



NEWSLETTER

Vol: 6 Issue: 1

January 2008

A mission organization of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

Mission Presentation

If any congregation would like to know more about the LMA mission in Haiti, please contact Paul and Lil Spilde at (218) 333-1560.

We would be more than happy to visit with your congregation or Bible class and tell you about the great work being done in Haiti.

A presentation has been prepared that shows the story of the LMA mission in pictures.

A Merry Christmas Story: St. Raphael, Haiti

Special messages are to be merrily treasured and special people cross our path at times, but we really don't know them or their struggles. The Lord, however knows their struggles and prayers, and sometimes He shares a peek of His all-knowing work amongst us.

On the road of life there are times when God shares a peek of His plan with you. When they come, accept those moments with humble joy and bask in the merry moments when all else seems to stand still knowing the Lord is with His family.

This past year in St. Raphael, Haiti, such a moment was given for me to notice, to reflect on, and to be joyously caught up in. It was a merry gift beautifully played and graced by His handiwork.

The story begins half way through church service in St. Raphael, Haiti in March 2007, when I heard a swishing as an elder opened the palm leaf door to admit an elderly women stooped over a wooden stick. It was oppressively hot and she looked tired and dusty. I got up out of my chair and helped her into it, exchanging glances she nodded to me a thank you.

My heart tugged and empathy flowed as I wondered how long she must have waited for us to come before walking the mile or so from the village to get to the church.

Back then, I was part of an LMA team that had come to see the work done on the first cement church constructed with LMA's support in this very poor village of St. Raphael. On that day our group came to share fellowship and communion with our Haitian brothers and sisters in Christ. On that day it became more than fellowship with strangers, it became a special moment with a special Christian women and her family.

Newsletter Contents

A Merry Christmas Story
by Deb Larson

2008 Haiti Mission Team

Mission News

Sunday School Projects

Container Project Kit Info

Mission Presentation Info

St. Raphael Update

Adopt-A-Student Update

Annual Report

HAITI TRIP 2008

To date, there are five people planning a trip to the Cap-Haitian Complex in early April. Deb Larson, LeRoy Kelly, Lil Spilde, Virginia Valleau (Lil's sister), and Lori Salvhus.

The LMA team will be leaving Ft. Lauderdale on April 1st. Deb and Virginia are returning on April 7th. The rest of the team will stay until April 14th. Lori is planning on teaching English classes. Virginia, LeRoy and Lil will help with the construction. Deb will work in the clinic and possibly in the sewing center.

There may be more going, but the time is drawing to a close when we need to make the final plane reservations. Some generous donations from individuals has given us about \$14,000 to help pay for construction materials and labor for the start of the second phase of the building at Madeline. As I stated before, building materials are expensive, so any new donations would be most welcome.

LMA team members would be glad to come and speak to your church or event and tell you about the mission trip and the mighty work done through spreading the Gospel.

A Merry Christmas Story, cont.

At the close of the service I lost track of the elderly women. But then, there in the back of the crowd stood the old women leaning on her cane and smiling as our team shook hands with those around us and said our good byes.

I thought, "Who is this woman? What is her story? Were her daughters and granddaughters standing amongst us? Was this church building an answer to her prayers? Was the school for her grandchildren to learn a better way of life? What hopes did she have for the future? What road did she travel in her life?" Time ran out to know as we were escorted back to the SUV to return to Cap-Haitian. I watched her as she watched us drive down the dirt road. Life continued on.

In 2007, the LMA had many challenging projects like sending the generator and the second container, but one of the projects special to our hearts and minds remained the St. Raphael church and school. What about St. Raphael? How did LMA get involved?

A terrible hurricane in 2005 washed out a bridge isolating St. Raphael from food and aid for many months. It was a starving community. When the waters receded a contingent from St. Raphael traveled to Cap-Haitian three times to see Pastor Bernard about becoming Lutherans. A relationship developed and, under the direction of Pastor Bernard, a vicar was sent to minister and shepherd this group during the transition to Lutheranism and the starting of the school.

Later in the spring of 2005 an LMA team visited Haiti and traveled to St. Raphael to gather and bring back news of their circumstance. Back in the states, the pictures and news touched many hearts.

