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**ENCYCLOPEDIA OF RELIGIOUS GROUPS IN  
LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN:  
RELIGION IN JAMAICA**

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# Religion in Jamaica

## Country Overview

Jamaica is a small island in the Caribbean Sea, located south of Cuba and west of Haiti. It is an island of astonishing natural beauty. Although Jamaica is only 150 miles long by less than 50 miles wide, the island is a continent in miniature. It has wide stretches of alluvial plains, interior tablelands, and mountains that peak at 7,402 feet.

The spectacular Blue Mountain range, which is shrouded almost perpetually by mists that give the mountains their bluish color, stretches across the eastern portion of the island for a length of 28 miles with an average width of about 12 miles. The mountains rise so steeply that it is possible to drive from the coastal plains to an elevation of over 7,000 feet in less than an hour. The slopes of the Blue Mountains receive more than 300 inches of rain each year, which provides sufficient water to meet the needs of about half of Jamaica's population. The 194,000 acre Blue Mountain and John Crow Mountain National Park was established in 1992 to preserve some of the remaining forests and to protect the island's largest watershed.

Its population of 2.8 million (2008) is spread across the 4,244 square miles of land, although most of the population is concentrated in cities and towns along the coast. The country is divided into three counties (Cornwall, Middlesex and Surrey) and fourteen parishes, the largest of which are St. Andrew (555,828), St. Catherine (482,308) and Clarendon (237,024). An estimated 53 percent of the population lives in urban areas. Between 1960 and 2001, the nation registered a negative migration balance, which means that emigration exceeded immigration and its natural population growth (births over deaths).

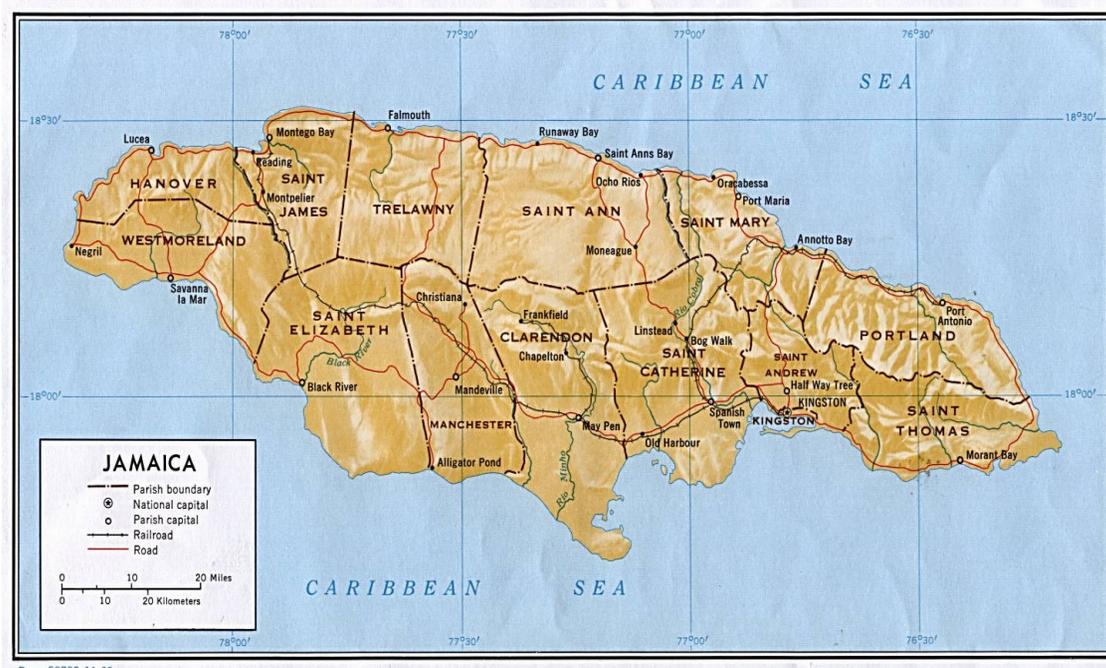
| CENSUS YEAR | POPULATION | MIGRATION BALANCE |
|-------------|------------|-------------------|
| 1960        | 1,609,814  | -195,200          |
| 1970        | 1,848,512  | -296,500          |
| 1982        | 2,190,357  | -216,959          |
| 1991        | 2,380,666  | -181,601          |
| 2001        | 2,607,632  | -216,392          |

Kingston, the capital and largest city of Jamaica, is located on the southeastern coast. It faces a natural harbor protected by the Palisadoes, a long and narrow sand bar that connects Port Royal (Jamaica's major city until 1692) and the Norman Manley International Airport to the rest of the island. Kingston is the largest predominantly English-speaking city in the Americas south of the USA.

The local government of the parishes of Kingston and St. Andrew were amalgamated by the Kingston and St. Andrew Corporation Act of 1923, to form the Kingston and St. Andrew Corporation (KSAC). Greater Kingston, known as the "Corporate Area," refers to the KSAC, which includes Kingston Parish and part of St. Andrew Parish. The nation's largest urban centers in 2005 were the KSAC with 701,063 inhabitants, followed by Portmore (124,050), Montego Bay (108,968), Spanish Town (97,729), and May Pen (57,568).

Kingston Harbor, the seventh-largest natural harbor in the world, is an almost landlocked bay, approximately 10 miles long by two miles wide. Most of the harbor is deep enough to

accommodate large ships, even close to shore. The harbor is bordered to the north by the city of Kingston, to the west by Hunts Bay and the municipality of Portmore, and to the south and east by the Palisadoes. The harbor is home to the Kingston Container Terminal, Jamaica's largest port. Other docks on Kingston Harbor are at the Petroleum Corporation of Jamaica in downtown Kingston, and at the Jamaica Flower Mills and the Caribbean Cement Company at Rockfort.



Sangster International Airport (SIA) is located at Montego Bay on the north coast of Jamaica. It is one of the largest, busiest and most ultra-modern airports in the Caribbean, capable of handling nine million passengers yearly, which is three times the size of the Jamaican population. SIA is often referred to as the “Gateway to the Caribbean,” and is the Caribbean hub for many airlines. Montego Bay is the most popular tourist destination in Jamaica.

Although Jamaica was originally discovered and settled by the Spanish during the early sixteenth century, the island was conquered by the British in 1655 and governed as a British colony until the mid-twentieth century. Jamaica gradually obtained increasing independence from Britain. In 1958, Jamaica joined other British Caribbean colonies in forming the Federation of the West Indies. Jamaica gained full independence when it withdrew from the Federation in 1962.

Today, the government of Jamaica is a constitutional parliamentary democracy. The Chief of State is the monarch of the United Kingdom of Great Britain, currently Queen Elizabeth II, who is represented by a Governor General. The head of the government of Jamaica is the Prime Minister. There is a Cabinet appointed by the governor general on the advice of the prime minister. The monarch is hereditary; the governor general is appointed by the monarch on the recommendation of the prime minister. Following legislative elections, the leader of the majority party or the leader of the majority coalition in the House of Representatives is appointed prime minister by the governor general.

Historically, the nation's major political parties have been the United Peoples Party (UPP), the People's National Party (PNP), the Jamaica Labour Party (JLP), and the National Democratic Movement (NDM).

Deteriorating economic conditions during the 1970s led to recurrent violence as rival gangs affiliated with the major political parties evolved into powerful organized crime networks involved in international drug smuggling and money laundering. Violent crime, drug trafficking, and poverty pose significant challenges to the government today. Nonetheless, many rural and resort areas remain relatively safe and contribute substantially to the nation's economy.

Gangs in inner-city Jamaica include small "corner" gangs," often made up of unemployed or sub-employed adolescents and young men, and larger "community or area gangs." For Jamaican sociologist Horace Levy, "community gangs" are formed primarily to defend their communities from criminality from both inside and outside.

In the late 1960s and through the 1980s, many politicians and enforcers or area dons in Central and West Kingston were mutually dependent on one another. Enforcers and area dons ensured party loyalty in inner-city areas and politicians depended on them to deliver key votes. Area dons in return depended on the politicians for patronage, such as jobs via public works programmes and public housing. This relationship has been well documented. "The weapons of the political violence of the 1970s and 1980s were guns. The guns were being issued in 1980 by none other than the politicians." (Source: Mogensen 2005:2)

According to an Amnesty International USA report (dated 21 July 2009): "Jamaica has extremely high rates of violent crime. According to police statistics, in 2008 alone there were 1,611 murders in Jamaica – in a population of only 2.7 million. Most of the victims live in socially-excluded inner-city areas. In 2008 the proportion of child victims grew significantly."

### **The Population of Jamaica: Ethnic and Religious Diversity**

The ethnic composition of Jamaica, according to the 2001 census, was: black, 91.2 percent; mixed races, 6.2 percent (this figure is believed to be a low estimate); and other or unknown, 2.6 percent (2001 census). Other races include East Indian, 1.3 percent; Chinese, 0.2 percent; and white 0.2 percent.

At various periods in Jamaican history, the British colonial government passed Acts to encourage immigration to the island. Due to the ratio of slaves to white persons on the island, and the concern that there might be slave insurrections, Acts were passed to encourage the immigration of white persons to improve this ratio. Land grants or patents were given to white immigrants between 1735 and 1754 to encourage them to settle in Jamaica. Because of the ratio of black slaves to white persons on the island, and the concern that there might be slave insurrections, Acts were passed to encourage the immigration of white persons to improve this ratio. In 1783, land grants in St. Elizabeth Parish were given to British Loyalists from North America following the U.S. Revolutionary War of 1775-1783.

After the Abolition of Slavery in 1838 (the Emancipation Act was passed in 1833 but did not achieve its full impact until the later date), there was a need for additional laborers on the island, and an Act was passed, primarily to encourage immigrants to fill the gap. Many of the immigrants who went to Jamaica signed Indenture Agreements, and became Indentured Servants. Under the terms of these agreements, the "Master" would provide the "Servant" with his passage to Jamaica, clothes, food and drink, laundry services, lodging, and a small annual salary; and the "Servant" would agree to serve in Jamaica for a certain number of years.

Asian Indian immigration was the longest lasting; it began in 1838 and, though it stopped from 1839 to 1844, it continued after that until 1917. Approximately 33,000 Indians immigrated to Jamaica during this time. The Chinese immigrated between 1860 and 1893, with nearly 5,000 people arriving on the island. These Eastern immigrants changed the face of Jamaica throughout history. Efforts to bring in African indentured laborers took place between 1840 and 1865. During that period, about 7,500 Africans arrived, although many claimed free return passage to Africa after their term of service ended.

Jamaican Creole (JamC, known to its speakers as *Patwa* or *Patois*) is a language of ethnic and national identity for most of Jamaica's population both at home and overseas, who use it in normal daily speech, whereas British Standard English (BrSE) is used in more formal occasions by middle and upper-class Jamaicans. For all Jamaicans, *Patwa* serves to distinguish them from other peoples, and to unite them in possession of a rich and diverse set of language resources.

The origins of Jamaican Creole postdate 1660, in the interaction of British colonists and African slaves. The language did not yet exist in 1658, when the 7,000 settlers and soldiers on the island from Britain, Ireland and the Americas outnumbered Africans 5 to 1. Between 1677, when there were about 9,000 each of whites and blacks, and 1703, when the white population had slightly declined but the numbers of enslaved Africans had risen to 45,000, the roots of Jamaican Creole were planted. Many key features were in place before 1750, though others can only be documented from the early and mid-nineteenth century.

The identification of specific ethnic groups in Jamaican society is challenging because of social, economic, linguistic, religious and ethnic differences among the population. Numerous combinations of these differences are represented by individuals and families within various social groups. For instance, the ethnic background of one family may be West African, their language Standard British English, their religion Roman Catholic, and their financial status, upper-middle class. Another family of West African ancestry, who may appear to be physically similar, may speak *Patwa*, attend a Pentecostal church, and have little money or social status, while yet another family of West African ancestry may be devout Rastafarians, which determines their overall beliefs, attitudes and conduct. Many characteristics must be considered in combination in order to describe particular population segments.

Specific statistical information is of limited value when one considers such a complex society. The following figures can be used as guidelines in defining the combinations of characteristics common to particular ethnic groups.

Some secular sources report that 76.3 percent of the Jamaican population is of West African descent. Jamaica was one of the largest slave trade centers in the Caribbean, with more than 3 million residents by the end of the 1700s. Most black slaves worked on the 230 sugar plantations where Jamaican *Patwa* evolved between 1660 and 1834, when the slaves were emancipated.

The Maroons are custodians of the culture of the first African immigrants, and they still preserve a distinctive speech form, called "Maroon Spirit Language" (Bilby 2005). Their ranks were strengthened by runaway slaves from the British plantations, and they maintained their independence by treaty, after defeating British forces in 1739 and 1795.

Today, large numbers of blacks own or lease small plots of land on which they raise food and cash crops without mechanization (subsistence agriculture). Only traditional methods are utilized and life is difficult, with little opportunity for potential expansion or for saving money. The island's plantations (sugar, cacao and coffee), though on the decline, still employ significant numbers of lower-class black laborers.

Many Jamaicans are descendants of blacks and Europeans (mixed races), for which several descriptive words are used – mulatto, colored and Afro-Caribbean – to describe this population

segment, which comprises an estimated 14.6 percent of the population. Most mulattoes more readily than blacks accepted the cultural and religious traditions of the British colonists. They acquired the use of Standard British English, although many understood *Patwa* but dared not use it out of fear of losing their master's respect. Among mulattos, the Anglican, Presbyterian, Methodist and Roman Catholic doctrines and traditions have been closely adhered to as more elite expressions of Christianity. Two additional ethnic groups present in Jamaica are East Indians (an estimated 30,000) and the Chinese (10,000-20,000).

Each ethnic group has preserved selected cultural traditions and has historically held specific jobs and played a particular role in Jamaica's social structure. Descendants of black slaves who once worked the fields have now risen to important positions as import-export middlemen. The Chinese have generally remained separate by marriage, but East Indians have been more willing to intermarry and adapt to other lifestyles. Most Chinese and East Indians have been exposed to the superficial Christianity of the general public, but many still retain the religious traditions of their ancestors.

Although most Jamaicans have adopted some form of Christianity, many have also maintained beliefs and practices that accompanied the revival of African cultural traditions, beginning in the 1860s.

## **The Economy**

GDP (2008): \$12.2 billion.

Real growth rate (2008): -0.6%.

Per capita GDP (2005): \$4,700.

**Natural resources:** Bauxite, gypsum, limestone, marble, sand, silica. Agriculture: *Products*--sugar cane, bananas, coffee, citrus fruits, condiments and spices. Industry: *Types*--tourism, bauxite and alumina, processed foods, sugar, rum, cement, metal, chemical products, ethanol.

**Trade (2008):** *Exports*--\$2.6 billion: alumina, bauxite, sugar, bananas, chemicals, citrus fruits and products, rum, coffee. *Major markets* (2005)--U.S. 37%, U.K. 15.5%, Japan and Canada. *Imports* (2008)--\$8.5 billion: fuels, machinery, transportation and electrical equipment, food, fertilizer. *Major suppliers* (2000)--U.S. 40%, Trinidad and Tobago 15.7%, Venezuela 9%, Japan 3%, China 3%, U.K. 2%, and Canada 2%.

**Coffee Production.** The once forested, lower slopes of the Blue Mountains are now mostly grasslands but some areas are used for the cultivation of vegetables, spices and the world-renowned Blue Mountain coffee. The first coffee seedlings were brought to Jamaica from Hispaniola in 1728 by Governor Sir Nicholas Lawes. The lower mountain slopes were cleared to establish coffee plantations; and, by the first quarter of the 19th century, Jamaica was the world's leading coffee producer. The coffee industry fell into decline after Emancipation in 1838 when Jamaica could no longer compete economically with slave-owning countries like Brazil and Cuba.

Today, *Jamaican Blue Mountain coffee* is considered to be among the best of the world's gourmet coffees. To ensure the quality, the Jamaica Coffee Industry Board set standards for the coffee beans and the processing in order to carry the "Blue Mountain Coffee" label. Today, 90 percent of the island's coffee production is exported to Japan. Although some large coffee estates remain, most of the beans are grown on small plots by local farmers.

## **Current Religious Situation**

The Constitution provides for freedom of religion, and other laws and policies contributed to the generally-free practice of religion. The law at all levels protects this right in full against abuse, either by governmental or private actors. There is no State-supported religion.

According to the most recent national census (2001), religious affiliation in Jamaica was as follows (the categories have been grouped to correspond with the PROLADES classification system of religious groups): Protestant, 61.5% (includes Seventh-Day Adventist, 10.8 percent; other Pentecostal, 9.5 percent; other Churches of God, 8.3 percent; all Baptists, 7.2 percent; New Testament Church of God, 6.3 percent; Church of God in Jamaica [Anderson, IN], 4.8 percent; Church of God of Prophecy, 4.3 percent; Anglican Church, 3.6 percent; all Methodists, 2.0 percent; United Church in Jamaica and the Cayman Islands, 2.0 percent; all Brethren, 1.0 percent; Moravian, 1.0 percent; all other Protestants, 0.7 percent); Roman Catholic 2.6 percent; other or unspecified, 15.0 percent; and none 20.9 percent. The category "other" includes Jehovah's Witnesses (2.0 percent); 24,020 Rastafarians; an estimated 5,000 Muslims; 1,453 Hindus; approximately 350 Jews; and 279 Baha'is. Pentecostal adherents are about 28.4 percent of the national population, compared to 33.1 for the non-Pentecostal Protestant population.

Parliament may act freely to recognize a religious group; however, registration is not mandatory. Recognized groups receive tax-exempt status and other privileges, such as the right of their clergy to visit members in prison. In mid-2006, 547 religious organizations were registered with the government, but it is not known how many of these were denominations or just local congregations.

Religious schools are not subject to any special restrictions, nor do they receive special treatment from the government. Most religious schools are affiliated with either the Catholic Church or Protestant denominations; there is at least one Jewish school.

## **Historical Overview of Social and Political Development**

Discovered by Admiral Christopher Columbus (Cristóbal Colón) in 1494, the island was settled by the Spanish early in the sixteenth century. The permanent occupation of Jamaica began in 1509, when Juan de Esquivel arrived with a group of Spanish settlers who came in search of gold and silver but found none. Instead they began what they believed to be a viable alternative: enslaving Native American Indians (Amerindians) to plant and farm sugarcane and other agricultural products. The settlement of Santiago de la Vega (called Spanish Town after 1655) was founded in 1525 and became the island's principal town.

