

INTRODUCING OUR NEWEST MISSIONARIES

*Lloyd & Elaine Cooke*

*Serving the Lord in*



# Jamaica



In March we were presented with the opportunity to help a family that has been serving the Lord most of their adult lives. The organization that was their covering was getting ready to close its doors after 25 years, and they only had 30 days to find a new covering. They made application and the board of Harvest International accepted them immediately. Please welcome Lloyd and Elaine Cooke to our family.

Lloyd and Elaine have been serving the Lord in Mandeville, Jamaica since 1999. Lloyd teaches at the Jamaica Bible College. He teaches Comparative Religions, Evangelism, Church History and Mission. In addition, he teaches Sunday school as well as preaching once a month on mission topics. Lloyd also leads a monthly Mission Study and Prayer group to intercede for missionaries and mission requests world-wide.

Elaine leads weekly Children's Bible Club, leads a weekly literacy class with grad-school children, and coordinates a local program which goes into schools to share about sexual abstinence and offer moral and spiritual counseling to children.

Both Lloyd and Elaine have initiated a cooperative effort by some local churches to try to rescue at-risk kids, particularly fatherless boys, by offering practical help, guidance, training and financial assistance.



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May 2012

Dear Friends,

We have been back for a time now. Sorry that busyness caused us to take some time to correspond. Our 11 day trip to Miami, and our 4 day cruise with Jamaica Bible College alumni was truly enjoyable. It was good to visit with family and friends, as well as with one of our home churches. At our daughter's church we were privileged to witness our son-in-law's installation as a deacon. This time away enabled us to get some much needed rest along with opportunity to reflect and develop new ministry ideas.

We have picked up back on our various ministries: Lloyd teaching Comparative Religions at Jamaica Bible College (last week's class was on 'Christianity and Western Thought'); and his activities with the local churches, working with the Executive of the Ministries Fraternal. First Sunday Lloyd spoke on "The Cross and the Triumph of Christ" and its implications for missions. A number of persons responded for prayer, commitment and salvation.

Elaine is back to her beloved Children's classes at Porus on Tuesdays and on Saturdays. This Thursday we have a meeting with mothers and, hopefully, some of the fathers of needy children from the hill area above our home. The government's Social Development Commission's officer will be there to help us all find answers to their economic and other problems. We trust that they will also see that Christ is their greatest need.

## Pray with us for

- Lloyd's efforts to get the churches to plan a united evangelistic effort in the near future.
- Final classes, and then the students' taking of final exams in Lloyd's class in Comparative Religions, in a few weeks time.
- Our financial situation: Gifts have begun coming in to our new sponsor, Harvest International, for our support, but only slowly so far. Pray that God would move upon hearts, and meet their needs so that they may help meet ours.
- Elaine who has an appointment to speak to young people later this week at a large Baptist Church in Brown's Town. She will address them on singleness and their spiritual and moral challenges.
- Some openings she has in a couple schools to address the children on sexuality and morality themes. Pray that many will receive Christ as their savior.

You are in our hearts and often in our prayers.

*Lloyd & Elaine Cooke*



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# Jamaica

June 2012

Dear Friends,

The Poinciana trees are in riotous bloom in homes and forests, with their flamboyant reds and oranges. On my 'plantation,' for you interested ones, the Jamaican apple tree is in ripening mode. We do have to share with the birds, however, many of which nest in our various trees. (Linda, your sister's apple pie recipe will soon be tried.) The weather is turning hot, and the grass and flowers are beginning to show the effects. This will be one of our dryer periods, except if we get a storm or hurricane. God forbid!

Last week we enjoyed the visit, by cruise ship, of a family from Texas who have supported us over the past few years. We thoroughly enjoyed meeting and hosting them for the day, taking them to a couple of attractions in the Falmouth area, on our North Coast.

The coalition of churches in the Greyground district, near to our home, have had a number of meetings recently with some poor, largely unchurched families, whom we are trying to find ways to assist economically. Working with the government's Social Development Commission (SDC) officer we are trying to devise a way to aid them without encouraging dependency; to "teach them how to fish, instead of just giving them fishes;" to help them develop small businesses by 'seeding' their start-up costs, rather than giving them grants. Some of these, mostly single mothers with many children from numerous fathers, have workable business ideas we would like to assist. So we want to open a revolving fund to help them get started. We are willing to contribute from our meagre resources, but need others to come alongside us. We are also seeking the assistance of businesses from the community. Please pray with us for both the wisdom and the resources to give them a 'hand-up' rather than a 'hand-out.'

Jamaica will celebrate its 50th anniversary of Independence from British rule on August 5th. Various cultural, historical and political events are planned. The Church nationally is trying to find ways to represent Christ, and to appropriately remind the nation of its pivotal role in our national life. In Mandeville our Ministers Fraternal is responding to a challenge to help plan a united witness event during the week of July 15th to 21st. We also are planning a Public Service of Thanksgiving for August 5th., the eve of Independence Day. Pray that these events will be eagerly entered into by local churches, and be well received by the community.