In 2005-2006 the perseverance of the St. Raphael community moved the LMA with a renewed vision. News was spread and excitement grew and a gift of money was received to purchase land at St. Raphael. Material donations from the first container project were of much help to them. With the Lord's guidance more funds were received to start construction of the foundation for a church in St. Raphael. The LMA was overjoyed to be of service to help fund construction and provide food for workers to clear land.

In March 2007 an LMA team returned to see the progress done in St. Raphael. The LMA brought a gift of communion ware for the church. The team was able to share in

communion with our sister LCMS congregation in St. Raphael. The trip to the town was a dangerous and long one. The ride was hot, bumpy, and dusty, but up on a rise above the town you could see the church's walls and foundation standing tall, but without a roof. A small old palm leaf church stood close by as the St. Raphael congregation came out to greet us. The elders pointed the way to the new church's construction and showed us the stones that marked out the land. This is when I had met the old women.

“if it is meant to be, God will make a way for it to happen.”

With the ending of the 2007 we wondered if the final goals for the past year would be accomplished. We had already asked for so much from so many this year how could we ask for more to finish the St. Raphael Church roof construction or to begin the next phase of construction at the Cap-Haitian complex in the spring of 2008? LeRoy our president said, “if it is meant to be, God will make a way for it to happen.”



Was it the old Haitian women praying? (pictured left) Did the Lord hear his children? We know He does. He knew the plan to aid this women's family and church was set in motion at the beginning of time, because this past Thanksgiving the Lord made the way for it to happen. The answers came in a blink of an eye, quicker than Santa Claus and his eight reindeer, down in Haiti a roof was put on the new St. Raphael church.

With continued thanksgiving, a Christmas service was held in the new St. Raphael church and the children will have a real school building in which to gather for many years to come.

Added to this were awesome gifts in the month of December totaling \$14,000 for construction at Cap-Haitian this spring. Finally, another wonderful gift surprise came from a Wisconsin group that donated money toward a specially-built well for St. Raphael, so they will have access to good water. I know there was incredible rejoicing in St. Raphael this Christmas season and also with us in the LMA! Your prayers and support made this happen!

Christ is at work revealed in His wonderful birth!
May God grace your family with joy and happiness!
Happy New Year! Deb Larson

Mission News

Medical Team Heading to Haiti. On Friday March 28, a medical team consisting of a pediatrician, a dentist, and two nurses are leaving from Nebraska and are heading to Cap-Haitian complex for a week to offer their specialized talents. Money has been forwarded to Pastor Eliona Bernard to purchase lawn chairs for the dentist to use in the clinic and then fold up when he is not there. Both the dentist and doctor specialize with children. ***Pray for their safe travel and medical care.***

Bird Flu Score: A strain of bird flu, one that is not transmittable to humans was reported in Dominican Republic. This caused panic in the hungry and impoverished nation of Haiti. Because of this Haiti closed its borders to chicken imports from the Dominican. ***Pray for world hunger relief.***

In Remembrance: In St. Raphael the new lay pastor's 18 year-old son died of typhoid and malaria. Medical help was blocked due to high water at the river. Pastor Eliona Bernard was unable to get to the young man's funeral due to the same high water. ***Please remember the lay pastor in your prayers.***

HOW ARE YOU SERVING AS AMBASADOR FOR CHRIST?

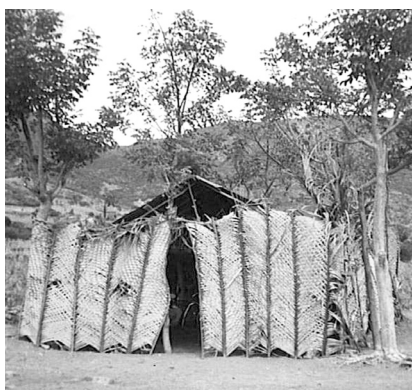


The Cap-Haitian Complex Well

Evangelical Lutheran Church in Haiti S t . R A P H A E L

The building at St. Raphael finally has a roof and is being used for worship service. The building was completed in December, and will be dedicated sometime in January 2008. Neither the inside or outside have been plastered yet, though the floor has been poured. It is a wonderful improvement from the frond-covered shelter the congregation has been using. The new building was constructed with funds from some of our fine contributors, and generous gifts from a number of others.

