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## IT'S THE MOST WONDERFUL TIME OF THE YEAR!

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There is nothing in the world like a green Christmas in the Caribbean (with apologies to the traditional song). The humidity goes down, the temperature drops three or four degrees (that may not sound like much, but the difference is huge), the air clears of dust and everything is clear and bright. On campus we had three Christmas trees, and many lights in the center of the campus. The students were very happy to be done with classes and have two weeks of holiday break between terms.

On Christmas eve nine of us gathered to sing Christmas carols and pray. There were six different countries represented: Barbados, Haiti, Jamaica, Nigeria, St. Vincent, and the US. We prayed for all our homelands and for each other.

Late in the afternoon on Christmas Day we had a devotional service in the chapel and a large Christmas dinner in the dining hall, followed by the sharing of gifts. There were gifts for everyone sent by a church in the US. Then we had a white elephant gift exchange among ourselves. The trick about these gifts is that they had to be hand made by the giver, no money spent. There were paintings, wall signs, plant holders, jewelry, decorations, even a coconut leaf hat! It was lots of fun.

The covid restrictions here are still pretty severe. The government eased up a little so we could still have the traditional Christmas morning service in the churches at 6:00 am, and "Old Year's Night" service from 10 pm to midnight on New Year's Eve. We are now allowed to have more than 25

people, and they can sit three feet apart instead of six, if at least 70 percent of the people are vaccinated. We still have to take temperature, sanitize our hands and write down our names on entering the building.



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## VISIT BY A TEAM

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Christian Campus House from the University of Missouri sent a team for their annual pre-Christmas visit to WISE. They painted the LONG verandah ceiling of the girls' dorm, cleared ditches, and removed old concrete post bottoms around campus. They always work hard, and are a delight to have every year. They were able to visit a number of beaches and see some sights around the island during their six-day stay. The group of six was quite a bit smaller than usual, but we appreciate their willingness to brave all the hassles of travel protocols to serve at WISE!



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## WISE HIGHLIGHTS

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- Kevin Hinds, a WISE graduate from a few years ago who lives in Antigua with his wife and new daughter, is helping WISE with recruitment in the Caribbean. While Covid is still around, travel is difficult and large gatherings in the islands are rare, but we anticipate Kevin being able to help us with enrollment by visiting various countries and talking to potential students. At present he is working to establish contacts and communicate by various virtual platforms.

Pearson Bend, one of our instructors, and his wife have been in England visiting family and friends over the holidays.

During the week between Christmas and New Year's, students are taking turns preparing a special meal for all of us from their home countries. The Haitians get the New Year's Day slot, as that is also their Independence Day.

Lucas and Mikayla Ness and family enjoyed a visit from Lucas' parents, who were here from Colorado for about a week in November.

Jeff and Jane Robertson attended the International Conference on Missions (ICOM) in November in Richmond, VA.

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## PRAYER REQUESTS

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- The new term of classes which begins January 3. Please pray for all our students and teachers.

The ongoing search for a new long-term director of WISE. We need the Lord to direct our steps in this all-important decision. Meanwhile, Jeff Robertson continues to serve as interim director, so please pray for him as well.

General elections in Barbados, which have just been called and are set for January 19. (Yes, it does happen that quickly!) Pray for this nation which serves as home to WISE.

## THANKSGIVING

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No, we don't have our holidays mixed up. But as always, it is a time of thanksgiving for all of our faithful WISE partners! We are blessed by your prayers and financial support for this ministry, which reaches throughout the Caribbean and beyond. God's provision through you has been truly amazing in 2021! So as this year ends and we look ahead to 2022, we say a great big **THANK YOU!**

May each of you experience a New Year filled with the peace, favor, and goodness of God!

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