

Groggs in Dominica

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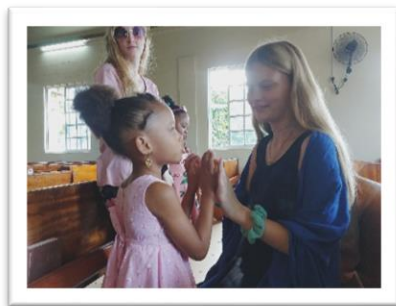
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Church Fellowship *A Deep Longing*

We've been to three different churches now, not including our attempt at creating a home church. I thought once we got here we'd find a church to plug into and that part of life would go on "as normal." We'd have a church family, a support system with friends while continuing to grow and learn more about God and His Word.

It's hard to overcome barriers when they seem to be everywhere. First, there are the covid mandates so there are some churches that still aren't open, some that limit their attendance in accordance with the government, there's mask and registry requirements as well (for contact tracing).

If you find a church that's open and not doing all the mandates, you then have to wonder if you'll hear Scripture, or just moral stories. If there is actual teaching, then you must listen closely to make sure what is being taught lines up with Scripture. If it doesn't seem to, you then have to find out if this is actual error or a cultural misunderstanding. Pastor says one thing to the church, you clarify in a private



meeting and what he says there, to you, agrees with Scripture.

One wonders though, what the point of going is if you don't learn anything new and have to clarify almost everything the Pastor says once he's done. Your children are confused and start to wonder if they can teach the sermon better and more clearly. Yet, all the questions prove they were actually listening, and we've had some really good talking points.

Then you find what might be a good fit, with songs being sung that you all know (actual hymns!), theological preaching that all lines up with Scripture, no need to clarify anything. There's no emotional hype or yelling women. Several families attend (with the fathers).

This last church is Olivet First Baptist in Portsmouth. Our first visit was last Sunday with Jason as a guest speaker. We came for Sunday School as well and heard the Pastor teach the Scriptures referring back to the original texts and the meanings of words before they were translated into English.

While this church was a fresh of breath air, you can tell the people are still in fear of covid and the government. And

... PRAISE ...

- Jason's Basic Carpentry class finished their first project. Lidded boxes!



- Jason's had a handful of odd jobs to help pay bills.

- We were granted a three-month extension for our stay here (to the tune of \$500EC). We've been here for SIX months!

... PRAYER ...

- Parts of our Work Permit application have been turned in. Please pray for all this paperwork to flow smoothly and be accepted.

- Our own vehicle for work projects and family adventures.

- We have three months left at our current rental and still don't have any leads on where to go next.

- A source of income that still allows us to freely minister.

while this church is the one we'd like to go back to, it's a 50

minute drive from Mahaut, buses don't normally run on Sundays and our rental truck will be returned soon.

Transportation

A Vehicle of our Own

Vehicles, or transports as they're called down here, aren't a necessity of life for Dominicans. Buses really are everywhere and run almost 24 hours a day. Sundays and holidays are an exception.

For the average worker, this isn't a big deal. When you're talking about needing to take tools to and from your work, it's something else entirely. When you need to buy supplies such as timber, you'd better have a friend with a truck or have your own.

That brings us back to our predicament. I'll be transparent here, our move cost us greatly in the financial area. Jason not having full-time employment has depleted what little we had, so once we started looking for a vehicle, we didn't have the means to buy, even though there were a couple that looked decent. Now that Jason's dipped into his retirement funds a bit, there are no local used trucks...at all.

Buying from overseas is relatively common here, and there are plenty of choices. But once your vehicle arrives at the port, you're faced with a tariff that's over 100% the cost of it. So, we wait and pray and try not to be frustrated.

Employment

Every Little Bit Helps

So far, Jason helped our neighbor with his house when

we were back on Campbell Road, made benches and miscellaneous items for a sauna, minor repair jobs on our first landlady's rentals plus installing all new locks for her and building a bedframe for an acquaintance. This doesn't take into account all the projects he's done and is still doing on our current rental.

His current project is helping a German couple after their contractor walked out on them. Jason and Hannah have been going every day they can to work on his veranda all the while teaching him what he needs to know to continue working on his house.



This project leads us back to our lack of a transport. To be able for Jason to do this job, he has to have a vehicle, so we've been renting a pick up for the past three weeks. While we might come out even on the cost, it does get Jason's name and reputation out there for future jobs.

Silver Linings of Life

The Bright Spots Matter

Jason wrote an article for the local paper that probably won't ever be published. He's been handing out copies though and one woman has been using it to talk to those that come to her food stand. The article is about the four God-ordained

governments; self, family, church and civil.

At the opposite end of our street is a wonderful man named Francis. He often brings us fresh fruit with tips on how to use them and bread nuts his sister boils. He has also shown us a house next to him that's for sale and just overall made us feel very welcome in Belfast.

Two weeks ago we took a trip to the home of one of Jason's students. His mom lives alone



with him and his little sister. She's been building her house bit by bit and has had no front door. Jason built the bottom half for her and later we'll go back and build the top half.

The other week Jason took Nathan to a plant nursery he's been wanting to check out. Nathan found a flower there he wanted to "buy" for me. So now I have a beautiful Plumbago shrub to plant where ever we end up.



Jesus is King!

Until next time,
the Groggs