



Outreach Jamaica

JUNE - SEPTEMBER 2020

**OUTREACH JAMAICA
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UPDATE

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If you would like to send a donation, please make checks payable to Outreach Jamaica.

You may also donate through PAYPAL at agapeharbor@yahoo.com

All donations are tax-deductible.

Dear Friends,

When I sent out our last update, I couldn't have imagined that I'd still be in Wyoming, watching it trying to snow, and updating you all again. God IS good, and we've seen His hand moving in our lives so many times in so many ways over the past months. I wouldn't begin to tell you that we've always understood at the time what His plan was/is, but He has allowed us to see glimpses of Him working and we know we can trust Him through it all....even when we can't see it!

Jamaica opened her borders to citizens and visitors to come in July 15, with very strict conditions. At the time, the numbers of Covid-19 cases and deaths were relatively low, and the government felt they had a good handle on the situation. Curfews were eased a little, and churches and bars were allowed to 're-open' again. Beecher Town Church of Christ started in-person worship again soon after restrictions were eased, with strict sanitization and screening protocols in place. We continue to meet only for Sunday morning worship at this time, as curfews don't allow for evening meetings to take place. The ministry has faced many changes. All of our evangelistic meetings planned for the year have had to be cancelled; also our plans for VBS, 3 weeks of camp, youth retreat, and national convention. Schools were closed in March, and have still not yet re-opened for in-facility learning so we've not been able to share in devotions with the children and teachers each week. Since meeting back in person for worship services, tho, there has been a marked increase in attendance and interest from non-Christians! Our services are reaching numbers that may have us needing to add additional services due to crowd limits! We praise God for the opportunity to share with people who previously appeared un-interested in the Good News we have to share!

God has also opened doors of opportunity for us to expand the feeding program we had started last year for school children, to also assist members of the community who are facing hardships due to lack of employment for this extended period of time.

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To date, Outreach Jamaica and the Beecher Town Church have been able to help over 300 families with food and medicine. (well over 1,500 people) As supplies start to run low, God has provided through his people in Jamaica and abroad to help re-supply the pantry. Praise God, there hasn't been a time yet that anyone who asked hasn't received *something*, if even for a day or a single meal. My dear friends, through it all, our God IS good and faithful! We've had to shift from preparing pantry items for hand-out from our church fellowship hall to our Home due to safety concerns. Our girls are enjoying being active in this ministry tho, and since they're home-schooling now, they have plenty of time to help Jacques with it. Please let us know if you'd like to help fund this aspect of our ministry as the needs continue to grow.



bagging up pantry items



staple items like flour, sugar, rice, cornmeal, dry beans, crackers, dry soup, oil and tinned beans, mackerel and sardines.



Jacques delivering bags to the Beecher Town Primary School Principal, Ms. Bailey, for parents to be able to come and pick up for the week.

continued ...

The government has also halted the placement of children into any NGO facilities, so for the near future, we will not be allowed to care for any more children until regulations are lifted. While we understand concerns about the potential spread of the virus, we also remain concerned about the situations many children will find themselves in due to these restrictions. Please pray with us that workable solutions can be found for the benefit of the children most at risk, especially during these trying times.

We have no clue when things may start to 'normalize' in Jamaica. Hotels and tourist attractions, although technically 'open' are virtually empty. Unemployment is at almost unthinkably high levels. Cases have started to rise by the dozens daily (appx 9,000) and deaths are currently 160. Hospitals are overcrowded, resources stretched, and field hospitals have been set up to help try to handle the need. Continue to pray with us that this situation WORLDWIDE would be brought under control. We know many of you have been affected personally by it, as has our family. May God's will be done through it all.

On a more personal note....

Covid has touched our family in a very personal way. In July, Jacques' sister and brother-in-law in Florida were diagnosed with the virus. Both are in their 70's. Initially, Sidney was critical and we weren't sure he would pull through, and Pearline was hospitalized then released after a few days. A week later, she was re-admitted and continued to get worse, as Sidney recovered. He was released in September, but Pearline continued to decline until she lost her battle this morning. It is hard to wrap our minds around what's happened, but we know that whatever God does, He does well, and we will trust Him through this also. Please remember our extended family in prayer during the days ahead.

My mom continues her struggle with multiple health issues...cancer, auto-immune hepatitis and gallstones being the most recent diagnoses. The blessing with me being here longer than expected due to Shamar's paperwork being delayed is that I've been able to attend most of her Dr. appointments with her through this. Since her assisted living facility is still on lockdown, this enables me to be able to spend precious moments with her at her appointments, normally multiple times a week. Please keep her in your prayers as well.

We have had some recent positive correspondence regarding Shamar's citizenship paperwork, and are hopeful that it will be wrapped up and finalized in time for me to be home before Christmas! I hate to even say that out loud, with everything that has happened so far this year, but that is our prayer.

*Lastly, we want to thank you all for your faithful prayers and support! We know many of you have been affected in various ways during the past months also. Even though the future is uncertain in so many ways, we will continue to ... **"Publish His glorious deeds among the nations; tell everyone about the amazing things He does!" I Chronicles 16:24***

~Jacques and Bev