

HAITI EARTHQUAKE RELIEF EFFORTS

UP-DATE FEBRUARY 9, 2010

JOHN L. KACHELMAN, JR.

The efforts to offer relief and supplies to those impacted by the January 12 earthquake in Haiti continue and are beginning to provide tangible results. We continue to be absorbed in efforts on a daily basis. I want to share with you some of these developments. Thank you for your assistance that is helping to highlight the compassion and character of the Lord's Church and the benevolent hearts of Christians all over the world!

Containers Loaded!

We have been able to begin loading the relief supplies that have been collected at the three locations (Columbus, MS; Henderson, TN; Judsonia, AR).

The first container was loaded out of Henderson, TN this past Saturday (6 February). This container is going to the Sonlight Children's Home in Port-au-Prince. They began at 9:00 a.m. and completed loading at 11:30 a.m. After the loading was completed Jan Sharp sent me the fantastic quantities of items loaded: 1,014 5-gallon Family Buckets; 12,000 pounds of food and baby formula packed on four pallets; 14 boxes of hygiene items; 12 boxes of first aid supplies; approximately 18 dozen new t-shirts; 34 new mattresses for the Sonlight Children's Home. This totaled to a value of \$71,288.00. We bought the container that was shipped and will have part of the transportation charges to pay (from Henderson, TN to the port of discharge).

The second container is loading today (Tuesday February 9) out of Columbus, MS. This container is scheduled to be delivered to the Sonlight Children's Home in Port-au-Prince. This container is scheduled to load 21,000 pounds of rice; over 600 5-gallon Family Buckets; and over 800 personal Hygiene bags. Once again the value of this container will exceed \$70,000.00.

The third container is to load out of Judsonia, AR but the date has yet to be confirmed. We had hope that it would have loaded Monday but the load time was complicated because of the purchase of the container. This container will go to our brethren in Gonaives and be distributed through the church there. This container will send 1,300+ 5-gallon Family Buckets to Haiti.

The encouraging response from the brotherhood...

The response of those involved in collecting and sending relief to the earthquake victims has been very encouraging to me. At Judsonia we have received funds from California and Washington State to Virginia and New Jersey; from Ohio and Wisconsin to all of the states bordering the Gulf of Mexico. Add in Alaska for an even greater scope! We have received expressions of concern and funds from brethren in India, Saudi Arabia, Philippines, and Ukraine!

One of the projects that has seen an incredible response has been our "Family Buckets." We have received buckets put together by brethren in many states and others have sent funds to help purchase items because they were located too far away. At the end of this update are pictures of various groups that were involved in this. John Durham, missions' minister for the Centerville, TN congregation sent me pictures of the buckets he took for the Henderson, TN load. John noted: *"Our teenagers packed the relief supplies for Haiti. These supplies along with numerous generous contributions were donated by congregations throughout Hickman County including but not limited to the congregations at Twomey, Totty's Bend, Anderson's Bend, Nunnelly, Wolf Creek, Five Points, Clearview, Columbia Avenue, Fairfield, Pinewood, Shady Grove and Centerville. Buckets were also donated from the 5th grade class at Brentwood Hills. Bill McDonald, one of our elders and the owner of McDonald Funeral Homes, loaned us the vans and helped me bring the supplies down to Henderson."*

The beauty of generosity...

David Lawyer brought me a letter that had been mailed to the Life Resources International post office box but it held a check made payable to the Haiti Relief Fund being managed by the Judsonia congregation. In this

envelope was a letter from a thirteen year old named Izsie that touched my heart and I know you will appreciate the compassion that she demonstrates. I am copying her letter here for you to appreciate.

Hi! My name is Izsie Hilbert. I just turned 13. For my 13th birthday I had a big swimming pool party and asked everyone that was coming, to bring a small donation for the people in Haiti instead of bringing presents. All together I raised \$165.

At first we didn't know what organization to give the money to. But the next day my mom got an email from a friend, saying that you needed money to help the people in Haiti.

God bless you in your work!!!!

Love,

Izsie

Trust in him at all times, O people; pour out your hearts to him, for God is our refuge. Psalm 62:8

Behold, God is my salvation, I will trust and not be afraid.

Isaiah 12:2

But blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord, whose confidence is in him. Jeremiah 17:7

Buckets, buckets, buckets...

There has been a phenomenal response to our requests for congregations to collect and pack Family Buckets. These will be distributed to those in Haiti that have lost everything. These buckets are to provide the basic items needed for a family. In our first container we shipped over 1,000 of these buckets. In the Columbus load we will probably pack 600-900 of these. The first container loading out of Judsonia will be completely loaded with these 5-gallon buckets (we estimate 1,200-1,400 depending on whether we have a high-cube or standard container).

Affixed to each bucket is a label that says: "We are praying for you. You are in our heart (we love you). Churches of Christ" In the pictures at the end of this update you will see these buckets and those putting labels on the buckets.

Commodities available...

