

SEEDS OF SUPPORT MISSIONS

*A Ministry of St. Andrew Lutheran Church, Eden Prairie, MN
and United Lutheran Church, Langdon, ND*

SOWING SEEDS. BUILDING COMMUNITY.

WINTER 2021: RE-ENVISIONING EMPOWERMENT

Hello everyone, and God's blessings to you all.

Since we began our mission in Haiti nearly 12 years ago, empowerment of the local community has been one of our primary goals. Through accompaniment, we have always tried to walk alongside our partners, with their needs and goals guiding our work.

While our mission has not changed, *how* we carry out that mission has undergone significant transformation in the last two years. Even before COVID-19 emerged, socio-political unrest in Haiti had forced us cancel several mission trips. As the situation has continued to deteriorate, we have come to the realization that we won't be able to travel to Haiti safely for the foreseeable future. And with the continuing gang violence, even sending Jorel to Pasquette on our behalf is currently not possible.

So how do we move forward? We remain committed to our partnership with Redemption Lutheran Church and the Pasquette community, even amidst the current uncertainties. However, we are also looking at ways to expand our mission throughout Haiti by encouraging our partners to look for outreach opportunities in their own neighborhoods. Seeds of Support will consider their ideas for safety and practicality and provide funding for them if they feel they meet our mission. As you will read below, several initiatives are in the works, and we are excited to see where this new direction takes us and our partners in the coming months!

CELEBRATING CHRISTMAS IN PASQUETTE

Julien (head of the water committee in Pasquette) came up with the idea to host a Christmas party for children in Pasquette. As co-sponsors, Seeds of Support provided the funding, Redemption Lutheran Church hosted, and Julien organized the event. At the party, held on December 24th, children were fed, and they received an age-appropriate gift at a program celebrating the meaning of Christmas.

Additionally, proposed by Julien, Jorel, and Joseph, we co-sponsored a Christmas dinner for 53 families in Pasquette. Each family received the fixings for a traditional Haitian Christmas dinner of rice, beans, and salmon to cook at home.

KERLANGE HOSPITAL OUTREACH

Kerlange approached Seeds of Support with an idea to provide needed supplies to patients at the hospital in Saint-Marc (the town where she lives northwest of Port-au-Prince). She explained that there aren't enough doctors, and many people don't have access to basic supplies like toothpaste, soap, and sanitary napkins. Seeds provided funding, while Kerlange and a team of friends shopped and distributed the supplies at the hospital the weekend before Christmas. She provides the following update on the project.

“Two of us went to the market to buy the things needed by people in the hospital. We bought Kotex, laundry soap, bar soap, toothbrushes, toothpaste, chlorine bleach and baby diapers...four of us filled the bags with gifts. It



Even little Zeke helped!

took us three hours to fill 50 packages.

Sunday, eight of us went to the hospital and gave patients the 50 gifts. We visited more than that and prayed for them. We promised to return again...we don't know how many people total are patients in the hospital. There are so,

so many. Many are very, very sick. Those we visited were so happy and surprised. They kept saying “thank you” and asked us to pray for them.

I think we all were pleased about this work. Me especially, I'm so happy I got it done...I had a great day and I say thank you to God for protecting me even when I don't deserve it. It is sad and very hard to go to a hospital, especially to visit the sick people. I thank God for this opportunity. and I thank you all. You should have been there to see this!”



Above: Bags of laundry soap ready for distribution

Below: Kerlange and her team at the hospital



INTERVIEW WITH A MISSIONARY: JAMIE EFNOR

Even though we can't travel to Haiti right now, we know that the mission experience remains close to the hearts of many at St. Andrew and beyond. Jamie Efnor (formerly Samuelson) shared some memories of her three trips to Pasquette and where she saw God at work.

How many times have you traveled to Haiti with St. Andrew?

3 times: 2012, 2015 and 2016

Why did you decide to go the first/subsequent times?

I had always gone on the mission trips at St Andrew growing up and was excited to attend an international mission trip. The first trip was so eye opening and heart changing that I couldn't wait to go back again when I had the time to do so.

Share a favorite memory from your trip(s)

My first trip to Haiti was in 2012. On the medical clinic day, the doctor that came to administer exams, spoke only Creole and Spanish, and the other translators we had with us were already assigned jobs/posts for the day. Being that I was in college at the time and studying Spanish, I sat with the doctor all day and helped serve as a "translator" between the St. Andrew run "pharmacy" and the doctor. It was such a memorable experience, and God clearly put me on that trip for that specific reason because no others in our group had a Spanish speaking background.



Tell us about one of the biggest challenges you experienced during your mission trip?



Jamie and fellow mission trip participants in 2015

I am very much a punctual, routine person. I do my best to "roll with the punches" that day might have for me, but in Haiti all that goes out the window. You can prep and plan for hours, but schedules are very loose there. Each night at dinner, we walked through the next day's schedule and always joked that everything was in Haiti Time. So, a 10:00 a.m. departure might mean 10:15, 10:30 or even 11:00 depending on our drivers, the road conditions/traffic, etc. So being more patient and learning to go with the flow was a challenge for me.

Kids club participants making God's eyes during a 2012 mission trip

Where did you see God at work on your trip/after you returned home?

I had a newfound appreciation for what I had/have access to. After each trip, I have found myself feeling "reset" in a way and feel much more grounded in my faith and in my belief that we have SO MUCH MORE than we need.

SAVE THE DATE!

This winter, Saint Andrew will host a Wednesday night education hour exploring the current situation in Haiti, an update from our friends, and highlighting Seeds of Support's continuing mission both in Haiti and beyond. You are most welcome to join us. The offering will happen in the sanctuary for in-person participants as well as be live-streamed. Watch for more details in the coming weeks!

CONTINUED PRAYERS FOR OUR FRIENDS

And as we move forward in mission, please keep the community of Pasquette, along with Jorel, Joseph, Kerlange and their families in your prayers. Pray for God to keep them safe as they go about their daily lives, for an end to the violence rocking the country, and that we will be able to greet each other in person again soon.

Blessings,
Pastor Peter, Linnae Stole, and the Seeds of Support Board

CONTACT US!

For questions about the contents of this newsletter or Seeds of Support's work in general, contact Pastor Peter (pastorpeter@standrewlu.org) or Linnae Stole (lbstole@gmail.com).