



Jamaica

Caribbean

Geography

Area 10,991 sq km. The 3rd largest island in the Caribbean after Cuba and Hispaniola. Mostly mountainous with only 17% arable land.

Population	Ann Gr	Density
2010	2,729,909	0.46%
2020	2,834,321	0.34%
2030	2,873,362	0.05%

Jamaicans have emigrated in large numbers (more than 2 million) to North America, UK, and increasingly elsewhere. 80% of Jamaicans with higher education live abroad.

Capital Kingston 582,000. **Urbanites** 53.7%. **Pop under 15 yrs** 29%. **Life expectancy** 71.7 yrs.

Peoples

African Caribbean 96.0%. Jamaican 93.7%; Haitian 2.0%.

Asian/Afro-Asian 3.0%. East Indian 1.7%; Chinese 1.2%.

Euro-American 1.0%. British 0.4%; American 0.3%.

Literacy 87.6%. **Official language** English; 97% of the population speak Jamaican Creole. **All languages** 7. **Indigenous languages** 3. **Languages with Scriptures** 1Bi 1w.i.p.

Economy

Tourism, remittances, the mining of bauxite, and agriculture are the main revenue sources. High debt servicing, frequent hurricane damage and rising crime rates can be added to the normal financial challenges of underemployment, inflation and foreign competition. Servicing the large public debt takes up much of the GDP.

HDI Rank 100th/182. **Public debt** 116.3% of the GDP. **Income/person** \$5,199 (11% of USA).

Politics

Originally inhabited by the Taino Indians. Spanish “discovery” and rule from 1494 followed by British rule from 1655 until independence in 1962, when Jamaica became a parliamentary democracy. Notable political stability has not always translated into the social, criminal or economic spheres. Gang rivalries and warfare for “turf”, illicit drug dealing, alignment of political parties and the dubious dealings in granting construction contracts all blend in an unsavoury mix to allow for a rise in crime, corruption and violence.

Religion

Freedom of religion.

Religions	Pop %	Population	Ann Gr
Christian	82.91	2,263,368	0.4%
Ethnoreligionist	10.20	278,451	0.7%
Non-religious	4.65	126,941	1.1%
Other	0.90	24,569	2.9%
Hindu	0.65	17,744	2.1%
Muslim	0.30	8,190	4.2%
Baha'i	0.20	5,460	0.5%
Chinese	0.18	4,914	2.9%
Jewish	0.01	273	-2.5%

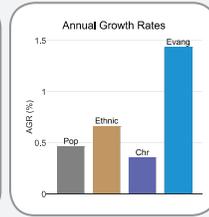
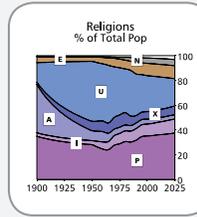
Christians	Denoms	Pop %	Affiliates	Ann Gr
Protestant	53	36.05	984,000	0.8%
Independent	106	10.20	279,000	1.2%
Anglican	1	3.66	100,000	-0.2%
Catholic	1	4.25	116,000	0.2%
Orthodox	1	0.10	3,000	-0.6%
Marginal	9	1.95	53,000	3.6%
Unaffiliated		26.70	729,000	-1.1%

Churches	MegaBloc	Congs	Members	Affiliates
Seventh-day Adventist	P	600	210,000	265,000
NT Church of God	P	800	75,000	165,000
Catholic Church	C	93	67,442	116,000
Jamaica Baptist Union	P	315	38,000	108,680
Anglican Church	A	266	50,000	100,000
Ch of God of Prophecy	P	300	28,000	70,000
NT Church of Christ	I	158	31,500	69,930
Ch of God (Anderson)	P	106	5,000	50,000
United Church	P	200	17,500	47,000
Methodist Church	P	170	17,400	44,000
Jehovah's Witnesses	M	205	16,538	43,000
United Pentecostal Ch	P	240	26,000	39,000
Revival Zion	I	318	17,500	30,625
Apostolic Church	P	36	9,000	27,270
Moravian Church	P	55	6,300	25,000
Other denominations[156]		1,942	170,842	334,238
Total Christians[171]		5,804	786,022	1,534,743

TransBloc	Pop %	Population	Ann Gr
Evangelicals			
Evangelicals	28.0	764,733	1.4%
Renewalists			
Charismatics	20.7	564,541	1.8%
Pentecostals	15.9	433,675	1.6%

Missionaries from Jamaica

P,I,A Approximately 100 in 18 agencies from 26 countries.



