

WISE

Windward Islands School of Evangelism

NEW SCHOOL YEAR BEGINS IN SPITE OF COVID REGULATIONS

We have waited a bit to send off this letter to see how the dust would settle for our new students. Well, not all the dust has settled yet, but classes at WISE are underway for the 2021-2022 school year. COVID has made it exceptionally difficult for our international students to travel to Barbados. Last year there were half a dozen Haitian students who wanted to come, but none were able to make it. We are excited that two of them were able to make it this year, although not without challenges. They ran into a problem on the day of their departure from Haiti and had to reschedule to the next day. Then they had to spend several days in Jamaica before getting a connecting flight to Barbados. Upon arrival, one of them tested positive and had to spend 10 days in quarantine. (The other one spent the normal five to six days before being retested and released.) But Ritchey and Steve are here and excited to FINALLY begin their studies at WISE!

As of this writing, there are three other new students who are in various stages of travel arrangements: a woman from Haiti, a man from Nigeria and a man from Pakistan. So, it looks like our incoming class will number about five, which is not a lot, but up from last year. We are using an online platform to help these incoming students keep up with their lectures and assignments so they will not be hopelessly behind by the time they arrive. Others have said they are going to wait because of COVID, and still others have expressed enthusiastic interest but were just too late to apply for this year. Hopefully by next year we will see a definite upward trend in enrollment!

COVID has been surging in Barbados, as in many places around the world. It is now common to see over 150 new cases a day, which seems small by U.S. standards, but was unheard of in Barbados until recently. There were 168 new cases on September 22, an all-time high. Human resources are being stretched thin, as well as accommodations for quarantine purposes. The churches are under tight restrictions, limited to 25 people for services. The trajectory is definitely not good right now, and people here are quite concerned. Please keep the Barbadian churches and church leaders in prayer.



NEWEST ADDITION TO WISE

Meet the newest addition to our WISE family. This is Bennett Ness, born in April. Bennett is the son of staff members Lucas and Mikayla Ness. Bennett's sister, Ava, just celebrated her second birthday. Kudos to Bennett's dad, who after they arrived back on campus in July, tackled the daunting task of taming the grassy jungle that had grown up in the summer when we were short-staffed.



HELPERS FOR WISE

God has provided some special helpers for us during this season. Ben and Sara and their four boys are living with us on campus for a few months. They had plans to serve elsewhere in the world this year, but that door did not open at this time; so while they pursue their options, they are serving here at WISE wherever and however they can. It has been great to have them!

Kenny and Tia King are wrapping up a two-week visit with us. The Kings are from Wabash IN, and they came down to assist us with a variety of projects around campus. They have done a tremendous job! With a long list of stuff to do, and with the hurricane that hit Barbados in June, we have been cleaning up and fixing up and catching up as best we can. But thanks to the labors of people like these, along with our other staff, the campus is looking good!



LEADING BY FOLLOWING

Our theme for this year is “Leading by Following Jesus.” At WISE we are all about training leaders, but every leader in the kingdom of God is first a follower of Jesus. So, we are emphasizing what it looks like to follow Jesus. With that in mind, please ask God to work in the hearts and lives of all students and staff so that all of us will learn to follow Jesus more closely that we might lead more effectively.

Here are some other prayer requests:

1. Protection for the WISE family from COVID and wisdom to navigate this season as a school.
2. Help for our new students to arrive safely in Barbados and to adjust to life at WISE.
3. Guidance and strength for Renee, one of our second-year students who had to leave school to seek medical help. She hated to leave, as she loves being at WISE and wants so much to finish her course, so pray for her recovery and that she will be able to return at a later time.

We are grateful for our new students, for God's provision, for those who have come and are planning to come to Barbados to help us, and for all who love WISE and are a part of this work. We are grateful that since COVID started, WISE has not ceased to do what it does in teaching the Word of God. Thank you for your prayers, your financial gifts and your concern for our students and staff. These are difficult times for people everywhere, which makes us all the more thankful for the WISE family everywhere!

