

## Greetings from Belize.

Yes, I'm back here in Belize after my 3 month furlough in England. It was lovely to see so many friends, and family of course, as well as meeting new people, all around the country. I really enjoyed visiting the new, as well as the familiar places, and thanks for making me so welcome where ever I went. I truly appreciate all the prayers and support shown for the work here in Belize. I'm just sorry I didn't have time to see everyone I wanted to! But I'm sure that more people now know about Belize and what is going on here.

I returned to Belize in mid October, so as I write this I have been back exactly 4 weeks; and it already feels like I was never away! I can't believe how quickly my diary has filled up, with meetings, activities and funding deadlines - well it's that time of the year here!

One of the meetings I attended was with the principal of the school where we are planning a new school building (Wesley Upper), Mr Rudolph Conoquie, and the Methodist Schools General Manager, Ms Pat Bennett, to decide on a plan of action for the development work. This is to alleviate the serious over-crowding at one of the schools, as well as to provide space for technical subject teaching, which we hope will help to address the problem of school dropout - especially amongst our boys. A formal proposal has been drafted to go to the Belize Ministry of Education, laying out our plans, and asking for assistance, and Pat will be meeting with the Education Minister next week about this and other issues. Please keep praying that we receive a favourable response, and secure government funding to assist with the project.

The proposal will also go to our District level 'November Committees' for approval as a district project, which will also enable us to ask for assistance through mission work and teams from the United Methodist Church in the States.

Talking about Mission teams - that's what I have spent some time working on this week. We had 2 people from N. Carolina here on a 'pre-visit', setting up accommodation, meeting project managers and working out what they will be doing and what they need to bring with them; they will be bringing a team of 20 people here in early Feb for 2 weeks, to work on the new Belama Church - they hope to put the roof on while they are here - and the almost completed teachers house at one of our rural school, not far out of Belize. Then I had another call from Kentucky today, about 2 more teams coming in March and June. So already it looks like we will have many more teams visiting us next year than we had this year, which is great news. We have plenty of projects here for them to assist with.

One event I have attended was a song competition organised by Youth Enhancement Services; competitors had to write original lyrics on the theme 'My future is not for sale' to raise awareness of the sexual exploitation and trafficking issues. All 5 finalists' songs were really good, and they will all be participating in a parade through Belize City, along with high-school pupils and other supporters at the end of this month. Then I was asked to be a judge

Maggie Patchett

Mission Partner serving in the Belize / Honduras District of the Methodist Church in the Caribbean and the Americas (MCCA)

Email [mpatchett@gmail.com](mailto:mpatchett@gmail.com)

tel (501) 223 2610

Cell (501) 628 8004

John and Charles Wesley Centre

75 Albert St, P O Box 212

Belize City, Belize, Central America

(don't ask why!) at Wesley College for their 'form room' competition during their 'Red Ribbon Week' promoting a 'drug free' school.

I've also attended several Harvest Thanksgiving Services since my return. Our school children are involved in these, bringing their gifts and 'marching up' in church - along with all the church groups - so as you can imagine these are long



services, but our churches are packed! At Ebenezer, as at many churches, there are actually 3 Harvest services; in the morning it's for the boys, the afternoon for the girls, and the evening for all the church groups.

My favourite harvest hymn is now "We plough the fields.." but here are the words we use in Belize...

We plough the fields and scatter the good seed on the land  
But it is fed and watered by God's almighty hand  
The onions and tomatoes, the lemons, limes and cane  
Cassava and potatoes and all the sweet corn grain.

*Praise Him all ye people with harvest hymns of joy  
O give to God His mead of praise, and love without alloy.*

He is the great creator of all that here one sees;  
Bananas, cabbage, pumpkins, pineapple, salt and peas;  
The waters here are teeming with scale fish, conchs and all;  
To God our sole provider, we on our knees should fall.

For sea and sand and sunshine, our God has been so kind  
He gave us them for living and they are truly fine.  
The tourists come to find them; in turn we all are fed;  
Our daily bread and butter by Him is there outspread.

We thank the then O Father for all things bright and good,  
The crawfish in its season, the straw work and the wood.  
Accept the gifts we offer for all thy love imparts  
And what thou most desirest, our humble thankful hearts.

With love and prayers,

*Maggie Patchett*



Maggie Patchett

Mission Partner serving in the Belize / Honduras District of the Methodist Church in the Caribbean and the Americas (MCCA)  
Email [mpatchett@gmail.com](mailto:mpatchett@gmail.com)  
tel (501) 223 2610  
Cell (501) 628 8004

John and Charles Wesley Centre  
75 Albert St, P O Box 212  
Belize City, Belize, Central America