

Arkansans rally to help Haiti's earthquake victims

Faith Abubey ■ January 16, 2010

Miles away from the devastation in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, Arkansas are trying to do their part to help the relief efforts after a 7.1 magnitude earthquake Tuesday.

Congregation members at the Judsonia Church of Christ, Saturday, gathered hygiene products in 5-gallon buckets. Soap, towels, medicine and other items John Kachelman says the displaced earthquake victims will need.

"They'll go in [to displacement camps], and you give them these personal hygiene products and they'll have it. These are things that do not need to be kept under refrigeration," he said.

For seven years now, there have been few disasters the Judsonia Church of Christ has not responded to. From hurricanes, to war-torn countries, and now earthquake ravished Haiti. The church members have come together to do their part.

"It looks like it's horrendous over there. I just can't imagine being over there and what and what they are going through at this time," said Ruth Lacy, a congregation member.

The church has partnered with several organizations across the country to collect other relief items; all of which will be shipped by free of charge by U.S. Army.

"We have a group in Minnesota that's donated 44 thousand pounds of food," said Kachelman. "We have another group down in Houston that's donated ninety thousand pounds of rice and so just by word of mouth the generosity of America has responded to this great humanitarian need."

"It's just a natural catastrophe and these people they need us," said Gene Donnell.

Kachelman says they have had trouble reaching out to the needy in Haiti in the past because of political roadblocks. But Lacy says in the wake of a natural disaster and a country crying out for help, she hopes the donations make it into the right hands.

"I hope they help the people," she said.

The Judsonia Church of Christ also works with the U.S. State Department. The minister says four officials are heading to Haiti on Monday to assess the need and also to make sure the donations arrive promptly. The church is still collecting hygiene items.

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