Hot News from Haiti



Our Second Year in Haiti.





Greetings and thanks to all our friends and supporters for the prayers, messages of support and assistance in so many ways over the past year for us and the work here with Eglise Méthodiste d'Haiti (EMH). We have had a challenging time, but seen EMH moving on with completed building projects,

increased coordination of the volunteer work teams and a distinct move from 'recovery' to 'development'. We have also been blessed with visits from several folk from the UK, which included family, previous mission partners revisiting Haiti, a second visit from Leslie Griffiths, this time in his parliamentary capacity, and some young people, Jasmine, from Leslie's church,



New Siloe Clinic outpatients

Mellier Church opening

Wesley's Chapel in London, Ben from Bolton and MWM North West, and we look forward to the arrival of a medical student from Cambridge whose home is in Bury.





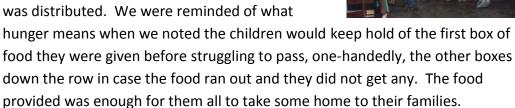




Kathy & Geoff previous mission partners, Jasmine meeting pupils at Leveque school, Ben checking medications with John.

One of the moving events of the year was being invited by the Marco Depestre Foundation to help serve a Christmas meal to people from the poor area of Port-au-Prince where the La Saline Church is located. The church, school and clinic have been refurbished with the assistance from Methodist Churches in Britain, initiated by the

Methodist Churches in Britain, initiated by the congregation of Westminster Central Hall in London. Christmas Day saw us at La Saline and Sharon involved the children in acting out the Christmas story, then led devotions while awaiting the arrival of food and gifts. A small group gave a presentation about dental care before the food was distributed. We were reminded of what







Before and after refurbishment





On 26th, Boxing Day we were privileged to be able to help again serving another meal at a remote

village in the mountains a 4 hour drive from Port-au-Prince.

The **Health Programme** has established and run training for a Health Board to advise and oversee the Health Programme. This draws in the experience of Haitian health professionals and managers rather than leaving the superintendant ministers with sole responsibility for overseeing the health activities in their circuit. In February we were blessed by being able to appoint a Health Coordinator, Dr Benjamin Soledade, to be the link between

the Health board and the circuits, and in March a training session for the Health Board and key members of the Circuit Health Committee (CHC) from most circuits was held and the CHCs are now slowly becoming established.

We praise God for this development and supervision for the health activities of EMH, and thank, from the UK 'All We Can' (previously MRDF) and from the USA UMCOR (United Methodist Committee on Relief), for their support, both Dr Lolo (Health Board Chair) and Dr Benjamin lead the training and the Board and Circuit representatives were energetically involved while UMCOR Health Team from New York provided expert input from their work in Africa.



financial and with expertise, in these developments and the training conferences.

Please pray for the Health Board and Circuit Health Committee members, Dr Benjamin in her very

challenging role as Health Coordinator, and the integration of all EMH development activities (Agriculture, Micro-credit, and Health), with Christian Education, General Education, Vocational Training and Literacy.

We also give thanks for the Volunteers in

Mission (VIM) teams who give their time and money to support all these activities in many ways, and their willingness to coordinate the

activities they do with development priorities of EMH.

Visiting the clinics and meeting the staff, delivering the medical supplies has some challenges, VIM teams help with the work.





The **Christian Education** Department has been called on to offer workshops in Evangelism to congregations and in Thomassin Church we culminated the 3 weeks of training with a walk of witness on Palm Sunday and dramatic reading of the Passion narrative. I was glad to only read a small part in French - that of the maid by the fire! On a larger scale EMH has arranged two Marches of Witness, in Cap Haitien and Jéremie to publicise the presence of the Methodist Church in its lead up to celebrating 200 years in Haiti in 2017. Sharon continued with her visits to schools, in

particular at La Saline where Jasmine remarked that she









The Headteacher and Rev Yachelle Watson (in gold)

a VIM team, arts and crafts have been much appreciated.

A visit to Bainet, (just off the road to Jacmel I was informed) proved to be a trek over the mountains and we arrived in the dark to be told, "I hope you have eaten. There is no food". The reply in such circumstances is "We are fasting." Bananas bought from a local lady supplemented the peanut butter sandwich and coffee for breakfast next day before leading Local Preachers on 'Why preach from the Old Testament.'



The Department has published a second Sunday School book and undertaken extensive training throughout most





O Lord, give me a double portion of your Spirit, prayed Elisha.



of the District. This has been an enlightening experience for Sharon, accompanied by Elwilne her secretary, (who happily has recently married), and they have shared the training sessions. Teachers prepared mini lessons, offered suggestions for improvement to one another, and were challenged to maintain discipline while the rest of the group played up. It was noted that Sharon knew every distraction in class!

