

Chapter 3: St. Thomas: July 1966 – October 1971

Franks description of this move from Puerto Rico to here follows. It should be noted that this rendering of Frank's was done by him in the third person.

"A regional National Spiritual Assembly of the Leeward, Windward and Virgin Islands was due to be formed at Ridván 1967, with its seat in Charlotte Amalie, St. Thomas.

It was suggested that Frank contact Katherine Meyer, a Knight of Bahá'u'lláh for Margarita Island who was secretary of the Local Spiritual Assembly in St. Thomas to see if she knew of any jobs that were available in St. Thomas. A quick trip there, a phone call, an interview and Frank had a job in the office of a small construction outfit.



Dorothy Behar came to St. Thomas with the Paccassi's. We were able to find a house large enough for all of us. It was just around the corner from long time pioneers, the Harmers, Marjorie and Ellerton and their three children Susie, Michele and Tony.



Most of the work done by the construction company was for the Virgin Island Government and the local phone company. They did other work like redoing an old rum storage warehouse that had been just opened after many years of wrangling in the courts. The boss kept the five 55-gallon barrels of rum from the warehouse that was supposed to be dumped. Frank commented on the irregularity of that to them on that and was ignored.

About five weeks after Frank had been hired, a duplicate check on another matter for several thousand dollars was received from the government. This was a duplicate payment that they had already received. The boss decided to keep it instead of returning it. It was suggested by Frank that if the check was returned the Government would look at them in a much more favorable light. The boss not only didn't see it that way, instead, he decided to fire Frank.

In reality, St. Thomas was not an easy place to obtain work, especially for a Continental, that is, someone from the U.S. mainland. In August 1966 a one-day tryout job for Frank with a local surveyor gave him such a very bad case of hay fever that his nose was stuffed up for several years to come.

Frank scoured the island of St. Thomas but could not find a job. The money was weeping away. Pat decided, resultantly, that she had to go to work. She found a job at Spencely's jewelry store. To her surprise, she was good at it.

By December 1966 Frank was working at the Welfare Department as the Director of Welfare Research and Statistics. He promptly posted on the wall the nine Baha'i holidays when work is suspended.

The job at times sent him to the U.S. regional Welfare office in Charlottesville, Virginia. On these trips he had the great pleasure of meeting with the Chutes. One of Rúhíyyih Khánúm's cousins was Jean Chute.

At Ridván with the presence of Hand of the Cause Dr. Ugo Giachery and his wife, Angeline, the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the Leeward, Windward and Virgin Islands was formed with its seat in St. Thomas. "



Our good friend Dorothy Behar, another pioneer in Puerto Rico, decided to go with us to St. Thomas. So we once again packed up and moved. I didn't know at the time that this was to be only the second in a series of moves throughout the Caribbean for the Faith. Much later I recalled when we were first new Bahá'ís in Carmichael, California, the Local Spiritual Assembly asked us to move to help a nearby community, which was even nearer to Franks' work. I said, "No, I'm not moving that far". Oh my, had I known!

It was here in St. Thomas that a letter from the Universal House of Justice arrived in the latter part of 1960's. In it was the appeal for pioneers to remain at their posts. This, then, was when I decided that we would not, ever, return to the United States, but would remain at our post.

During the first few months we lived in St. Thomas, I learned a basic principle that Bahá'u'lláh has always applied to us as pioneers. Frank was not yet able to get another job in St. Thomas. Our funds had dwindled down, even with me working, so that at the end of the month, we did not have enough money to pay the rent and buy groceries. One day a few weeks later we got a letter in the mail from Maxine and Marty Roth who were minding our house in Carmichael, California that we had not been able to sell before we left the States. In it was a check with enough to pay the rent that month, with \$100 left over. YAY! It seems that there had been a hit and run driver who ran into our garage door and damaged it. Marty had put in a claim and then fixed the door himself. More YAY! They had sent us the money from the insurance company. The next

week another a letter came asking for ninety dollars as the hot water heater in the house had broken and they needed the money to fix it. The lesson to me was very clear. You will get what you need, but nothing extra!



We stayed five years in St Thomas, from 1966 to October 1971. After we had been there for a while I realized that in spite of its being a very lovely island with lovely climate and beautiful beaches it was a difficult post for me. So many different factors contributed to this understanding.

