

## Jennifer Porteous – Brown

Jennifer Porteous - Brown born on October 9, 1958 .

I grew up in a large family of ten – mother, father, six sisters and one brother. We all attended the Baptist church in a nearby rural community where my mother was a member. As children, it was mandatory to attend church and Sunday School every week and to participate in several church programs.



I migrated to England in 1965 to live with an aunt who had no children. I received my Primary Education at a mixed Public school in Manchester, England.

On returning to Jamaica in 1970, I sat the Common Entrance Examinations and obtained a scholarship to attend the prestigious Manning's school (a traditional High school) which then had a population of approximately 550. I graduated from this school with 7 passes in the GCE O Level examinations and worked one year as a Pre Trained Primary school Teacher. I needed the money to offset my college expenses as my parents could hardly afford it.

I was enrolled in the Church Teachers College in 1977 where I majored in the teaching of Spanish and English at the secondary level and graduated in 1980. I am also a graduate of the University of the West Indies with an Upper Second Class Honours Bachelor's Degree Spanish major and a holder of a Masters degree, specializing in Adult Education.

I am presently a full time teacher at my alma mater, Manning's school; a Spanish oral Examiner for the Caribbean Secondary School Certificate Examinations (CSEC) and an Assistant Examiner/script marker for the Caribbean Advanced Proficiency Examinations (CAPE) Spanish. I go to Trinidad each year to fulfil this assignment.

I have been happily married for the past 28 years . The link below will give you some background of my husband and you will see a picture of my family.

<http://www.caribbeannazarene.org/wmcaribbean/Countries/Jamaica/JamaicaWestDistrict/RevLionelBrownAutobiography/tabid/425/Default.aspx>

One of the most treasured times in my family is when we have family devotions and each person has an opportunity to share or to lead in the devotion and prayer. My husband and I spend much time together holding hands and praying for each other. My boys, who are no longer living with us at home, still look forward to their visits which always end with us holding hands and praying before they set off on their journey. I believe prayer is and has been that unifying force which has kept my marriage and our family these past 28 years.

## **Testimony**

One night in 1971 (early teens) I was led to attend a Gospel Crusade meeting in a Holiness church in my community. I distinctly remember the title of the message preached: "God is good God" –very simple, yet so profound. I recalled that something stirred within me and when the invitation was given, I found myself at the altar, weeping.

I surrendered my life that night to the Lord, to the dismay of my friends. I was encouraged by my mother and some of my sisters to continue. I recall many times being laughed at and ridiculed by my peers at school over the next few weeks and months. I was determined to walk with the Lord for the rest of my life because I discovered that not only did He save my soul but my very life. My life even at that age took on new meaning, purpose and a new direction.

I adopted the theme "Saved to serve" which has been my guiding motto to this day. I continue to rejoice in a full and free salvation. My Christian journey to date has been an eventful one to the extent that even if there were no promise of Heaven and to live eternally, it has been worth having the Lord in my life!

## **Christian Background**

I have been involved in the church and Christian ministry for most of my life. In the church my husband pastors, Bt Savannah CON - I have served as Sunday School teacher from 1985 to the present; local School Superintendent for more than 5 years; District Sunday School Superintendent for 6 years; local NMI President for 8 years; District NMI President for almost 14 years; the Regional Representative on the Global Nazarene Missions Council from 2005 - 2009.

I pursued ministerial studies in 2003 and graduated from the Caribbean Nazarene College in 2007. I was ordained as an Elder in the Church of the Nazarene in March 2009. Today, I work alongside my husband as Assistant Pastor at the Burnt Savannah Church of the Nazarene. My main area is chairing the evangelism and church growth committee at our church. I also prepare new believers for church membership.

I assist with churches (presently 2) that are without Pastors on our district – mostly preaching and organizing leadership training.

Over the years I have organized children's camps/marriage enrichment seminars/ couples retreats and others, for my church and also the district.

I am the co-founder and Director of the Burnt Savannah Nazarene Evening Institute (an outreach program of the church) for the past 6 years. I also volunteer by teaching English at the exam level for high school dropouts.

For the past 3 years, I have worked closely with a mission outreach of our church. This church should be fully organized before the end of this year.

## **Mission Passion**

My mission passion began about a year after I was saved. I became actively involved in the Inter School's Christian Fellowship (ISCF) and later on "Youth For Christ" movements. Both organizations provided students/youths with the opportunity to become involved in missions. I recall the many "Discover Jesus Mission Trips" that I participated in across Jamaica for several weekends. We would travel to various towns and communities and share the gospel at the market place, street corners and wherever people gathered. We did not know where we would sleep but God provided for us accommodation and meals from Christian volunteers who shared our passion. Just to share the gospel and see people responding excited me (still does more than ever today). We would record their names and send them on to the church with which they were affiliated and the Youth For Christ Group in that area was left to do follow up. I personally kept up correspondence with a few after we left the area. It was from those days I kept telling myself that I wanted to become a missionary.

Finally, my husband and I share a vision and passion for the lost and dying and the unfortunate among us. We believe that as Christians we need to meet the needs of the TOTAL man. To this end we are presently involved in the construction of the Gamertsfelder Mission Centre (GMC) (a medical centre which will deal with dental, optical and medical services) which is next door to where we live. We house and work alongside dozens of W/W teams who have been assisting in the worthy cause in honor of Dr Paul Gamertsfelder, retired ophthalmologist and founding father of Nazarene Men in Missions. You can read more about this on the mission of sight web page.

I know that this is more than a mouthful but I hope it helps to give you a better picture of who I am.