

## HAITI MISSION TRIP February 2016



*Evangelical Lutheran Church  
Jacmel - praise & worship!*



*Teen Meetings at the Church*



*Much needed supplies for the  
children*



*Center of Refuge Orphanage:  
mealtime & fire damage*



I was so happy to be in Haiti again. The weather was wonderful as it always is plus my arthritis pain disappeared immediately. The country seemed to be a little cleaner and we saw way more animals than we have ever seen in past trips. Also, Haiti is in a big controversy over their election of a new leader. Nothing was resolved in the 2 weeks we were there.

I loved being in church again listening to all the wonderful singing and seeing everyone dressed as if it was Easter. Even though I don't understand their language, just being in their church is very uplifting.

Carnival was being celebrated during our first week there which meant school kids and public workers had 3 days off. We went into town but it was way too crowded for me plus the narrow roads can barely fit a car let alone millions of motor bikes, semi trucks and people. BUT this is life in Haiti and I have yet to see an accident. Since carnival is a voodoo activity, Pastor Markey opens his church up to the teens from all over the Jachmel area. Nathan organized 3 days of activities from 8:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. We all helped make breakfast sandwiches for 100 kids and we helped serve the rice and beans with chicken at 2 p.m. We could hear the kids singing and praising God from the guest house. Also, Jackie and Mark gave talks to small groups on marriage and the dos and don'ts of their teen age years. Of course Nathan was the interpreter. Plus, I overheard the groups discussing alcohol and drugs. They have the same problems we have in the USA. It was wonderful to see so many teenagers in church and really enjoying themselves. The idea is to keep the teens from straying into any of the voodoo activities going on.

The hospital we visited is undergoing a huge addition so not much activity was going on. We were able to give the new mommies and soon to be mommies the diapers, receiving blankets and onsies we brought. They were elated.

We brought over 200 washcloths and yet it wasn't enough. I saw more men using washcloths than I did women. I gave Nathan's daughter a Little Mermaid washcloth and you would have thought it was gold. Washcloths seem to be a fashion statement since AnLisa made sure her washcloth stuck out of her purse just right. Fortunately, this year we brought a lot of vitamins, ointments, pain killers, soap etc. These were distributed at the hospital, guest house and orphanage. I was so excited to finally see the orphanage. Two years ago our mission team sat around a table and pledged money to build a new orphanage for Pastor Joseph, his wife Roussimee and at that time 27 orphans. Seven months later, they all moved into the new orphanage. Many mission trips later including 4 mission teams from Ohio State University, the compound wall got built, the orphanage got painted and much miscellaneous work was finished. So what a pleasure it was for me to see that endeavor completed.

Unfortunately, on the third day of our visit, there was a fire at the orphanage. Thankfully, no children were hurt but Roussimee and her brother, Jimmy were severely burned on their arms and Roussimee's face. They were taken to the hospital but medical help in Haiti is almost non-existent. They wrapped their arms in gauze and sent them home. The following morning we immediately brought them both to the guest house and there they remained for the next 12 days. Nathan's brother is a doctor and without his care possibly one or both of them would have died. We were able to purchase all the necessary medicines and bandages etc that were needed, and electricity was finally put in the orphanage and all fire damage was repaired. Due to Haitian construction, the fire was contained in the 2 family rooms of Pastor Joseph and a lot of smoke damage to the girl's dorm. Haitians are amazing people. The constant



*Feeding program at Beaudouin tent city*

outpouring of family and friends that came to visit them was incredible. Food was prepared for them constantly, beds were being changed plus the hardest task was trying to keep the patients clean and in clean clothes. Not once was there a cry or complaint. Had the burns been on my arms I know I would have been a horrible patient, especially when they had to peel all the dead and burnt skin off. As of this writing I am happy to say the patients are back home and doing well.

Again this year we visited Boudwin, the tent city's feeding program that Pastor Markey and Sydney administer twice a week. The need is still as great as ever for those 100+ children and there were a few handicapped adults. I thought the lid to a 5 gallon bucket was a strange container to have rice and beans put in but this year beat that. One boy came with a urinal, the container that is usually given to a man in a hospital. You have to be vigilant because some of the older kids try to go through the line a second time. You wish you had enough food to feed everyone.



*Ministering to the impoverished elderly in Jacmel*

A new adventure this year was taking food to the elderly. Haiti does not have a retirement system so if you are too old to work or handicapped you can only hope that your family will take care of you. But many elderly don't have families so they get handouts or in some cases they starve to death. Manu, the director of the guest house, has taken it upon himself to sort out those that have the greatest need. Our mission team pooled \$200 and we bought enough rice, beans, bottles of cooking oil, canned tomatoes and tomato sauce to feed 12 of the elderly for 3 weeks. The very first person we delivered food to was a 76 year old lady that literally lived in a tent and there was no bed or chairs inside, just lots of blankets on the ground. Outside of the tent was a chair and the traditional little charcoal burner for cooking the rice and beans. We all had lots of mixed emotions because we were happy to take them food, but when we left who knows when they will get their next donation.



*Pennies for Rice: Picnic Dinner (chicken & rice) Point Est, Ile a Vache*

We visited 3 schools and Mark took pictures of the students for their sponsors. We were able to share the clothes and washcloths we brought with the Pastors so they can distribute them to their needy. I was sorry that we were not able to go to Ile a Vache this year. I have talked to Nora and she said the children at Pt Est are doing very well. The latrine was finished and we sent money again this year for a chicken dinner. The entire school went to the beach and enjoyed a picnic dinner. So this was a different kind of treat for them.

On one of my daily walks I saw Nadia. She helped in the kitchen at the guest house 4 years ago when I visited. Two years ago when I was there she had a 6 month old baby, Sebastian. This trip of course he was walking and trying to talk. Haitian babies are so adorable.

We concluded our trip with taking the orphans to the beach and this year we made corn dogs for everyone. Of course they had never seen them before. It is such a pleasure seeing these wonderful kids. The older ones look out for the little ones and it really is something when you see an older boy trying to get a little one dressed after taking off a wet bathing suit. On top of that is getting the right clothes for the right child out of the big pile of clothes.



*Lee & Phoebe  
Ke Bondye beni nou  
God Bless You!*

I hated saying good bye to Sydney and the gang at the guest house as this is my last trip. I will never give up helping in any way I can but I have to face I am getting older and I have to hope some younger people will get on board. AND maybe some day Haiti will not be a third world country anymore. Thanks to all who have helped me on all my mission trips in any way be it prayers, contributions, or monetary donations. I couldn't have done it without you.

Ke Bondye beni nou  
God Bless You  
Lee