As it was small, roughly 13 miles long by 2 miles wide, its characteristics were more noticeable. I had always lived in big cities, with our focus being on family, work, friends and the immediate neighborhood. But in St Thomas it was so small, one became aware of the situations prevailing in the whole island. The population was mainly in four different categories; native dark skinned St. Thomians, native white St. Thomians; Continentals, that is, those from the Continental United States; and native West Indians down-islanders who were working or staying there trying to get to the United States or just happy to be in U.S. territory, earning U.S. dollars and sending some home to their families. As it usually is, these groups mainly kept to themselves without much fraternizing.

The native white St. Thomians, felt they had the edge and were clearly the bedrock of St Thomas. They owned most of the businesses and still owned most of the land. Later when I had gone to work at H. Stern, an international jewelry store, I met a young woman from this population who also worked there. She and I became good friends, allowing me a peek into this society otherwise not obtainable by a "Continental". She told me a great story about her grandfather who loved to play cards. One night he got into a game; lost steadily and ended up selling St. John Island for \$7.00 an acre to another player!

This level was not particularly interested in any new religion. The only one from this level of society that I know of was Knud Jensen who enrolled in 1961 in the Harmer home, becoming the first Bahá'í in the Virgin Islands. His father was of Danish origin, mother, St. Thomian. Knud was born in Denmark in 1917 and brought to the Virgin Islands as a baby. He was a strong, active Bahá'í, and died in St. Croix, Virgin Islands in 1987.



The native dark skinned St. Thomians were children born there, either from the 4th grouping of the down-islander West Indians or from the slaves brought here over the years by either the British, French, Spanish or the Danish all of whom ruled the islands at one time or another. The islands were finally sold to the United States in 1916 by Denmark. These offspring then thought of themselves as Americans, mingling with those from other islands. These were the ones that I found were more receptive to the Faith, and many became and stayed strong Bahá'ís. The first one in this grouping to become a Baha'í was Alma Lake in 1965. She lived in a project close to us and we visited with her often. While not an active teacher, she did attend the Bahá'í activities and events. She was a quiet, sweet woman.



St. Thomas was also moving into the sea of materialism. It was U.S. territory and a free port. At any time of the year large cruise ships could be seen in the harbor. During Christmas time there would be as many as ten cruise ships docked there, all its travelers rushing into a concentrated area of shops downtown. The stores sold both cheap and expensive jewelry, liquor, tobacco, and lots and lots of cheaper souvenirs. These all were on the same block on the main street, which was approximately 200 yards long. The only other street in downtown, running parallel and was called "Back Street" but sold almost nothing to attract the tourists.

The earliest chance I had at teaching the Faith here happened one day when I went to lunch. It was at an open air restaurant and I settled down to eat and read my book. Eventually I heard someone speaking to me. I looked up and at the next table a tall, good sized, good looking and very dark complexioned man, with a big grin, saying 'Hi, can I buy a drink?' "No" I said, "I don't drink". "Oh, how about a beer then?" After that it became very clear, he was not going to leave me alone. I thought to myself, all right, if I can't read, you are going to hear about the Bahá'í Faith! We began to talk and an hour later it was also clear that this man, Ted Brown, was seriously interested in the Faith. I invited him to our home, making sure he understood I was married. He became a Bahá'í not too long after that. He also became a very good teacher of the Faith, bringing in several new Bahá'ís, all ladies!



As we settled in, we started having firesides in the style of the only ones we knew from California. As there was a great variety of peoples in St. Thomas, these turned out to be very successful. Also, Dorothy Behar was a great "attractor", she was one of those who act as a magnet for seekers, and left the "teaching" to others. We had lots of young people attending our firesides, many of whom became Bahá'ís.



This as it developed, became a minor problem for me, as I was reported to the Local Spiritual Assembly as not teaching the Faith properly "...otherwise so many would not have become Bahá'ís so quickly".

I met with the Assembly and after a bit, was able to convince them that I did have enough knowledge necessary to teach the Faith to others.