The native Tainos, who spoke an Arawakan dialect and inhabited Jamaica for centuries, were gradually exterminated by warfare with the Spanish and by European diseases. They were replaced by African slaves who became the new source of cheap labor on the island. By 1601, only a handful of Tainos remained alongside of an estimated 1,000 Africans who worked on the Spanish colonial plantations.

England seized the island from the Spanish in 1655 and established a plantation economy based on sugar, cocoa (chocolate) and coffee production. When the British arrived in 1655 they found about 3,000 inhabitants, of which 1,500 were of African descent and the rest mostly Spanish; after 1660, only a few dozen Spanish remained, while an estimated 300 Maroons fought the British from their mountain strongholds. Most of the Spanish colonists fled Jamaica and took refuge in other Spanish colonies in the Caribbean, mainly on the islands of Cuba and Hispaniola.

Prior to British colonization, a small number of black slaves from the Ashanti tribe of the Gold Coast (later known as Ghana) of West Africa were taken to Jamaica by the Spanish early in the sixteenth century. The African slaves who preferred to take a chance on freedom in the Blue Mountains rather than bear the burden of slavery under their Spanish masters ran away into the island's interior. As the number of African slaves brought to Jamaica increased so, too, did the number of fugitive slaves. These escaped slaves were later known as Maroons, which is probably derived from the Spanish word "Cimarrón," meaning "wild" or "untamed."

In May 1655, before the Spanish forces fled the island when confronted with a superior force of invading British troops (the English fleet consisted of 38 ships and about 9,000 armed soldiers who sailed into Kingston Harbor), the Spanish colonists (numbering about 1,500 with only about 500 able to bear arms) freed their cattle and their slaves to harass the British. The freed slaves fled to the mountainous interior and joined forces with those already living there, where they and their descendants consistently resisted British occupation and preserved their own mixture of Ashanti and Fanti cultural traditions.

The first Maroons settled mainly in the St. John district of St. Catherine Parish, which is still called Juan de Bolas after one of the Maroon chiefs. The isolated Maroon communities continued to grow after 1655 from the addition of runaway slaves from the British-run estates. In 1663, the British colonial authorities offered free land and full freedom to any Maroon who surrendered. However, the Maroon leaders ignored the offer. This failure to come to terms led to 76 years of irregular warfare between the Maroons and the British.

The courageous resistance of the Maroons to colonial domination threatened British plantation society and its prosperous sugar industry. The Maroons occasionally raided the plantations, stole food and other supplies (including guns and ammunition), killed white militiamen, and rescued many slaves. They engaged in guerrilla warfare against the British forces sent to track, kill or capture them. The threat to the British colonial system was clear and present; therefore, the planters were willing to sign a series of treaties with the Maroons, beginning in 1737.

The peace treaty of 1739 recognized the Maroons as a free people and handed over to them 1,500 acres of land. It further allowed them to administer their own laws. The Maroons agreed to ally themselves with the British colonial government of Jamaica against any invader, such as the French from nearby Haiti or the Spanish from Cuba, as well as to hand over to the British any runaway slaves.

The treaty gave the Maroons "a perfect state of freedom and liberty," with "full pardon" for attacks on people and property. It gave them 1,500 acres of land on which to settle, and freedom to hunt for game in the mountains. Cudjoe was confirmed in his office as chief, with power to punish crimes that did not deserve death. In return for these immunities and privileges, the Maroons agreed to serve as woods policemen for the capture of runaway slaves.

Moving to their reservation, a broken stretch of land in the edge of the mountains, twenty miles south-east of Montega Bay, the Maroons built two villages, half a mile apart, called Old Town and New Town. Thereafter they were left to care for themselves – without teacher or preacher, or anyone to suggest any kind of culture or improvement. The ground, with gentle coaxing, produced crops, which not only supplied them with ample food, but left a surplus sufficient to procure, by exchange, such clothing and other manufactured supplies as their simple life demanded. There was no incentive to give them habits of industry; on the contrary, because rum was easily obtained, there was a constant inducement to drink to excess, an inducement that was the stronger because many white planters drank immoderately. Moreover, they were often employed in the work of bloodhounds, in trailing fugitive slaves through the mountains.... They purchased leaf tobacco and

manufactured a salable twist [cigars]. They cured meats for which they found a ready market. They accumulated coin. Evidences of financial prosperity steadily, if slowly, increased among them.

Source: *The Register*, Thursday, August 7, 1902: "The Jamaica Maroons," available at: <http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~canbrnep/jammaroon.htm>

During the British colonial period, Kingston was the center of the slave trade in the British West Indies. Prior to Emancipation, the British had imported about 600,000 African slaves of whom about 400,000 were traded and taken to other parts of the Caribbean and North America. Only about 200,000 African slaves were sold and distributed in Jamaica, most of whom worked on the sugar plantations. Slavery was finally abolished in the British Caribbean colonies in 1838, but the end of slavery was followed by widespread poverty and sporadic periods of unrest among the general population.

Once blacks were free, they faced many problems. They needed money for food and rent, which they could not obtain without employment. Many former slaves did not wish to continue living on the plantations to which they had been bound. However, some former owners also no longer wished to employ the laborers they had once had for free, opting for immigrant labor instead.

With full freedom from slavery and apprenticeship in 1838, there was the desire among some blacks for personal liberty and land of their own. This desire was heightened by the harsh treatment meted out to the ex-slaves by the planters. In many cases, the planters paid the slaves low wages and charged them high rental fees, which sometimes led to eviction from plantation dwellings. It was soon realised that freedom would have little meaning as long as planters controlled both the housing and labour of the ex-slaves. Free villages emerged as a solution to this problem.

Free villages were townships established during the post-emancipation period. Their development was both undirected and systematic. In the first case, individual ex-slaves either bought random sections of wasteland subdivided for that purpose by planters who needed quick capital; or [they] obtained lots from planters who abandoned their properties with the hope of recovering some of their losses. In the second case, free villages were established under well-defined leadership, which came from the Non-Conformist missionaries. These missionaries came from the Baptist, Moravian, Presbyterian and Methodist denominations. They bought land, which they sold in small lots to [members of] their congregations.

(Source: Jamaica National Heritage Trust at: <http://www.jnht.com/category.php?id=84>)

With the help of white Non-Conformist missionaries, numerous all-black "free villages" were established in Jamaica. Within five years, about 200 villages composed of former black slaves came into being across the island. In 1840, there were an estimated 8,000 peasant free-holders, but five years later that number had more than doubled. These former slaves sought to grow crops on their own land to make the money they needed to buy additional supplies to support themselves and their families.

Although the concept of "free villages" proved an immediate success, and many were set up, their establishment depended partly upon success in raising money in England through the Baptists, the Quaker Joseph Sturge, and other Christian or abolitionist circles. For those who remained on the plantation estates, conditions could sometimes be harsh; so much so that some left to live as best they could in the wilderness of the hills. This underclass of subsistence

farmers experienced great hardship and lived in poverty in rural enclaves on the fringes of Jamaican society for generations before relocating to Kingston or elsewhere in search of employment and achieving a higher standard of living during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

### **A Chronology of Major Events during the British Colonial Period (1655-1962)**

**1655** - The English Navy under Admiral William Penn and Army troops under General Robert Venables arrived in Jamaica on May 10. Although articles of capitulation were signed by the Spanish colonial authorities within one week, it was five years before guerrilla warfare ended and the English conquest was complete (1660). An English garrison remained on the island to protect against a possible reconquest by Spanish forces.

Oliver Cromwell, the Lord Protector of England (1653-1658), used several methods to colonize the island. Large grants of land were given to wealthy English and Scottish planters to colonize Jamaica. Prisoners taken in Royalist uprisings were sent out as servants of the State. In October 1655, it was ordered that 1,000 Irish girls and 1,000 Irish boys 14 years of age or under be sent to Jamaica; and, in 1656, 1,200 men from Ireland and Scotland arrived. About 300 English settlers arrived from North America, and some from Bermuda and Barbados. Few of the early settlers succeeded, due to indiscipline and intemperance (alcohol abuse).

Records show that the vast majority of the first wave of European immigrants was made up of young Irish men and women, mostly servants, bondsmen, or bonded servants. For all practical intents and purposes, this was slavery by another name as most, if not all, were not there of their own free will.

In 1648, Cromwell put down a rebellion in Ireland with such savagery and cruelty that his name is still today burned into the Irish psyche. In his own words after the siege of Drogheda, "the officers were knocked on the head, every tenth man of the soldiers killed, and the rest shipped to Barbados [and Jamaica]." Cromwell drove Irish men and women from their home counties into the relatively barren and inhospitable province of Connaught. The soldiers and the *intelligencia*, mainly Catholic priests, teachers and Gaelic bards, posed a real threat to a new government. Cromwell's solution was to institute a system of forced labor, which would also provide British planters in the Caribbean with a massive influx of white indentured laborers.

Cromwell's son, Henry, was made Major General in command of the English forces in Ireland. It was under his command that thousands of Irish men and women were shipped to the West Indies. Between 1648 and 1655, over 12,000 Irish political prisoners were shipped to Barbados [and Jamaica]. Although indentured servants (Irish included) had been coming to Barbados since 1627, this new wave of arrivals was the first to come involuntarily.

**1657** - As a solution to the defense of Jamaica from possible reconquest by the Spanish, British Governor Edward D'Oley invited the so-called "Brethren of the Coast" to come to Port Royal and make it their homeport, which was located at the end of the Palisadoes, on the seaward side of harbor. The Brethren was made up of a group of pirates who were descendents of cattle-hunting buccaneers who had turned to piracy themselves after being robbed by the Spanish and subsequently thrown off the island of Hispaniola. The pirates were a seemingly perfect solution; their attacks were concentrated against the Spanish colonies and shipping. The pirates later became legal English privateers who were given "letters of Marque" (commissions or warrants issued to someone to commit what would otherwise be acts of piracy) by Jamaica's governor.

Around the same time that pirates were invited to Port Royal, England launched a series of attacks against Spanish shipping vessels and coastal towns. By sending the newly-appointed

privateers after Spanish ships and settlements, the British had successfully set up a system of defense for Port Royal. Spain was forced to continually defend their property, and did not have the means with which to invade and reconquer Jamaica, which had been one of Spain's richest agricultural colonies.

**1659** - Two hundred houses, shops and warehouses existed in Port Royal, crammed into fifty-one acres of real estate at the end of the Palisadoes.

**1660** - The Restoration of King Charles II. The king and his counselors recruited investors and planters for Jamaica. Most of the land grants on record at the Royal Archives in Spanish Town were dated during this period. Sugar would become the main crop during his reign. In the early stages, white laborers, most of them indentured servants, were used. Free transportation to Jamaica and other British islands became a regular punishment for political prisoners, vagrants, and convicted felons. Charles II was King of England, Scotland and Ireland from 1660 to 1685.

**1661** - The file of land records starts in 1661. It includes over 5,000 patents for the seventeenth century.

**1662** - In October, the total population of Jamaica was 4,205 of which 87 percent (3,653) were whites (English and Portuguese Jews) and 552 were Negroes, of whom 150 were estimated to be freemen.

**1662** - The controversial Act of Uniformity of 1662 was approved by the English Parliament (under King Charles II) that established the form of public prayers, the administration of the sacraments, and other rites of the Established Church (The Church of England). This act required the use of all the rites and ceremonies in the Book of Common Prayer in all public worship services, as well as episcopal ordination (based on apostolic succession) for all ministers. As a reaction to these requirements, nearly 2,000 English clergymen left the Anglican Church in what became known as the "Great Ejection." The Acts provisions were later modified by the Uniformity Amendment Act of 1872.

The term *Non-Conformist* was used after the Act of Uniformity of 1662 to refer to an English subject who refused to conform to this Act or who belonged to any non-Anglican church body. The term is also used more narrowly to refer to a person who advocated religious liberty or freedom of worship. Non-Conformists included Dissenters within the Church of England (such as Puritans and Presbyterians) who violated the Act of Uniformity of 1559. The Dissenters practiced or advocating radical, sometimes separatist, practices with respect to the Established Church. The Non-Conformist label was applied to Presbyterians (1560), Quakers (1648), Unitarians (1648), Congregationalists (1658), Baptists (1659), and other groups formed later, such as the Wesleyan Methodists (from 1739 onward, Wesley and the Methodists were persecuted by Anglican clergymen and magistrates because they preached without being ordained or licensed by the Anglican Church; the movement did not form a separate denomination in England until after John Wesley's death in 1795), Plymouth Brethren (1827-1828), the Free Church of England (1844), etc.

**1663** - King Charles II and the royal family backed a slave-trading company, to avoid having to buy slaves from foreigners. The slave trade grew between Africa, England and British colonies in the Caribbean region.

**1664** - At this time there were seven established parishes: "the town and parish of St. Katherine's, St. John's, the town and parish of Port Royal, Clarendon, St. David's, St. Andrew's and St. Thomas, which are very large, and in them all, [only] one church, that at St. Katherine's" (according to Sir Thomas Modyford in 1664).

**1667** - About 600 British refugees arrived from Montserrat when it was taken by the French.

**1670** - A hurricane drove the English fleet ashore, except for Morgan's ship.

**1673** - There were 7,768 whites and 9,504 slaves, for a total of 17,272 inhabitants. The chief products were cocoa, indigo and hides. The cultivation of sugarcane had just begun.

**1675** - About 1,200 British refugees arrived from Surinam when it was ceded to Holland. The refugees settled in St. Elizabeth. This section, which was called Surinam Quarters, later became a part of the Parish of Westmoreland.

**1685** - The Monmouth Rebellion occurred in England in June-July, led by James Scott, the Duke of Monmouth (formerly the captain-general of the British armed forces in 1678-1679), who rebelled against James II (formerly the Duke of York), who became the King of England in February 1685. Hundreds of prisoners of war, the remnants of the Duke of Monmouth's rebel army, were shipped to the British West Indies as "white slaves" to work on the sugar plantations.

**1692** - On June 7, a powerful earthquake destroyed Port Royal, which had become the headquarters of buccaneers. By 1692, five forts had been built by the British to defend the port, which grew to be one of the two largest towns and the most economically important port in the English colonies. For much of the period between the English conquest of Jamaica and the earthquake in 1692, Port Royal served as the capital of Jamaica. During a twenty-year period that ended in 1692, nearly 6,500 people lived in Port Royal.

**1693** - The city of Kingston was founded on 22 July 1692 as a refuge for survivors of a strong earthquake that destroyed most of Port Royal in June. After this disaster, Port Royal's commercial role was taken over by the city of Kingston and the island's capital was transferred to Spanish Town. Before the earthquake, Kingston's functions were purely agricultural. The earthquake survivors set up a refugee camp on the sea front, facing the harbor. An estimated 2,000 earthquake survivors later died due to mosquito-borne diseases. The colonial government sold land to people with the regulation that they could purchase no more than the amount of the land they owned in Port Royal, and only on the sea front. Kingston was established as a parish.

**1698** - Jamaica's population was 47,365 of whom 40,000 were black (85 percent) and 7,365 were white (15 percent).

**1734** - Jamaica had a total population of 94,190: 7,644 were white (8 percent) and 86,546 were black slaves (92 percent). There were 76,011 head of cattle on the island. A powerful hurricane did great damage that year.

**1744** - On October 20-21, a powerful hurricane and earthquake hit Jamaica. Savanna-la-Mar was destroyed, and Kingston and Port Royal were severely damaged. Eight men-of-war and ninety-six merchant vessels were stranded, wrecked or foundered. The hurricane lasted for twenty-four hours.

**In 1744**, Jamaica's total population was 121,888; there were 9,640 whites (8 percent) and 112,428 black slaves (92 percent); also, there were 88,036 head of cattle. The island produced 35,000 hogsheads of sugar, and 10,000 puncheons of rum.

**1768** - Jamaica's total population was 183,914; there were 17,000 whites (about 9 percent) and 166,914 black slaves (91 percent); also there were 135,773 head of cattle. Also, 55,761 hogsheads of sugar, and 15,551 puncheons of rum were produced that year.

**1774** - The island produced only 654,700 lbs. of coffee.

**1775** - The total population was reported as 209,617, which was composed of 12,737 whites (6 percent), 4,093 free colored or mulatto (2 percent), and 192,787 black slaves (92 percent).

**1780** - By this time less than half of the 4 million acres in Jamaica had been patented by the British Crown, but a large proportion of the unpatented land was rocky, mountainous and of little value. On October 2-3, 1780, the southwestern part of the island was hit hardest by a hurricane,

and Savanna-la-Mar was completely destroyed again. On October 2, there was an unusual elevation of the sea (a *Tsunami* wave), which then broke suddenly upon the town and on its retreat swept every thing away with it. There were no buildings left standing in the town or in the area for 30 to 40 miles around it. On the next day (October 3), this was succeeded by the worst hurricane Jamaica had ever experienced, followed by an earthquake, which almost totally demolished every building in the parishes of Westmoreland, Hanover, part of St. James and some parts of St. Elizabeth.

**1781** - On August 1, another hurricane desolated the island; several men-of-war and merchant vessels were lost at sea.

**1799** - By the end of the eighteenth century, more than 3,000 brick buildings had been constructed in Kingston, which took over many of the functions previously handled by Spanish Town, the island's capital at the time. These functions included the control of the island's commerce and agricultural production and distribution, and Kingston became the main transportation hub to and from other regions of the island. In 1872, the capital was formally transferred from Spanish Town to Kingston.

**1831** - Christmas Eve Rebellion in Montego Bay among black slaves, led by Sam Sharpe, which sped up the abolition of slavery in the British Empire on 1 August 1838. Many of the white plantation owners accused the white Baptist missionaries (associated with the Baptist Missionary Society of London) of planning the Rebellion, due to their reputation as Abolitionists. Six Baptist missionaries were put in jail, a Wesleyan Methodist missionary was tarred, and about 20 chapels were destroyed or damaged as retaliation for their alleged support of the Rebellion. In the aftermath of the Rebellion, the Baptist and Methodist missionaries sent delegates to England to plead the case for the Emancipation of the slaves (Elam 2005:101-105).

