

Groggs in Dominica

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12/04/2021

Volume 1 – Issue 16

Hard Holidays

Nothing's Normal Now

It's probably the biggest thing I wasn't looking forward to. Actually, I think dreading is a better word. I know we're not the only ones separated from family at the holidays. There are probably thousands, if not more, that are in that category. With a couple Thanksgivings and even more Christmas gatherings, we see a lot of our families during this time of year.

Knowing how much the holidays mean to our families I knew it was going to be tough. We did video chats with both sides on the days they celebrated, but it's not the same. Now that we're past Thanksgiving, the ache of being away from family ebbs a bit but it's overshadowed by the next and largest family gathering, Christmas.

The Bible talks about sacrifice when living for Him. He talks about forsaking all others. I wasn't prepared for how that would feel though. It's certainly one thing to acknowledge it in your head then try to get your heart to follow. There were tears shed on our part of the globe. And while no one back home said anything, I'm sure the ache was greatly felt there too.

We are encouraged by the new family and friends God has provided here. We still celebrated Thanksgiving and did so with a small family originally from Canada, that didn't get to celebrate the holiday back in October.

Scripture & the Gospel

An Empty Search

"Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved." How, then, can they call on the One they have not believed in? And how can they believe in One of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? And how can anyone preach unless they are sent? (Rom. 10:13-15a)

When the idea of moving out of the States first started forming, it was more along the lines of getting our kids out of a country that had turned its back on God. The more things developed, we saw God had other reasons, other plans for us. He paired us up with Feed My Sheep and we were looking forward to being able to help fix their building and see what we could do to help the physical needs, as well as the spiritual needs, of the Dominicans outside of the Mission.

We had read that Dominica was very God-centered. They have a national prayer that talks

PRAISE

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- Nathan's ringworm is gone (he says "Hi!") and Gracia's is going away too. It arose between the last newsletter and this.

- Jason has been given a couple odd jobs by our landlady.

PRAYER

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- Continue praying justice is done regarding the mother at FMS whose baby was taken away.

- Our own vehicle for work projects and family adventures.

- A local bank account

- A source (or sources) of income that still allows us to freely minister to Feed My Sheep and those around us.

Requests

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- If you'd be willing to donate toward a vehicle, or the shipping of two barrels our parents are sending for Christmas, please contact us.

about Jesus and their national anthem gives praise to God. The schools start each day with prayer as does each session of the government. The vehicles have religious phrases and wording on them and the people all nod their heads in agreement when we start talking about “God things.”

The longer we’ve been here though, the more we’re realizing that something really important is missing. We can’t find God’s Word.

Jason was invited to go on an outreach the other week with three or four pastors. They travel around each week to the villages that don’t have a church in them. They sing songs and tell feel good, moral stories. Jason kept waiting to hear Scripture reading, but he never heard it.

When we first arrived, the church we went to had no Scripture reading, for several weeks, until after Jason taught one Sunday. Since then, there has been much more reading of the Scripture.

Without a vehicle, we haven’t been able to visit other churches, thus, I can’t say Scripture is absent everywhere. However, by the actions of the pastors Jason heard, we’re starting to wonder. Where is God’s Word?

Before we left the US, I shrank away from the word “missionary.” I know, by its very definition, we’re all called to be missionaries, commanded to “go into all the world and preach the Gospel to all creation.” (Mark 16:15) I grew up having put Missionaries in the group of people who left

their homes and families for the sole purpose of reaching others for Christ. Missionaries weren’t people who just up and moved to have a change of culture or get jobs helping people fix things.

We are to be the Light of the world. No matter where we are, we must be about our Master’s business. Our time here may be short, and it may not. But He needs to find us faithful. God is making it more and more clear to us that He brought us here for more than just fixing people’s homes and buildings. We are to bring His Word back to these people. Jason believes it starts with reaching out to the pastors and Christians here, reminding them where Truth, daily instructions and most importantly, our Savior, is to be found. Scriptures must be opened and read!

There are many people here who can’t read, people who don’t have Bibles and those who aren’t reading what they do have. There are churches singing songs on Sunday and telling moral stories with nothing being heard from God’s Word. People are going to hell while thinking that just believing in God will be enough.

These thoughts, regarding reaching the pastors and Christians on this island, are overwhelming, let alone those unsaved. I was reminded of Luke 10:2 where Jesus told his disciples “the harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few.” So we are asking the Lord of the harvest, to send out workers into his field. We are asking Him to send us help.

Dominica Waking Up *The Rise of Feminism*

I was invited by a friend to a tea party a while back. Rather an odd thing, I thought, a fancy tea party in Dominica? Just for fun? An opportunity to get out and meet new ladies perhaps?

Unbeknownst to me, this tea party had a purpose and it wasn’t Godly. This group of women was hand-picked business women, entrepreneurs and others of influence. What started off as a gathering to “network,” quickly turned into a male-bashing event. The cries of feminists calling “unfair” and “unequal treatment” rang loud and clear. These women’s disgust with men in the workplace was very clear.

It was eye opening for me to see and hear the direction these women want to go. I felt as though I was sitting in on a meeting that probably happened many years ago all over the United States and my mind vividly recalled where that has led us.

Dominica desperately wants to be like the larger, more developed countries. What they don’t understand are the sacrifices that will come along with it. We’re praying that we’ll be able to gather the pastors on this island, to encourage them to speak God’s Word, the Truth, and bring the people of Dominica into a relationship with their Creator.

Jesus is King!

Until next time,
the *Groggs*

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12/23/2021

Volume 1 – Issue 17

His Plan, His Time We Trust, We Wait

This has been a somewhat difficult letter to write, with all the prayer requests and updates that have gone out prior, I've struggled with what to put in and what details to leave out. While wanting you all to know everything that happened week before last, wanting to extend grace where needed, knowing love covers a multitude of sins, I feel the need to be careful. Where forgiveness has happened, sharing more would be akin to gossip at this point.