Answers to Prayer

- 1 Jamaica has a wonderful Christian heritage.** Praise God that many leadership positions have transitioned from foreign workers to national leaders, enabling the Jamaican Church to come into its own.
- 2 This nation has a rich but little-known mission sending history.** Praise God for those rediscovering this spiritual legacy and remobilizing Jamaica to once again become a sending powerhouse. Increasing numbers of mission agencies are operating branches out of Jamaica.

Challenges for Prayer

- 1 The country finds itself in the midst of moral and social collapse.** Powerful South American drug cartels, using Jamaica as a transshipment point for cocaine destined for the USA, wield great influence. This fuels violence, putting Jamaica fourth globally for murders per capita. Rape and domestic abuse are widespread. As part of an anti-corruption drive, the government has invited greater participation from churches. Pray that government and church leaders may reject compromise. Pray for courage, moral integrity and determination to turn the country back to God. The National Leadership Prayer Breakfast brings church leaders together with leaders in politics, business and the security forces to address and pray for these issues.
- 2 Jamaican Christianity needs reformation and renewal.** It enjoys one of the world's highest number of churches per square mile, but the majority of self-proclaimed Christians in Jamaica neither attend church nor lead a Christian life. Networks – such as the Jamaica Council of Churches, the Jamaica Association of Evangelicals and the Jamaica Pentecostal Union as well as many ministers' fraternals – seek to address and combat the political and social ills while working for unity and true Christian faith and practice in the Church.
- 3 With the most evangelicals and the best-resourced churches** in the Caribbean, Jamaica can and should be a spiritual leader in the region for evangelism and mission, training and unity. Pray that the 15 Bible schools and seminaries in Jamaica as well as the Keswick teaching conferences, which serve the whole Caribbean, may be powerhouses of biblical theology, practice and vision.
- 4 Young people.** OAC has reached over one million in its 20-plus years of evangelistic outreach to school assemblies. CCCI has a presence on both university campuses in the capital. CEF ministers through Bible clubs, camps and devotions in schools. IFES and SU have a combined ministry (SCFSU), producing Bible reading materials and witnessing in over 200 schools and 20 tertiary institutions. Pray for effective evangelism and discipling of young people that will prepare them to cope with the many challenges of life.
- 5 The less evangelized** who need prayer:
 - a) The very poor** have little exposure to the gospel except by radio. There is a large underclass, including the pseudo-orphaned “barrel children”, among whom mostly Catholic and Anglican ministries work. These gospel-neglected people have little by way of moral foundations; pray for the whole gospel to touch their lives and communities.

b) **The Rastafarians** began as a protest movement that mixed Christian beliefs with Black consciousness ideas and deified the Ethiopian Emperor Haile Selasse I. They are well known for their reggae music and use of *ganja* (marijuana), as well as for their non-violent “peace and love” philosophy. They have considerable influence in Jamaica and have spread to Europe and North America. In recent years, a few prominent Rastafarians have professed Christ as Saviour and become active evangelicals.

6 Christian help ministries – many serving the whole Caribbean.

a) **The Bible Society**, based in Kingston, channels Scriptures to most of the mini-states of the region. The Society has a strong vision of making Scripture accessible to young people in particular.

b) **Christian bookstores**. Source of Light Ministries operates six Christian bookstores in Kingston and runs the region’s largest Bible Correspondence Course. **CLC** has a notable ministry through three bookstores.

c) **Christian broadcasting**. Radio is broadcast in English by **TWR** (from within Jamaica) and by others from outside, totaling 77 hours per week. In the country itself, there is also a religious radio (LOVE FM) and TV station.

d) **The Student Christian Fellowship and Scripture Union** (SCF/SU), as well as Jamaica Youth for Christ and Jamaica Child Evangelism Fellowship, do valuable work among the younger generation. Many outstanding Christian leaders serving globally or in Jamaica are products of these ministries.