Sam Sharpe was the main instigator of the 1831 Slave Rebellion which began on the Kensington Estate in St. James and which was largely instrumental in bringing about the abolition of slavery.

Because of his intelligence and leadership qualities, Sam Sharpe became a "daddy" or leader of the native Baptists in Montego Bay. Religious meetings were the only permissible forms of organised activities for the slaves. Sam Sharpe was able to communicate his concern and encourage political thought concerning events in England which affected the slaves and Jamaica.

Sam evolved a plan of passive resistance in 1831, by which the slaves would refuse to work on Christmas Day of 1831 and afterwards, unless their grievances concerning better treatment and the consideration of freedom were accepted by the state owners and managers. Sam explained his plan to his chosen supporters after his religious meetings and made them kiss the Bible to show their loyalty. They, in turn, took the plan to the other parishes until the idea had spread throughout St. James, Trelawny, Westmoreland, and even St. Elizabeth and Manchester.

Word of the plan reached the ears of some of the planters. Troops were sent into St. James and warships were anchored in Montego Bay and Black River with their guns trained on the towns.

On December 27, 1831, the Kensington Estate Great House was set on fire as a signal that the Slave Rebellion had begun. A series of other fires broke out in the area and soon it was clear that the plan of non-violent resistance which Sam Sharpe had originated was impossible and impractical.

Armed rebellion and seizing of property spread mostly through the western parishes, but the uprising was put down by the first week in January.

A terrible retribution followed. While 14 whites died during the Rebellion, more than 500 slaves lost their lives – most of them as a result of the trials afterward.

Samuel Sharpe was hanged on May 23, 1832. In 1834, the Abolition Bill was passed by the British Parliament and, in 1838, slavery was abolished.

Sharpe had said: “I would rather die upon yonder gallows than live in slavery.”

Source: <http://www.jamaicapage.com/jamaica-national-hero-sam-sharpe/>

**1834-1838** The Abolition of slavery freed an estimated 250,000 black slaves, most of whom became farmers in subsistence agriculture. The Emancipation Act of August 1833 ordered the ending of slavery as of August 1834, but it did not achieve its full impact until 1838.

With Emancipation, the freedmen sought to escape the hard work required in the sugar-cane fields. The former slaves desired to obtain a small plot of land on which to grow their own food and sell the surplus to the local plantations or towns. However, many freedmen also needed to work on the plantations from time to time to earn cash to buy land or needed supplies, but they were not willing to remain as submissive field workers on the plantations. This created an immediate need for additional cheap laborers on the island, and an Act was passed, primarily to encourage immigrants to fill the gap.

This was a difficult economic period in Jamaica. Most planters were heavily in debt. Their properties had been heavily mortgaged even before Emancipation, and their properties had a negative cash flow. The planters could not find the cash to pay wages and to purchase labor-saving equipment.

**1839 – 1841** Indentured laborers arrived in limited numbers from Europe, including Portugal.

**1842** - East Indian “coolie laborers” were imported under labor contracts.

**1844** - The census showed a population of 377,433: there were 15,776 white (4 percent); 68,529 colored (18 percent); and 293,128 black (78 percent).

**1844 - 1845** By this time many of the sugar estates throughout the island were half desolate. Many planters had defaulted on their mortgages or tax payments, and others had either ceased to reside in their mansions or had cut back on their expenditures.

**1845** - The first railway was opened, from Kingston to Spanish Town.

**1846** - A law was passed in England to equalize the tariff on sugar, and to eventually eliminate protective duties that favored the colonies. This led to rapid economic decline in the British West Indies. Sugar prices fell alarmingly; the planter as a class was ruined. Some plantations were abandoned; some were divided into lots and sold to Negro peasants.

One article from the Jamaican paper, "The Daily Advertiser" of January 19th, 1852, reported a meeting in the parish of St. George. A report was given of the decline of produce in the island. Sugar export had fallen from 150,000 hogsheads to 36,000; coffee had fallen from 34,000,000 lbs to 5,000,000 lbs. Mr. Dunbar described the island as exhibiting widespread desolation instead of luxuriant fields and people busily working. Landowners had been driven from their homes by financial distress, the jungle had retaken the cane fields, buildings were decaying, and the island was on the brink of a disaster created by Britain.

In the same meeting, the 'collecting constable' of the parish (the tax collector) reported on properties that had been abandoned, grown up in brushwood, or were falling into decay. The taxes were now

lower on properties, since they had fallen so far in value, yet the proprietors could not pay. The constable said [that] he had often been obliged to give the finishing stroke by levying upon the stock of those properties. Not only were the estates in Jamaica nearly all going out of cultivation, but the inhabitants themselves, ruined financially, were leaving the island in quest of employment.

(source: <http://www.jamaicanfamilysearch.com/Samples/Hisback.htm>)

**1850** - An Asiatic cholera epidemic caused the death of 32,000 on the island. In the burial registers there are entries that just state "unidentified persons" followed by numbers: 25, 75, or more at one time. Some entries stated that the victims were buried in the dead of night. They were being buried as fast as possible to try to stop the spread of the disease. In the last weeks of the year, the cholera, which had already taken a dreadful toll, especially in Kingston, advanced towards the west of Jamaica. It devastated Black River, and began to attack Montego Bay.

**1854** - Over 1,000 Chinese laborers were brought to the island as indentured servants.

**1858** - East Indian immigration resumed.

**1860-1862** The so-called "Great Revival in Jamaica" occurred in the aftermath of the worldwide revival that took place during 1857-1858, mainly in North America and the British Isles, where several million people allegedly were "converted to Christ." Veteran revivalists like Charles Finney, James Caughey, and Walter and Phoebe Palmer rode on this wave of revival, which "reaped masses of converts." The famous preacher D .L. Moody, converted in 1855, soon became the foremost advocate of mass evangelism; his own ministry greatly impacted two continents. Others like R. A. Torrey and J. Wilbur Chapman also took on the burden of mass evangelism. William and Catherine Booth, converted under the ministry of Caughey, later launched the Salvation Army and attracted great crowds to their rallies. Also, Charles Haddon Spurgeon preached to capacity crowds each week, filling the largest halls in London.

It was during September 1860 that this unprecedented evangelical awakening began in Jamaica among the Moravians in St. Elizabeth Parish, in the southwest. It soon spread like wild fire, first to the three parishes of St. James, Hanover and Westmoreland, causing a sensation in local congregations, regardless of denomination. Eastwards the movement quickened Mandeville and spread along the coast to villages and hamlets, eventually affecting the entire island—from Montego Bay to St. Thomas, from St. Ann's Bay to Savanna-la-Mar.

**However, the 1860s also produced the Revivalist movements of Zion and Pukkumina (also called Pocomania and Pocomia) led by Myalist and Obeah practitioners, with "spirit possession" being the predominant religious experience that attracted many blacks and colored who were not active in the Protestant churches. These Afro-Christian sects emerged in the context of the Great Revival in Jamaica;** both Revival Zion and Pukkumina became strong religious movements during the 1860s and then they declined in importance. However, Pukkumina experienced resurgence during the 1880s and again in the 1910s, both in Jamaica and among Jamaicans of the diaspora (definition: "any movement of a population sharing common national and/or ethnic identity"), especially on the Caribbean coast of Central America during the period 1880-1940.

**1864** – During the elections of 1864, the population ratio of blacks to whites was 32 to one. Out of a population of over 436,000, fewer than 2,000 were eligible to vote, and those were almost exclusively white, due in part to a large voting fee that blacks had to pay in order to participate as voters.

**By 1865**, twenty-seven years after the abolition of slavery, some of the former black slaves had left the plantations and cultivated small plots on the hillsides, because this was the only land

available to them. At the same time, many ex-slaves remained on the plantations, where the working conditions for them and their offspring were not much better than during slavery. Many former black slaves were living in dire poverty, often starving and naked in some of the villages. During the mid-1800s, many attempts were made to expel the Negroes from certain uncultivated lands of which they had taken possession.

However, groups of middle-class “brown people” held meetings and spoke out against the existing conditions of poverty and lack of education, economic opportunity and civil rights. And, at that time, the middle class were literally “brown” (colored) since they were the “outside” children of the white slave owners and some of their black slave women.

One such person was **George William Gordon**, a colored man who was sufficiently educated to be a bookkeeper on his white father's plantation. Gordon was radical enough to join the Baptist Church, which had a membership made up mainly by the black peasantry. Some of the white English Baptist missionaries had played a vital role in the abolition of slavery, so they were not liked by the estate owners, most of whom were members of the Church of England (Anglican).

While many people in the area were small farmers and laborers, Paul Bogle was successful, well-educated and owned about 500 acres of land near the village of Stony Gut in St. Thomas Parish. He was also eligible to vote at a time when there were only 104 voters in the parish of St. Thomas, due in part to the large voting fee required to participate. Bogle became a supporter of George William Gordon, a local landowner, politician and fellow Baptist. In 1864, Gordon made Bogle a deacon in the Baptist church in Stony Gut.

**1865** - The Morant Bay Rebellion began on 7 October when a poor black man from Stony Gut was put on trial at the Morant Bay courthouse and imprisoned for “trespassing” (illegally cultivating land) on a long-abandoned plantation in southeastern Jamaica. Paul Bogle and some of his supporters attended the trial. One member of Bogle’s group protested in the court against this unjust trial and was immediately arrested, which further angered the crowd. However, the imprisoned men were rescued later, after Bogle and his men went to the market square and retaliated. Several of the local constables were severely beaten and forced to retreat that day, while the imprisoned men were freed.

On 9 October, warrants were issued against Bogle and a number of others for rioting and assault. The police arrived in Stony Gut to arrest Bogle but met with stiff resistance from Bogle’s supporters, who fought the police again and forced them to retreat to Morant Bay.

Consequently, Paul Bogle, his brother Moses, and many people of Stony Gut walked to Spanish Town (the colony’s capital at that time), a distance of 45 miles, to air their grievances to Governor Edward Eyre regarding social injustices and oppression faced by them in St. Thomas Parish. However, the Governor refused to see them. This left the people of Stony Gut with a lack of confidence and distrust in the colonial government, and Bogle’s supporters grew in number.

A few days later (October 11), Paul Bogle (who is considered a Jamaican National Hero today) led a group of his followers armed with sticks and machetes to the court house in Morant Bay, a distance of about six kilometers. The authorities were shaken, and a few people in the crowd threw stones at the volunteer militia who fired into the crowd killing seven people. Although the militia retreated from the scene, the group of angry protesters retaliated by setting fire to the courthouse and nearby buildings. When the officials tried to leave the burning buildings, they were killed by the irate crowd outside who took control of the town. Eighteen people were killed, including government officials and militiamen. These actions prompted a declaration of martial law by the authorities. In the days that followed, an estimated 2,000 black rebels roamed the countryside, killing two white planters and forcing others to flee for their lives.

Governor Edward John Eyre (b.1815-d.1901, ruled 1862-1865) sent British troops to hunt down the poorly armed rebels, and bring Bogle back to Morant Bay to be hung. Colonel J. Francis Hobbs of the Warwickshire Regiment led the British reprisals against Bogle's community at Stony Gut. During his march to and from Stony Gut, Hobbs' troops burned down over 1,000 houses and several Baptist and Methodist chapels; Hobbs reported that he had utterly destroyed this rebellious settlement. Despite the fact that these troops were met with no resistance, the soldiers shot or hanged almost every Negro they came across, mostly innocent people, without a trial. One soldier said, "We slaughtered all before us...man or woman or child." In the end, 439 blacks were killed in the repression and 354 were executed after "trials" that ranged from the whim of an individual officer to the judicial lynching that resulted from an official court martial. Over 600 men and women, including pregnant women, were flogged with up to 100 strokes. In addition, many suspected rebels received long prison sentences.

Governor Eyre blamed **George William Gordon**, a member of the colonial legislature who had been an active leader in mass-meetings held by black and colored people to give expression to various grievances. Eyre accused Gordon of instigating the rebellion, even though he was in Kingston at the time of the incident in Morant Bay. Gordon was quickly arrested in Kingston and brought by boat to Morant Bay, where he was tried, convicted and hanged before the charred remains of the courthouse. Bogle and nearly 800 others (some accounts claim that between 1,000 and 3,000 blacks were murdered by government security forces) were either shot dead or captured and hanged and their bodies buried behind the courthouse. As a result of this brutal suppression, Eyre was removed as governor and left Jamaica in disgrace in 1866, but he was later pardoned and given a substantial pension by the British government.

[Historical note: **Edward John Eyre** served as the British colonial administrator of Australia (1833-1845), where he was a magistrate, explorer, and writer on Australian geography, and had a reputation for sympathy for the aborigines. After terms as Lieutenant Governor of New Zealand (1846-1853) and Governor of St. Vincent (1854-1860), he became Governor of Jamaica in 1864. He was recalled in 1865 after the Morant Bay Rebellion, for which Eyre was accused of brutality and illegal acts during the governor's ruthless suppression of the Jamaican uprising, especially the execution of George William Gordon, a member of the Jamaican legislature. After Eyre was recalled to Britain, several attempts (promoted by John Stuart Mill, Goldwin Smith and Herbert Spencer) to try him for murder were forestalled by a committee of admirers, which included John Ruskin, Alfred Tennyson, Thomas Carlyle and Charles Kingsley. An English grand jury declined to indict him, and a royal commission exonerated him, while criticizing his "unnecessary rigour." The episode contributed to the fall of the British government of Lord John Russell in 1866. In 1874, Eyre was finally allowed to retire on a governor's pension. He died on 30 November 1901 in Devonshire.]

The Morant Bay Rebellion turned out to be one of the defining moments in Jamaica's struggle for both political and economical enhancement. The Rebellion was the part of the long struggle of black resistance to white hegemony, in order to achieve black voting rights, self-government and finally political independence. The "Underhill meetings," chaired by Edward Underhill, were held in 1865 to discuss "universal adult suffrage" (under which all adults would have the right to vote) and political independence for the island nation.

**1866** – The English Parliament declared Jamaica a Crown Colony and established a small Executive Council of 14 persons. Its newly appointed governor, **Sir John Peter Grant** (1866-1874), wielded the only real executive or legislative power. He completely reorganized the colony, encouraged the development of banana cultivation, and reformed the judicial system. The 22 parishes were reduced to 14, Parochial Boards replaced the Vestries, and a regular police

force was formed to replace the almost useless local militia, and to ensure that no further peasant rebellions would take place.

During this period, the Governor established the Kingston Public Hospital and the Bellevue Mental Hospital. Prior to the building of parish hospitals, the wealthy were operated on in doctors' private surgeries while the poor literally "took sick and died." Transport was greatly improved by the building of roads and railways, and by the establishment of a streetcar service in Kingston. Governor Grant also initiated street lighting in Kingston by installing gas lamps.

The Rio Cobre irrigation system was built to provide water to the St. Catherine plains. Although the Mona Dam existed from 1849, most of Kingston was without piped water until Grant became governor; previously, the residents of Kingston had to rely on local wells.

Grant also introduced the Fire Brigade Service in Kingston, which used horse-drawn water wagons. Before the great earthquake of 1907, which literally destroyed 90 percent of Kingston's buildings and houses, most structures were built of wood.

The Governor increased taxation in order to implement new projects, and his main source of new funding came from the disestablishment of the Church of England. This meant that the government no longer paid the salaries of the bishop and priests of the Anglican Church or provided for its upkeep. Grant also introduced the Government Savings Bank, which in later years would become the Workers Bank before it was sold to other commercial banks.

**1869-1895** Additional East Indian laborers were brought in under the indentured servant system. However, many of them left the island when their labor contracts expired.

**1887** - Marcus Mosiah Garvey (1887-1940), born nearly 23 years after the Morant Bay Rebellion, later became a major spokesperson for the civil rights of black people in Jamaica and elsewhere in the Caribbean and North America.

**1889** - Jamaica's population totaled 639,491 (compared to 377,433 in 1844); only about 14,700 were whites, about 615,000 were black or colored, and the rest were Asian Indian and Chinese (maybe 10,000 combined).

**1899** - About 600 more East Indian laborers were introduced.

**1900's** - A wave of emigration began to Panama to work on the Panama Canal or in construction, followed by emigration to other Central American countries for railroad construction and the development of banana plantations (1880s-1920s).

**1911** - The total population of Jamaica was about 831,400 of which 15,600 were whites, about 800,000 were black and colored, and the rest were Asian Indian, Chinese and others (about 15,000 combined: immigrants and their descendants).

**1919** - Labor reform was promoted by J.A.G. Smith in the Jamaican Legislative Council, which led to the first laws regarding Workman's Compensation and Trade Union Registration: the Trade Union Law of 1919; this was preceded by a series of labor strikes that began in 1918 in the wake of World War I.

**1929** - The important social and political issues raised in 1865 were part of the charter of Garvey's **People's Political Party (PPP)** in 1929. However, only taxpayers (land and business owners) could vote at the time, so Garvey and his PPP candidates lost the election because most of his supporters were poor peasant farmers. It was then his turn to run with the baton of black civil rights until it was passed to Alexander Bustamante and Norman Manley in 1938.

**1935** - The National Reform Association was born. This was the forerunner of the **People's National Party (PNP)** led by Norman Manley, which was established in September 1938 to fight for universal adult suffrage, self-government and political independence. In 1935, out of a total population of 1,121,823, only 68,637 were eligible to vote, or a mere 6 percent.

**1936** - The **Jamaica Progressive League** was founded on August 3, in the Harlem district of New York City, and on December 6, 1937, in Kingston, Jamaica, for the purpose of “promoting social and political reforms in Jamaica,” particularly regarding the issues of universal adult suffrage, self-government and political independence.

**1938** – In January 1938, an estimated 1,000 cane cutters on the Serge Island Sugar Estate in St. Thomas Parish demonstrated their dissatisfaction with the poor working conditions and low wages. After they began a series of demonstrations, the local constabulary was summoned, which responded with force, armed with rifles and bayonets. A few days later (January 5), at the same site, there was another demonstration by workers who armed themselves with machetes, stones and bottles, the only ammunition at their disposal. Despite the efforts of Alexander Bustamante and others who addressed the demonstrators, a clash ensued between the demonstrators and the police that resulted in many injuries and arrests. Bustamante was arrested on charges of sedition and inciting an unlawful assembly but was defended by lawyer Norman Manley and was later released.