In another encounter with a pioneer from the States, I once again ended up in front of the Assembly. She was "black" as the

term went in the 1960's and another pioneer from the United States. I was so delighted to meet her! I was born and raised in Detroit, Michigan, which had a most deserved reputation as being one of the most racially prejudiced cities in the country. It had not been possible for me to have a "black" friend there so I was so happy to have a Bahá'í pioneer who could fill me in as to how her experiences had been growing up in the still divided atmosphere of the times. I began asking her question after question. She apparently misunderstood what I was doing and reported me to the Assembly as a racist. Oh my, that is not an easy thing to try to explain to others, especially when their decisions affect ones' whole life. Fortunately, I must have been able to make my motives understood to them, but unfortunately, she and I never became friends.

Frank, Judy and I made our first travel teaching trip in 1968.



First 19 Day Feast held on Montserrat, August 1968
2nd. L: travel teachers, Pat Paccassi, 1st. R: Frank Paccassi

The following years, I made most of the following trips through the islands of the Caribbean taking our youngest daughter Judy with Lynn staying home with her father and grandmother. I eventually visited most of the islands over the years. My boss at H. Stern, Mrs. Hanna Steiner, who liked the Faith and me, would sigh when I came to

her at the beginning of summer, and say, "OK, how long will you be gone this time?"

Travelling down island was a real education for me. I went to places where I had not even imagined existed and saw life styles totally unfamiliar to me. I learned new ways of describing things. An example of this was on one of the islands and looking at a large, beautiful tree. I asked one the local men what kind of a tree it was. He looked at for a time and said "A shade tree".

The local Bahá'ís at that time were mostly not of influential people or those with a lot financial means. On one trip to Nevis, we, Frank, Judy and I stayed at the home of the Claxton family who were the Bahá'í bedrock of the island.

It was a rather small house with many occupants. We were given the bedroom of the children. All three of us slept in the one bed. As it was summer, it was hot with very little breeze. In the day time, the flies covered the bed and at night the mosquitoes replaced the flies. Judy was 10 and a restless sleeper. So combined with her tossing and turning in the little bed and the mosquitoes enjoying the "imported" blood, I did not fall asleep right away. Just as I had just fallen into a nice slumber state, I was awakened by a loud, loud cheery voice saying "Well, good morning everyone!" I was so startled that I sat straight up and said in a loud voice and definitely not with a non-Baha'i-like comment said "What in the hell is that!" The sound immediately stopped. I later found out it was a radio show from St. Martin which came on every morning at 4.30 am. Nothing more was said about this by anyone. The next morning the radio didn't come until 7.00 am.

At the first meal we had there, I had expected that we would eat with the family, but instead were fed at a different time. The lady of the house put our food down and waited, watching us eat. Never did find out why for sure, but I later figured out that she was so unsure what she could feed us would be alright. So she had to stay and watch us and make sure we would eat what she had given us.

This family was very gracious and we ended up having a wonderful time. It didn't take me long to figure out that I was really more comfortable with village people rather than the "upper level". I can do upper-level, but prefer villages.

Our firesides on the porch at night when all the neighbors came



Meeting at Claxton home in Brown Hill, Nevis
August 1968

were great! I was born and raised in Detroit, Michigan which had a population of 3 million people. These new experiences in small village life as well as bugs in the dry foods, ants in the sweet things, flies and mosquitoes everywhere was perhaps made easier for me to be content here because when I was young my family had always gone camping all summer long. Life was also simple then; we slept in tents and my morning chore was to scoop the ants out of the food that they had managed to get into overnight.

I loved travel teaching. West Indians are a gracious people. They always give you the benefit of doubt, not simply judging that if you were white, you feel would you were superior and would act accordingly. They are generous, if they have two of something and you need one, they will share. The faults, of course, are there as well, but one learns what is appropriate during different situations.



My youngest daughter Judy, who usually traveled with me, was loved instantly. For years I was known as "Judy's mummy".

After we had been in St. Thomas for a year, the time for the formation of the first regional National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the Leeward, Windward and Virgin Islands had come.



It was April 1967. Hand of the Cause of God Dr. Ugo Giachery, representing the Universal House of Justice, and his wife, Angeline attended. At the time the National Spiritual Assembly was formed I was on the National Teaching Committee and as such was asked to give the report at Convention.

I was really nervous, especially with a Hand of the Cause of God sitting next to me. But later when I looked at the photo of this taking place, I was truly cheered in that he did seem to be listening.

There were also many visitors from overseas. Many of them connected to Baha'i institutions who had worked for years helping the development of the Faith in the Caribbean Islands. Others were travel teachers who had made many teaching trips in the islands, and felt that it was like the birth of a child. Altogether there were close to 100 attending. I was thrilled!