Elaine is helping her Methodist circuit plan Vacation Bible Schools, and will participate herself. Recently she was invited by a local Primary School to address their Grade-Six students on morals and values, before they enter High School. We thank God for such opportunities to share Christ with children in our schools. Her other children's meetings continue on track.

Thanks to you for standing with us in all these endeavors. Your aid will continue to be invaluable.

Happily serving our Saviour in Jamaica.

*Lloyd & Elaine Cooke*



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July 2012

Dear Friends,

We have just completed a week of intense witness activities in connection with, and commemorative of, Jamaica's 50th anniversary of political Independence. The Mandeville Ministers Fraternal has led the way in planning the activities, and so Lloyd has been intensely involved in the plans and in leadership of some of the activities. A March of Witness through the town on Saturday, followed by a public service of Music, Testimony and Message, brought an end to the week's activities. Many responded to the salvation message and gave their hearts to the Lord.

The first week of August will see Jamaica celebrating its Jubilee of Independence. A special united service of commemoration to focus on the role of the Church in the Nation will be held on August 5th. Lloyd is again involved in the planning of this. Pray with us for a real witness to be borne at this service.

In between these two efforts will be the annual Keswick Convention meetings, from July 21st. - 29th. Rev. Dr. Walford Thompson from St. Vincent is the speaker, and we are hosting him for the week. These meetings are for the spiritual enrichment of believers. We pray that the local churches will see lasting benefit.

Elaine has led one week of Vacation Bible School, and has one more to come at another of the Methodist Churches in the circuit. After that we will take a brief vacation locally, before the new school year at the Bible College where Lloyd teaches begins.

Presently we face a couple situations of financial need for which we need your urgent prayers:

Our 18 year old Nissan car has developed transmission problems. The cost for repairs will amount to near 25% of the present value. Nevertheless we have decided to go along with the repairs, as we cannot consider replacement at this time. Simultaneously with this is the second matter; this has to do with the publication of Lloyd's book, "The Story of Jamaican Missions" detailing the activities of Jamaican Missionaries since the 1840s. We are expecting submission to the printers in a couple weeks time.

Because of the extended delay, costs have escalated beyond the estimate we were given a few years ago. As a result we will need to find an additional \$4,000+ within the next month. We believe the Lord will meet this need, but it is a major stretching of our faith. We ask you to believe with us for this provision. You will hear more about how to get the book when it is available. Thanks for standing with us in our ministry here in Jamaica.

Yours in service to our King!

*Lloyd & Elaine Cooke*



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October 2012

Dear Friends,

It has been a while since we last communicated with you. But we have not been inactive during this time.

Community assistance project: At our September meeting there were a number of encouraging reports:

- We were informed that two of the at-risk youth that we are involved with had returned to school. This after a period of prolonged absence.
- The government's Social Development Officer assigned to our area has meetings scheduled with a number of the mothers, to train them in how to begin small and micro business enterprises to help support themselves and their families.

In discussions with them, one of the women desires to reopen a small chicken rearing business. But she will need help with start up costs which she will repay from profits over a specified time period. Another wishes to go into pig rearing. Our committee is looking at setting up a revolving fund, funded by our own contributions, to help them and others like them to do this.

We are seeking more like-minded community persons to join us on a Management Committee to help fund, counsel and give guidance to this effort. We intend to get this off the ground at our next meeting in a couple weeks time. Your prayers, and any contribution you can make towards this effort, would be appreciated, as we seek to make an impact in these lives for good, and for our God.

Local Evangelism Effort:

At the last meeting of our Ministers Fraternal's Evangelism Committee, of which Lloyd is the Vice-chair, plans were sketched out for a proposed year long focus on evangelising children in the town and its environs. This will involve recruiting prospective children's workers and leaders; training seminars in the peculiarities of winning children; and joint community mini-children's crusades, leading up to a major united crusade, cum Family-Fun day, late in next year. Do remember us in your prayers that these proposals will be accepted by the Fraternal membership, and actively supported and implemented.

Special School Evangelism program:

In cooperation with Regent College of the Caribbean (formerly Jamaica Bible College) and a Jamaican led ministry out of Florida, Elaine and I look forward to hosting a Missions Team of College students in November to go into schools with a message uplifting self worth and instilling Christian values. Pray with us for all these plans and interventions for Jesus sake.

Elaine continues her various children ministries at the Porus Methodist Church, and her sexual abstinence sessions in the schools. She is encouraged by the positive signs of growth in both. Lloyd had invitations recently to minister in Missionary meetings in the capital, Kingston, and at home. Later this week he leads a missionary prayer group which meets monthly to intercede for indigenous and other missionaries serving worldwide. Joining the group for the first time will be a young man, who was referred to him recently, who has a deep sense of a call for missionary service. Pray for us as we seek to guide him to find the Lord's will and his place of service in the vineyard.

Once again we want to say thanks to you for your prayers and support over the years. Even in the midst of trying economic times you have been faithful. We are grateful to you, and pray the Lord's meeting of all your needs through His riches of love in Christ Jesus.

