



## ACE IS 30!

It's true! American Caribbean Experience is thirty years old this year! For some of us, that's a scary thought – when the ministry grows up, the founder grows older. Regardless of the aging process, life is very good for all of the hard workers God has used to get us to this point. We hope

that the passing years have produced wisdom in understanding God's heart so we can continue to meet the needs of the Jamaican community He has assigned us to serve.

We've said this many times before, but turning thirty reminds all of us that ACE only works well in meeting the spiritual, physical and mental needs of the many when volunteers are committed to long-term

investment. As a ministry called to help in a developing country like Jamaica, we are very aware how God has used our U.S. and Canadian volunteers to assist us in work where we need the help most – working alongside our National families. Your time and support have sustained us for decades, and we thank you!

It's going to be a fantastic year! ACE is celebrating with a big event in the U.S. (more to come)! We will see the beginning of some long-awaited programs that have been announced in the past and are now coming into play. We have new faces, new talent, and the same great attitude our staff and friends have had for these thirty years, so celebrate with us! When a wonderful ACE memory comes to mind, share it with us on Facebook, Instagram or Twitter. We would love to hear from you!

Thirty years doesn't sound that old – we think we are good for another thirty! And we hope you'll stay along for the ride!

Feeling younger everyday – *Marla and Allen*



## KATIE'S KORNER

The infirmary has always been one of my favorite ways that ACE is able to minister to the forgotten. We are there as a staff every week and are able to

build relationships with the residents. Many of them aren't able to communicate clearly, but we find our ways. One of the residents that I have

gotten close with is Cassandra. She is one of the bedridden residents that can't really speak clearly and doesn't seem to have mentally developed completely. Nevertheless, I always share a smile with her and help her with the soup and water that we serve each week. She has started to call me Mummy, and I'm learning different ways that I can communicate with and understand her.

Over New Year's, we had a team here to put on a music, dance and art camp for the local students while they were on holiday from school. The infirmary residents always seem to liven up when music comes to the infirmary, so we didn't miss a chance to bring some guitars and drums while we were serving at the infirmary. When the musicians arrived to the women's ward, I was helping one of our

volunteers serve Cassandra. As we were listening to them sing for another resident, Cassandra began to say Hallelujah. I smiled and asked the guys if they knew Hallelujah? They did, and so did Cassandra. She wasn't so familiar with the verse, but once we got to the chorus she was singing along... Hallelujah, Hallelujah, Hallelujah!

I was moved to tears and had to walk away for a minute. Looking back at the lyrics now, I'm struck by this line: "I've seen joy and I've seen pain. On my knees, I call your name. Here's my broken

hallelujah." Truer words cannot be said for Cassandra and for the rest of the residents at the infirmary. These are people who have seen terrible pain and they continue to experience it, and yet there they are bringing joy to myself and hundreds of others.

I will never forget hearing Cassandra singing the chorus for us that day. Needless to say, she still calls me Mummy... and sometimes she calls me Hallelujah.



## WE WENT OUT WITH A BANG!

We can dance, we can play, we can sing... so the

storyline goes! With a very successful Christmas party and art camp, ACE finished the year with a bang in Jamaica.

Last year, if you remember, Sondra from First Christian Church from Stillwater brought her team of young adults to Jamaica and launched the first ART camp for students on school break. It went so well that we had to do it again. This time, however, we had another longtime friend of ACE add her team to the mix – Tina and her students from Rebel Ministries. From Art Camp to the Christmas party, we were

absolutely in awe as both leaders and teams came together to give our sponsored and non-sponsored students a great week of fun.

Speaking of the Christmas party, ACE tried something this year that wasn't exactly a spiritual part of ACE – Santa Claus! Here is where middle-class American thinking met Jamaican traditions. When our sponsored students walked in and saw this brown-skinned man with a white beard in a red suit sitting by their presents, hesitation grabbed them. They stood and stared, wondering who this person was and what was he doing at their party.

While the experience went well, we quickly learned that Christmas without Santa will do just fine next year. Let's keep the reason for the season and not add to the story. It was another learning moment for ACE and our volunteers, and, ultimately, a good time was had by all! Thank you, Child Sponsors, for sending your love. Perhaps you can come down sometime and enjoy the moments you create for your students and us with your support!

## ANSWERED PRAYERS & PRAYER REQUESTS

**ANSWERED PRAYER** Although we have sustained heavy damage to our farm crops, the heavy downpours of rain have finally subsided.

**PRAYER REQUEST** Pray that our beans will be ready to can when our canning crew comes next month.

**ANSWERED PRAYER** We are so excited to announce that we have had a generous donation of two new Dental Chairs, currently being shipped from New York. We will now be able to do a lot more than just pull teeth!

**PRAYER REQUEST** We ask for favor with Customs, and that our paperwork with the Friendly Society will be approved.

**ANSWERED PRAYER** Allen and Marla were able to travel to Texas this month to meet with new friends, and renew some old friendships that have been with ACE throughout the years. It was a great trip!

**PRAYER REQUEST** Pray that we will close on the Campus in February. God is moving the court system along so we can have clear title.

**PRAYER REQUEST** Due to the heavy rains, we have seen the land eroding and slipping away for many of our child sponsorship families and friends in St. Mary. Some have lost their entire home, and are currently living in churches. Our own Lorna has sustained a lot of damage. Please pray the earth will not move anymore, otherwise, Lorna will lose her chicken business and is trying to find a place to move as we speak.



Please send all checks to:

P.O. Box 566263, Atlanta, GA 31156

Please make a note in your records for all future payments, and pass this on to anyone who may assist in your financial operations, since addresses may come up automatically in accounting and banking software.

We sincerely apologize for any inconvenience, and we, as always, appreciate your continued support of ACE.

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