

Jamaica Mission Update- January – February 2021

From our Congregations

“All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn to the Lord, and all the families of the nations shall worship before you.” Psalm 22:27. The passage above has been our inspiration as we laboured with hope that the Lord of harvest will accomplish His work among us, especially in the island of Jamaica

Since the start of the year and from the Sunday of the Baptism of Our Lord, we had welcome two adults into the Body of Christ through Baptism. Baptized was Tamara Richards on Sunday January 10th, and John Brown on January 17th. They were some of the regular attendees at the congregation since 2013 but were not ready yet as most Jamaicans claimed. According to the words of our Lord: “Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned.” Mark 16:16. Both individuals rejoiced in the grace of God and boldly confessed their faith.

In February, we welcomed three individuals, two adults and one infant into the Body of Christ through Baptism. Etoline Bruce, a 76-year-old lady was connected to the Lord through one of the regular participants of our community Bible Study group. At one of the home visits, she believed in the Lord and requested to be baptized. Her mobility is limited to her yard and has been assisted recently by that member of the study group. She and her partner are rejoicing in finding new friends from the Faith community.

On Sunday February 14, Andrea Bennet was baptized and welcomed into the congregation. She has been attending worship services since 2014. The following Sunday, February 23, Baby Rasheed Williamson was brought to the Lord in Baptism. Rasheed’s parents lived in the Parade Gardens community and were invited by Brother Henry and family.

Members of our congregations and staff at our school are involved in connecting and serving people in the community. A couple of visitations to the sick, delinquent members in the community were undertaken by pastor and other members of our congregations and friends of our ministry. Grocery's shopping and preparation/delivery of meals, home Bible studies were parts of the visit. We are grateful to God in serving the needs of these individuals.

Regular worship service and online Bible study class and counselling are part of the active ministry at St. Andrew Lutheran Church. On January 31, a seeker who attended our Worship Service twice last year and was offered counselling returned to thank God for blessing him with a new job and accommodation along with other benefits. He was homeless for weeks when he first found the church as he was seeking a place to sleep. He tearfully attended a worship service the first Sunday and repeated a visit the following Sunday. He was engaged in spiritual formation as part of the step to reform him and position him for a new opportunity in life. Greg is very grateful to God and the support he received through the congregation.

From the school

Our school is doing well by the grace of God and began in January following the Christmas break. We had an opportunity of meeting with some of the parents and encouraging them in spite of the pandemic and its impending challenges and fear. In-person instructions are ongoing and parents

were happy with the level of instruction delivered so far by the school. We are trusting the Lord to protect our students, parents and the school community. On January 29th, our students and staff had an opportunity to connect online with the Prince of Peace Lutheran Church and Preschool. It was a great chat meeting even though the technology was not excellent, but the joy of seeing and singing along with another great family across the sea was overwhelming. Our kids and staff are looking forward to another such connection soon. As part of the celebration of the Reggae and Black History Month, the school community opted to worship at Faith Lutheran Church on February 14th and also to mark the St. Valentine's Day Celebration usually observed in most Jamaican schools. The recited a Bible verse and sang during the service. A pre-celebration was observed at the school on Friday, February 12.

At the general meeting of Parents and Teachers on Monday, February 22, the first body of Parents Teachers Association (PTA) was inaugurated. The body will be tasked with the responsibility of working together with the school and other parents for the success and progress of the school. The five-member body was highly motivated to render efficient service to the secure growth for the school. Pastor Ite commissioned the body and dedicated them to the service of God and the school community.

The New COVID-19 restrictions

The beginning of this year has been very promising to our churches and people and also come with increasing cases of positivity for COVID-19, however, cases not from the churches.

The new COVID rules as will affect our churches/people are:

- **Effective March 1** – The islandwide curfew remains at 8:00pm to 5:00am day to day and expires at 5:00am on March 23, 2021.
- All places of worship, including churches will engage in only online services. However, a maximum of 10 persons are allowed inside the worship centre to facilitate online broadcasting.
- **Effective March 8** – All Funerals and Burials will be prohibited. Funerals already scheduled for March 1-7 are allowed once they are in compliance with the Disaster Risk Management Act.
- Weddings are allowed with a maximum of 25 persons including the officiating pastor, witnesses and wedding party.

Prayer Requests

- For our school, students, parents and staff
- For members of our congregations, especially the newly baptized.
- For direction in navigating the new COVID-19 restrictions and sustaining ministry within our congregations.
- For our family.

Photos



Members of St. Andrew January 3



John Brown at his Baptism, January 17



Andrea Bennet at her Baptism February 14



Andrea Bennett at her Baptism and cross section of worshippers – February 14.



A cross-section of our students in school - February 12



A cross section of student at school – February 12



Students and Teacher presentation at Worship Service – February 14



Students and staff at the end of Worship Service – Feb. 14



Etoline Bruce, following her Baptism in her home – Feb. 3



A cross section of parents and teachers at meeting – February 22



New inaugurated Parents Teachers Association (PTA) Body – February 22. From left to right: Ms Monique Harrison - President, Ms. Tameka Campbell – Vice-President, Ms. Brittany Mckalin - Secretary, PRO, Mrs. Sandra Buchanan – Treasurer.