Yours in service to our King!

*Lloyd & Elaine Cooke*



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November 2012

Dear Friends,

Greetings to all: and a special Thanksgiving Day greeting to our U.S. friends!

We trust that all have survived the ravages of hurricane Sandy, as we here in Jamaica did: though some in the eastern parishes are still picking up the pieces, in terms of lost roofs, lost houses, lost electricity and flooding in some cases. But our losses seem to have been minute in comparison to some in the New Jersey and New York area. We have been following the news of your devastation, and our prayers are still being lifted up for those who were adversely impacted. We pray that God's people will come alongside their neighbours to help and bring cheer, and that many would find God's arms underneath lifting them up and drawing them unto Himself.

Elaine and I attended the home-going service on Saturday in Kingston of one of the first Jamaican missionary nurses sent out to Haiti by the former Jamaican agency International Missionary Fellowship (IMF), Nurse Hortense Salmon. She served for 22 years near the southern city of Aux Cayes, under the supervision of the then West Indies Mission (later World Team). I wish I could share with you the fulsome tributes and stories of her faithful service, which service continued at her local church, First Missionary Church, even after her return to Jamaica in 1988. It all validated the faith of IMF's founders that Jamaican believers were well qualified to serve with distinction on any mission field of the world. A former pastor of her's, speaking from Hebrews 11: 13-16, and 32-40, entitled his message "The people of whom God was not ashamed." It was certainly an apt description of her, her faith and her works for the Lord in Haiti. Other Haiti missionaries also sent tributes.

It was my privilege to share on behalf of IMF, since I also went to the field through this agency just a couple years after she did, and am one of the few still around who could speak of her service from that perspective. I also quoted from the profile I have of her in my near-to- publication book on Jamaican missionaries: "The Story of Jamaican Missions." I had to remark to some persons after the service that I wished we could have more such missionary meetings.

We greatly thank God for His gracious mercies towards us, and for your prayers, concern and financial support of us. Some items for praise and prayer are:

- For God's mercies to us during the passing of Sandy. And let us pray for those in Jamaica, Haiti, Cuba, the Bahamas and those in the U.S. still dealing with its aftermath.
- Praise that all our relatives and friends have come through it fairly unscathed.
- For God's help and touch of Lloyd recently as he went through a bout of elevated blood pressure, difficulty sleeping, and anxiety attacks. All is now O.K.
- Rejoice that the pressure of many weeks of detailed work correcting and retyping changes in the Index for Lloyd's book is finally over. It is now submitted to the Publishers, and should go on to the Printer shortly.
- For the gift from a U.S. supporter of funds to help needy families to start self-supporting business ventures. However, one mother who was ready to be helped balked when she realized that she would have to sign an agreement to repay the loan, though the time and terms would have been very easy. Do pray that others will be more responsible, and take the help that is available to help them help themselves.
- Our local Ministers Fraternal met today and the Evangelism Committee, of which Lloyd is the Vice-Chair, shared plans for a year of Children Evangelism in 2013. Please pray that these plans will be well received by the churches, and that many will be trained to win young children to Christ and be disciplined to become faithful believers. Much planning and effort will be involved in bringing this about.

May the blessings of our faithful God always be your portion, and may we all be good Ambassadors of our loving Father during these difficult times facing our world. Remember that 'The Reason for the Season' is Jesus Christ, as Christmas comes around once again.

In Christ's loving service in Jamaica,

*Lloyd & Elaine Cooke*



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December 2012

December 15th 2012

Beloved Friends/Family,

Elaine and I would like to wish you and your loved ones a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year, when it comes!

The Lord has been so very good to us this year, and we thank Him for all his blessings:

- Our health has been good: no serious problems;
- Our families have also been well, and what issues there were have been overcome;
- We were favoured to go on a cruise earlier in the year, with fellow Alumni from Jamaica Bible College (now Regent College of the Caribbean);
- For Lloyd, teaching at the College has been satisfying. He had the joy of sowing into lives who will be going into ministry to lead the lost to Christ;
- Friends like you, and family, have been faithful in praying for us and standing by us financially. We can say with Paul that "we have learned in whatsoever state we are to be content." And truly "godliness with contentment is great gain"; (Phil. 4:11-12; 1 Tim. 6:6)
- It was our special joy, in June, to meet a supporting family from Texas who were on a cruise stopping in Montego Bay, and to take them to a couple sights in close proximity;
- We have been enabled to reach out to a number of needy persons and children in our area. We have helped a few to help themselves, rather than to depend on us for handouts;
- Elaine has seen a number of the children with whom she meets weekly led to Christ. Some were recently united with Christ in baptism and joined the Church.

Truly God has been good to us and continues to use us in His service. When we can no longer make a difference in His Kingdom then the best will be still ahead of us, as He shall then call us home to be with Him for all eternity. What better present and future can one ever hope for?

In the light and love of Christ until we see you sometime in 2013, or in heaven.

A Merry Christmas again to you all!!

*Lloyd & Elaine Cooke*