First National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the Leeward, Windward and Virgin Islands, 1967-68
Left to Right: Tom Hooper, St. Thomas; Ellerton Harmer, St. Thomas; Lorraine Landau, Saba; Jean Desert, Guadeloupe; Henrietta Trutza, St. Lucia; Hand Dr. Ugo Giachery, Katherine Meyer, St. Thomas; Jeffery Lewis, Grenada; Dorothy Schneider, St. Croix; Ed Miller, Grenada

Those elected to this first Assembly were: Edwin Miller, from Grenada, Chairman, Jean Desert, from Guadeloupe, Vice-Chairman, Katherine Meyer, from St. Thomas, Corresponding Secretary, Henrietta Trutza, from St. Lucia, Recording

Secretary, Ellerton Harmer St. Thomas, Treasurer, Thomas Hooper from St. Thomas, Lorraine Landau from Saba, Jeffery Lewis from Grenada, and Dorothy Schneider from St. Croix.

It is interesting to note that of the nine members of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Leeward, Windward and Virgin Islands, 8 of the nine members were pioneers, all of whom were originally from the United States except Jean Desert who was from Haiti. Jeffery Lewis from Grenada was the

only West Indian Bahá'í from within the National Spiritual Assembly jurisdiction.

The following Bahá'í year, 125 BE or 1968-69, Katherine Meyer left the area to pioneer to a post in South America, creating a vacancy in the Assembly. In the by-election there were 13 votes for 13 single persons. As I had been traveling in the area for a few trips, my name was apparently the best known of the thirteen, and I was elected to the National Assembly.



L to R: Ellerton Harmer, Pat Paccassi, Wilfred Bart, Beverly Miller, Tom Millington, Lorana Kerfoot, Bill Nedden, Henrietta Trutza, and Edwin Miller.

The national area was later divided in 1972 into two national Bahá'í areas, the Leeward, and Virgin Islands and the Windward Islands.

In order to help with the consolidation of the new Bahá'ís we moved to Barbados after the mass teaching project in 1971. Both Frank and I were elected to the newly formed National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the Windward Islands.



The seat, Barbados, was later added to the official name, as Barbados did not consider themselves part of the Windward Islands. It then became the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Barbados and the Windward Islands.

But in 1967 National Spiritual Assembly of the Leeward, Windward and Virgin Islands had a difficult task ahead of it. The islands included 4 languages, English, French, Spanish and Creole. It had 4 major currencies, the American Dollar, the French Franc, Barbados Dollar and Eastern Caribbean Dollar. These small islands were surrounded by large bodies

of water, the Atlantic on one side and the Caribbean Sea on the other side. One good thing was that except for the French Islands, English was spoken everywhere else. The French Islands are described as follows:

French West Indies*

The French overseas departments of Guadeloupe and Martinique in the Lesser Antilles, along with the island of Saint-Barthélemy and the French portion of Saint Martin.

*American Heritage® Dictionary of the English Language, Fifth Edition.

Within this grouping, English was spoken on both St. Barthelemy and St. Martin. At first, however, the Assembly did not know that English was easily spoken on St. Barts. A desperate search was made for a travel teacher who spoke French. Roy Massey from the United States did make a trip to the island and was happy to report that English was widely spoken there. At a later date Roy ended up as a pioneer residing in the French Islands.



The third year, the Assembly did not have a French speaking person on it. Thus in order to communicate with the French Islands a letter was written in English, sent to New York to be translated into French, then sent by mail to the proper French island, wait for an answer, then sent to New York to be put into English and sent back to St. Thomas. One could only hope that there was not an urgent matter to be dealt with. Later however, this was no longer a problem when the French speaking pioneers arrived.

Travel was also a challenge to be overcome as the members lived in islands from St. Thomas to the North and Grenada to the South. Air travel was very expensive. Some of the members who lived in the lower islands would often combine an Assembly meeting with stopping in islands to or from

meetings to do teaching or conveying messages from the National Assembly.

It was also remarkable in that the first years the National Assembly was self sustaining in its finances. Later however, it had to be subsidized by the Universal House of Justice.

