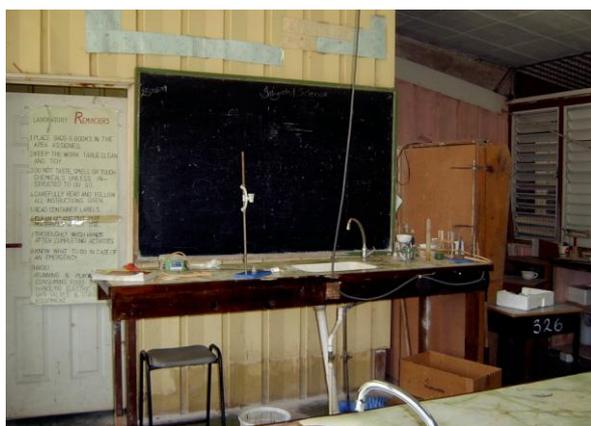


Andy Dye's Prayer Letter from Grenada April 2010

andrewldyeuk@yahoo.co.uk

Methodist Church Office, Lucas Street, St. Georges, Grenada

My first Easter in Grenada was filled with holy week services, listening to the buzz of kites, sports, school and discovering a bit more of Grenada. In the church here, there was a service each night of holy week which I found to be a great preparation and way of thinking more about the events of the week. We also had a big fun sports day at Church on the bank holiday Monday. There were all kinds of sports and it was hard work playing football in the sunshine. I was umpire for a cricket match, which proved very controversial when I gave the final wicket out as the batsman played on to her stumps. It was at that moment when I realised why everyone else had avoided the job of umpiring in a place where everyone is very passionate about their cricket! During the Easter break, I also managed to see a bit more of the island, its rainforest and the coral reefs and I got a nice surprise when I encountered monkeys in the national park!



The school was still active during Easter, some teachers and students were working with extra classes going on. I was helping to sort out a brand new science lab at Wesley College. The new school lab was funded by a grant from the World Bank and has enabled a complete re-building and re-stocking of the one lab. Apart from one block, most of the approximately 450 students of Wesley College are schooled in class rooms made from corrugated iron

separated by movable screens. So to have a newly fitted out lab, built with solid walls is a great improvement on the broken down old lab. (Hopefully, you can tell which is before which is after, in the pictures!) Of course more desirable would be a whole newly built school, but that seems a long way off, and at least this is going in the right direction.

The re-stocking of the lab was also a lesson to me in how people on the ground need to be involved in decision making. All of the stock for the new lab was ordered in detail by someone without any consultation of the teachers at the school. As an example, one consequence of this is that the school now has a massive volume of wonderful A-level quality chemistry glassware, when it teaches very few pupils that will need this, yet there is none of the sodium metal that was promised, which can add a nice spark to a lesson. When I asked one of the senior teachers about this she said, 'This always happens, we just store it all away and use what we need.'



I read a lot this month about something that affected the whole of the UK, no not the election, the volcano! Flights in to and out of Britain were stopped and people were stranded as far away as, well, the Caribbean! This was because they could not fly through the ash. So just where was the volcano? England? Scotland? No it was Iceland, some distance away. Just recently, we had lots of hazy weather. It meant that you could not see a long way and it was like looking through mist. But then someone explained to me that the haze was caused by fine sand blown all the way from the Sahara desert. That is all the way across the Atlantic Ocean, 4000 miles away. It's amazing, although we think of our world as very big; things that happen in one part can so easily affect another, like with the ash from Iceland or the sand from the Sahara. These events are natural ones but it is a good reminder to us to treat our environment and planet with care because what we do can have an impact not only on ourselves but people in countries far away.

Just three weeks after Easter, it was harvest festival in the Methodist church here. It felt a bit strange so soon after Easter, but here in Grenada things grow all year round so harvest is all the time. At the harvest festival, people brought along lots of different fruits and Vegetables, decorated the church and then it was all sold off. It was great to see all of the different produce and I have managed to try sugar cane, wax apples and make a purchase of cocoa pods. Cocoa pods are brownish-yellow fruits that are about 30cm long. Inside, they contain a white pulp and inside all of this are cocoa beans. These beans were used by the ancient Inca civilizations to make a 'drink of the Gods', and of course we make chocolate. I have taken the advice of people in my congregation and am in the process of getting the cocoa beans. I will inform you of my success, or otherwise. Actually, one of the main things that occurred to me at harvest was the nature of the hymns sung. Many of the harvest hymns seemed to belong to another time and place. Hymns like, 'We plough the fields and scatter', although very relevant in their sentiment, have some lines which just do not seem to work in Grenada. Does it make sense to sing about 'snow in winter', in a place where it does not snow and there is no winter?

Prayer points:

- Give thanks for the new science lab at school; pray that the students and teachers may be able to get the best use out of this new resource.
- Pray for the final year school pupils as they head in to their exam period.
- Continue to pray for Haiti, give thanks for the work that is going on through various agencies and pray for the work of the Church.
- Pray for the Methodist Church in Grenada as it seeks to address the needs of people in the village and town communities in a relevant way.

Please feel free to drop me an e-mail at the address above.

God bless,
Andy