The May 1938 riots at the Frome Sugar Factory in Westmoreland, where workers revolted against the inhuman conditions under which they had been forced to work for a long time, resulted in four workers being shot and killed by the police, 13 people were hospitalized, and 105 protestors were jailed. Notwithstanding, from all accounts it was the workers themselves who started the rebellion and in the process raised both Bustamante and Manley to such positions of national prominence from which not even death has been able to remove them.

From Kingston the labor rebellion spread to the countryside and by the first week in June every parish reported strikes and arrests. The fiercest action was perhaps seen in Islington, St. Mary, where on June 3 a large crowd of strikers from surrounding estates were confronted by the police, their leader Edgar Daley who refused to surrender his stick to the police was bayoneted and then had his back broken. His angry colleagues rose to his defense and the police responded by opening fire and killing four strikers.

**1939** - In January, Bustamante and his supporters formed the **Bustamante Industrial Trade Union (BITU)**. The struggle of the peasant farmers, which began with the Morant Bay Rebellion in 1865, advanced to a higher level when Bustamante formed this trade union to address their plight. Bustamante was imprisoned for subversive activities in 1940. However, his anti-colonial efforts resulted in the granting of universal suffrage to Jamaica. After he was released from prison in 1942, Bustamante founded the **Jamaica Labour Party (JLP)** in 1943 as the political wing of the BITU.

The depression of the 1930s, coupled with blight on the banana crop, produced serious disruption and demands for political reform. A royal commission investigated the island's social and economic conditions, and recommended self-government for Jamaica. A Jamaica legislative council committee concurred, and in 1944, Jamaica held its first election. The contenders in that election were two recently formed political parties, the People's National Party (PNP), founded in 1938 by Norman W. Manley, and the Jamaica Labour Party (JLP), founded in 1943 by Manley's cousin, Sir Alexander Bustamante.

**1944** - Bustamante's party won 22 of 32 seats in the first House of Representatives, elected by universal suffrage, which made Bustamante the unofficial government leader (as Minister for Communications) until the position of Chief Minister was created in 1953. He held this position until the JLP was defeated in 1955. During 1947 and 1948 he also served as mayor of Kingston.

**1950s** - During the 1950s, the bauxite industry and the tourist trade assumed prominent roles in the economy. However, the economic gains from these enterprises did little to solve Jamaica's underlying economic problems.

**1958** - Jamaica joined other British Caribbean colonies in forming the short-lived Federation of the West Indies (1958-1962).

**1962** - Jamaica gained full independence within the British Commonwealth of Nations when it withdrew from the Federation in 1962. Jamaica's current Constitution was drafted in 1962 by a bipartisan joint committee of the Jamaican legislature.

**Postlude: 1969** - The Right Excellent Paul Bogle was named a National Hero along with George William Gordon, Marcus Garvey, Sir Alexander Bustamante and Norman Washington Manley.

## **A Chronology of Major Events since Independence in 1962**

**1962-2009** - Jamaica has traditionally had a two-party system, with power often alternating between the People's National Party (PNP a Democratic Socialist political party, founded by Norman Manley in 1938) and Jamaica Labour Party (JLP, founded in 1943 by Alexander Bustamante). The JLP governed Jamaica from Independence in 1962 to 1967 (Alexander Bustamante and Donald Sangster), from 1967-1972 (Hugh Shearer), from 1980 to 1989 (Edward Seaga), and from 2007 to the present (Bruce Golding). The PNP governed from 1972 to 1980 (Michael Manley), from 1989 to 1992 (Michael Manley), from 1992 to 2006 (Percival Noel James Patterson), and from March 2006 to September 2007 (Portia Simpson-Miller).

**1972** - In February, the PNP regained a majority in Parliament, and the late Norman Manley's son, Michael, headed a new Democratic Socialist government. Manley moved to nationalize various industries, and expanded Jamaica's programs in health and education. Manley placed price controls on a number of key products and provided consumer subsidies for others.

Internationally, Manley established friendly relations with Cuba, which the U.S. Government decried. Deteriorating economic conditions led to recurrent violence in Kingston and elsewhere during the mid-1970s, which discouraged tourism.

**1976** - Jamaica was faced with declining exports, a critical shortage of foreign exchange and investment, an unemployment rate estimated at 30–40 percent, and rampant currency speculation. The PNP nevertheless increased its parliamentary majority in the December elections that were held during a year-long State of Emergency.

**1979** - Tourism suffered another blow in January with three days of rioting in Kingston at the height of the tourist season. Meanwhile, Manley quarreled with the International Monetary Fund (IMF). The IMF responded to Jamaica's request for loan guarantees by conditioning acceptance on a set of austerity measures. Manley refused to initiate many of the market-oriented measures demanded by the IMF.

**1980** - Manley called for elections in the fall of 1980. The political campaign was marred by somewhere between 500 and 800 deaths, and was further inflamed by PNP claims that the CIA was attempting to destabilize its government. The opposition JLP won a landslide victory, and Edward Seaga became prime minister and minister of finance (1980-1989). Seaga announced a conservative economic program that brought an immediate harvest of aid from the U.S. Government and the IMF.

**1981** - In October, Jamaica broke off diplomatic relations with Cuba, and two years later it participated in the U.S.-led invasion of Grenada.

**1983** - In December, Seaga called for elections, which the PNP boycotted, leaving the JLP with all 60 seats in the House of Representatives. Seaga then implemented an IMF plan of sharp austerity, which pushed the economy into negative growth for two years.

**1986** - In May, Seaga turned away from the IMF and announced an expansionary budget. The JLP nevertheless suffered a sharp loss in July parish elections, with the PNP taking 12 of 13 municipalities. By January 1987, a new IMF agreement was in place, but the PNP's political position continued to slide.

**1989** - The elections were a good deal less tumultuous than expected. The two parties reached an agreement to control their respective partisans, and election violence was minimal. The rhetoric was also considerably less inflammatory, as the PNP's Manley ran as a more moderate candidate. Citing the deterioration of social services under Seaga, and promising to attract foreign capital, Manley again became the Prime Minister after the PNP won a powerful 45-seat bloc in the House of Representatives. Manley reversed many of Seaga's policies, but by 1992 inflation was on the rise, the economy slowed, and unemployment hovered around 20 percent.

**1992** - Manley retired, leaving the government to Percival J. Patterson, who moved further to the right from Seaga and encouraged more market-oriented reforms. Within a year of taking office, he called for elections, in which violence erupted anew and 11 died in campaign-related killings. The PNP increased its parliamentary margin to 52–8, a small consolation for a government besieged by serious political, social and economic problems.

**1992-2006** - Patterson assumed office as Prime Minister when Michael Manley resigned in 1992, at a time when the Caribbean island nation was facing the formidable challenge of securing a place in a new global order of economic liberalization and deregulation. Patterson led efforts to strengthen the country's social protection and security systems—a critical element of his economic and social policy agenda to mitigate, reduce poverty and social deprivation. His massive investments in modernization of Jamaica's infrastructure and restructuring of the country's financial sector are widely credited with having led to Jamaica's greatest period of investment in tourism, mining, ICT and energy since the 1960s. He also ended Jamaica's 18-year borrowing relationship with the IMF, allowing the country greater latitude in pursuit of its economic policies.

**1996** - Political violence resurged, following the establishment in 1995 of the rival National Democratic Movement (NDM). Clashes between party regulars in Kingston and Spanish Town led to 10 deaths in a six-month period. Vigilante killings in response to a high crime rate were also the norm in 1995 and 1996, with police reporting 22 such killings in that time span.

**1997** - In March, former Prime Minister and PNP founder Michael Manley died. In the December elections that year, the PNP remained the dominant party. It was the first time a Jamaican political party had won a third consecutive legislative victory.

**1998** - The ruling party also swept local elections in September 1998. However, the PNP presided over an increasingly troubled country, with continued economic contraction and an escalating crime wave. Much of the crime and violence was attributed to rival gangs that had begun as armed militias created by the major political parties in the 1970s, which later evolved into highly powerful organized crime networks that engaged in international drug smuggling and other illicit activities.

**1999** - In the first half of 1999 alone, an estimated 500 Jamaicans had been killed in gang-related violence. In addition, rioting followed the announcement of a 30 percent gasoline tax increase in April. With export revenues driven down by low prices and high costs, and tourism hurt by rising violence, a quick economic recovery was seen as unlikely.

**2002** - The PNP continued to dominate Jamaican politics. In the October 2002 elections, the PNP captured 52.2 percent of the vote, winning 34 seats in the 60-member Assembly. After

three years of economic stagnation, Jamaica showed only timid signs of economic recovery, but the crisis in the tourism industry continued to hurt the country's economy.

**2004** - Patterson made international headlines when, as Chairman of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), he led the regional organization in the decision to refuse recognition of the of Gérard Latortue government in Haiti following the removal of the democratically elected Jean-Bertrand Aristide from office. Patterson arranged for Aristide to take up temporary residence in Jamaica during Aristide's lawsuit against the United States and France accused the military forces of those countries of kidnapping him.

Jamaica is a full and participating member of the CARICOM, an organization of 15 Caribbean nations and dependencies. CARICOM's main purposes are to promote economic integration and cooperation among its members, to ensure that the benefits of integration are equitably shared and to coordinate foreign policy.

**2005** - In one of his final initiatives as Prime Minister, Patterson launched a program of radical transformation of Jamaica's education system aimed at development of quality human capital equipped to succeed in the competitive global economy.

**2006** - Portia Lucretia Simpson-Miller (PNP) was Jamaica's Leader of the Opposition and the country's Prime Minister from March 2006 to September 2007. She was Jamaica's first female Prime Minister and also a member of the Council of Women World Leaders, an international network of current and former women presidents and prime ministers whose mission is to mobilize the highest-level women leaders globally for collective action on issues of critical importance to women and equitable development.

**2007** - Orette Bruce Golding became the Prime Minister (and leader of the JLP), following his party's slim victory in the September 2007 general election, and became the nation's eighth PM since Independence. Golding was the founder of the National Democratic Movement (NDM). He was formerly the chairman of the JLP before he and others felt the need to split and form the NDM in 1995. In 2002, he rejoined the JLP and in November 2003 was again elected chairman of his Party.

## **The Roman Catholic Church**

Roman Catholicism was brought to Jamaica by the Spanish at the beginning of the sixteenth century. The first Spanish colony was established at Seville on the north coast in 1509, under Governor Juan de Esquivel who was appointed by Diego Colón. In 1512, King Ferdinand of Spain issued a royal charter to the Franciscan provincial instructing him to send a total of 40 missionaries to Cuba, Puerto Rico, Jamaica and the mainland of the Americas. It is not known how many of these missionaries actually arrived in Jamaica, but a Franciscan monastery had been constructed in Jamaica by 1514 (Dayfoot 1999: 30-31). The first Dominican priests had arrived in Jamaica by 1525, when the settlement of Santiago de la Vega was founded (later called Spanish Town).

In 1611, the entire population of Jamaica was only 1,510 people (including Amerindians, African slaves and Spanish colonists), and was reported to be only about 2,500 (including slaves) in 1655, when the British conquered the island. Almost all European residents in Jamaica were members of the Roman Catholic Church at the time of the British takeover, when most Roman Catholics fled the island. By 1655, almost all Amerindians had been exterminated by armed conflict and disease.

Official records show that the vast majority of the first wave of European immigrants after 1655 was made up of young Irish men and women, mostly servants, bondsmen, or bonded

servants (an estimated 2,500 by 1660). For all practical intents and purposes, this was slavery by another name as most, if not all, were not there of their own free will. Almost all Irish immigrants were Roman Catholic.

Refugees from St. Domingue (modern Haiti) began arriving in Jamaica in 1791 during the Haitian Revolution of 1791-1803. When more refugees arrived in 1792, a Roman Catholic Chapel was opened in Kingston, for the first time in about 100 years. The refugees became the main core of that church, which also included Spanish, Irish and English congregants. In 1793 through 1798 more French refugees arrived in Jamaica in considerable numbers. Many of them fled St. Domingue with very little but their lives during the revolutionary period when black slaves revolted against the French colonial government.

The first installment of freedom of worship was granted to the Roman Catholics in Jamaica in 1792. The first Catholic records in the archives of the Holy Trinity Cathedral, Kingston, date back to this year. The first priest was Anthony Quigly, and most of the Catholics under his care were French, Irish or Spanish.

Prohibited for many years, the Roman Catholic Church was officially reestablished in 1837 when a contingent of Jesuits arrived just prior to slavery being discontinued in 1838. On their return to Jamaica, Roman Catholics were only allowed to practice under very limited circumstances. A Vicariate Apostolic was established in Jamaica in 1837 under Bishop Benito Fernández (1837-1855), O.F.M., which was a suffragan of the Catholic Church in the Antilles (West Indies), an ecclesiastical region. Bishop Fernández was succeeded by Bishop James Eustace Dupeyron (1855-1872), S.J. Since 1855, all successive bishops and archbishops of Jamaica have been Jesuits until the appointment of the current archbishop (a secular priest), Archbishop Donald James Reece (2008 to date). The previous archbishop of the Archdiocese of Kingston in Jamaica (elevated to an archdiocese in 1967), between 2004 and 2008, was Lawrence Aloysius Burke, S.J.

The Jesuit order had an important impact on the Vicariate Apostolic of Jamaica, later the Archdiocese of Kingston, and included many Irish Americans -- one being the Rev. Thomas Addis Emmet (born of Irish parents in Boston, MA, in 1873, and served as bishop of the Vicariate Apostolic of Jamaica from 1930 to 1949), who was a direct descendant of the famous Irish patriot Robert Emmet.

Father Joseph J. Williams, SJ, wrote *Whence the "black Irish" of Jamaica?* (1932), in which he details many of the shipments of Irish citizens to Jamaica from Barbados and direct from "The Auld Sod." The last shipment appears to have been made in 1841 from Limerick aboard the *SS Robert Kerr*, which took seven weeks. The *Kingston Gleaner* noted of the Irish immigrants: "They landed in Kingston wearing their best clothes and temperance medals," meaning that they did not drink alcohol. Therefore, there are records spanning a period of approximately 200 years (1655-1841), which detail the importation of many thousands of mainly teen-aged Irish boys and girls to Jamaica as indentured servants, along with Irish political prisoners and common criminals.

The St. Peter and St. Paul Catholic Church at Matilda's Corner in St. Andrew Parish was built in 1850 under the direction of Father Dupont. The congregation was mostly of French, Irish and Spanish origin.

The Vicariate Apostolic of Jamaica became the Diocese of Kingston in 1956, from which the Diocese of Montego Bay was erected in 1967 (comprising a territory of 1,497 square miles with a total population of about 700,000 in 1967). The Diocese of Kingston contains a territory of 1,261 square miles and had a total population of 1,176,927 in 1970. Previously, the Diocese of Kingston had a total population of 1,827,000 (the entire population of Jamaica in 1966), which

contained 12 parishes that were served by 17 diocesan priests and 99 religious priests (a total of 116) and assisted by 66 religious brothers and 262 religious sisters (nuns). In 1966, there were only an estimated 139,508 Roman Catholics in Jamaica (about 7.6 percent). The Diocese of Mandeville was created in November 1997 (from the Diocese of Montego Bay), comprising the civil parishes of Clarendon, Manchester and Saint Elizabeth.

According to the 2001 national census, only 2.6 percent of the population was Roman Catholic (about 72,800 persons). In 2004, the Diocese of Kingston (archdiocese) reported 56,000 Catholic adherents; the Diocese of Montego Bay reported 14,926 Catholic adherents; and the Diocese of Mandeville reported 8,296 Catholic adherents, for a total of 79,222 adherents nationally.

## **Historical Overview of Religious Development since 1655**

Since the beginning of the British colonial period, Jamaican society has been strongly influenced by its pluralistic religious development. The British colonial government of Jamaica allowed settlers far more religious freedom than was possible in England. In fact, one of the first Jewish synagogues in the Caribbean region was built in Jamaica (date?).

**While European settlers tolerated most European religions, they were less accepting of African religions.** The plantation owners believed that if African religious practices were allowed without government supervision and control they might unite the slaves in a revolt against the colonial government. Although there was some basis for this fear, the African cult practitioners simply stayed out of sight during much of the colonial period. **African-derived belief systems include *Kromanti* among the Maroons (groups of fugitive slaves who survived in mountain hideaways), *Myalism-Obeah* among the plantation slaves, and later *Kumina* among the Bantu-speaking arrivals in the post-Emancipation period.**

A combination of Christian and African beliefs and practices has created several syncretistic religions within Jamaican society. The most important of these combined African Myalism with Christianity to create the *Native Baptist movement*, subsequently various expressions of *Zion Revivalism*, such as *Bedwardism*, and later *Rastafarianism* (a nativistic movement).

After the emancipation of the slaves, Jamaica again attempted to survive using indentured servitude, beginning in the mid-nineteenth century. Migrant contract workers from China and India made their way to the island and often stayed after their term of servitude ended. These new settlers played an important role in the development of the island's pluralistic religious history.

**Rastafarianism** is another African-influenced syncretistic religion that developed in Jamaica. Rastas believe in the teachings of the King James Bible, but read the text with an Africanist view. They believe that Ethiopia is heaven on earth and considered former Ethiopian Emperor Haile Selassie their religious leader. Rastafarians live in isolated African-styled communities in the island's interior and reject civil authority at every level.

Members of the Rastafarian community have complained that law enforcement officials unfairly targeted them; however, it was not clear whether such complaints reflected discrimination on the basis of religious belief or were due to the group's illegal use of marijuana as part of Rastafarian religious practices.

**Since the mid-1800s, numerous U.S.-based Protestant denominations and marginal Christian sects have arrived on the island.** Although the Church of England was the dominant religion of the plantation owners during the British colonial period, newer Protestant groups now predominate in Jamaican society. **In addition, there are a variety of non-Christian world religions.**

The religious beliefs and practices of denominations imported from the USA were particularly attractive to lower-class blacks after 1850. They adopted religious patterns taught by North American missionaries who emphasized the prohibition of alcohol, any form of dancing, listening to secular music or smoking. Specific churches and religious groups, which strongly emphasize religious practices that appeal to Afro-Caribbean cultural patterns, have been particularly successful within Jamaican society.