There was a great need for pioneers in this newly formed national area. As a result, a flood, literally hundreds of prospective pioneers stopped in St. Thomas, the seat of the national headquarters to consult with the National Assembly before going to their post down island. This practice was not always as useful as one might imagine. For some, stopping in St. Thomas gave these prospective pioneers a look at and a taste of an entirely new life style. It was easy living, lots of things to do, a relaxed atmosphere of people who came from the United States who kicked off their shoes, shirts and inhibitions in that order. Some Bahá'ís did not last long as pioneers. Many, however, did move directly to other islands where they served with devotion and dedication.

I have made a table showing the names, places and the dates of the pioneers and travel teachers up to 1984 when my research ends, this is a link to the information:

http://www.bahaihistorycaribbean.info/Complete_List_Pioneers_and_Travel_Teachers_to_LWVI_Web_View.pdf

Over the years one could almost predict which new pioneers would leave their posts soon. These were the ones who complained about almost everything, nothing suited them, and they invariably returned to their home land.

Between 1959 and 1981 seven Hands of the Cause of God visited St. Thomas; Dr. Giachery, 1959 and 1967; Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánúm, 1970, Rahmatu'llah Muhajir, 1974, Jalál Khazeh, 1974, John Robarts, 1974, Paul Haney, 1977, and Enoch Olinga, 1977.



The visit of Rúhíyyih Khánúm in June 1970 was a great honour and pleasure for our area. In looking back it seems incredible that she was only there for three days! So much happened with activities for her, interviews with the media, courtesy calls on government officials, and meeting with the Bahá'ís.

I personally had the wonderful duty of driving her and her companion, Violette Nakhjavání during the visit.

At the airport saying goodbye, I watched Khánúm go and felt as though I was losing my best friend. She turned around at that moment, saw my face, came back, and in a tone of voice mixed with annoyance and affection said "Oh Pat" and gave me a kiss on the cheek.



Just before she and Violette arrived I had received a call from one of our friends in Puerto Rico who asked if we could give hospitality to a team of young people. At that point, once the news had gone out that such a distinguished visitor was coming, all available hospitality was immediately filled. I apologized, but said it wasn't possible. After a brief hesitation my friend asked if we had a back yard. I said "Yes", and he said "Great, I'll get together a tent and supplies and they can just stay in the back yard!"

It was now too late to back out. The team arrived just in time for the meeting. Eloy Enello, a young pioneer to the island was the coordinator. I took one look at the team consisting of several young, teenage boys and girls. This would not do,



and promptly managed to get other places for the girls to stay, the boys stayed with me. Eloy is second from the right.

I had been assured that they would be self-sufficient and take care of everything themselves. That evening Eloy came into the house carrying a bag of rice and a sweet smile on his face. He hefted it in his hand and asked "How much water should I use for this?" OK, I now had a team of lovely young Puerto Rican boys to care for! Evidently, what had been meant by self sufficient was that the girls would take of things like that.

The next night it rained, and I woke up the next morning, went downstairs, and saw wall to wall boys sleeping everywhere. I never regretted it as getting to know them and such a sweet young Eloy Enello was a privilege. He contributed so much in his Bahá'í life. In 1984, he founded Nur University in Santa Cruz, Bolivia. One can look him up in Wikipedia to see how extensive were the contributions made by him through this university.

During the teaching trip through South America that I made in 1985 with Meherangez Munsiff I met Elloy again. During our chat, he told me the following story;

"On one of the early visits of Dr. Muhájir I asked him what he saw for me in my future. He put his head back and after a bit said; "I see you travelling, travelling, and travelling".

Eloy then said to me, "And I haven't been off an airplane since!"

In 1965 a letter to the Local Spiritual Assembly of St. Thomas was received from the National Spiritual Assembly of the United States Property Goals Committee asking them to look for Hazíratu'l-Quds property costing between \$10,000 to 12,000 thousand U.S. dollars.

This, for some reason, did not become a priority until 1971, when the Local Spiritual Assembly of St. Thomas began to intensive it's looking for property sites. Here are before and after photos of the property that was eventually purchased in the downtown area of Charlotte Amalie;



In the early part of 1971 the National Assembly having been thrilled by the news of the Mass Teaching projects in the United States began to plan its own Mass Teaching project in the islands. This project was a true act of faith, as there was very little money in the National Fund to finance it. Never the less, a plan was adopted with me as coordinator. The original choice of Nevis for the project was not feasible as I could not find housing large enough to accommodate the team we anticipated. Barbados was chosen instead. This account of the project will be given during my Barbados recollections.