What you need to know, is that our God is good! His timing is perfect, He provides for all our needs, in His time. He chooses our paths and the steps we take. He desires for us to trust Him more and more.

For those that didn't get the prayer request and subsequent updates, I will give you a very brief synopsis with more details regarding the people blessings that arose from our near "crisis."

Tuesday the 14th, we were to move into a house in Belfast (a neighborhood within Mahaut) that we'd started calling the Holland House. This, due to the fact that the owner had lived close to 30 years there and had just returned to Dominica in July. Now, she was going back again for a six-month visit.

What we thought was a settled agreement, wasn't thought of in that way with the owner. There was a miscommunication between us, leading to fear on her part. Instead of bringing her concerns to us, she decided to nix the agreement, without telling us. We had to find out through a relative, whom thankfully, we had number for.

We spent the rest of that day trying to figure out what to do. We had to be out of our rental by Thursday the 16th. New people were moving in Saturday the 18th, so staying there longer wasn't an option. Deborah immediately called her people and a search for another rental went into full swing. An earlier one we'd looked at was still available, bringing me relief that we had a "safety net." After double checking though, we discovered they'd doubled their monthly price, making it unaffordable. A couple others were found but were either too expensive or too far away from Mahaut. I was starting to feel more anxious than I already was. Deep breaths (more like large sighs?) escaped me often. Back to God's Word and His promises I went. This was my rollercoaster for a couple days.

Wednesday the 15th seemed to add insult to injury. The car rental place we use said there'd be a truck ready by 9 am, there wasn't. Sometime after lunch, Deborah had her friend Nick

come and take most of our belongings down to the Mission. Thursday dawned and still no place to live and no vehicle to move our things. We had to be out this day. Soon, Deborah let us know she'd called a friend who lived alone in a six-bedroom house. She'd agreed to let us stay with her for however long was needed, for little rent. Nick came again, taking us and the rest of our items to the Mission. We spent the day there, waiting to hear when to visit this elderly woman, while preparing ourselves to spend the night at the Mission.

Instead of just a visit though, Deborah suggested we pack an overnight bag in case the visit went well, we could just stay. We picked up pizza on the way to Mero, where Miss Editha Drew lives. Interestingly enough, the pizza was made by a couple from America who'd moved to Dominica 13 years ago. It was very delicious. The rest of that evening was spent getting to know Miss Editha and her story, complete with motions! She may be elderly but she is by no means old. This lady has gone through some pretty rough challenges during her life and had to fight for what she has. Even though her hands are now a little shaky, her fire is still roaring.

Friday, we caught a bus headed to Mahaut and I think

we got a tour of St. Joseph as he drove around picking people up. Once on the main road, the radio station started reading Scripture. It was wonderful and reminded us where our focus still needed to be. Once at the Mission, we worked on organizing Groggden and decided to go ahead and see if the truck was available yet. One was, so Jason took off to town and rented it. Miss Editha had warned us that it could be tricky to catch a bus back to her place after supper, especially with six of us. We ate supper at a new restaurant called INO. It was recommended to us by Deborah as it's a start-up by a church family. From there, we drove the crazy roads back to Miss Editha's and spent another evening at her place, watching Wheel of Fortune and chatting with her. She was born here but moved with her family to England as a young teen and came back to Dominica in 1999 to fulfill her dream of taking care of the elderly. Her six-bedroom house, at one time, was home to these people that she willingly cared for. However, with so many government restrictions in place in the recent years, she retired herself and has decided to sell so she can move closer to her children and grandchildren. We pray that God will richly bless this amazing lady.

Saturday, we again spent the day at the Mission. Not long after the events of Tuesday, Deborah started contacting the owner of the Holland House. Deborah also had lived in Holland for many years, so the two of them shared a past. They had a connection, even though just meeting a couple months

ago. Speaking Dutch, Deborah and the owner talked many times over the week. We were given updates until finally, we were told an agreement had been worked out and Deborah put the first month's rent into the house's account. The rental agreement was signed and we could move in!

Once more though, we ran into miscommunication. The person we thought had keys to the house didn't and the woman who did was at work and couldn't talk. We found ourselves waiting, again, and wondering if we'd need to call Miss Editha and request another night at her place. Shortly after 5:00pm, we got a call saying we could be to Holland House at 6:30 and receive the keys. By 7:00, they were being handed over, and with some chit chat, we found out one of the women there was a new Christian. Once she learned we were helping at the Mission, she started asking questions about how to know what God's will was. I (Jenn) gave her my number and let her know she could call anytime. Then I tell myself, if all had gone according to plan, I would have never met this woman. God cares so much for each person, maybe, just maybe, this is how He got us to meet. I don't know. I might never know and I don't need to, even though I want to.

As we are still moving in, organizing, finding out what the house needs to make certain things functional (like the hot water heater and AC units) and what we need to do to fight the overwhelming number of mosquitos and ants here, we're starting to look toward the

weekend, toward Christmas. We'd been keeping track of the barrels our parents shipped to us, barrels with not just food stuffs and clothes for the kids, but with Christmas gifts for us all. Tracking says they are now going to be about a week late. Deborah was going to have us put up her 7-foot-tall Christmas tree here but with how things went, that's probably not going to happen. On the bright side, the house was already a bit decorated for Christmas and we're tackling advent again. For once, we're not behind. 😊

Thank you all, again, for your prayers! We not only felt them, but saw them being heard and answered.

Jesus is King!

Until next time,
the *Groggs*

**Merry
Christmas!**