A toilet was constructed on the grounds, which is a great improvement from the “behind a tree”. There are about 4 acres of land at St. Raphael. Cactus plants which grows to about six feet were planted around the land by the people at St. Raphael. When planted close together it provides a “fence” around the land.



The Old Church Building

Construction on a well will soon begin at St. Raphael. A \$3,500 donation was given by Brookfield Lutheran Church near Milwaukee, WI toward the drilling of the well. Pastor Eliona Bernard has contacted Neil Van Dyne, a well driller in the Central Plateau and is working through the agreements to have the well drilled. The drilling method used at the complex in Madeline cannot be used because of the rocky ground at St. Raphael, so another, more expensive drilling method must be used. The estimated drilling cost is near \$5,000. Also, Mr. Van Dyne requires that the well be maintained and be available to use by all the people in the surrounding area. (Currently there is a well located not far from the church, but it is privately owned, and the owner charges a fee for every bucket of water taken from it.)

LAYING A FOUNDATION WITH ACTS OF CHRISTIAN KINDNESS...

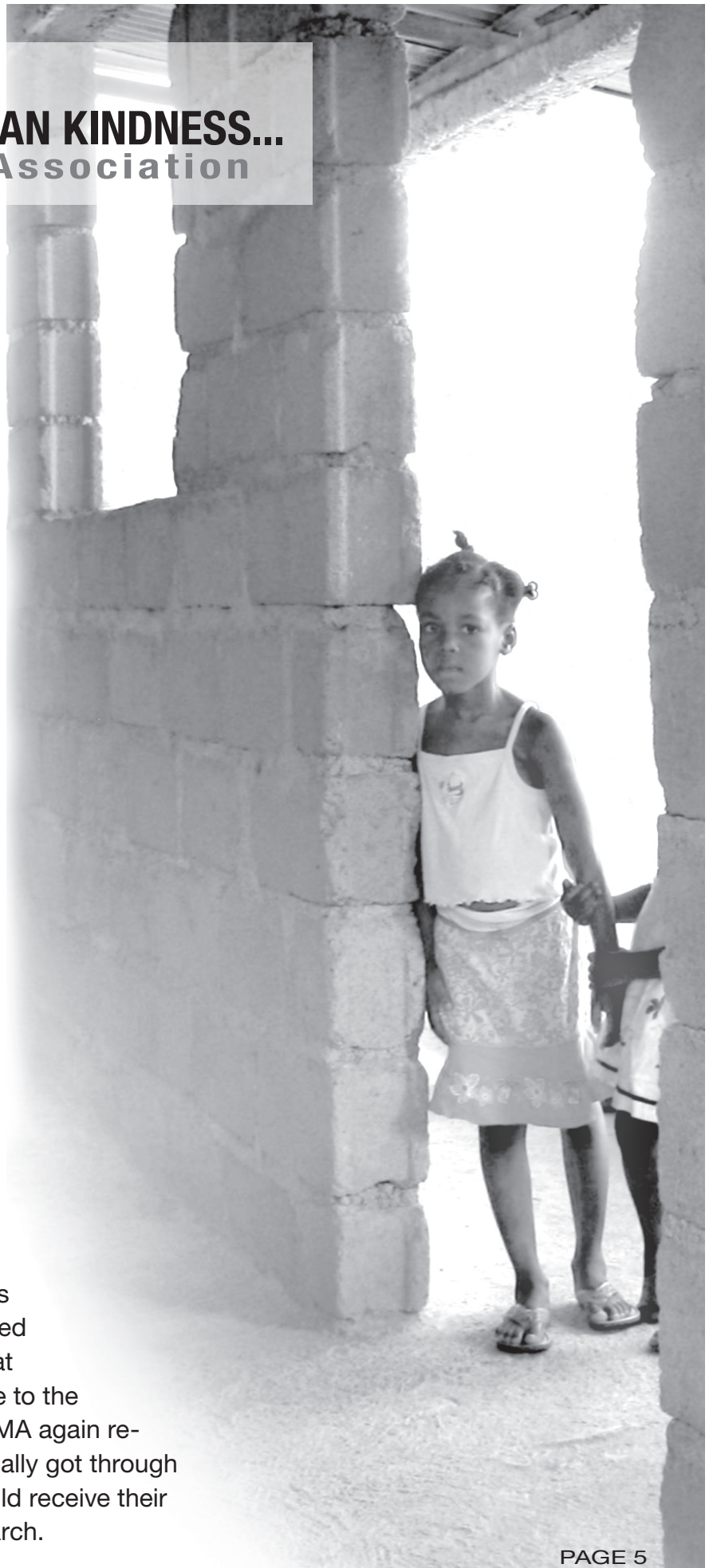
Lutheran Mission Association

Adopt-A-Student UPDATE

The First Lutheran School of Cap-Haitian's "Adopt-A-Student" program for the 2007-2008 school year has been blessed with thirty sponsors who are sponsoring thirty-two students. This is our greatest year so far and is partly attributable to the widening of our summer mailing list to include every LCMS church in the Minnesota North District.

This is the fourth year of the Adopt-A-Student (AAS) program. With the AAS program, each sponsor donates \$250 towards student's school expenses. In return each sponsor will receive photo of their student and a letter from Pastor Eliona Bernard with information about their student's family, school progress, etc. The donated money goes toward tuition, a school uniform, school supplies, and teachers' salaries, etc.

At the time of this newsletter Pastor Bernard is ready to mail the sponsor's letters and photos, however, he needed U.S. postage stamps. Two attempts at mailing stamps to him have failed due to the unreliable mail service in Haiti. The LMA again re-sent more stamps to him and they finally got through a few weeks ago. Each sponsor should receive their letters and photos by February or March.



CONTAINER PROJECT

School Supply Kits:

Two pencils, an eraser, a box of 8 crayons, ruler (metric, please), and a small tablet.

