

WISE

Windward Islands School of Evangelism

The First Christmas to the Last

Our kids love sharing in an Advent Book we have and opening up each day's story. Advent means the coming or arrival of a notable person, thing or event. We had one student who heard the Christmas story here for the first time and was in awe. Can you imagine thinking back to that first Christmas? So many lives changed – the shepherds' wonderment, the wisemen's journey of worship, the faith of Mary and Joseph. And all because of Jesus' coming. The coming that changed the world forever. "Behold, she will bear a son, and they shall call His name Immanuel (God with us)," (Matthew 1:23).

But what about the next Christmas? Or the next? When reality set in and Mary was busy with daily motherhood tasks, when Joseph was able to continue back to work in carpentry, when more kids were added. Did the wonder and worship wear off? Did the shepherds still look up for angels? Lives were changed when Jesus was born, and as a result of His birth, lives are still being changed all over the world.

Next year our family will transition roles from WISE. We've grown and been privileged to join in so many traditions at WISE that we love and will miss. While it's our last Christmas here with this family, the message is still the same. Some foods may change, and the traditions will be different. Decorating palm trees will be replaced, for sure! But the good news of Christ will continue to be shared here and in our new location. Jesus says, "Hold on to what you have, for I am coming soon," (Revelation 3:11). We can hardly wait to all be together for eternity! We pray you have a beautiful Christmas and maybe, just maybe, your Christmas this year might look a lot like the First Christmas. A smaller gathering, a place you didn't picture it happening (hopefully not a stable), a loved one who isn't here this year or couldn't join your celebration. But there is still so much wonder to share! Look up to Him! He is coming!

- Brice and Amanda Wurdeman



Matching Grant Update

We humbly say “thank you” to the many who gave to this generous matching grant project to fence the property. \$19,095 was matched! We are so thankful for your generosity in continually helping WISE! Work has begun by the locals here, but it has been a slow start due to the daily heavy rains.



Student Highlight

Meet Sis. Stevernique, from the Glen Christian Church in St. Vincent. She's one of our younger students at age 18, but she jumped right in with the other students and lends her beautiful voice to our worship. Her church and family back home helped to send her. She loves being able to fellowship with everyone at WISE, learning more about Christ and growing spiritually here. She has had to learn how to cope with others from different cultures and how to better manage her time with classes and the work study. She hopes to go back home after the two years and minister in her church—allowing God to lead her with everything else.



COVID Protocols & Changes

So many things everywhere have been affected by the virus. For WISE, some of our accepted students could not get flights in, so we had to adjust and make online classes available this semester. This type of learning is not ideal for WISE as so much of our teaching and growth comes not just in the classroom, but in fellowship with students from other cultures and learning to minister through serving and learning about families. Often our students have not experienced that before. So, we are praying the online students can soon be on campus since online learning is certainly not ideal for WISE students.

If you have not been to our campus, we live far from the touristy side of the island. We are located in what is known as “centipede land,” smack dab in the middle of cane fields. So, it’s ideal for studies and COVID times as we are fairly isolated. This means that since most of us are always on campus, we are able to be a big family and move about freely. We are so grateful to be sickness-free here, but do pray for those who are hurting during these times.



Thankfulness Abounds

We had a beautiful Thanksgiving with 48 of us gathered together. Amidst the food and fellowship, we each shared one thing we are thankful for. Some thoughts shared that were especially meaningful to us

were thankful for grace, salvation, supporters, family and WISE becoming their family, and their studies. One student said she was thankful WISE was in Barbados now as with her family, church and full-time job she would not have been able to leave to study if it were elsewhere. Another student was thankful for COVID because after graduation he had not been able to return home and was forced to put aside his desires and grow spiritually while here waiting.

Soon, we will gather together and celebrate Christmas here. It's always such a special time. We try to make it unique since staff are not with their families and home cultures, and students are away from their loved ones. We'll have a homemade gift exchange in which everyone participates. In years past, gifts have been purses, jewelry, wooden shelves, car washes, shirts and much more! This year Lifetrack Christian Church sent gifts for each person. We'll play games and share in a devotional and worship with candles. And we'll feast together – a sweet tradition in which each of the staff families make several of their favorite dishes. So, there's always a fun variety. Some "must haves" are ham, sorrel, rice and peas, jugjug, black cake and mac pie. (Feel free to message us if you wonder about the recipes or what some of these dishes are.) We wish you could join us!



PRAISE AND PRAYER NEEDS

- Praise our graduates can return home soon! They have been stuck here since April.
- Praise the Wheat family's house sold, and they are in preparations to come to WISE to transition as director next year. Continued prayers that Daniel's work visa will be accepted and processed along with the Ness family's paperwork, as they too await their approval to come to WISE.

- Prayers for Sis. Jane who has been stateside with back surgery and now pneumonia.
 - For numerous board members who are currently dealing with COVID.
 - For our current students learning different teaching styles online. Consistent internet can be difficult to get in some of the countries we have represented.
 - For unity among our students with the varying cultures on campus.
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