



2023 Year in Review



Caribbean Christian Center for the Deaf (CCCD)– Briggs and Bloemendaal

A glimpse at what your support made possible:

Testimony from a team member who went for a weeklong trip:

“This past week, I had the opportunity to visit the Jamaica Deaf Village with this team! The work that God is doing through CCCD to empower the deaf community in Jamaica and further spread the gospel is so incredible and worth sharing. God did some wild things to get me to go on this trip. I got to meet and work alongside some pretty incredible people this past week, and I’m so thankful to have had the opportunity and hope to have it again someday! The second day in Jamaica at JDV, we got to go to church and hear a wonderful message from their pastor!



We had a Q&A information session about CCCD, which was so fascinating to hear more about their heart and the mission the Lord has sent them out to accomplish. This day was a lot about fellowship, as well. We spent time with the people there playing games and making new friends.

I’m always a bit shy when meeting new people, but when I also don’t speak their language, it can be extra intimidating for me. But when the people you’re meeting are full of joy and kindness and laughter, it makes it easier. I enjoyed all of the moments of learning, of playing games, and of making connections! I’m so thankful for the time I got to spend there and for all of the people I got to meet there!”

-Hayley Wilson (Faith Promise Team)



Testimony from a student:

"My life here at CCCD has been transformed in a positive way. Being away from home, I have learned to be responsible for myself and how to care for my personal things. I spend most of my time at school studying and staying focused. School is so much more fun than when I am at home. I talk all the time with my friends. We play football and video games together. I enjoy laughing and talking about different stories in the dorm. I thank God that my teachers are so good to us. They always put a smile on our faces. I also love to go to church and to learn more about God. I am happy to be here at my school. The staff teach me everything I need to know about life and my future."

-Kenardo Parkes (Knockpatrick Student)



Please Pray

- We would love prayers for impactful team trips down to Jamaica. That teams would be open to learning, growing, and creating relationships with students and staff at CCCD in Jamaica.
- We would also love to pray specifically that we can increase our number of student sponsors. Our prayer is that through impactful trips, conversations, and prayer, people would feel called to sponsor a student at CCCD.



Staff Jamaica Day

Personal Update from Chris and Ren Briggs

For our family, 2023 was the return to normalcy followed by the completely unexpected. Over the previous 18 months, Ren and Caitlin had spent two extended times in the U.S. visiting a variety of doctors and specialists to get to the bottom of Caitlin's chronic fatigue, pain, heart, and vision issues. By the time we were all back in Jamaica in the fall, we felt like we had some answers—even if those answers meant that this would be a life-long condition for Caitlin.

As we settled into 2023, things finally started to feel normal again. We were set to host 23 LIFE teams (our international ministry groups) which was almost back to our pre-COVID numbers of 25-28 per year.

Our Deaf church was meeting in person again regularly, and we were also engaging with a hearing church in Mandeville that was interpreting services and looking for ways to engage the Deaf community that had been attending there at a deeper and more personal level.

The various industries and agricultural endeavors at JDV (Jamaica Deaf Village) were all growing, and we were looking for opportunities to train and employ other Deaf individuals who had been reaching out to us for employment.

During some of our “break” weeks, we were looking for windows of opportunity to re-engage our transitional training program with the residents at JDV, but being somewhat short-staffed and everything firing on all cylinders, it occasionally felt like little more than controlled chaos (but good chaos).

Mid-way through 2022, we had been granted an extension on our visas that would allow us to stay until January of 2025, but we knew it was time to start exploring the longer-term option of permanent residency because this was the only way that Caitlin would be allowed to stay beyond 2025. We started having those discussions with immigration in April and May and this is when things started to change direction.

In May, Caitlin shared with Ren that she was having more frequent and more intense symptoms with her mental illness as well as some new symptoms that she had never experienced before. After doing some research and talking with both her counselor and her psychiatrist, we concluded that this was not something we could address in Jamaica—at least in the short term. After additional conversations with our directors in Jamaica, at the U.S. office, and with our RCA supervisor, we came to the mutual conclusion that this would be a good opportunity for a home assignment year.

Ren and Caitlin returned to the U.S. in mid-August, and I (Chris) came back towards the end of September after finishing up the summer portion of our LIFE team schedule. Caitlin was able to immediately start counseling again as well as see her psychiatrist to see if any of her medications needed to be modified to help stabilize her condition.

Caitlin has also been able to start doing some part-time work, which she has been desperate to do for the last year or so as well as find some social outlets that just have not been accessible in Jamaica. Ren and I have seen some real growth in Caitlin over the last few months and trust that there will be even more in the coming months.

We were all happy to be able to return to Jamaica for the end of the year to be with the Deaf community and a few of the LIFE teams that we have grown close to over the past six years. Ren and Caitlin returned to the U.S. in mid-January so Caitlin could continue with her counseling and I will be returning in mid-February. 2023 didn’t finish on the same trajectory that it started, but we have all felt the love and support of our faith community both here in Jamaica and in the United States, and we feel God’s hand of protection over us during this time of change.

We are looking forward to continuing to serve CCCD both in Jamaica and the U.S. during 2024 and ask that you would continue to lift up both our family and our ministry.



Baptism



Christmas and newborn twins on the island.

Prayer Requests:

Caitlin:

- Pray that counseling will help bring stability and understanding of her mental health. Pray these resources will help her figure out how to manage/control her symptoms as best as possible.
- Pray for work and social opportunities that have not been available to her in Jamaica.
- Pray for the ability to check off some of the teenage milestones—graduation, driver's license, etc.

Ren:

- Pray she finds some time to rest and be encouraged.
- Pray for opportunities for work and ministry while we are in the USA.

Chris:

- Pray for trusting that he has equipped others to manage things well while he is away and that his time back on the island will be joyful and fulfilling rather than overwhelming and anxious.
- Pray that he may use this time when he is not as accessible to everyone else to focus more attention on Ren and Caitlin.