

# EMMANUEL BAPTIST CHURCH, PORT MARIA, ST. MARY

# E-EMMANUEL

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## EDITORIAL: HAPPY BIRTHDAY JESUS

One very important date in a person's life is his/her birthday. Remembering birthdays signifies how special that person is and through birthday celebrations we learn truths about the person being celebrated. Today we celebrate the birth of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ (*and we have already established that He was not born at this time of year, but this is the time that has been used to observe this great event in history to show how significant Jesus is*). In our celebrations of Jesus' birth we should recognize two important truths.

First, Jesus entered the world as a human being like each one of us. As a child, like us, he was dependent upon others to survive; he faced the elements of cold, hunger, thirst and other stresses. Thus, His birth signalled that *"the Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us"* (St. John 1: 14, NIV). Second, Jesus is still here with us in the person of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is here dwelling among us but in this form, we are dependent on Him for our spiritual empowerment as depicted in Acts 1:8 *"But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."*

As the birth of Christ is celebrated, may we find the time to invite Jesus to dwell in our hearts today; and not just today but always—so that we can be empowered to accomplish His mission, to bring good news to lost souls. On this Christmas day, let us remember that special person—Immanuel—the one who is always here dwelling with us and among us—Jesus!

Happy Birthday Jesus!!

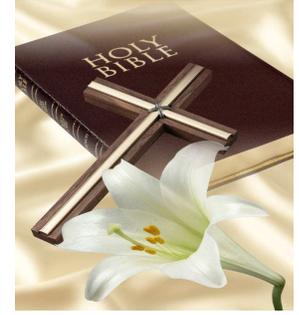
*Dahlia Palmer, Chairperson  
Communications Committee*

## WATCH NIGHT SERVICES

Many of the Watch Night Services in Black communities that we celebrate today can be traced back to gatherings on December 31, 1862, also known as "Freedom's Eve." On that night, Americans of African descent came together in churches, gathering places and private homes throughout the nation, anxiously awaiting news that the Emancipation Proclamation had become law. Then, at the stroke of midnight, it was January 1, 1863, and according to President Lincoln's promise, all slaves in the Confederate States were legally free. People remained in churches and other gathering places, eagerly awaiting word that Emancipation had been declared. When the actual news of freedom was received later that day, there were prayers, shouts and songs of joy as people fell to their knees and thanked God. (*Adapted from: <http://theoldblackchurch.blogspot.com/2008/12/watch-night-services-and-black-church.html>*).

Today, in addition to celebrating our freedom as a people and giving thanks for our freedom in Christ, we also attend watch night services as an opportunity for recommitment. As Christians, we should use the service as a time to reflect on the events of the past year and to look ahead to the future by entering into a new covenant with God—a new commitment to witnessing and serving; in fulfilling the mission of Christ.

As we prepare to attend watch night service this year, try to focus, not so much on the past, but focus on the Light of the world—Jesus—who brought hope to us and has promised us life everlasting.



## DECEMBER REMINDERS

25th	Christmas Sunday
25th	Christmas Concert: "Persons of Interest"
26th	Christmas Day Observed
27th	Boxing Day
31st	Watch Night Service

## December Birthdays

Mark Campbell	7th
Linda Hines	10th
Earl Irvin	11th
Joan Green	12th
Janet McCarthy	17th
Rockeisha Barnett	18th
Oshane Barnett	19th
Sylvester Barnett	20th
Rose Freckleton	24th
<b>Larkland Peart</b>	<b>25th</b>
Winsome Davis-James	26th
Audrey Maxwell	28th

**Thought: Christmas is not so much about opening presents around us; it is more about opening our hearts to the needs around us!** - Adapted from Janice Maeditere

We welcome your ideas and suggestions

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**SHOULD CHRISTIANS VOTE?** On Sunday, December 4, 2011, Prime Minister Andrew Holness announced election date as December 29, 2011. At the end of his presentation, he asked all persons who were gathered to hold hands as a sign of unity; and then he prayed asking God to lead and direct persons to make the right decision on election day. Although many of our political leaders do not publicly acknowledge Jesus as their Saviour, they often include scriptures and other phrases of a religious nature in their speeches. Although these politicians appear religious, should Christians really be voting for non-Christian leaders? Here are the views of some persons about whether or not Christians should vote:

Yes Christians should vote; it is their civil responsibility.

Yes I think that Christians should vote. We are a part of society.

If they so desire. They're voting for the lesser of two evils!

I do believe that Christians should vote. Christians have always been involved in the life of the society and have influenced Governments. Christians have contributed significantly to the abolition of slavery and introducing education to common people. In Romans 13 Paul urged us to obey governmental leaders because all authority comes from God. Voting is part of our civic responsibility as good citizens. Christians should seek to make a positive impact on society by way of voting wisely.

Yes I believe that Christians should vote. they too are citizens and have a responsibility to exercise their political right. Remember that Jesus said that we ought to render to Caesar's and to God the things that are God's.

## Remember to pray for and visit ...

... the sick and shut-in members of the church and in our surrounding communities. Here is a list of our sick and shut-in members:

Sis. Audrey Maxwell (Port Maria Class); Sis. Emma Scarlett-Grant (Port Maria Class); Sis. Inez Graham (Trinity Class); Sis. Percess Scott (Trinity Class); Bro. Thomas Bennett (Mason Hall Class); Bro. Archibald Henry (Stennett Street Class); Bro. Jeremiah Dalhouse (Stennett Street Class); Sis. Daphne Reid (Galina Class); Sis. Georgina Peart (Cox Street Class); Bro. Lucan Scott (Cox Street Class); Adassa Reddie (Cox Street Class)

## Fifth and Sixth Formers

This is a reminder that the period between December-January/February is the time to make your applications to sixth forms, colleges and universities. Please obtain the necessary application forms and send in your applications before the varied deadlines. Some institutions now facilitate online applications. You may visit the following websites for application forms:

- University of Technology - <http://www.utech.edu.jm/forms.html>
- University of the West Indies (deadline is January 31, 2012): [http://sas.mona.uwi.edu:9010/pls/data\\_mona/twbkwbis.P\\_GenMenu?name=homepage](http://sas.mona.uwi.edu:9010/pls/data_mona/twbkwbis.P_GenMenu?name=homepage)
- Mico Univeristy: [http://themico.universitycollege.edu.jm/cms/?page\\_id=73](http://themico.universitycollege.edu.jm/cms/?page_id=73)
- Northern Caribbean University: <http://www.ncu.edu.jm/admissions/docs/ncuapplication-form.pdf>

Applications for teachers' colleges will open between January/February 2012. These colleges include Bethlehem Moravian, Church, Sam Sharpe, Shortwood and St. Josephs



Find the differences!



## REFLECTION OF 2011:

So many things have happened during the 2011 year—some of them have been marvellous; others very sad. Yet, in all of this the Lord our God has been with us—leading, healing, sustaining, comforting, providing, listening, protecting, interceding, helping, convicting, teaching, and nurturing. We give God thanks for his continual presence with us. We do not know if we will see the New Year, and if we do see it, we do not know what it will hold for us, but we know that the Lord our God will be with us. We give God thanks for His steadfast love toward us.