbados, including the local community at Codrington as well as the descendants of those enslaved at Codrington who reside within Barbados and across the diaspora to ensure that those who will be directly impacted are consulted.

They will also work closely with representatives of a number of key bodies including - the Government, the University of the West Indies and the Church of the Province of the West Indies.



There are lots of conversations around reparative justice currently, is this the most appropriate way forward?

Both USPG and CT see this project as an opportunity to take concrete steps to carry out reparative justice and remain committed to the delivery of this in partnership with The Codrington Trust. We are aware that is one of the first projects of its kind and seek to undertake this work in a spirit of openness learning from others. In this regard we are especially grateful to the independent members of the steering committee for their commitment and expertise.

How can I receive updates of the project?

Keep updated via our website here.

You can also follow us on social media @USPGglobal and @codringtoncollege

What are the next stages of the project? Who will decide how the funds will be spent?

The Codrington Trust will be leading this project in partnership with USPG. The allocation of funds will be on the recommendation of the steering committee. Further project updates will be available on the project website.

ADDITIONAL USPG SPECIFIC FAQS

A lot of money has been pledged, why so much and will USPG still be funding other projects around the world?

No amount of funding could ever repair the loss and damage and effect this has had on the legacy of the enslaved. The amount we have pledged has been directly proposed by the Codrington Trust to carry out this work. A staff team has been appointed and will manage the budget and costs accordingly.

The funding for the work at Codrington and within the Caribbean will be drawn from USPG sources of income including its reserves.

USPG will continue to fund projects around the world to rethink mission, re-energise church and champion justice. USPG will honour all its commitments and will continue to share financial resources with a wide range of partner churches. All funds specifically raised for the work of partner churches will continue to go to programmes run by those churches.

We will provide periodic updates on how the project is progressing in addition to making information regularly available on the dedicated website.

USPG has apologised – why is this not enough?

It is important for USPG to acknowledge and accept its history, apologising for the wrongdoings of the past and commit to this reparative action. An apology without committed action is not reparative justice.

What would be USPG's hopes for the project?

We are coming into this process with open hearts and minds – this is not about “us” as we are being guided by Codrington Trust and its community. USPG would like to support their flourishing and growth in the ways that they recommend to us.



The project is developing a number of workstreams to create a sustainable and stable portfolio of initiatives which seek to address the injustices inherited from the past

It is expected that the work will cover the following areas:

- Burial Places and Memorialisation
- Family Research
- History Research
- Community infrastructure and enterprise
- Theology and Spiritual Repair

I understand that at the point of emancipation, all slaveholders were ‘compensated’, was USPG compensated and what happened to that money?

Alongside all slaveholders, USPG received financial compensation from the British Government. It received the sum of £8,823. That fund no longer exists with USPG’s finances, the capital having been transferred to Barbados a number of years ago. For many years income from that fund also supported the Church in Barbados. Further research is being undertaken to provide a detailed account of the history of this fund.

In 1835, SPG established an Education Fund which totalled £171,777. The majority of which was invested in the Caribbean. This money was used from 1835 to 1850 to pay the salaries of clergy, catechists, and schoolmasters and to build churches and schools.

Whilst this was clearly a substantial sum of money, decisions relating to how the money was spent were not made by the those who had been recently emancipated, but by SPG and other actors in the context of colonial occupation by the British. The improvements in infrastructure and provision were part of a programme of ongoing Christianisation. Assessments will vary, but this programme of activities should be seen as, at best, a way to support and improve the situation rather than as reparatory in nature.