Dear Brethren,



I would like to introduce you to John and Robin Harris, missionaries sent from our church to the country of Belize. The Harris' have now been in Belize for about six years. Four years ago, God used them to plant Grace Baptist Church in Dangriga ministering to the Garifuna people.

Robin grew up in our church. She and John met while attending Bible college. Upon completion of college and marrying, they spent some time here at Grace serving an internship. Burdened by God for Belize, the Harris' began the process of joining a mission board and beginning deputation. I was pastoring in Utah at the time and had them present their calling to Belize at our church. Impressed by their burden on their field, we took them on for monthly support. I now have the blessing of being their pastor.

God has blessed their ministry in Dangriga, and we are excited to see what the future holds. I recommend them to you as hard working, faithful, caring missionaries who have a love for the Garifuna people and a great burden to reach them for Christ. I ask that you please consider having them present their work at your church and then prayerfully consider them for future support.

Pastor Randy Love
Grace Baptist Church, Pittsfield, Illinois

Dear Pastor and Friends
of the John Harris Family,



I am excited to write to you on behalf of the John Harris family, missionaries to Belize with BIMI. The Harris family is sent out of Grace Baptist Church in Pittsfield, Illinois, where Kyle Waterhouse serves as pastor.

For over eight years, John and his family have faithfully served the Lord in Belize. During that time, the Lord has allowed them to establish Grace Baptist Church in Dangriga. What began as a small Bible study has grown into a ministry with an average attendance of 35–40 people. It is exciting to see how the Lord has blessed their faithful labor!

Brother Harris is planning to schedule meetings in the States during 2027, with the goal of raising additional financial support as they continue their ministry in Belize and reach souls for Christ.

Would you prayerfully consider having Brother Harris visit your church during that time to share what the Lord is doing through their ministry in Belize? It would be an encouragement to them to have the opportunity to share their burden and ministry with your church.

Thank you for considering this opportunity to be a part of what the Lord is doing through the Harris family in Belize. Your consideration and partnership in their ministry are greatly appreciated.

Should you have any questions or if we can be of any assistance, please let us know. You may reach me by email CentralAmericaDirector@bimi.org or cell phone (501) 691-1808.

Your co-laborer in Central America,
Bill Norton
BIMI Central America Director

- **Independent**
- **Fundamental**
- **King James Believing**
- **Conservative**
- **Separated**
- **Unashamed Baptist**

Please visit our website for a complete doctrinal statement.



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The Harris Family

Your Missionaries to Belize, Central America



Belize is a very intriguing country just south of the Yucatan Peninsula of Mexico and to the east of Guatemala. Belize is very diverse in culture with several different people groups such as the Mayans, the Garifuna, the Mestizos, the Mennonites, the Chinese, and the Eastern Indians. Each District has a different type of culture, and the people God has called my family to is to the Garifuna, who is unfortunately an unreached people group within Belize.

Origin of the Garinagu:

(According to the Garinagu Website www.mybelize.net/people-culture/the-garinagu)

Garinagu (plural of Garifuna) or Black Caribs, are descendants of two ethnic groups, Carib Indians and Black Africans, that lived on the island of St. Vincent. Arawak Indians, also called Yurumei, the original inhabitants of St. Vincent, were invaded and conquered by Kalipuna (Carib) Indians, a tribe from mainland South America. The Arawak men were killed and the warriors took the women as wives. The Carib Indians originated as a mixture of these people.

Around 1635 two Spanish ships carrying Black Africans destined for slavery to the West Indies shipwrecked near St. Vincent. Survivors escaped and swam ashore to St. Vincent where they settled and lived amongst the Carib Indians.

Over the next 150 years, the two groups intermixed and the Garifuna ethnic group also called Black Caribs was formed. By 1750 the Black Caribs were the dominant population of St. Vincent and quite prosperous. French settlers lived on the island as well.

The Black Carib men hunted and fished while the women did most of the farming. The Black Caribs also traded with nearby islands: tobacco and baskets for arms and European manufactured goods. In 1763 the British invaded the island trying to take over land from the Black Caribs to plant sugarcane. This struggle for land resulted in the Black Caribs trying to establish independence and control of the island. They were supported by the French with whom they did considerable trading. Many years of battles between the Caribs and the British ensued. After losing a major battle in 1795, the French and the Black Caribs finally surrendered and the British took over the entire island.

The British hunted down the Black Caribs, burned their houses and killed hundreds. Early in 1797 over 4000 Black Caribs were taken prisoner and sent to the Island of Baliceax where over half of them died from diseases like yellow fever and malaria. In 1798 the rest were exiled to the Island of Roatan, an island off the coast of Honduras. From Roatan the Black Caribs migrated to the mainland of Honduras (Truillo) and settled all along the Caribbean coast of Belize (then British Honduras), Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua.

According to legend, the first Garifuna arrived in British Honduras on November 19, 1802. Today this day is a national holiday and the arrival of the Garinagu is celebrated all over Belize with drumming, dancing and pageantry in Garifuna communities. Dangriga is called the Cultural Capital of Belize, and most of the town is Garifuna.

Spirituality

Garinagu are a proud people devoted to their roots, and their religion consists of a mix of Catholicism, African and Indian beliefs.

Belief in and respect for the ancestors is at the very core of their faith. They believe that the departed ancestors mediate between the individual and the external world. If a person behaves and performs well then he will have good fortune. If not, then the harmony that exists in relationships with others and the external world will be disrupted leading to misfortune and illness.

The religious system thus implies certain responsibilities and obligations between the living and deceased. Food and drink should occasionally be laid out for the ancestors who may also appear in dreams. A spiritual leader leads the contact of a family with the deceased. In preparation of these spiritual gatherings with healing, drumming and dancing, a feast of seafood, meat and cassava bread is prepared.

Garifuna spiritualism is creatively expressed through music, dancing and other art forms. Spiritual oppression is felt throughout the town of Dangriga and we are working hard to show them the light of the Gospel. Often times throughout the night we hear the sound of ritualistic drums and singing which shows us that there is much work to do.

John



- In the Ministry since 2003
- Sunday School Teacher
- Bus Captain
- Assistant Pastor
- Bachelor's of Science
- Master's of Practical Pastoral Theology
- Founding Pastor of the Grace Baptist Church of Dangriga, Stann Creek, Belize
- On the field since February of 2017

Robin

- In the ministry since 2004
- Sunday School Teacher
- Bachelor's of Science
- Bus worker
- Children's Worker
- Pastor's wife of the Grace Baptist Church of Dangriga, Stann Creek, Belize
- On the field since February of 2017