## **The Protestant Movement**

**Anglican chaplains** arrived with the British occupation in 1655, mainly to minister to the white English population, and the **Church of England became the Established Church in Jamaica**, although a bishop was not appointed for Jamaica until 1824. The early English and Scottish settlers brought their religions with them, which led to the establishment of the Church of England and the Church of Scotland on a limited scale. However, the Anglican chaplains were only concerned about the spiritual needs of the small white population, and for nearly a hundred years did nothing to evangelize the growing African slave population, which was considered to be the property of the white plantation owners. This attitude of white superiority and the inferiority of blacks dominated the mentality of Anglicans in Jamaica until after Emancipation in 1838.

However, in 1844, the **(Anglican) Diocesan Church Society for the Propagation of the Gospel** (1844-1853) was established under Bishop Spencer to aid in the education of thousands of children of former African slaves in Jamaica. This ministry was revived in 1861 by Bishop Courtenay as the **Jamaica Home and Foreign Missionary Society**, with a broad agenda to provide church care for neglected parts of Jamaica and to assist missionary work in West Africa (an initiative that began in Barbados).

In 1865, the Anglican Church, which as the Established Church had been financed by the British colonial government, was disestablished and had to support itself; the government no longer paid the Anglican clergy. The loss of this financial support greatly affected the work of the Anglican Church in Jamaica. **Today, the Anglican Church of Jamaica has been incorporated in the CHURCH IN THE PROVINCE OF THE WEST INDIES.**

The first nonconformist group (dissenters within the Church of England, some of whom established independent churches in England and its American colonies) to begin work in Jamaica was the **Society of Friends (Quakers) in 1671**, which was very active in the anti-slavery movement. In 1671, the English founder of the Quakers, George Fox, visited Jamaica for seven weeks and established seven meeting places.

The most radical Christian group was the Quakers who from 1776 insisted that their members in England and Pennsylvania liberate their enslaved persons or face ejection from the Society of Friends. In England, Quakers were also involved in the campaign to abolish slavery.

The Friends work remained small until the Iowa Yearly Meeting (USA) began a mission in 1881, followed by the American Friends Board of Foreign Missions in 1882. However, the Jamaica Yearly Meeting was not organized until 1941, under the leadership of Jamaican and American Quakers. The Quakers are well known for the establishment of Happy Grove High School in Hector's River, Portland, in 1898. What is not so well known is that the Quakers did pioneering educational work among East Indians.

Mary Langford, who serves the Jamaica Historical Society with distinction, published a book in 1997 about the history of Jamaican Quakers entitled, *The Fairest Isle: History of Jamaica Friends*. This book has a wealth of information about the work of the Quakers in

Jamaica, including two outstanding Quakers who made a significant contribution to Jamaica, Joseph Sturge and Lascelles Winn.

Joseph Sturge, a member of the English Society of Friends, sailed to the Caribbean in 1837 to make an inquiry into the results of the imperial Abolition Act in the British West Indies because of the many "inconsistent and contradictory" statements received from the West Indies. Winn was the planter who employed Moses Baker and allowed Baker to preach on his estates to African slaves. Baker was the one who established Baptist work in western Jamaica. So there is a connection between Quakers and Baptists.

In 1685, the first English **Congregational** pastor arrived in Jamaica and began ministering to group of "white slaves" who arrived later that year from England, some of whom were the remnants of the Duke of Monmouth's defeated army and others were prisoners "for conscience sake" (Non-Conformists). The first recorded reference to **Scottish Presbyterians** in Jamaica was in 1688.

During the mid-eighteenth century, Jamaica benefited from the beginning of the world Protestant missionary movement, whose initial phase (carried out by the **German Moravian Brethren and British Methodists**) was directed to the Caribbean region. The Moravian Church (with international headquarters in Herrnhut, Germany) was recognized by the British Parliament as an "Ancient Protestant Episcopal Church" (founded in Moravia, Germany, in 1457) and not as Dissenters or Non-Conformists. In 1754, the **Moravian Church of Britain** sent Zacharias George Caries, Thomas Shallcross and Gottlieb Haberecht to begin missionary work among the black slave population on the estates of two absentee England planters, William Foster and Joseph Foster-Barham, in St. Elizabeth Parish. Their work soon spread to neighboring plantations, and from this small beginning the **Moravian Church in Jamaica and the Cayman Islands** emerged.

In 1755, the Moravians acquired (with the agreement of the directing board in Europe) their own 700-acre sugar plantation, at New Carmel, in an effort to support themselves and their missionary activities among the slaves. The Moravians supported themselves thereafter in their missionary work by the labor of 30 or 40 slaves. As a result, their credibility among the slaves generally was low and their success in converting them to Christianity was correspondingly low. The estate was sold in 1823 and the church headquarters was relocated to Fairfield.

Although Gottlieb Haberecht died in 1755, his replacements arrived in 1756: Christian Rauch and Mr. Schulz from America, where Rauch had spent fifteen years working among the Native American Indians. However, the new arrivals disagreed with Caries and Shallcross about the conditions to be met before a slave could be baptized. The disagreement lost them the respect of many and caused confusion among those awaiting baptism. As a result, the number of people attending religious services started to fall and did not recover until 1764 when a Mr. Schlegel arrived.

The first building used exclusively as a Moravian church was erected in 1820 at New Eden. Prior to that, religious services were held in the hall of the missionaries' residence or outside under shade trees. Another eleven church building were constructed during the next thirty years: 1826 at Fairfield and first school near New Carmel; 1828 at New Carmel and Irwin Hill; 1830 at New Fulnec; 1834 at New Bethlehem; 1835 at Nazareth and New Hope (Parker's Bay); 1837 at Beaufort; 1839 at Lititz; 1841 at Bethabara; 1847 at Springfield; and in 1849 at Bethany.

Following Emancipation in 1838, the Moravians were involved in the establishment of "free villages" for ex-slaves, including one at Maidstone (Nazareth) in Manchester, and others at Beeston Spring and at Beaufort, near Darliston, in Westmoreland. The Moravian Church has always considered education to be an important part of its mission and as a result established 46

schools and two colleges. The first school, at Lititz, in 1826 was also the first primary school of any kind in Jamaica.

The 1860s in Jamaica and the West Indies was a time of religious revival as a result of the general Great Awakening or revival taking place in North America and the British Isles. The revival among Moravians in Jamaica continued until Mr. Schlegel died in 1770. Thereafter, little progress was made until 1809. The work prospered again, particularly after the close of Old Carmel estate in 1823, with membership growing dramatically during Apprenticeship (which started in 1834) and after Emancipation in 1838. By the mid-1800s, Moravian adherents had reached 13,129, which included 4,249 communicants; in addition, the Moravians administered 43 schools with a total of 1,728 boys and 1,280 girls.

Today, there are about 70 Moravian churches in Jamaica with an estimated 28,000 adherents (2001 national census). The Moravian Church founded and continues to oversee nearly 50 educational establishments at all levels, including Bethlehem Moravian College (formerly Bethlehem Teacher Training College), the first such institution in Jamaica. The Lititz All Age School in St. Elizabeth Parish is the successor to the first primary school established in Jamaica. It accommodated about 300 students. It is one of a total of 46 schools established by the Moravian Church across Jamaica: "Where ever the Moravians founded a church, they also built a school."

The Moravian Church is a member of the World Council of Churches. Rev. Dr. Paul Gardner, the President of the PEC (the Executive Board of the church), is a member of the World Council of Churches governing body, the Central Committee. The Moravian Church was a founding member of the Jamaica Council of Churches.

**American Methodist Bishop Thomas Coke** (b.1747–d.1814), known as the “Father of Methodist Missions,” visited Kingston early in 1789, and before the year was out the Rev. William Hammett arrived from the USA to establish the first Methodist mission, which remained under the authority of the **British Conference of the Methodist Church**. In 1793, Dr. Coke opened a Methodist mission in Martha Brae, Trelawny. **The Jamaican Methodist Conference** was organized in 1816. The Methodists as well as Quakers, Moravians and Baptists benefited from their support of the anti-slavery movement. The Methodist Church of Jamaica is now a part of the larger Conference of the Methodist Church in the Caribbean and the Americas.

In the meantime, in 1782, George Liele (c. 1751–1828), a former black slave (born in Virginia) in the British colony of Georgia, left the territory of the emerging United States of America (USA) with a group of British Loyalists who had been driven out by the American Revolution (1775-1783) and relocated in Jamaica. He was converted to Protestantism in 1773 at an interracial Baptist church in Georgia, where he later became a Baptist preacher and established **the first Negro Baptist churches (called Ethiopian Baptist) in the USA**, beginning in Savannah, Georgia, in 1775 (Gayle 1982: 6-12).

**After arriving in Jamaica in 1782, Liele founded the first Baptist churches of any kind on the island at Kingston.** Within two years of his arrival, Liele began to preach in a small house in Kingston. A "good smart congregation," it was organized with four other blacks who had come from North America. The Baptist congregation eventually purchased property in the east end of Kingston and constructed a brick meeting house in 1789. This church was named **Windward Road Baptist Church** and became the “mother church” to many of the other Baptist churches founded in Jamaica.

Liele reported to his Baptist friends in England that raising money for the new building was especially difficult in his circumstances. "The chief part of our congregation [is] slaves, and their owners allow them, in common, but three or four bits per week for allowance to feed

themselves," he wrote. "And out of so small a sum we cannot expect anything that can be of service from them."

The free black people who belonged to Liele's church were generally poor, but "they are all willing, both free and slaves, to do what they can." Liele himself farmed and hauled goods with his horses and wagon. He lamented that the businesses kept him "too much entangled with the affairs of the world," but felt it also set a good example.

Despite initial opposition from some whites, Liele's congregation grew to about 350 members by 1790 and 500 by 1802, including a few whites. Liele accepted Methodists as members after they had been baptized by immersion but did not receive slaves without "a few lines from their owners of their good behavior toward them and religion."

Nevertheless, as he had in the Savannah, Georgia, area, Liele prized the freedom to preach the gospel and reached those yet under the yoke of slavery. He asked for help to obtain a larger church bell – one that could be heard two miles away – for the steeple of the Baptist meeting house. The reason, he said, was "to give notice to our people, and more particularly to the owners of slaves that are in our society, that they may know the hour on which we meet, and be satisfied that our servants return in due time."

Next Liele helped organize other black Baptist congregations, and he promoted free schools for slaves and for free black Jamaicans. Some of the other black Baptist leaders were Thomas Swigle, George Gibbs and Moses Baker, all of whom had been born in the British colonies in North America and relocated in Jamaica after the American Revolution. All of Liele's associates were black Baptist pastors who adhered to strict Baptist principles, as witnessed by their adoption of "The Covenant of the Anabaptist Church, begun in America, December 1777, and in Jamaica, December 1783," which provided a doctrinal basis for Jamaican Baptists and English Baptists to work together in harmony. On his ministerial burdens, Liele wrote in the early 1790s (Gayle 1982:15, 20-32):

I have deacons and elders, a few; and teachers of small congregations in the town and country, where convenience suits them to come together; and I am pastor.... I preach, baptize, administer the Lord's Supper, and travel from one place to another to publish the gospel and settle church affairs, all freely.

However, Liele was charged with "seditious preaching" and thrown into prison in 1797. Although the original charge was dismissed, his inability to satisfy debts incurred in the building of his church kept him incarcerated for three years.

The passing of an Act in 1802 (followed by others in 1804 and 1805) by the Jamaican Legislature "restricted preaching to slaves" on threat of imprisonment and accompanied by whipping if convicted. According to this legislation (Gayle 1982:30-31):

...any person, not duly qualified according to the laws of the island, who should presume to preach or teach in any assembly or meeting of negroes or people of colour, was declared a rogue and vagabond, and ordered to be treated as such. The punishment for the first offence was confinement to hard labour in the house of correction for one month; and for every subsequent offence, six months each.

Although this legislation was not always vigorously enforced until after 1810, there were many instances of very severe persecution, whipping and murder. Despite this growing persecution, crowds overflowed Liele's church, some standing outdoors during worship to hear

him preach. When pressed into service during a British call to arms, Liele found it more and more difficult to meet the spiritual needs of "the poor Ethiopian Baptists of Jamaica." Yet the Baptist presence in Jamaica continued to expand, growing to more than 20,000 within five years of Liele's death in 1828. However, many of Liele's fellow pastors and lay leaders suffered great persecution for practicing their Baptist faith. Some of the churches founded by Liele have survived until today, although many others were short-lived for a variety of reasons. The East Queen Street Baptist Church in Kingston was organized in 1816; the Hanover Street Baptist Church in Kingston; and two other Baptist churches in Spanish Town (then the island's capital).

Liele is considered the "founder" of two of the largest religious traditions in the country: the mainline Protestant denomination known as the **Jamaica Baptist Union** and the African-derived religion known as the **Native Baptist movement**. The latter emerged in the 1830s under the leadership of Myalmen and Obeahmen who incorporated elements of Protestantism into their African belief systems and utilized the name "Baptist" to give their movement some legitimacy.

The **Jamaica Baptist Mission** was founded in 1814 after the arrival of John Rowe, the first white missionary sent to Jamaica by the **Baptist Missionary Society (BMS)**, based in London. At the time of his arrival, Rowe reported that the total Baptist membership in Jamaica "stood at about 8,000" among the churches established by Liele and his associates in the parishes of Kingston, St. Catherine, St. Thomas, St. Mary, St. James and most likely St. Ann. In June 1830, the Rev. William Knibb arrived in Falmouth, also under BMS sponsorship. During this period, the black Baptist pastors and deacons worked in harmony with the white English Baptist missionaries, although the latter began to usurp leadership in the orthodox Baptist movement. In 1843, the Baptists established Calabar Theological College as a training center for the local ministry, and also trained and sent black Jamaican missionaries to other countries during the latter half of the nineteenth century. In 1849, some of the Baptist churches in Jamaica came together to establish the **Jamaica Baptist Union**, which declared its independence from the BMS in 1856.

Starting in the 1830s, in anticipation of emancipation from slavery, English Baptist missionaries in Jamaica pioneered the concept of establishing "free villages" for the settlement of freed slaves, with help from an English Quaker abolitionist, Joseph Sturge (b.1793-d.1859), who founded the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society in 1839 based on the ambitious objective of achieving emancipation and an end to slavery worldwide.

Many plantation owners and others in the landowning class made it clear they would never sell land to freed slaves, but agreed to provide housing on their plantations at the rents they chose. The aim of the estate owners was to prevent the movement of free laborers between employers, and keep labor costs low or negligible after the abolition of slavery. To circumvent this, the predominantly Afro-Jamaican Baptist chapels approached Baptist and Quaker contacts in England to instruct land agents in London to buy Jamaican land and hold it for the establishment of "free villages" that would not be controlled by the estate owners.

For example, in 1835, using land agents and Baptist financiers in England, the Afro-Jamaican congregation of the Rev. James Phillippo (a British Baptist pastor and abolitionist in Jamaica) were able to discreetly purchase land, without the knowledge of the plantation owners, in the hills of Saint Catherine parish. Under the scheme, the land became available to the freed slaves upon emancipation for division into lots at not-for-profit rents, or for full ownership and title, where they could live free from their former masters' control.

Henry Lunan, formerly an enslaved headman at Hampstead Estate, purchased the first plot in the very first "free village" or Baptist Free Village scheme to come to fruition at *Sligoville* in Saint Catherine Parish (named after the Marquess of Sligo, the Jamaican Governor at the time of abolition), located ten miles north of Spanish Town. In 2007, a plaque was erected at Witter Park,

Sligoville, on May 23 as a Labor Day event to commemorate the establishment of Jamaica's first Free Village.

The liberation of Jamaican slaves at midnight on 1 August 1838 was a source of great joy for Jamaicans and English Baptist missionary anti-slavery activists. However, Emancipation in the British West Indies did not end the trans-Atlantic slave trade. The desire of some freed Jamaicans to return to Africa to assist in the anti-slavery movement as well as to be instrumental in the spread of the Gospel sparked a wave of enthusiasm for further humanitarian activity.

In 1839, Jamaican Baptists proposed the establishment of a mission to West Africa. When the proposal ran into opposition, BMS missionary **William Knibb** (b.1803-d.1845) and two Jamaican Baptists, **Henry Beckford** and Edward Barrett, took the matter directly to BMS officials in the United Kingdom.

Known for his anti-slavery views, Knibb envisioned starting a BMS field along lines proposed by Rufus Anderson of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (Congregational) or Henry Venn of the Church Missionary Society (Anglican). Anderson and Venn promoted self-supporting, self-governing, self-propagating churches under native leaders, and their ideas strongly influenced Baptist practice.

For their part, the Jamaican Baptists shared an interest in establishing a Jamaican undertaking independent of the London-based BMS. The Jamaican Baptists envisioned a self-supporting, self-governing, self-propagating mission, but they sought inter-confessional support rather than limiting the appeal to the Baptist constituency alone. The idea of giving authenticity and purpose to a newly emancipated people was crucial. The freed Jamaicans would assume a particular role in the advance of Christian missions in Africa. As well, the mission would provide a stimulus for the repatriation of Afro-Caribbeans to Africa.

At a meeting on 22 May 1840, Knibb, Beckford and Barrett made their appeal for the creation of a Baptist Mission to West Africa. Their appearance provided the impetus for the BMS to open a new field in West Africa staffed primarily by Jamaicans. The BMS would be responsible only for white and black missionaries that it appointed, and not for freed Jamaicans who went to Africa as settlers. At the same time, the BMS committed itself to strengthening its work in Jamaica and commissioned ten new English missionaries for Jamaica. Two years later, in 1842, Jamaican Baptists formally created the **Jamaican Baptist Missionary Society (JBMS)** to promote ministry and mission in West Africa, the Caribbean and Central America. Between 1841 and 1888 a joint mission was conducted in West Africa by the London-based BMS and the Kingston-based JBMS. The JBMS sent its first missionaries to Honduras (Bay Islands) in 1846, Panama in 1850, St. Andrews Island (Colombia) in 1860, Costa Rica in 1887, and Belize and Panama in 1893.

**The British and Foreign Bible Society (BFBS)** first arrived in Jamaica in 1810 and began to distribute Bibles, New Testaments and Scripture Portions among the inhabitants, with the support of local Protestant churches. The first **Presbyterian Church in Jamaica**, affiliated with the Established Church of Scotland, opened for worship on 4 April 1819 in Kingston. The first Presbyterian mission station was founded in Jamaica by the **Scottish Missionary Society** at Hampden, near the St. James and Trelawny borders, in 1824. The United Free Church of Scotland (also Presbyterian) was established in Jamaica in 1824. The Jamaican Missionary Presbytery, affiliated with the Church of Scotland, was established in 1836. This jurisdiction was later known as the Union of the Presbyterian Church of Jamaica and Grand Cayman.