In 1971, a series of Oceanic Conferences was announced. The closest to St. Thomas was being held in Jamaica in May 1971. A cruise ship was chartered from the United States for the trip to the conference. It was designed to be a concerted program

for the proclamation, expansion, and consolidation of the Cause.

550 Bahá'ís from the United States sailed on this cruise ship called "The New Bahama Star". It sailed from Miami and stopped in St. Thomas and Puerto Rico picking up the Caribbean Bahá'ís on its way to the conference.

We had a great time on this ship. All the passengers were Bahá'ís. The ship accommodated them by closing the bars and the casino. Bahá'ís get on such a high when a large group gets together. One could almost feel sorry for the crew who were bombarded with firesides everywhere they turned. It also was a test for them in that the waiters relied on good tips from the people they served at their assigned tables. But, Bahá'ís do not sit in the same place all the time. They table hop and chat and visit and the poor crew could not count on one set of people at any time.

On the return trip the Bahá'ís in St. Thomas had arranged a simplified teaching plan during the several hour layover in St. Thomas. The first part had the Bahá'ís taking the short walk into town, rather than take taxis as was normal. This did arouse a lot of attention. However, the taxi drivers weren't too happy and in retrospect, a lot of others who watched the march probably just thought they were stupid or incredibly cheap, the noon day sun is very hot! But, there were 172 enrollments that day!

Mass teaching had a lot of mixed emotions among the Bahá'ís. Most Bahá'ís were not neutral, they were either for it or against it. In St. Thomas there seemed to be more in the "against" than in the "for it" category. We all know what happens, or rather, doesn't happen when unified action is not taken.

The rest of our time in St. Thomas followed a pattern that seemed to hold over the years. One gets into a routine, teaching, assembly meetings, Bahá'í meetings and all the other activities that life brings us. It takes a lot of self discipline to remember that you are where you are in order to

promote the Faith, as well as maintaining the Bahá'í standard of living at all times. Everyone around you knows you are a Bahá'í and they watch closely to see if you practice what you preach. In the West Indies you are either "walking the walk" or "talking the talk".

After the 1971 mass teaching project held in Barbados, it was clear that the few pioneers on that island were not going to be able to handle the consolidation of all the new believers. Frank and I consulted and we decided we would move to Barbados to help. After all it only seemed fair as I had coordinated the teaching project.

We then started a process which was to be our guide for the remainder of our pioneering. When the need arose, we answered the call and went. It wasn't always the same process in the beginning of each move however. Some we initiated, others came about after Frank had lost a job and needed a new one. We would consult with the National Spiritual Assembly and they in turn would send us where the need was.

Our move to Trinidad was the only exception. This move was decided by our financial concerns. Frank had again lost his teaching job in St. Lucia in 1985 due to local people becoming available. We did not have savings that would sustain us and our social security from the United States would not kick in for another two years. He was now at retirement age in the Caribbean with no prospect of getting another job.

During a visit to Sacramento, California, I came in contact with Charyl and Keith Thorpe who had pioneered to Trinidad several years ago. They still owned a house there and Charyl said they would subsidize us. We could live in their house rent free. This subsidy would also include the rent money from the two apartments downstairs which we could use to maintain the property as well as for our own personal needs. Wow, talk about an offer one can't refuse!

It also turned out to be part of our overall plan from Bahá'u'lláh as it was here that I was to become part of the

Institute Process which was just starting on the island. It's hard for me to find words to describe my feelings toward being introduced to this process. It was the next step in the development of the teaching in our area. We had tried so hard to consolidate after projects, but there was just never enough manpower or a consistent plan. This was an answer to the dilemma. I was asked to be on the Trinidad and Tobago National Baha'í Institute Board of Directors and served as its secretary for the remainder of our time on the island. But more on time spent in Trinidad later.

In October 1971 we left St. Thomas and moved to Barbados. I had gone and ahead to find us a place to live in Belleplaine, Barbados. I remember leaving St. Thomas and walking towards the airplane and with each step I felt lighter, joyous, and free! It was a strange feeling but I knew in spite of moving while we were not at all sure that we could stay on Barbados, it was the right thing to do.