Session 1

Here We Are

The United Reformed Church Children

Greta is off to Jamaica. Jamaica is an island and can be found between North America and South America and is surrounded by the Caribbean Sea.



The island is about 146 miles long. Parts of it are 22 miles wide and other parts are 51 miles wide, its landscape includes golden sandy beaches, rolling hills and busy towns. Kingston has been its capital city since 1872. Nearly half of the island is covered in mountains with the Blue Mountain Peak being the highest point. Have a look at a map to see what other towns you can spot and what other terrain it has.

A long time ago in 1494 Christopher Columbus claimed the island of Jamaica for Spain, a few years later in 1655 British naval forces captured Jamaica from the Spanish. Sadly, they didn't always look after the people very well, in fact Jamaican people were made to be slaves. This continued for a couple of hundred years until slavery was ended in 1834. Jamaica became an independent county once again in 1962. The original Indigenous people of Jamaica were the **Taíno** (often historically called Arawaks), who migrated from South America around 600–900 AD and named the island *Xaymaca* meaning '*land of wood and water*'



Several different languages are spoken in Jamaica but the most common are Jamaican English and Jamaican Patois.

Jamaica is hot all year round, but it can get chilly at night and at certain times of the year though it doesn't tend to get colder than 20° and often reaches into the mid-thirties in the daytime. The tropical climate is influenced by the sea and the northeast winds, which are strong throughout the year. Coastal breezes blow onshore by day and offshore at night. Rains are seasonal, falling mainly in October and May, although thunderstorms can bring heavy showers in the summer months, from June to September. June to Nov is 'hurricane season.



The Jamaican flag features a colourful design consisting of a gold diagonal cross that divides the flag into four sections: two green triangles at the top and bottom, and two black triangles on the hoist and fly sides. The flag was officially adopted on 6 August 1962, the same date that Jamaica became an independent country from the United Kingdom. The black colour stands for resilience, the green colour stands for hope and the yellow/ gold stands for the natural resources of the country.

The people of Jamaica are warm and hospitable, its history, creativity, and spirit of its people have created a vibrant and diverse culture. From the sounds of reggae to the vibrant art, dance, and culinary traditions, Jamaican culture promotes unity and embraces life.

Jamaica and the people who live there have had to find a way through many challenges, from having their independence taken from them, living through the sadness and tragedy of the slave trade and more recently the devastation which Hurricane Melissa brought when it hit in October 2025 – the difficulties of which will be felt for many years to come.

Bible Link Acts 17: 26

"*God began by making one man, and from him he made all the different people who live everywhere in the world. He decided exactly when and where they would live.*"

It can be difficult to read this Bible passage and live in a place that has difficulties however we can be reassured that God is with us and never leaves us.

- If God decided where and when people would live, what does it mean then if we move house or country?

Prayer
God, thank you for the vibrancy and diversity of the place where I live. Reveal yourself in the words and actions and faces of the people. Amen.



Active Prayer Globe
Lay out a map of the world or use a revolving globe. Place red dot stickers on the parts of the world that you know, green dot stickers on countries you'd like to visit and yellow dot stickers on the places you would like to pray for. Make sure at least one sticker is on Jamaica.

If you have a revolving globe, spin that as you pray. If it is a flat map make a circle round it and walk round it as you pray.



Greta Wonders:
- what the land where you live is like?
- if you'd rather live in hot country or a cold country?
- how many people you know of who are a different ethnicity or nationality to you?

Activity 1 Create your own Jamaican flag

You will need:
- A4 piece of paper with the lines of the flag pre drawn
- picture of the Jamaican flag
- green, yellow and black tissue/crepe paper or similar
- glue



What you do:
Use the picture as a guide to create your own flag by tearing or cutting the paper and sticking the right colours onto the right parts of the flag. You could attach a wooden skewer and display it in a pot of soil or play dough.

Activity 2 Jamaican Fruit Salad with Lime and Honey (Be aware of any food allergies)
Prep Time 20 minutes



Ingredients
- one papaya peeled, seeded, diced
- two mangos peeled, diced
- one pineapple diced
- two oranges
- ⅓ cup shredded coconut

Dressing
- ½ cup honey
- ¼ cup of orange juice
- ¼ cup fresh lime juice
- one tablespoon lime zest

Method
1. Rinse, peel, and dice the fruits into bite-sized pieces apart from the coconut. Grate some coconut.
2. Combine all the fruits in a bowl and set aside.
3. Prepare the dressing by whisking together the lime juice, lime zest, orange juice and honey, to your desired taste. (Optional) Add a pinch of cinnamon/ nutmeg.
4. Pour the dressing over the fruit mixture and place in the refrigerator.

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Action Point The people of Jamaica are very proud of their heritage. Think about your hometown and your home country. I wonder what it is that you love about your country and why. If you were having a celebrate your country day, what would you do?