

## Barbados Seeks the High-Noon Standard

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*Arbor Day*

Being only a hundred and sixty six square miles (415 sq. kilometers) in size, Barbados is a small island in the Caribbean with a population of 270,000. Primarily a people of African descent, over time, as others have made it their home, diverse races have helped make a wonderful blend of various cultures. Our main industries are tourism and sugar farming.

Our FFWPU headquarters is located on the southeastern side of the country. We have approximately fifty members, mainly young people, in our second generation. We have two centers set up in the homes of two blessed couples. I am the national leader and my wife, Jacqueline Kennedy-Durant, is the deputy national leader.

We gave Gary and Gail Veith, returning members, responsibility as community leaders for the southwestern part of the island. Over the years, we have had five national leaders, and many missionaries as well as International One World Crusade (IOWC) visitors.

Inspired by the arrival of the first

Unificationists in 1975, from Japan, Germany, and America, young men and women accepted the Unification Church teachings. Soon a steady growth in membership occurred as these foreigners spread their message and beliefs across this little island. Unfortunately, many people who joined then did not stay very long, as fears of the unknown overwhelmed them at that time.

Yet the sun setting in the far distance beneath the Atlantic Ocean's horizon, as night approached, could not prevent the new recruits from laboring in their pursuit to win souls day after day. Lightening flashed and the thunder roared. However, without fear, they traversed our communities teaching the word in spite of the persecution and rejection from the prominent churches. The determined members continued with greater zeal to preserve the quality, the standard and the traditions of the organizations, especially during turbulent times.

### A strong island



*Our Barbados church celebrates its 40th anniversary*

We have embarked on a weekly lecture program, and we have introduced a midweek service. Home churches have been set up throughout the country in three locations and we conduct Sunday services at varying times. We participate in interfaith gatherings at which much debate and interfaith dialogue occurs. Some small churches invite us on special occasions for fellowship.

Additional seminars are held on conflict resolution, anger management, bullying and true family values. There is a youth gathering

at one home center on Fridays, bringing together young people of other faiths as they share their beliefs and expound on challenging matters facing them as young people and that are affecting the wider society.

We have introduced new measures as we seek innovative ways to increase church membership. I have given some people specific responsibilities, especially in an outreach forum we are part of. We have established community leaders and have identified prospective young leaders.

We utilize music and dance along with poetry and crafts to attract young people.

The younger people coordinate projects to raise funds and they carry them out, which affords some opportunities for them to visit engage in activities such as undersea exploration or to gaze into the galaxies.

### Inner-community projects



*The Barbados FFWPU community*

On May 17, 2015, Barbados commemorated the fortieth anniversary since the arrival of the first missionaries to its shore with an interfaith service at the Long Bay headquarters.

We collaborated with other organizations to celebrate the International Day of Peace and we planted trees at a school for Arbor Day.

FFWPU is closely working with the Hindu community as we seek unity between our two faiths. The local arm of the Universal Peace Federation (the Barbados National Peace

Council) works closely with many NGOs and certain figures in our national parliament with whom we have a good relationship in finding solutions to many problems on the island.

The drug trade has become prevalent. Many of our youth have gone headlong into this dangerous practice, which has led to many crimes, shootings, stabbings, robberies, vandalism and murders.

These things have led to an increase of promiscuity, especially expanding prostituting. The legalizing of same sex marriage, in America especially has a very strong effect on the island. Therefore, proponents of what used to be closeted behavior are highlighting and promoting it, giving FFWPU and UPF additional headaches in working with youth.



*UPF Barbados donated money to the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry*

The worldwide economic downturn has strenuously influenced our youths' thinking as they struggle with stark realities. Nonetheless, we are determined to educate our youth on the fundamental principles of one heart, one love, one people, one God, and one family under God.

In the final month of this year, we will be having a Blessing Ceremony in conjunction with the practices of FFWPU as well as having married couple renew their marriage vows under the auspices of FFWPU. Therefore, we are on a promotional journey, sending out flyers

and using whatever medium we can to spread this message of blessings. Our main Korean leader, and the national messiah and his wife will be joining us as they take responsibility for the Blessing Ceremony. We are hoping as well to be graced with a visit from our regional president on this our special occasion on December 13. This date was chosen by the Korea national messiah to commemorate the tenth anniversary of the only Visit of our True Parents to Barbados during their 120-day world tour fifteen years ago.

The goals for Barbados over the next five years are to have bi-yearly Blessing Ceremonies and to teach people the fundamentals of FFWPU. We will grow in membership and instill absolute love, faith and obedience in the minds and heart of our people, while living a high noon standard as an exemplary nation in the region. Barbados home to cricket, calypso and renown cuisine, is a big-hearted island even though small in size.