Hygiene Kits are VERY welcome! (They would include a hand towel, a washcloth, TWO bars of soap, a toothbrush, tube of toothpaste (tape the top shut, please), also a bottle of shampoo and a nailclipper. All can be packed in the towel which should be held shut with at least two medium sized safety pins.

Newborn Kits:

Three to six cloth diapers, two diaper pins, baby lotion, one or two newborn "onesies", a receiving blanket, a soft washcloth, all wrapped in the receiving blanket, pinned together with diaper pins.

Medical Supplies:

Band Aids, 3" gauze wraps, rolled bandages (from old sheets, 2-3" wide), antibiotic salve, athlete's foot/ringworm salve (antifungal salve, that is), lice shampoo, over-the-counter antidiarrheal medicine, Tylenol, vitamins, anti-itch salve, lotion, alcohol wipes, Purell (Sam's Club has this in a liter size).

Need A Sunday School Project? Chicken & Egg / Goat Projects



One of the main topics at the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Haiti's (ELCH) convention last summer was how to become self-sufficient, and not dependent on foreign money to function.

In the past, a number of other Christian (non-Lutheran) missions in the Central Plateau, sent missionaries from the USA on a regular basis. Then, when the government of Haiti went into turmoil in early 2000, those missionaries left and the churches folded. The ELCH doesn't want that to happen to the Lutheran congregations, so they MUST become self-sufficient.

Since very little money comes in the collection plates on Sundays, it is necessary for each ELCH congregation to have a business to support their church.

The idea of a chicken/egg farm came from the Madeline, St. Raphael and DonDon congregations. Each congregation has some land that can be used, and they would like to start raising chickens for meat and eggs to sell as a money-maker for the congregation. Each congregation would like to start out with about 50 chickens, which must be purchased from the Dominican Republic. Each chicken cost about \$5. Fencing and a building are also needed, but building materials are EXPENSIVE and would cost around \$40,000.

The salaries of the workers would need to come out of the profits. So far the LMA has collected \$379 for the chicken project (that's 75.8 chickens!), but we have a long way to go to get that project off the ground.

The church at St. Raphael believes they could also raise goats on their land, for meat and milk. The cost of each goat is about \$65, but we do not know how many their land could handle, We thought about 10-15 goats would be a good start.

On Madeline's new 4+ acres, crops such as beans and other vegetables along with banana trees have been planted. They are expectantly waiting for harvest to be able to use the produce for the schools and possibly for sale.