We continue to be able to purchase food commodities that will be shipped into Haiti and distributed by our brethren to the needy in targeted areas of Haiti. Among the commodities received thus far and being shipped are these items:

164,000 pound of rice
27,000+ pounds of flour
44,000 pounds of dried beans
400 NEW dome tents (7 feet x 7 feet)
42,000 tarps
4,200 mosquito netting
20+ pallets of canned foods (and more coming)
12+ pallets of baby items (bottles; formula; diapers)

Amazing offers to help...

As news of our effort continues to spread we receive amazing offers of assistance. It seems that there are two major concerns being expressed and which we can offer absolute assurance: The first is that the donated funds will NOT go to existing overhead or operating expenses. They want every cent to go to the relief efforts and not salaries. We can offer assurance that 100% of each dollar will go to the relief effort. The second is that the donated items will be shipped and distributed in a timely fashion. Too many have shipped commodities and even though they arrived in Haiti "first" they are still stacked and not distributed. In working with Washington we have been very deliberate in not sending any shipment until we are assured that logistics and distribution are confirmed. Thankfully, the Lord's Church is providing us a network of distribution and this is a point of great pride.

We are thrilled with the offers from so many to help and are doing all we can to follow up on each and utilize it for our efforts. Here are just two that approached us since the last update:

- *Availability of C-130s and Russian transport aircraft from TX*

This developed in a most interesting manner—Andy Baker (Searcy) was contacted by an unknown source (private sector) who has access to two C-130 cargo aircraft as well as some Russian transport aircraft. Andy was told these aircraft were available and would be offered free for transport of relief items into Haiti. Andy contacted Sam Billingsley (College congregation in Searcy) about this opportunity and Sam in turned contacted David Lawyer. David contacted me about the opportunity. We have devised a pre-load inventory for the possible first flight. The donor is making a test flight into Haiti to discuss the legalities and gain assurances that all will go smoothly. If all develops as planned we hope to fly the C-130 into Searcy where it will be loaded and then fly directly into Haiti where the plane will be unloaded and our brethren will distribute it. Needless to say that this operation involves a number of details and is most exciting! If this proves to be a viable option then it opens up an incredible avenue for our mission.

- *Offers of assistance from north Alabama Firefighters*

Another astonishing development comes from my home state—Alabama! I received a telephone call from the Firefighter's Union in Florence, AL. They told me that the Union wanted to do something to help in the Haiti relief effort. They had decided that one of the best ways to help would be to provide for infants. They

especially wanted to collect diapers to send. After they decided what to do they were concerned about how to get it to Haiti with the assurance the donated items would in fact reach those in need and not be sold on the black market or sit uselessly in port. They began searching and found my website and called me. The Union leaders are discussing this project and communication and planning is to continue. They have discussed this with the Florence, Huntsville, and Sand Mountain locations and say that the effort could possibly go as far as south as Cullman. In communicating this incredible opportunity to Washington I received this reply: *we can send the diapers and baby supplies to Jacmel. Jacmel has been out-shadowed by PAP, even though it was also badly affected by the earthquake.*

A message from in-country Haiti...

John, and all, I have not heard from you since I left, but I have been pretty busy herein Haiti and the DR, We are hearing that you have sent one container already to Haiti and another is being sent sometime in Feb.?? Is this true, when is it to arrive and what are the contents?? I also heard that there is a drive to collect and send 5000 tents, we could use that many and more. There are so many displaced peoples and they are afraid to spend the night in their homes, even if those homes are pretty well intact, so most in the area of the devastation spend the nights out in fields sleeping under whatever is available. Some have tents some tarps or bed sheets...just whatever.

We have been busy working at a couple of the hospitals, and helping at the children's home breaking up the fallen walls and cleaning up the mess. There are quite a few who can and are willing to help rebuild some of them and at the same time, there is a crew being paid to build specific walls and parts of them where it is necessary to maintain security.

There is much more to tell, I am planning to return home sometime after the 15th or so I am going to have to get with the military which is here and other contacts to see if I will be able get out with them, which is the plan but much of that is being somewhat curtailed, so we will have to see. Some here are having to stay quite a bit longer because the DC area is getting so much snow all of the flights were and are cancelled.

John, if the Air Force is going to be able to fly your next shipments in someone needs to know the itinerary so there can be a crew there to off-load onto trucks. The airport is starting to complain because things are beginning to stockpile and becoming a problem. There are truckers in PAP, but information on arrivals needs to be more clearly disseminated so the right people know about those shipments....Too bad it could not be air-dropped into miss Roberta's compound.

By the way, the church has bought two of the containers to use as permanent storage units for the food that is being given out to those who have nothing. This is being done every day and that is logistically pretty tough.

I am trying to represent you and the Lord here the best that I can. A lot of pictures have been taken and I hope to have an opportunity to do a presentation at church some time after I get back.

Well I had better get off this thing it isn't mine but I wanted to let you all know a bit more of what is happening. Prayers are in great need here and I covet them as well. God be with you as well, mc

(Mike Caldwell is a member of the College congregation in Searcy and constant help in our efforts)



Centerville
Teens
Pack family
Buckets
For Haiti!

