

Lutheran Mission Association Newsletter

March, 2006

The Church is growing. Reviere-du-Nord is in the process of becoming a new church community and will likely develop a small school. Mr. Valery, an experienced lay pastor will likely be sent to that church. The town of St. Raphael has been visited by Pastor Eliona, Vicar Gergens, and Mr. Valery. They have almost nothing, having been cut off when the bridge from Cap Haitien was washed out. These new Christians will require teaching and aid. The Catechism project which we have instigated will aid in the teaching and spreading of the Gospel to new Lutherans in Haiti. Ten dollars buys a beautiful, long-lasting hardbound copy of the catechism. This is bringing in much-needed funds, and the books will be ordered and shipped from France before the new school year this fall. The plan is to see that all the Haitian Lutheran pastors share in this gift. We ask that you please contribute toward this project. A Christian dogma book is also being purchased for the pastors, the vicars and the students at the seminary. Also, we have been, and will continue to purchase Bibles in French, along with medical books and children's books in French. A book is worth so much!

The country has elected a president who is closely associated with the ex-President Aristide, and many people are unhappy with the results of the election. It could mean further trouble for this already troubled country. Please pray for them!

Construction work has begun on the next three-quarters of the complex. Foundations have been built for the other half of the school. Donations toward this effort will be welcome. The outlying churches have needs, too. Dondon is looking to purchase land and build a church. Riviere-du-Nord has rented a building to use for a church for the next three years, and St. Raphael will be needing funds to house a church, and later a school. If you are aware of a congregation looking for a mission project, these are indeed worthy missions.

The Medical Clinic construction is complete, inside and outside. The exterior has been painted green and white. The shipping container we sent has arrived with some of the materials needed to set up the clinic. The lab has received a \$10,000 grant from LCMS to get it started. A woman with experience in Haitian labs has been helpful in developing lab systems, and a lab tech has been found, who is not yet hired, but is giving advice on setting up and acquiring items. A USA nurse who indicated she might spend a considerable time in Haiti, has now decided not to go. There is a Haitian nurse who is advising on the clinic. The clinic will also contain a pharmacy. If you have an interest or skill in helping with the clinic project, please contact Deb Larson at 1-218-283-2447 or debsdoodles@yahoo.com. There is much work to be done. The generator for the church is defunct, and they are using a borrowed one. A dependable generator and refrigerator system with battery backup is needed to run equipment at the clinic and lab. Another need is for clean, safe water at the site. This will aid the school, the church people, and the community at large by reducing worms and diarrhea. Donations toward these projects are welcome.

The School in Cap-Haitien and Dondon received many pairs of donated shoes from our group. A small team of women in the Bemidji area (and from outlying areas) have been sewing some beautiful uniforms for the students as that task has become very difficult without a dependable generator and an inability to get needed materials. This project is in its infancy, but if you would like to become involved, contact Lil Spilde at 1-800-399-0209, ext 101. Uniforms will be needed for the school at Dondon, and eventually at the schools in Riviere-du-Nord and St. Raphael, when they are established.

The school and church interior work was done over Christmas vacation, and we hope it motivates the children to stay in school. The outside of the school is painted white and pink. LWML members have been very supportive in providing school supplies and hygiene kits for the children, and the children are happy. The Adopt-A-Student program remains vital to provide for the operations of the school and help with the teachers' wages. The teachers are very dedicated to the school and its future, and often need to wait for some of their wages. Adopting a student insures that the student has all he needs for school: materials, shoes, uniform and tuition. The children receive one meal a day and a weekly vitamin. It remains difficult for many of the children to go to school, as they are often needed to work to help with the support of their families. Some of the teachers are receiving ongoing education to improve their skills. LMA is looking toward the purchase of school books and reading materials in French. A small library has been donated to the school. The school bus is in use for school and church services.

The Women's Center has been continuing to run, but has been impeded with the problem of the lack of consistent power. LWML has been very supportive of this center, and we are very thankful. The items given by women in MN North have made their way to Cap-Haitien in the shipping container this past year, and will be well utilized by the women of Haiti. The women of the church there lend aid to those in need. LWML has made two of our kits a focus for the LWML convention to be held in June. Thank you to everyone who has contributed.

The Shipping Container was sent in December, but not received at the site until late January. It was quite expensive, but well worth the effort, as everything arrived intact. The items we sent were received with much joy. Many of the things will be shared with other Haitian Lutheran pastors and their congregations, such as clothing, food, quilts, shoes, and kits. Many of the items will supply the complex's church, district, school, women's center and medical center. Construction tools were sent to replace worn out ones. Many of you participated in this project with time and gifts; sorting and packing, kits, quilting, gathering items, donating food, medical supplies and medicine, school and clinic supplies, office equipment, and funds for shipping. Thank you so much! A gift of a 40' container and platform was given to the church to store items at the site in Cap Haitien. This storage area will greatly benefit the congregation and their ability to store items safely.

We will make every effort to have items shipped in bulk the beginning part of August to arrive there in time for the new school year. Whether or not we send another container depends on how much we have to send, and our financial situation.