

“...Whereas the aim of our charge is love that issues from a pure heart and a good conscience and sincere faith”

I Timothy 1:5

Journey to India

The Rev. Dr. Valerie Carter, Rev. Freda Wilkins and I, left for Bengaluru, India on August 16. We traveled there to teach as guest instructors for two weeks at the Indian Institute of Theology and Mission (IITM). The classes were part of a mission conference held at the school. The students and instructors of IITM had never met or known about the experience of African Americans, specifically African American women. They were excited to hear us share about Black African and African American experiences in America and God’s actions in our history. We taught every day for two hours. Rev. Carter’s topic was on mission, Rev. Wilkins topic was on prayer and my topic was multicultural religious education.

On the last day of class, we asked the students to share their faith stories with us as we had shared our faith stories with them. This was the first time visiting instructors had given them an opportunity to share their stories. They appreciated that and felt connected to people that struggle to survive all over the world.

Being received, embraced and affirmed as an instructor and a sister in the family of faith in a male dominated conservative Christian theological society was astounding. While experiencing another perspective of Christian education in an environment of poverty in India at IITM, I realized in some ways it is similar to that in Haiti. I will always hold a place in my heart for India and such respect and admiration for each student and the instructors who shared with us their narratives of becoming a Christian.

Jeanette Salley, a Global Ministries missionary is a member of St. John’s United Church of Christ, Richmond, Virginia. She serves with the National Spiritual Council of Churches in Haiti (CONASPEH) as an assistant for disaster preparation and response, as well as a teacher at St. Andrew Seminary.



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