**Congregational missionaries** supported by the London Missionary Society arrived in 1834, followed by missionaries of the **American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions of the Congregational Church in New England**, who arrived in 1837. The Congre-

gational Union of Jamaica was established in 1877.

**The Great Revival of 1860-1862** impacted Jamaican society to such an extent that most Protestant churches, regardless of denomination, were full to overflowing with those seeking spiritual renewal. Below is a description of some of the results of the revival (Tony Cauchi, "The 1860 Revival in Jamaica").

It was during September 1860, that this unprecedented evangelical awakening began among the Moravians in St. Elizabeth Parish, in the southwest. It soon spread like wild fire, first to the three parishes of St. James, Hanover, and Westmoreland, causing a sensation in local congregations, regardless of denomination. Eastwards the movement quickened Mandeville and spread along the coast to villages and hamlets, eventually affecting the entire island - from Montego Bay to St. Thomas, from St. Ann's Bay to Savanna-la-Mar.

The most notable feature of this awakening was prayer. People whose lips seemed solely accustomed to curse and to swear now prayed as fluently as if such petition had been the daily employment of their lives. The prayer meetings seemed to generate a supernatural force which carried the multitudes along on a wave of irresistible power which, in turn, produced passionate repentance, astonishing moral reformation and fervent longing to know and love and serve the Lord Jesus Christ...

The Baptists announced more than 6,000 baptized or restored to membership with another 6,000 applying for baptism and fellowship. So great was the Congregationalist growth that the London Missionary Society, by 1867, considered the field sufficiently evangelized, that it withdrew its missionaries completely. The United Presbyterian Church of Scotland announced "the most remarkable and encouraging news that have ever come from Jamaica." Their church membership grew by almost 25% and by the close of 1860 there were 1,928 candidates awaiting admission to membership, and one year later another 1,703.

The Wesleyan Methodist Circuit at Montego Bay experienced an exceptional reviving, marked by "strong crying with tears," with sinners wailing aloud for mercy and many of these people prostrated by conviction. Some 800 in regular membership welcomed 547 professed converts. There were vigorous movements in Lucea and Brown's Town circuit. Around St. Ann's Bay Wesleyan congregation had 150 on trial in a regular membership of 500 or so. This was typical of the north coast circuits.

On the south coast, Clarendon circuit churches were crowded to excess, with 400 on trial and a membership of 800. Daily meetings for prayer were conducted also in Spanish Town, with 120 converts "on trial," the regular membership being 650. Several people were prostrated for days on end. By early 1862 Methodists in Kingston had added 708 to membership, with another eighty-two still "on trial;" Montego Bay (807) had added 708, with 220 "on trial;" Spanish Town (655) had admitted 210 with 126 "on trial."

### **A Chronology of the Founding of Protestant Denominations between 1850 and 1899:**

- 1858 - Christian Church and Churches of Christ
- 1865 - Friends United Meeting World Ministry
- 1876 - United Christian Missionary Society, Christian Church (later, Disciples of Christ)
- 1880 - African Methodist Episcopal Church
- 1883 - The Salvation Army (1914)

- 1885 - Christian Church-Disciples of Christ organized
- 1893 - Seventh-Day Adventist, General Conference
- 1896 - Christian and Missionary Alliance (in 1949, their work became affiliated with the Missionary Church)

The **Seventh-Day Adventist Church** began work in Jamaica in 1893, and since then has enjoyed great success. The **Northern Caribbean University** (NCU) is a tertiary level academic facility in Mandeville, Manchester Parish, in west-central Jamaica operated by the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Founded in 1907 as the **West Indian Training School** in Bog Walk, St. Catherine Parish, it is the oldest private tertiary educational institution in Jamaica.

In 2001, Adventist adherents in Jamaica totaled 10.8 percent (about 302,400) of the national population (national census data). According to the denomination's international statistical report for 2007, the various Jamaican conferences (Central, East, North and West) reported a total of 602 churches with 230,195 adherents (end of 2007). Jamaica is part of the West Indies Union Conference within the Inter-American Division of the General Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

On 26 February 2009, the former president of the West Indies Union Conference of Seventh-Day Adventist Church, Dr. Patrick Allen, replaced Sir Kenneth Hall as Governor General of Jamaica. Allen is the first ordained minister to be sworn in as governor general and the first Seventh-Day Adventist to ascend to the post. Allen, 58, is the second-youngest person to serve, behind Jamaica's first governor general, Sir Kenneth Blackburn, who was 55 when he became governor general. Allen achieved a good reputation for his activism and for consistently calling on the Christian Church to take the forefront in issues concerning HIV/AIDS, teenage pregnancy, spousal abuse, and crime and violence.

**The Church of God (7<sup>th</sup> Day)** is related historically to the Church of God (Seventh Day), which split into two factions in 1933: the Church of God (Seventh Day) in Stanberry, MO (later moved to Denver, CO) and the Church of God (7<sup>th</sup> Day) in Salem, WV. Elder Dugger was affiliated with the Salem, WV, and moved to Israel in 1953 to establish its world headquarters and publish the *Mount Zion Reporter*. Many of the churches affiliated with this movement use the name "Mt. Zion Church of God (7<sup>th</sup> Day)." This denomination (headquarters in Jerusalem, Israel) reports affiliated churches in the USA, Canada, Mexico, the Caribbean (USVI, Antigua, Dominica, French Guiana, Grenada, Jamaica, St. Lucia, St. Martin, Trinidad-Tobago, St. Vincent), Central and South America, Africa, Australia, New Zealand, England and India (source: <http://www.cog7day.org/>).

**The Church of God in Jamaica (Anderson, IN).** On 14 January 1907 – at 3:30 pm – a devastating earthquake hit Jamaica followed by disaster, fire, looting, etc. On 30 July 1907, a young man of twenty-four, his wife and twenty-month old son landed in Kingston, made their way through the ruins of King Street, and had their first meal at a park.

As no one had met them at the dock, George Olson left his wife Nellie and son Daniel in the park and went to find Isaac Delevante, who had sent an urgent appeal to *The Gospel Trumpet*, published by the Church of God (Anderson, IN), for missionaries to be sent to Jamaica. Delevante had just received the letter from the Church of God in the USA when there was a knocking at the gate: there stood George Olson. After lodging was obtained, the Olsons settled in and began to learn about life in Jamaica and its spiritual needs. The Olsons along with several new converts formed the first nucleus of the **Church of God in Jamaica in August 1907**. The new missionaries depended entirely on God, as they had no assured income from their headquarters in

Anderson, Indiana. The Church of God Missionary Board was not established until 1911 and the Olson's received no regular financial support until 1919.

As faith missionaries, many times they did not know how the next meal would be provided for them and the workers living with them. Yet they travelled from Kingston to other parishes to share the good news. Any offer of hospitality was welcome, and a ride, even in an ox cart, was most appreciated. The work grew, and in four years preaching points had been established in twelve places. In Kingston, worship services were held in Mark Lane, Rum Lane, Smith Lane, in a tent on Highholborn Street, and later at 55a Highholborn Street. In 1914, the Highholborn Street Church was dedicated, and by 1928 it had to be enlarged to accommodate a larger attendance.

The first Assembly Meeting was held in 1908 with C. E. Orr from Anderson (Indiana) as a special guest. The next year, when N. S. Duncan visited for two weeks, the second Assembly was held. This was an outstanding event, as **George W. Cohen** and **George Downie** were baptized and George Olson was ordained to the ministry.

In 1910, with E. E. Byrum from Anderson and A. D. Khan from India, the Third Assembly Meeting was held. Much publicity was given to the meeting by "The Daily Gleaner"; one of these services was held in the East Queen Street Baptist Church and another at the Parade. A large number of people were present.

The following year **George W. Cohen** resigned his work in the Public Works Department and devoted full-time to the ministry. He labored at Port Antonio for 16 years, at Frankfield for six years, and then at Highholborn Street.

Other early ministers were: A. S. McNeil (1909-1927); John A. Mason (1909-1921); D.A. Hines (1914-1952); Miss Amy Lopez (1914-1923) and Mrs. Nellie Olson, both of whom were ordained. Early missionaries were: Archie and Rebecca Rather (1919-1924); George and Maud Coplin (1923-1925); Frank and Jennie Steimla (1924-1943); and Miss Edith Young (1927-1964).

Between 1907 and 1932, when the Silver Anniversary celebration was held, the work had grown to include 66 churches with 1,800 members, 70 Sunday Schools with 2,900 members, and 16 Young People's Fellowships. Ten years later there were 80 churches with 2,000 members, 78 Sunday Schools with 3,884 members and the property was valued at \$17,000. There were also 18 ordained ministers and a large number of local leaders.

The work grew in other ways. **The Gospel Messenger** was printed monthly; the **Jamaica Bible Institute** was started in 1926 and the first three graduates were R. U. Smith, K. D. Headlam and Gladys Campbell (later Mrs. Headlam).

There were hardships, discouragements, ridicule (the Wash Foot Society), but there was missionary zeal and enthusiasm. Prayer meetings and Sunday Schools were held in homes; tracts were distributed, street meetings held and the sick visited. Converts were added daily to the Church for "the people had a mind to work," according to an early report.

**The New Testament Church of God** began in Jamaica in 1917 by Evangelist J. Wilson Bell, a Jamaican Pentecostal preacher who lived in Kingston. The official record shows that the church was formally organized in 1925 by a U.S. missionary, the Rev. J. S. Llewelyn, who was sent to Jamaica by the Church of God (Cleveland, TN) to work with Rudolph Smith, Henry Hudson and Percival Graham. The name "New Testament Church of God" was later chosen by church leaders because there was another group operating in the Jamaica that had incorporated the name "Church of God" (Anderson, IN). The Church of God in Leicesterfield, in the parish of Clarendon, hosted our very first national convention.

From a small but vibrant group, by the year 1935, the Church had grown to 53 organized branches across Clarendon, St. Ann, Manchester, St. Elizabeth and Trelawny. Pastor Henry

Hudson was appointed the Jamaican Overseer in 1935. By 1940, the New Testament Church of God was well established all over Jamaica, and the churches producing their own preachers and youth leaders. By 1941, the church was preparing to send missionaries to other Caribbean islands.

A delegation from the denominational headquarters was sent to Jamaica to evaluate what was happening, and they reported the following: “The ministers of Jamaica are mostly young men and women ... with an undaunted courage and determination to evangelize the land of Jamaica. They are studious and loyal and the results are shown in progress.”

In 2004, this denomination celebrated 79 years of official ministry in Jamaica (since 1925) and over 86 years unofficially (since 1917), and it is still growing. In 2004, there were 328 churches that were served by 255 ministers in 63 districts, with a District Overseer who supervises the three to eight churches in his own district. The Administrative Bishop supervises the work in both Jamaica and the Cayman Islands. The District Overseer has an Island Executive Council of 12 ordained ministers who administer church business.

In 2008, the New Testament Church of God reported 361 churches in Jamaica and an active membership of 92,136. This translates to about 200,000 members and adherents worshipping on a typical Sunday. The 361 churches were served by 289 pastors—26 of whom were women (November 2008). This is one of the largest denominations in Jamaica. It has membership in both the Jamaica Association of Full Gospel Churches and the Jamaican Association of Evangelicals.

The **Church of God of Prophecy** grew out of a Pentecostal movement in the USA during the early 1900s, where fervent seekers of God not only sought to reform their respective churches (denominations) but also to denounce all man-made creeds in preference for the Holy Scriptures and were allegedly rewarded by miracles and the outpouring of the Holy Ghost in "fire-baptism."

A similar fervency occurred in Jamaica during the 1920s and 1930s with the two most significant dates being 1929 and 1935. In the 1920s a number of Jamaican ministers and lay preachers felt moved by God to minister in ways that were not always in accord with the message and style of the established churches in the island at the time. These preachers included Rudolph C. Smith and J. A. Riley. **They banded together as the “Bible Church of God” with the first one established at Main Ridge in Clarendon Parish in 1929.** In the 1930's, however, the ministers and members of **the Bible Church of God established a relationship with the international Church of God of Prophecy (COGP), with headquarters in Cleveland, Tennessee, and joined this organization in 1935.** Under the Overseer Rudolph C. Smith (formerly with the New Testament Church of God), the first local congregation was established under the banner of the COGP at Danvers Pen in St. Thomas in 1935.

**The COGP** claims to be “a dynamic Bible-believing and Spirit-filled fellowship that embraces believers of all social classes, races and backgrounds, united in seeking to reflect the Person and work of Jesus Christ and to fulfill the Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-19 and Acts 1:8) in Jamaica and the Cayman Islands.”

In 2008, there were 286 local COGP congregations (with an estimated 25,000 members) scattered across the length and breadth of Jamaica, and one on the island of Grand Cayman. The average membership in each of these local churches was approximately 80 baptized members with a following of more than twice that number (adherents). The COGP presence throughout Jamaica allows for the vast majority of the population to easily visit a congregation where they are offered “a warm welcome, spirit-filled worship, fervent evangelism, Biblical teaching and earnest preparation for our Lord's return.”

The COGP in Jamaica and the Cayman Islands is administered through the National Offices at 6 Phoenix Avenue, Kingston 10, Jamaica. Since August 1998, Bishop Clayton N. Martin has been the National Overseer of Jamaica, the Cayman Islands and Guyana, following his appointment in the 1998 General (International) Assembly, replacing Bishop Arthur C. Moss.

In addition to the National Overseer, the staff of the National Office includes two administrative assistants, the secretary to the National Overseer, the National Treasurer, the National Accountant, the SBR/ Sales Representative, and the Office Assistant. For administrative efficiency, the work of the church is divided departmentally into ministry areas and geographically into parishes/districts as appointed by the National Overseer.

### **A Chronology of the Founding of Protestant Denominations by Decades, since 1900:**

- 1913 - **Pentecostal Bands of the World** (organized 1885 with headquarters in Indianapolis, Indiana; at the annual conference of 1925, its name was changed to “Missionary Bands of the World”—doctrinally, it is a holiness body similar to the Free Methodist Church; in 1958, the **Missionary Bands of the World** merged into the Wesleyan Methodist Church, now a constituent part of the Wesleyan Church).
- 1916 - **Christian Catholic Church** (founded by John Alexander Dowie in Chicago, IL, who later founded the “City of Zion” on 6,600 acres on Lake Michigan, which became a communal economic enterprise of church members for many years; affiliated groups were established in other states and countries; in 1975, this denomination joined the National Association of Evangelicals in the USA).
- 1917 - **Church of God (Anderson, IN)** —a non-Pentecostal holiness body.
- 1919 - **Pilgrim Holiness Church** (merged in 1968 with the Wesleyan Methodist Church to form the **Wesleyan Church**, with headquarters in Indianapolis, IN)
- 1923 - Christian Brethren (also known as Plymouth Brethren)
- 1924 - The City Mission (Pentecostal)
- 1925 - Church of God World Missions (Cleveland, TN)
- 1927 - Seventh-Day Baptist Missionary Society
- 1929 - Bible Church of God (became Church of God of Prophecy in 1935)
  
- 1930 - United Pentecostal Church International (other sources give 1947)
- 1931 - Church of God (Seventh-Day) Missions
- 1933 - Church of God (Holiness) Mission
- 1933 - Pentecostal Ministerial Association
- 1937 - Assemblies of God, Foreign Missions (Pentecostal) (other sources say 1941)
- 1939 - Baptist Mid-Missions
- 1939 - Child Evangelism Fellowship
  
- 1942 - Shiloh Apostolic Church of Jamaica, Inc. (incorporated in 1962)
- 1945 - World Team (West Indies Mission); the Evangelical Church in the West Indies.
- 1945 - Church of United Brethren in Christ
- 1945 - National Baptist Convention of America
- 1949 - The Missionary Church, World Partners (absorbed the work begun by the Christian and Missionary Alliance in 1896)

- 1949 - Open Bible Standard Missions, Inc.
- 1952 - Source of Light Ministries International
- 1955 - Virginia Mennonite Board of Missions
- 1958 - Back to the Bible International

**TABLE OF LARGEST PROTESTANT DENOMINATIONS IN JAMAICA IN 1960**

|    | DENOMINATION NAME                         | NUMBER OF CONG. | ESTIMATED MEMBERS | COM-MUNITY |
|----|---|-----------------|-------------------|------------|
| 1  | ANGLICAN CHURCH                           |                 | 44,000            |            |
| 2  | SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH              |                 | 27,000            |            |
| 3  | JAMAICAN BAPTIST UNION                    |                 | 26,000            |            |
| 4  | METHODIST CHURCH IN CARIBBEAN & AMERICAS  |                 | 21,000            |            |
| 5  | ASSEMBLIES OF GOD*                        |                 | 20,000            |            |
| 6  | CHURCH OF GOD (CLEVELAND, TN)*            |                 | 20,000            |            |
| 7  | PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF SCOTLAND           |                 | 12,000            |            |
| 8  | BRETHREN AND HOLINESS CHURCHES            |                 | 10,000            |            |
| 9  | OTHER BAPTIST CHURCHES                    |                 | 10,000            |            |
| 10 | CHURCHES OF CHRIST                        |                 | 7,000             |            |
| 11 | MORAVIAN CHURCH                           |                 | 6,000             |            |
| 12 | CHRISTIAN CHURCH - DISCIPLES OF CHRIST    |                 | 4,000             |            |
| 13 | CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH                     |                 | 3,000             |            |
|    | ASSOCIATED GOSPEL ASSEMBLIES              |                 |                   |            |
|    | JAMAICA MENNONITE CHURCH                  |                 |                   |            |
|    | OPEN BIBLE STANDARD CHURCHES*             |                 |                   |            |
|    | PENTECOSTAL CHURCH OF GOD OF AMERICA*     |                 |                   |            |
|    | RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS – QUAKER     |                 |                   |            |
|    | SHILOH APOSTOLIC CHURCH OF JAMAICA, INC.* |                 |                   |            |
|    | THE MISSIONARY CHURCH                     |                 |                   |            |
|    | UNITED PENTECOSTAL CHURCH*                |                 |                   |            |

\* Pentecostal denominations

Source: McGavran 1962:12

In 1961, the first indigenous and independent nondenominational Faith Mission agency, **International Missionary Fellowship (IMF)**, was founded in Jamaica. It began through the vision of three men to harness the potential that they saw in Jamaicans for foreign missionary service: David Ho, a Chinese-Jamaican from the Brethren Assembly (Open Plymouth Brethren) movement; Richard Bell, an Englishman serving with Inter Schools/Inter Varsity Christian Fellowship, working among secondary and tertiary students in the Caribbean; and Thomas Northern, an American working with the Tabernacle Churches of St. Ann Parish. The IMF operated a Missionary Training School in Alexandria, St. Ann. Until its demise about 1978, the IMF recruited, trained and sent out 19 Jamaicans and 15 other Caribbean nationals to 13 countries to serve as transcultural missionaries.

