

BETHEL CHRISTIAN MISSION SERVING JESUS IN JAMAICA

[Home](#)
[About
Bethel](#)
[Experience
Bethel](#)
[Become a
Partner](#)
[Trip
Resources](#)
[Newsletter](#)
[Contact
Us](#)

Newsletter



Karen and Dean Dawson

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Greetings in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ!

"It is Alright, Alright! It is Alright, Alright!
As long as I have my Lord beside me it is Alright!
As long as I have His hand to hold,
As long as He watches over my soul,
As long as I'm under His control,
It is Alright!"

Wow! The above Jamaican praise chorus really sums up how we feel after spending our first busy summer here at Bethel. Working for our Lord is more than alright - it's fantastic! July passed by so fast that here we are almost through August before we have realized it! We've decided that "Busy" must be the buzz word from heaven that means "Blessings are headed your way" - for we have truly been blessed enormously by all of the teams that we had the privilege of hosting.

A four man team from our home church - Grace - in Des Moines IA were the second team we greeted this summer. They came for the sole purpose of working on Bethel projects and did they ever work! Many mornings they were hammering before they even had their breakfast. Energetic and creative are not powerful enough words to describe the talent they so willingly shared with us. Thanks to their efforts we now have a beautiful deck with benches next to the Sand Volleyball Court, a devotion table with benches in back of the Chapel, and they painted the fronts of the three crosses on the hill white - that really helps them to stand out and be noticed. Diligent effort was needed to perfectly paint the markings for the new Basketball Court - wow it looks fantastic! A round of applause for Don, Steve, Paul and Gary for all their blessed hard work!

Southeast Christian Church in Louisville KY sent us a team on June 19th that was truly a blessing. Jeff Heisler & his buddies tore down and removed the Prayer Chapel that sat above the crosses. It was in very poor condition and had become so much of a safety hazard that we couldn't allow guests to use it any longer. The SECC team also held a 2 day VBS at New Life Fellowship Community Church in Mandeville that is pastured by Bishop Bradley Hamilton. This area is populated by many Rastafarian families who were actually the target of this evangelistic effort. The Rasta's had planned to have a big party Saturday night and moved in a very large speaker system. Jesus had bigger plans as the SECC team showed the Veggie Tale "Jonah, the Movie" on the side of a local home that evening and even our Rasta friends enjoyed the film. Many seeds were planted and are still being reaped as attendance at the church has grown because of this outreach. Thank you SECC for your witness of Christ's love to even those who yet reject him!

David Smith with Global Access Partnerships brought in a team of college-age youth who visited schools and churches and through their musical talents shared the Gospel of Jesus Christ. These folks were up at dawn, had breakfast and loaded on their bus to head off to their audience - returning late, tired and hungry - but always on fire for the Lord! Praise God for the hearts they helped open unto our Saviour!

Dr. Ron Long brought us several different US teams coming together under the Luther Rice Seminary

banner for an awesome week of VBS! Organized and ready to minister they spread out to Mandeville, Hatfield, Porus and Bombay. They were true servants of the Lord as they travelled quite far to reach the children who needed to hear the truth of God's love for us sent through His only Son Jesus. Thank you! All the time God is good!

The second Grace team arrived on July 20th - Grace Youth led by Youth Pastor Josh Colyer. This team was spiritually prepared for the task and their high energy was flawlessly channelled into VBS at both Patricktown Moravian Church and New Life Fellowship Community Church. Never had we witnessed young people who are so on fire for the Lord and willing to listen intently for His direction in their life. Thirteen of the sixteen who came on the trip are seeking God's will as they prepare for careers in the ministry - some as missionaries! Praise God! Moms & Dads you have done a wonderful job raising these young people and we are very proud to know each of them!

Paul, who is a member of our staff, came to know Jesus Christ as his Lord and Saviour while the Grace Youth were here. They prayed without ceasing once we told them how close we felt he was. Paul was raised with his twin brother at the New Vision Children's Home at Christiana and was forced to attend church every Sunday. This had led to resistance that had blocked his ability to want to willingly accept Jesus into his heart. This summer as he saw the joy Christ brings to each of our lives and how His love motivates us to reach out to others - he decided that he wanted this for himself. God is so good all the time and we praise Him for this blessing!

Great things come in 3's as Jamaica was blessed next by a youth team from Fellowship Community Church from Norwalk IA who led VBS at Rosehill Church of God of Prophecy, a team from Calvary Community Church from Lincoln NE who led VBS at Newport Open Bible Church and a team from Kensington Baptist Church from CT who led VBS at Prophetstown Pentecostal Church of God. Relationships were bonded as these teams enjoyed each others company as they traded ministry ideas. A friendly match of volleyball pitted long time rivals Iowa State against the Nebraska Cornhuskers and you'll have to guess the outcome! All of these teams poured their hearts into the ministry and were blessed by the children's eagerness to hear how much Jesus loves each of them. What joy God had in store for them!

Awana Ministry

The AWANA seminar was a success as each of the four churches that attended signed up for the program. Each church is from a different denomination which is very exciting and shows how the AWANA program will break down denominational barriers as well as give the children in Manchester Parish the Bible education they so very much need. We are planning another seminar very early into 2004 and are confident that many more of the churches we have met and worked with over this summer will not only be in attendance - but will also see the AWANA program as one that their church can't do without!

What we've learned from our new friends . . .

Iowa Sweet Corn seeds will not grow in Jamaican soil - but we gave it a good Midwestern try!

There is both a hard and an easy way to cut up a chicken - now I know both!

While driving, honking the horn is a form of communication that must be used almost constantly.

What Jesus is teaching us . . .

The needs of the many far out weigh the wants of a few.

We can accomplish much if we remember to take one day at a time using what the Lord has graciously provided.

Listen intently and love unconditionally

Praises & Prayer Requests:

Praise God!! Over 565 Jamaican children accepted Jesus Christ as their Lord and Saviour this summer during the many VBS's that were held by teams from Bethel!

Praise!!! Our beautiful Kari has gotten the report that she is cancer FREE!!! This is an answer to many of our prayers and I thank each of you for praying with us. God is so faithful and gracious!

Continue to pray for our gorgeous mom-to-be Brandy - that she and baby David Michael remain healthy, happy and cool via the miracle of air conditioning!

Pray that every member of the teams who visited us this summer stay on fire for Jesus and the Jamaican people who went home with them in their hearts.

Thank you!

Both of us would like to thank each of you for your many prayers. We feel your prayers and they encourage us daily. As with any ministry, we have had some difficulties - but God has seen us through each one. We give Him all the praise and the glory because He has been so good to us!

We would also like to thank all of our financial supporters - your generosity makes it possible for us to be here serving Jesus! We pray that your households and congregations prosper under the Lord's care as you give Him honour with your gifts to this ministry.

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