2007 Annual Report

INCOME	TOTAL
Brookfield LC, Wisc.....	\$3,532.02
General Contributions	\$45,662.82
LWML	\$3,500.00
Special Designated Gifts.....	\$62,912.75
Matching Grants.....	\$4,500.00
Wells Fargo Bank	\$13.34
TOTAL	\$120,120.93

EXPENSES	TOTAL
Adopt-A-Student	\$11,100.00
Bank Service Charge	\$104.00
Building	\$8,200.00
Clinic.....	\$2,500.00
Container	\$7,470.00
Customs at Cap-Haitian.....	\$5,800.00
Food/Relief.....	\$1,500.00
Generator, Inverter	\$18,016.02
Land	\$41,600.00
LCEF Deposits	\$6,000.00
LCEF Withdrawls	(\$16,570.00)
Misc. Expenses	\$9,744.22
Gifts for Pastor Bernard	\$200.00
Orphanage	\$4,438.00
Salaries.....	\$1,000.00
Seminary Support	\$900.00
Travel	\$300.00
TOTAL	\$102,302.24

Balance on Hand 12/31/07 \$20,869.42

General Contributions maintain projects that are already in place like; Adopt-A-Student, Medical Clinic, School, and the Sewing Center.

Special Designated Gifts are from patrons for specific projects.

For a detailed report or explanation of LMA financial matters, please contact any board member.

Elections Information

Deb Larson was newly elected as the LMA secretary.

THANK YOU

The LMA wishes to thank all those who have given support to our mission efforts. Your prayers, donations of time, talents, and gifts have truly been a blessing for the Haitian people and mission outreach of the LMA.

The Gospel is at work as you reach out to others with acts of Christian kindness.

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Mission Statement

Lutheran Mission Association promotes mission activity among the congregations of the Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod in northern Minnesota. LMA promotes and maintains relations in a substantive and “hands-on” way between LCMS members and confessional Lutheran missions around the world for their support in the work of bringing the Gospel to the world.

Meeting Times

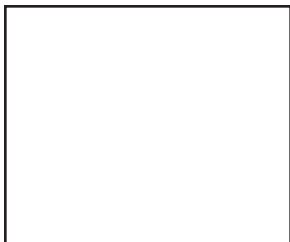
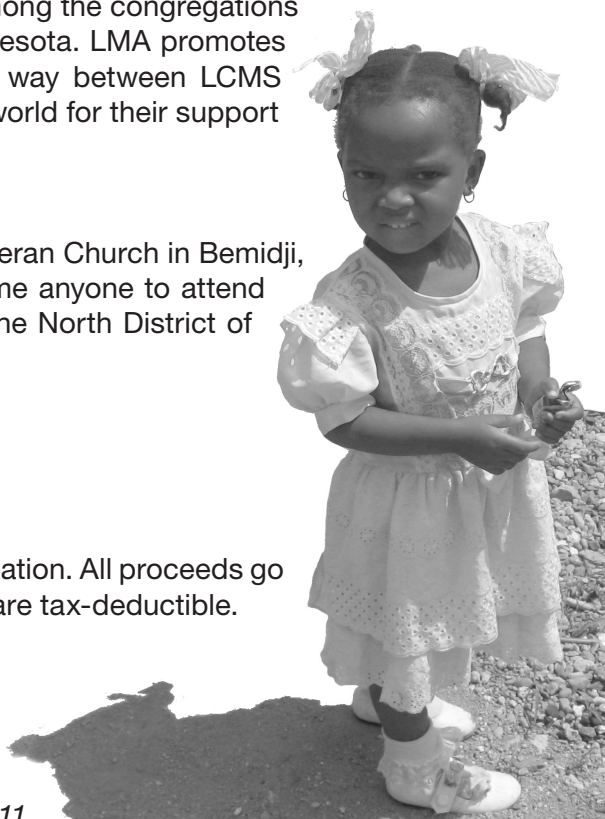
Lutheran Mission Association meets monthly at Trinity Lutheran Church in Bemidji, MN usually on the first Saturday of the Month. We welcome anyone to attend these meeting to learn more about what is happening in the North District of Haiti.

**To learn more the LMA call 1-800-399-0209
and ask to speak with Lil Spilde.**

Organization Status

Lutheran Mission Association is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization. All proceeds go directly to missions with no overhead costs. Contributions are tax-deductible.

*“The ransomed of the Lord will return.
They will enter Zion with singing;
everlasting joy will crown their heads.
Gladness and joy will overtake them,
and sorrow and sighing will flee away.” Isaiah 51:11*



LUTHERAN MISSION ASSOCIATION
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