

Dear Concord,

On behalf of Barfield Baptist Church, we would like to thank you for your support on our recent mission trip to St. Kitts. This was Barfield Baptist's first ever mission trip out of the country and it was an experience we will never forget.

Varetta, a native of St. Kitts and one of our mission team members, introduced us to this opportunity through the sharing of her testimony. She shared with us that most foreigners who come to St. Kitts, come on vacation and spend all of their time on a small portion of the island which focuses on tourist attractions. Few venture 20 minutes out into the local communities to see the day to day life of the native families there. If they did, poverty, violence, and drugs are some of the challenges they would see. Varetta grew up in and around many of these challenges, however, it was through a church group who came not on vacation but on mission, and who invested not in tourist attractions but in the lives of the local children, that she came to know Christ for the first time. In hearing her testimony, the Holy Spirit stirred up a passion in us for the people of St. Kitts. Our trip was in the planning stages shortly after.

The first time we drove through the communities of St. Kitts, we immediately recognized the lack of comforts that we were used to seeing at home. Most homes were cinderblock and had no air conditioning. They were open to the outside so the breeze could cool them off during the heat of the day. Houses were close together and only feet away from the street. The road was barely wide enough for two-way traffic but people parked along it anyway as they had no driveways or garages to park their cars in. This created the need to weave in and around cars parked on the curb while being careful not to hit other cars doing the same thing coming the opposite direction. Many children walked along the road as cars sped by, at times seemingly missing them by inches. Many of these children were barefoot because they didn't have shoes to wear. We saw 9 year olds pushing their baby siblings down the street without adult supervision. Varetta confirmed that because of St. Kitt's lack of child care options children are often raised to fend for themselves as their parents are at work. On the surface, it would seem the people of St. Kitts have so much to be angry and bitter about. However, in reality, they are some of the most gracious and kind people you will ever meet.

We were blessed to have the opportunity to share home cooked meals with them in their homes. We were blessed to be able to meet them on the court and play some friendly games of basketball. We were blessed to have the opportunity to get to know and love them, but most of all, we were blessed to witness God move throughout the local church, throughout their communities, and throughout our lives as well.

While there, we ran VBS in a backyard Bible school format with worship rally, Bible study, music, snack, rec, craft, and track time rotations. In this time, we had the opportunity to pour into the lives of 111 children from 3 to 20 years old. An invitation was presented each day during Bible study and we saw 17 decisions made throughout the course of the program.

We also helped run a sports tournament two evenings in the week where we had 30-40 participants per night. Halfway through the tournament, the gospel would be preached and an invitation given. God used this ministry to touch 14 more souls.

In all, 31 salvation decisions were made during our time in St. Kitts. God was certainly transforming lives and our mission team had countless conversations on how we had grown in our relationship with God as well.

This trip was one that we will never forget. Although this was the first mission trip we, as a church, have taken out of country, the relationships we have formed will provide us with an opportunity to make return trips as well. You are a huge part of that.

Thank you again for your support. Your willingness to enable groups like us to share the Gospel locally and around the world is a true blessing.

Thank you and God bless!

The BBC St. Kitts Mission Team