Another highlight of the year was the presentation of a 3 day event to train 70 Local Preachers. Aided by the Florida Conference the Institute of Preaching Haiti (IPH) was launched with an emphasis on how

to become a better preacher. Invited guest speakers, Dr Ed Phillips and Rev. Courtney Smith (USA) worked hard to prepare suitable lectures and sermons, that would translate both in language and context. Gifts of crosses and cups from Palestinian Christians were given at a moving final service, and

all received training manuals, study books that I prepared in French, and a SWAG (Stuff We All Get) bag given by Florida. We were grateful to Pam, Greg and Lisa for resourcing and packing these.

Many lessons were learned in the planning stages and during the event. However, with modifications, the exercise will be repeated for more preachers next year and we have other offers from USA conferences to assist in further trainings. The sound teaching and sessions led by our local ministers too were much appreciated, but above all the preachers enjoyed the opportunity to preach a 5 minute sermon to one another and be critiqued by their peers. There was much hilarity and warm fellowship.











Piano at Port-au-Prince Church: The grand piano at the church donated by a church in the UK, and not new then, has been in regular use since the 1950s. In 2012 the director of music produced the mechanism from the top note and requested the sourcing of a new mechanism for all 88 keys from the UK. The manufacturer no longer existed and the company who took over were unable to assist. This was mentioned in our talks to churches before leaving the UK for Haiti and after one service Mr Malcolm Nurse from Darlington, a retired piano tuner who had renovated pianos, offered to find the necessary parts using the pieces from the top key. This was done and he generously donated all that was required with detailed instructions of how to rebuild the mechanism, and another church funded the transportation along with a medical couch for one of the clinics. The





piano has been rebuilt and will now offer many years of music again for the people of Port-au-Prince.

Organ at Port-au-Prince Church:- Many buildings in central Port-au-Prince were destroyed in the earthquake, including most of the large churches. The Methodist church survived having only lost the bell tower. There were therefore no organs for worship or concerts left in central Port-au-Prince and the Haitians produce excellent classical and locally arranged music. The organ in the Methodist church was very old and had been renovated many times until it could no longer be done again. One goal of the church was to obtain a new organ to enable quality music for worship and community expression to again be available in Port-au-Prince, this would also provide a venue for hire for large musical events and also raise funding for running the activities and congregational outreach of the church. The project

was launched in memory of Mme Ruth Depestre at her funeral in 2013, and many activities were undertaken for this, one of which was the concert put on by some local

church choirs with our son Tony, as the Tenor soloist, during the family visit to Haiti, in which all the family sang and the renovated piano was used. Many individuals and churches also contributed to the project, the organ was installed, and when John's brother, Revd Arthur Harbottle, visited in June he

was able to play the organ, and report back

to Mr Malcolm Nurse that he had also played the piano.

Poigniantly the first service for which the organ was played was the funeral of the Director of Music, Fritz Hunter, who had asked for the parts to renovate the piano. He had heard just before his death that

the organ had been delivered.

Thanks to God for the enhanced worship and praise which is now being given through the improved musical activities of the church in Port-au-Prince and the witness and well-being this brings for the community.













Our family, daughter Helen with her husband Alan and our son Tony, visited for almost 2 weeks in November/December and we had an excellent time of mutual support. This included the concert mentioned above. They along with our other visitors have not only seen the work of EMH, but were able to see

some of the beauty of Haiti as well as the bleakness of the city and the deforested hillsides.

Jasmine and Arthur were













able to visit the Citadelle,

built shortly after the independence of Haiti to help in the defence of the country, and now a World Heritage site. They also saw the Sans Souci Palace also built by Henri Christophe below the Citadelle at the foot of the mountain.

Bassins Bleu, one of the beautiful natural wonders of Haiti where one can swim in the blue pools between the waterfalls (and jump down from several places ascending the waterfall depending on one's nerve).

Relaxation at the coast, swimming, viewing colourful fish and corals, boating and appreciating wonderful sunsets.







Mission activities in the mountains not only bring much needed assistance to the people of remote areas, but as well as the marvellous views the comfortable temperatures 17-25C replace the oppressive heat of the lower zones.





Should you wish to have more information about any of the events and activities described in this newsletter please contact us harbottlejs@gmail.com and we will be pleased to provide this.

May the Lord bless you in your mission to the communities you serve.

Sharon and John Harbottle.

Dr. J A & Mrs. S E Harbottle.

methodist.org.uk/mission/world-church/caribbean-the-americas/haiti

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