

## FROM THE RECTORY JULY 2023

On July 10<sup>th</sup>, 1973, I was dressed in the red PE kit of my house colours: my school's houses were named after Caribbean tribes: Lucayan (red), Carib (blue), Taino (yellow) and Arawak (green). Along with children from all over the island, we marched in burning hot sun (without water or sunscreen – seems beyond belief in these days!). Then Prince Charles (as he was then) ceremonially handed the 700 islands of The Bahamas over to Lynden O. Pindling, our Prime Minister. We all cheered and then sang our newly written National Anthem – *“Lift up your head, to the rising sun Bahamaland”* (we'd been learning it for weeks by this stage!). 50 years later the ending words still stir my heart; *“till the road you've trod lead unto your God, March on Bahamaland”*.



Memory is an interesting thing; painful if you or your loved one is suffering from memory loss, knotted and entwined for those suffering with PTSD, and nostalgic when we think of times and loved ones lost.

Yet memories are also a lasting gift we can give to people, to be aware that through our behaviour we have the opportunity to be part of others' good memory banks. This memory I speak of above reminds me powerfully of that, as others were *‘marching together’* with me; including friends I reminisced with recently as we prepare to celebrate this 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary.

So, during this month of July, enjoy anniversaries, birthdays and celebrations (why not raise a glass on the 10<sup>th</sup> July to Bahamian Independence and listen to the National Anthem?). And as you do that remember those words *“till the road you've trod lead unto your God”*, for I believe we will all meet with our loving God in the fullness of time, and wouldn't it be better to be someone that he recognises because we look like him (kind, loving, generous, thoughtful, patient and so on).

Let's all try to 'March together' and make some happy memories for others to lay down.

*With love, Rev Rona*

*Lift up your head to the rising sun, Bahamaland;  
March on to glory, your bright banners waving high.  
See how the world marks the manner of your bearing!  
Pledge to excel through love and unity.*

*...  
Lift up your head to the rising sun, Bahamaland,  
'Til the road you've trod lead unto your God,*

*March on, Bahamaland!*