More recently, a Jamaican Mission Sending Agency, **NEST (Networking, Equipping and Sending Team for World Evangelisation)**, has been established to continue the same work of promoting, recruiting, equipping, sending and supporting Jamaican young people in cross-

cultural missions. They sent out their first missionary to northern Ethiopia to work in partnership with the American agency Sudan Interior Mission (SIM) on January 22, 2003.

**Chronology continued...**

- 1962 - Protestant Reformed Churches of the USA - The Protestant Reformed Churches of Jamaica
- 1965 - A merger of Presbyterians, Congregationalists and the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) created the **United Church in Jamaica and the Cayman Islands**.
- 1966 - African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church
- 1966 - Church of the Nazarene, World Missions
  
- 1970 - Mennonite Central Committee
- 1972 - Baptist Bible Fellowship International
- 1974 - Baptist International Missions
- 1974 - Ministries in Action
- 1975 - Partners International
- 1978 - CSI Ministries
- 1979 - Faith Christian Fellowship

**TABLE OF LARGEST PROTESTANT DENOMINATIONS IN JAMAICA IN 1980**

|    | DENOMINATION NAME  | NUMBER OF CONG. | ESTIMATED MEMBERS | COM-MUNITY |
|----|--|-----------------|-------------------|------------|
| 1  | SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH                               |                 | 53,865            |            |
| 2  | ANGLICAN CHURCH  |                 | 52,600            | 73,000     |
| 3  | JAMAICAN BAPTIST UNION                                     |                 | 34,000            | 102,000    |
| 4  | METHODIST CHURCH IN CARIBBEAN & AMERICAS                   |                 | 19,479            |            |
| 5  | CHURCH OF GOD OF PROPHECY*                                 |                 | 11,200            |            |
| 6  | MORAVIAN CHURCH  |                 | 8,500             |            |
| 7  | UNITED CHURCH OF JAMAICA AND GRAND CAYMAN                  |                 | 5,500             | 12,000     |
| 8  | CHURCH OF GOD (ANDERSON, IN)                               |                 | 2,421             |            |
| 9  | NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH OF GOD (CLEVELAND, TN)*               |                 | ??                |            |
| 10 | ASSOCIATED GOSPEL ASSEMBLIES                               |                 | 1,800             |            |
| 11 | ASSEMBLIES OF GOD*   |                 | 1,798             | 2,700      |
| 12 | WESLEYAN HOLINESS CHURCH (WAS PILGRIM HOLINESS UNTIL 1968) |                 | 1,549             |            |
| 13 | CHURCH OF THE UNITED BRETHREN IN CHRIST                    |                 | 1,009             |            |
| 14 | OPEN BIBLE STANDARD CHURCHES*                              |                 | 1,000             |            |
| 15 | SEVENTH-DAY BAPTIST CHURCH                                 |                 | 965               |            |
| 16 | RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS – QUAKER                      |                 | 750               |            |
| 17 | PENTECOSTAL CHURCH OF GOD OF AMERICA*                      |                 | 701               |            |
| 18 | JAMAICA MENNONITE CHURCH                                   |                 | 318               |            |
| 19 | INTERNATIONAL CHURCH FOURSQUARE GOSPEL*                    |                 | 291               |            |
|    | AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL ZION CHURCH                    |                 |                   |            |
|    | BRETHREN ASSEMBLIES  |                 |                   |            |
|    | CHURCH OF GOD (HOLINESS)                                   |                 |                   |            |
|    | CHURCH OF THE NAZARENE                                     |                 |                   |            |
|    | SALVATION ARMY   |                 |                   |            |

|  |   |  |  |  |
|--|---|--|--|--|
|  | SHILOH APOSTOLIC CHURCH OF JAMAICA, INC.* |  |  |  |
|  | THE MISSIONARY CHURCH                     |  |  |  |
|  | UNITED PENTECOSTAL CHURCH*                |  |  |  |

\* Pentecostal denominations

Source: Holland 1981:191

### Chronology continued...

- 1980 - Macedonian World Baptist Missions
- 1981 - Mission to the World, Presbyterian Church in America
- 1982 - Emmanuel International
- 1985 - STEM Ministries
- 1985 - Island Missionary Society
- 1985 - Christian Blind Mission International
- 1985 - Reformed Baptist Mission Services
- 1986 - Christ for the Nations, Inc.
- 1987 - International Churches of Christ
- 1987 - United Church Board of World Ministries, United Church of Christ
- 1987 - World Servants
- 1988 - International Outreach Ministries
  
- 1990 - Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
- 1990 - Hope for the Hungry
- 1990 - World Salt Foundation
- 1991 - Reciprocal Ministries International
- 1993 - Habitat for Humanity International
- 1993 - Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod
- 1995 - International Teams of Canada
- 1995 - Greater Grace World Outreach
- 1997 - Lott Carey Baptist Foreign Mission Convention
- 1998 - Elim Fellowship

Since 1980, the Protestant movement has grown in membership and adherents, as well as in the number of denominations (at least 12), service agencies (at least 8) and independent churches (how many is not currently known).

**According to the most recent national census (2001), religious affiliation in Jamaica was as follows (the categories have been grouped to correspond with the PROLADES classification system of religious groups):** Protestant, 61.5% (includes Seventh-Day Adventist, 10.8 percent; other Pentecostal, 9.5 percent; other Churches of God, 8.3 percent; all Baptists, 7.2 percent; New Testament Church of God [Cleveland, TN], 6.3 percent; Church of God in Jamaica [Anderson, IN], 4.8 percent; Church of God of Prophecy, 4.3 percent; Anglican Church, 3.6 percent; all Methodists, 2.0 percent; United Church in Jamaica and the Cayman Islands, 2.0 percent; all Brethren, 1.0 percent; Moravian, 1.0 percent; all other Protestants, 0.7 percent); Roman Catholic 2.6 percent; other or unspecified, 15.0 percent; and none 20.9 percent.

In 2005, the **Jamaica Baptist Union (JBU)** reported the existence of 302 affiliated churches throughout the island, with 107 ordained ministers and over 40,000 communicant members. That year, the JBU intensified its fellowship and working relationship with Baptists in North America by entering into an historic 20-year partnership with the Board of International Missions of the American Baptist Churches in the USA, with headquarters in Valley Forge, PA. The partnership agreement emphasizes holistic mission, leadership training, mission education, urban mission, evangelism and discipleship.

**The Christian Brethren** (founded in Jamaica in 1923) had an estimated 84 assemblies with 6,210 believers in 1980. Currently, a popular Plymouth Brethren website lists 331 assemblies in Jamaica, with an estimated 24,825 members.

Included in the 2001 Protestant population total are **Pentecostal adherents**, which are estimated at 28.4 percent and include the following census categories: other Pentecostals, 9.5 percent; other Church of God groups, 8.3 percent; the New Testament Church of God [Cleveland, TN], 6.3 percent; and the Church of God of Prophecy, 4.3 percent. However, some of the “other Church of God” groups may turn out to be non-Pentecostal. By comparison, the number of Pentecostal adherents in Jamaica increased from four percent in 1943, to 13 percent in 1960, to 20 percent in 1970, to 24 percent in 1982, and to 29 percent in 1991 (census data). Apparently, there was little change in the number of Pentecostal adherents between 1991 and 2001. In 2000, only eight Pentecostal denominations were listed by Brierly (1997) among the 30 largest Protestant denominations in Jamaica (see table below).

Other Pentecostal denominations known to exist in Jamaica include the following: The City Mission (founded in 1924), Pentecostal Gospel Temple, Church of Jesus Christ (Apostolic), Church of God in Christ, the Apostolic Church of God, United Evangelical Churches, Christ Faith Mission, Pure Holiness Church of God, Holy Temple Church of the Lord Jesus Christ of the Apostolic Faith, Original Glorious Church of God in Christ Apostolic Faith, Church of the Lord Jesus Christ of the Apostolic Faith (Philadelphia), Church of Our Lord Jesus Christ of the Apostolic Faith, Church of Jesus Christ Ministerial Alliance, Free Gospel Church of the Apostle’s Doctrine, United Church of Jesus Christ (Apostolic), Church of Jesus Christ (Kingsport), Church of God (World Headquarters), Network of Kingdom Churches, Fellowship Tabernacle (pastored by Dr. Merrick Al Miller in Pembroke Hall, St Andrew Parish), etc.

**TABLE OF LARGEST PROTESTANT DENOMINATIONS IN JAMAICA IN 2000**

|    | DENOMINATION NAME                            | NUMBER OF CONG. | ESTIMATED MEMBERS | COM-MUNITY |
|----|--|-----------------|-------------------|------------|
| 1  | SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH                 | 590             | 78,600            | 149,000    |
| 2  | JAMAICAN BAPTIST UNION                       | 315             | 44,600            | 127,000    |
| 3  | ANGLICAN CHURCH                              | 230             | 43,400            | 86,700     |
| 4  | NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH OF GOD (CLEVELAND, TN)* | 293             | 33,400            | 59,700     |
| 5  | BRETHREN ASSEMBLIES                          | 331             | 33,100            | 66,200     |
| 6  | NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH OF CHRIST               | 140             | 28,200            | 62,800     |
| 7  | CHURCH OF GOD OF PROPHECY*                   | 360             | 19,900            | 50,600     |
| 8  | METHODIST CHURCH IN CARIBBEAN & AMERICAS     | 171             | 17,300            | 40,500     |
| 9  | AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL ZION CHURCH      | 280             | 11,400            | 26,400     |
| 10 | UNITED PENTECOSTAL CHURCH*                   | 100             | 9,610             | 16,000     |
| 11 | ASSOCIATED GOSPEL ASSEMBLIES                 | 150             | 8,990             | 18,000     |
| 12 | CHRISTIAN CHURCH – DISCIPLES OF CHRIST       | 100             | 8,900             | 20,000     |
| 13 | THE MISSIONARY CHURCH                        | 120             | 8,470             | 14,800     |

|    |   |     |       |        |
|----|---|-----|-------|--------|
| 14 | SALVATION ARMY                                | 74  | 8,300 | 11,400 |
| 15 | UNITED CHURCH OF JAMAICA AND GRAND CAYMAN     | 80  | 7,400 | 20,400 |
| 16 | SHILOH APOSTOLIC CHURCH OF JAMAICA, INC.*     | 30  | 7,290 | 22,300 |
| 17 | MORAVIAN CHURCH                               | 46  | 6,500 | 11,000 |
| 18 | CHURCH OF GOD (ANDERSON, IN)                  | 140 | 4,470 | 17,900 |
| 19 | ASSEMBLIES OF GOD*                            | 85  | 4,270 | 14,400 |
| 20 | CONGREGATIONAL UNION                          | 260 | 4,150 | 14,900 |
| 21 | WESLEYAN HOLINESS CHURCH                      | 110 | 3,550 | 8,530  |
| 22 | INTERNATIONAL CHURCH FOURSQUARE GOSPEL*       | 70  | 3,500 | 7,900  |
| 23 | PENTECOSTAL CHURCH OF GOD OF AMERICA*         | 50  | 3,080 | 8,810  |
| 24 | EVANGELICAL CHURCH IN WEST INDIES (WORLDTEAM) | 20  | 2,660 | 5,330  |
| 25 | CHURCH OF THE NAZARENE                        | 33  | 2,200 | 4,810  |
| 26 | SEVENTH-DAY BAPTIST CHURCH                    | 33  | 1,990 | 3,820  |
| 27 | OPEN BIBLE STANDARD CHURCHES*                 | 28  | 1,700 | 5,260  |
| 28 | CHURCHES OF CHRIST                            | 43  | 1,690 | 3,390  |
| 29 | CHURCH OF GOD (SEVENTH-DAY)                   | 40  | 1,610 | 2,690  |
| 30 | CHURCH OF THE UNITED BRETHREN IN CHRIST       | 31  | 1,060 | 1,770  |

\*Pentecostal denomination

Source: Brierly 1997 (Note: these statistics need to be verified from denominational sources)

Since the late 1960s, the **Charismatic Renewal Movement (CRM)** has spread across denominational lines to influence the spiritual lives of believers in Protestant as well as Catholic churches throughout Jamaica. It has led to the revitalization of many traditional non-Pentecostal churches, as well as to creation of some new churches with a neo-Pentecostal flavor. Tony Williamson, of the Covenant Community Churches, was very instrumental in the CRM in Jamaica during the 1970s. Also, the Rev. Dr. Phillip Phinn, who is the senior pastor at the Word of Life Ministries International that meets in Hagley Park Plaza in Kingston, is one of the leaders of the local CRM; he is also chaplain to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade and the Office of the Prime Minister.

Another CRM leader in Jamaica and the Caribbean region during the 1970s was the Rev. C. B. Peter Morgan, who is a graduate of the University of the West Indies, Mona Campus. He obtained a Masters Degree from the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Kentucky and his Doctor of Ministries Degree from the Oral Roberts University in Tulsa. In 2004, he was consecrated a Bishop to the Nation and to the Jamaican Diaspora across the world. He currently gives oversight to several vibrantly growing churches in the region, with a new radical shift toward transformation of the individual and his environment. He is constantly engaged in mentoring leaders within the professional and civic spheres. In the mid-1970's he was appointed Senior Education Officer in the Ministry of Education with the responsibility to develop the Guidance and Counseling program for High Schools in Jamaica. Between 1999 and 2002 he was Director of Caribbean Christ for the Nations, where he developed many new academic programs and curricula for the training of regional leaders for the church and the mission field. He is currently a visiting lecturer at the Caribbean Graduate School of Theology, where he teaches modules on Leadership and Community Transformation and Development.

Within the Roman Catholic Church there are "faith" and "covenant" communities through inner healing by means of the Person and work of the Holy Spirit, as well as reaching out to those in the wider society, including those in prison, through special ministries. Below is an example of one Protestant "Free Church" congregation (Brethren Assemblies or Christian/Plymouth Brethren background) that was revitalized by the CRM.

**Swallowfield Chapel** is one of the most popular churches in Kingston. In 1999, it had a membership of 400 persons; in 2003, it reported nearly 800 members. David Henry, who is the Pastor at Swallowfield Chapel, explained:

In the 1970s, there was this strong Charismatic Movement that influenced all of us. The Charismatic Movement began to influence our church in terms of our own style. It also brought a renewed openness to how the Spirit would do His work. The leadership did not seek to squelch that but to understand what was happening and to at least open our ears to see if we could learn anything. It is in that context that discussions about the Baptism of the Holy Spirit came about. Among the presenters were the Rev. Dr. Burchell Taylor (pastor of Bethel Baptist Church), who presented a paper on 'The Person and Work of the Holy Spirit'. This self-examination culminated in October 1985 when the Rev. Everard Allen (pastor of the Brown's Town Baptist Church) taught on the Holy Spirit. It was a watershed. It showed we were on the same page in terms of our own openness to the person and work of the Holy Spirit. There was leadership openness to the Spirit.

Swallowfield Chapel is functionally an independent evangelical church though it retains membership in the **Christian Brethren denomination**, which is essentially a layman's movement and as such does not have salaried clergy. Much of the church's vision for cross-cultural missions was cast by the late David Ho, executive director of the Congress for the Evangelisation of the Caribbean (CONECAR) during the 1980s.

**The Congress for the Evangelisation of the Caribbean (CONECAR)** began in September 1984 as the "Congress on the Evangelisation of the Caribbean." The prime movers were those who had attended Lausanne 1975 and included such Caribbean Christian statesmen as the late Elder Dave Ho, Rev. Dr. Gerry Gallimore, Rev. Dr. Rex Major, Elder Billy Hall, and Rev. Walford Thompson. The first congress was held on the Mona Campus of the University of the West Indies and drew more than 600 delegates from across the region. Congresses have since been held in Trinidad (1988), the Dominican Republic (1992), Guyana (1996), Puerto Rico (2000), Barbados (2002), The Bahamas (2005) and Trinidad (2007).

The name was amended to Congress of Evangelicals in the Caribbean when CONECAR added the missions' emphasis to the already powerful message on evangelisation. Currently, the concepts of strong discipleship and transformation are being added to the message of the CONECAR, which has been billed as "The Caribbean's Premier Congress for Christian Leaders." Its stated purposes are:

- Brings together the Body of Christ to review the role of the Church in the Caribbean.
- Connects the islands of the Caribbean from all the language groups, Evangelical denominations and agencies.
- Fosters fellowship and provides the forum to engender growth for future development of the Caribbean Church.
- Calls forth Speakers from the Caribbean to address Caribbean issues from a Caribbean perspective.

CONECAR is firmly committed to biblical, Spirit-filled evangelism and missions, transformation of nations and discipleship. It showcases the task of taking the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the world both far and near so that all peoples, especially those who have not heard, may become part of the worshipping family of God.

CONECAR emulates the heart of God for missions, namely, that all nations may worship our God and king. Within the past 24 years CONECAR was used to call believers to enter full time cross-cultural missions, to engage their communities, and now to disciple all those who come to Christ.

CONECAR 2009 was held 26-29 October 2009, in Jamaica, to celebrate 25 years of service to the Church in the Caribbean. Its theme, “The Church...Disciples in Transformation,” focused attention on how the Church should holistically engage society through “...Disciples Who Make A Difference.”

**The Evangelical Association of the Caribbean (EAC)**, in a spirit of servanthood, exists to unite Evangelical Christians in the Caribbean, giving them a regional identity, voice, and platform to extend the Kingdom of God through Christ-centered proclamation of the Gospel to all peoples, making disciples of all nations and transforming society.

The EAC’s vision: Every Church empowered to transform Caribbean society through biblical discipleship so that poverty is reduced, peace (shalom-wholeness) is increased, public justice is ensured, and national righteousness develops. Its purpose: Empowering the Church to transform society. Its Geographical/Scope Commitment: Throughout the islands of the Caribbean, including the Spanish, French, English, and Dutch islands and including those Central and South American countries that traditionally relate to the Caribbean islands, namely Belize, Guyana, Guyana (French Guiana), and Suriname.

In Jamaica, many of the newer, more conservative denominations and independent churches are affiliated with the **Jamaican Association of Evangelicals (JAE)**, which is associated with the **World Evangelical Alliance (WEA)**. The Jamaican Theological Seminary (founded in 1960), also located in Mona, provides leadership training for the more conservative Evangelical groups.

The JAE exists to “*stand together for the Lord Jesus Christ for the truth of His Word. The Protestant churches in Jamaica are predominately evangelical in their beliefs. Yet, in recent years, the voices of liberal theology and syncretistic universalism have been invading Jamaica church leadership. Evangelical Christians share a faith and a fellowship that is our common heritage, and we realize that the challenges facing us demand co-operation.*” The JAE was established for the following reasons:

- To provide spiritual fellowship as a means of united action among Christians of like precious faith.
- To manifest before the world true biblical unity.
- To promote evangelism and church growth.
- To alert Christians to theological trends that undermine the Scriptural foundation of the Gospel.
- To render special services for all men but especially for those “of the household of faith” (Gal. 6:10)

**The Jamaica Association of Evangelicals**  
P. O. Box 123, Constant Spring, Kingston 8, Jamaica  
Website: [www.thejamaicaassociationofevangelicals.org/](http://www.thejamaicaassociationofevangelicals.org/)

Many of the older Christian denominations belong to the **Jamaica Council of Churches (JCC)**, founded in 1941 (includes the Roman Catholic Church), which is affiliated with the

World Council of Churches (WCC). The **Union Theological Seminary** in Mona provides leadership training to affiliated church bodies, which include: The African Methodist Episcopal Church, The Church in Jamaica and Cayman Islands (Anglican, Province of the West Indies), the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church, the Jamaica Baptist Union, the Methodist Church (Conference of the Caribbean and the Americas), the Moravian Church, the Roman Catholic Church, The Salvation Army, the Society of Friends (Quakers), and the United Church in Jamaica and the Cayman Islands.

JCC website: <http://www.oikoumene.org/en/member-churches/regions/caribbean/jamaica/jcc.html>

### **WCC member churches based in Jamaica**

- Jamaica Baptist Union
- Moravian Church in Jamaica
- United Church in Jamaica and the Cayman Islands

### **WCC member churches present in Jamaica**

- African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church
- Christian Methodist Episcopal Church
- Church in the Province of the West Indies (Anglican Church)
- Methodist Church in the Caribbean and the Americas
- Religious Society of Friends: Friends United Meeting

**The Caribbean Graduate School of Theology (CGST)** was established in Kingston in 1986 under the sponsorship of the Caribbean Evangelical Theological Association, a consortium of some 50 undergraduate theological institutions scattered throughout the Caribbean region and belonging to various church groups. The CGST is accredited by the University Council of Jamaica (UCJ) and the Accrediting Commission of the Caribbean Evangelical Theological Association (CETA). This double validation imparts currency to its degrees at both local and international levels. Currently, the CGST offers five Masters level programs in the fields of Theology, Counseling, Psychology, Pastoral Ministries, Interdisciplinary Studies and Business Administration. The CGST is located on the campus of the Jamaican School of Theology in Kingston.

### **Other Religions** (other or unspecified 14.2 percent: 2001 census)

Jamaica has a variety of **West African-derived religions** that have survived to modern times. These include the **Maroon religion** (*Kromanti*), the **Myalism-Obeah traditions**, and **Kumina**, which are distinguished by the experience of “spirit possession” among their spiritual leaders as well as among regular members of these cult communities. In addition, the **Native Baptists** first appeared with that designation in the 1830s and had virtually ceased to exist after the 1865 Morant Bay Rebellion, and **Revival Zion** (Pukumina) emerged in the 1860s and has continued to modern times, both of which mixed African Myalism and Protestant Christian elements (syncretism) in their belief systems, which had a great appeal to the newly-freed slaves.

**The Maroon religion**, the oldest African-derived religious expression in Jamaica that emerged during the seventeenth century during the Spanish colonial period, is led by “spiritual guides” (mediums or shamans) who use a secret “spiritual languages,” allegedly to communicate with the spirits of dead ancestors. According to Hubert Devonish (2005), two secret “spiritual languages” are utilized: an archaic variety of English Creole, known in the historical literature as “Maroon Spirit Language” (MSL) or Deep Patwa, is used by the mediums to communicate with the spirits of the “recent dead,” while *Kromanti* (an Akan dialect of West Africa) is used to speak with the spirits of the earliest Maroon ancestors, many of whom were born in Africa. Drumming, dancing and singing in “spiritual languages” is used to establish communication with the spirits of the dead ancestors.

With the introduction of African slaves into the British West Indies, especially Jamaica, several additional African religious practices became widespread. Many of the slaves were from the Ashanti-Fanti and Ibo peoples of West Africa, who continued to practice their own brands of African animism. In Jamaica, two similar and complementary belief systems emerged on the plantations: **Myalism and Obeah**. The “obeah-man” is a private practitioner (sorcerer, witch or wizard), who uses “black magic” to cast spells and do harm to people, whereas the “myal-man” is a spiritual leader (medium, shaman and folk healer) of a cult group devoted to organized religious life (myalism), who uses “white magic” for spirit mediation, healing and problem-solving.

**The Kumina religion** is practiced among the so-called Bongo people (descendants of Bantu slaves who remained on the plantations, whose ancestors came from the Congo and Angola), specifically among residents of St. Thomas Parish in eastern Jamaica (Bilby 2005: 436). Another source reports that, between 1841 and 1865, an estimated 8,000 West and Central Africans arrived in Jamaica after being “rescued” by the British Navy from Spanish slave ships en route to Cuba (Glazier 2001: 167).

Many of the Central Africans were resettled in eastern Jamaica, where they worked as indentured laborers on plantations by former slaves after Emancipation in 1838. They established themselves as worshippers of a Central African supreme deity (Nzambi) with entrenched customs, which included Kumina (drumming, dancing and ancestral spirit possession), animal sacrifice, divination and herbal healing. The Kumina practices are family-based, in which the homes of practitioners serve as ceremonial compounds. The singing in Kumina follows the African call and response pattern: one line or verse is sung by a lead singer then repeated by others in response.

The most important Kumina ritual is the “memorial” dance that a particular family will hold in honor of their ancestors. Drumming and singing in *Kikongo* (an ancient Central African language) serves as a means of calling upon an ancestral spirit who is believed to “possess” the body of a worshipper who then begins to dance in a trance anywhere from a few minutes to several hours. The ritual is closed by the sacrifice of an animal (goat or chicken), whose blood is used along with rum to feed the ancestors. These religious practices are similar to Vodou in Haiti and Shango in Trinidad-Tobago.

The blending of African animism with Christian beliefs and practices occurred over the course of many centuries in the Caribbean. The acceptance of the Christian faith by Africans was a slow process, which resulted in varying levels of syncretism. Converts to Protestantism often retained lingering elements of their old animistic belief systems.

**The Native Baptist movement**, which first appeared in Jamaica with this name in official documents beginning in 1837, actually began sometime after the arrival of a Negro Baptist preacher (George Liele) from Georgia in 1783, who accompanied British Loyalists who refused to live in the newly-independent United States of America. By the 1830s, during the last decade

of African enslavement, the Native Baptists emerged as a distinct religious sect that incorporated Myalism into its beliefs and practices, along with many elements of Protestant Christianity. The emerging Native Baptist leaders were militant and used their meetings to discuss the urgent need of achieving freedom for all black slaves and the injustices of the slavery system. Gayle (1982: 33-35) among others argues that the Native Baptists incorporated Myalism and Obeah (witchcraft) in their religious observances, whereas Liele and his associates adhered to strict Baptist principles as found in North America and Europe. Native Baptists were found mainly in what is now called the Kingston Corporate Area and in St. Catherine, St. Thomas and Clarendon parishes. They were not found in western Jamaica.

One of the main leaders of the Native Baptist movement was **Sam Sharpe, who led the 1831 Slave Rebellion** on the Kensington Estate in St. James Parish. Paul Bogle was another Native Baptist leader who led the disastrous **Morant Bay Rebellion** in 1865 in St. Thomas Parish. These developments paralleled the establishment of the Jamaica Baptist Union, officially founded in 1849, under the leadership of black Baptist pastors with the support of white missionaries affiliated with the Baptist Missionary Society (BMS), based in London.

Several **Afro-Christian sects** emerged in this context. **Revival Zion or Pukumina** (sometimes called **Zion Revivalism**) became a strong religious movement during the 1860s and then it declined in importance. However, Pukumina experienced resurgence during the 1880s and again in the 1910s. It had strong spiritual links to the ancient African ancestors, to more newly-departed spirits (duppies), and to a variety of deities and supernatural forces (angels and demons); and its manifestations were often in the form of dancing, trances, spirit possession, flagellations, public confessions of sin, and use of ritual magic by spiritual intermediaries (priests, shamans, healers, sorcerers) to achieve desired results for either good or evil. According to Wedenoja (1980), Revival Zion became a “core religious tradition of the Jamaican masses from 1860 to [the end of] the Second World War” (ca.1945), when it “was being rapidly overtaken and increasingly absorbed by a rampant Pentecostalism.”

**Bedwardism**, which emerged in Jamaica during the 1890s, apparently had its roots in the older Native Baptist movement (1830s) and Revival Zion-Pukumina (1860s-1880s), both of which included elements of Myalism. The Bedwardian Movement is named after the prophet Alexander Bedward (b.1859-d.1930) of Union Camp in August Town, St. Andrew Parish, who is reported to have exhibited prophetic boldness and divine authority, accompanied by great personal humility and saintliness, while offering miraculous cures for many people.

On 10 October 1891, the uneducated Bedward received a “special calling from God for sanctification,” which led him to establish the **Jamaica Native Baptist Free Church** in August Town in 1894. This church was part of the nationwide Native Baptist-Revivalist movement that integrated elements of African and Christian belief systems.

Bedward believed that August Town was the New Jerusalem for the Western world, and he encouraged his followers to sell all their possessions and settle in August Town. One of the main causes of Bedward’s popularity was his use of water from the Mona River, which was believed to have special healing powers that would cleanse all sins, evils and diseases. People were given the water to drink or were baptized in the river. It was customary for Bedward to go to the river every Wednesday morning dressed in a white robe to perform baptisms. People would travel from all over the island to be “cured” by Bedward and his healing water.

At its zenith, the Bedward movement reportedly had about 30,000 followers. Bedward was later immortalized in the folksong “Slide Mongoose.” Although the song was intended to be a mockery of his activities, instead it served to immortalize him in Jamaican society.

Bedward was considered to be a madman by many of his detractors. On 21 January 1895, he was arrested and taken to Spanish Town, where he was accused of sedition; after a brief trial, he was neither convicted nor acquitted but confined in a mental asylum for one month. After his release from custody, he continued his role as a prophet, preacher and healer.

Later, Bedward led his followers into Garveyism (see below) by using a charismatic metaphor: Bedward and Garvey were like Aaron and Moses, one the high priest, the other prophet, both leading the children of Israel out of exile. Bedward also proclaimed that he was a reincarnation of Jesus Christ and that, like Elijah, he would ascend into heaven in a flaming chariot on 31 December 1920. He then expected to rain down fire on those who did not follow him, thereby destroying the whole world. However, this expected event did not take place and, in April 1921, Bedward and an estimated 800 followers attempted to march into Kingston "to do battle with his enemies" who accused him of being a false prophet. However, the civil authorities intervened and Bedward was arrested, tried and interned in a mental asylum again, where he remained to the end of his life.

In 1914, **Marcus Garvey** (b.1887–d.1940) organized a new movement, called the Universal Negro Improvement Association, for the purpose of ending discrimination against African people throughout the Western world. His effort led to a new emphasis on Jamaicans' African heritage, which was symbolized in the land of Ethiopia (the term often referring to the nation of Abyssinia and at times to Africa in general). One result of the Garvey movement was the founding of several groups with claims to an Ethiopian heritage, including the **Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church** (a member of the **Jamaica Council of Churches and the World Council of Churches**) and the **Ethiopian Zion Coptic Church**, with more dubious connection to Africa.

The most important back-to-Africa movement in Jamaica is known as **Rastafarianism**. In 1927, Garvey predicted the crowning of a black king in Africa whose emergence would be a sign of the coming redemption of Africans in the Western world from their situation of oppression. Eight years later, the coronation of Emperor Haile Selassie in Ethiopia was interpreted by many Jamaicans to be confirmation of this prophecy. In addition, several Protestant ministers in Jamaica saw the new emperor as the fulfillment of several biblical prophecies. The members of the movement soon ran into trouble with government officials when Leonard Howell was arrested for circulating pictures of Haile Selassie and telling people that they were passports back to Africa.

Through the next decades, the Rastafarians formed isolated compounds in the hills of Jamaica, where they recreated village life from their ancient African homeland; they became known for their dreadlocks (hair styled to resemble a lion's mane), their use of marijuana (or *ganja*, as they called it), and their liberation-oriented music (reggae), which has transcended their Jamaican-based movement to become popular internationally.

The Rastafarian movement has had a strong influence on Jamaican society, in particular. Many of the underlying premises appeal to the felt needs of individuals who may be bitter or critical of the "establishment." Political, social and religious issues are addressed by Rastafarian philosophies, which have often provided impetus for counter revolutionary activities. To the devout, man is divine, and any gods, rules or regulations become subject to the desires of man. Anything suggesting the establishment, including tidy clothing, styled haircuts, shoes, or even bathing, are rejected by the most radical Rastafarians. Particular portions of scripture are readily used if they express a Rastafarian principle. One example is the use of long hair. One passage in Ezekiel prohibits any razor from touching one's hair until the Jewish people returned to their homeland. For the Rastafarians this was originally the land of Ethiopia. Marijuana (*ganja*) is liberally used to raise the individual's level of consciousness and increase self-awareness.

**Marginal Christian groups in Jamaica include:** the Jehovah's Witnesses (194 congregations with 11,941 members and about 37,839 adherents in 2008), the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (21 congregations with about 6,000 members in 2008), Church of Christ Scientist, Religious Science International, Universal Church of the Kingdom of God (from Brazil), Church of God and Saints of Christ (founded by William S. Crowdy in 1896, now with headquarters in Cleveland, Ohio: a mixture of Judaism, Christianity and black nationalism—see **EAR #1746**), Christadelphian Ecclesias (11 groups), Philadelphia Church of God (follows the teachings of Herbert W. Armstrong, founder of the Worldwide Church of God), Church of God (Jesus Christ the Head), Moral Re-Armament, and the Assembly of Jahvah (part of the Sacred Name movement begun in the 1930s among members of the Seventh-Day Church of God).

Mormon missionary work first began in Jamaica in 1841, but the missionary only stayed for a brief time. Although Mormon missionaries were again sent to Jamaica in 1853, they found a great deal of antagonism and stayed only six weeks. The Latter-day Saint families of the John L. Whitefields and Jay P. Bills arrived in Jamaica in the late 1960s and began holding meetings in Mandeville. The Mandeville Branch (a small congregation) was created in March 1970. The first Jamaican branch president was Joseph Hamilton. Full-time Mormon missionaries began teaching again in Jamaica in November 1978, and the membership had increased to 300 by 1983. Jamaica became part of the new West Indies Mission, which was created in 1983. In November of that year ground was broken for a chapel in Kingston. In 1985, membership had increased to 520, and the first full-time Jamaican missionary left to serve in the USA.

**Other religious groups in Jamaica include:** a small community of Jews (Sephardic), one mosque serving East Indian and Syrian Muslim residents, American and Black Muslim groups, and a growing number of spiritual assemblies of the Baha'i Faith. Many of the East Indians are Hindus, who gather at the Prema Satsangh in Kingston. Other Hindu groups include the Ananda Marga Yoga Society, the Brahma Kumaris, and the International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON). Traditional Chinese religions exist among Chinese immigrants and their descendants, although many Chinese have become Protestants in Jamaica (cf. David and Cecil Ho and families, Plymouth Brethren affiliated).

**Freemasonry** is deeply entrenched in Jamaican society, enjoying support and patronage at every level. Freemasonry in Jamaica is populated with men from every walk of life. Members are drawn from commerce, law, publishing, medicine, tourism and academia. There are three Freemasonry traditions in Jamaica: the English (EC), Irish (IC) and the Scottish (SC). Most of the Craft lodges belonging to these constitutions are found in Kingston and Spanish Town. Freemasonry is active in the other centers of population as well, such as Montego Bay, Mandeville, St. Anne's Bay, Port Maria and Linstead. The English Constitution has 23 lodges, followed by the Scottish with 17 lodges, and there are five Irish lodges with two in the process of being established.

**Representatives of the Psychic-Spiritualist-New Age traditions include:** the Church of Scientology (founded by L. Ron Hubbard in Los Angeles, CA, in 1954), the Superet Light Doctrinal Church (founded in Los Angeles, CA, in 1925 by Dr. Josephine De Croix Trust, i.e. "Mother Trust"), and the Holy Spirit Association for the Unification of World Christianity (founded by the Rev. Sun Myung Moon in South Korea in 1954). The Kerista Commune (EAR #1201) was founded in 1956 by John Presmont ("Brother Jud") in San Francisco, CA, in "a quest for the meaning of religiousness and communal living" as a viable utopian culture (communal lifestyle, pantheism and polyfidelity). It is not known if this latter group still exists in Jamaica.

It is important to note that 20.9 percent of the population in 2001 reported no religious affiliation or refused to answer the question, which includes those who claim to be agnostic or

atheist, or perhaps did not want to go on record as belonging to a particular religious group or tradition (such as some of the African-derived religions mentioned above). The composition of this category needs to be investigated further to determine its meaning and relevance within modern Jamaican society. The category “no religious affiliation” rose from 4 percent of the population in 1943, to 25 percent in 1991, and declined to 20.9 percent in 2001 (census data).

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