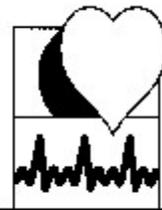


# The Heartbeat

A Newsletter of the Heart-4-Haiti Lutheran Mission Society - Trinity Lutheran Church, Vallonia, IN

March 2009



## AMAZING GRACE & AMAZING GENEROSITY

In a letter written after the 2008 hurricanes, Pastor Thomas Bernard wrote, "Haiti has experienced one of the most destructive hurricane seasons ever known. However, in the midst of the great distress and lamentation God still proves that He loves us."

God's grace has been amazing and your generosity has been amazing as well; for God has been working in this situation and loving the people of Haiti through you. You have responded with amazing generosity to the horrible humanitarian crisis that has hit this devastated island country. Listed below is the work that you have helped accomplish:

- ✓ Within a month after the hurricanes, \$40,000 was wired down to help with:
  1. Food & relief efforts throughout the country, especially in Port-au-Prince, Jacmel, Cap-Haitian
  2. Repair to churches and schools
  3. Financial support and student sponsorships for Lutheran schools
  4. Pay shipping and custom fees for food and other shipments
  5. Diesel fuel
- ✓ \$16,400 has been wired since to help with aid, student support, and diesel fuel
- ✓ A donated drum set and Yamaha keyboard was shipped
- ✓ 50 boxes of food processed and packed by "Kids Against Hunger" and Thrivent Financial for Lutherans was shipped

Pastor Thomas writes, "I want to express my thankfulness to all of you for your Christian love for the Lord's work in Haiti. Your Christian love for us down here shows that we are one in Christ. Only those who are in Christ could respond so quickly and positively to the voice of those crying for help. The cries of our people for help after the passage of the storms reminds me of the cries of the Israelites in the desert and the love of God for them. No matter how bad a situation is, God's people always find comfort and hope as long as they depend on God for deliverance. **But we also know that God acts through His chosen people to save others.**"

He concludes, "In the name of all the members of the congregations that I am serving and in my own name I want to say a **"BIG THANK YOU"** to each one of you for your prayers, your words of encouragement and your contributions during the hurricanes and the aftermath. With the funds received we will be able to feed our members and repair some of the damaged church and school buildings."



Food being packed for the hungry

"Kids Against Hunger" shipment

Repaired wall at Good Shepherd

### **A Letter from Thomas Bernard, Pastor of Good Shepherd Lutheran Church and School, Port-au-Prince**

Greetings in the name of our King and Savior, Jesus Christ! The main goal in writing this letter is to express our thankfulness to you for your prayers, your support, your donations, and especially your Christian love for us. In the midst of the great distress that our congregations have been going through, you never left us alone; you were always with us—encouraging, comforting and strengthening us with the Word of life. You have shared the suffering with us by praying, supporting and sending food for the congregation. That is love!

A new year has begun and no one knows what it will bring. But as for us, God's children, we remain confident and faithful that our Lord will work it for the good of His people. This will happen, no matter how hard the prince of evil is working. The book of Jeremiah has recorded the plan God has for us. So, at the center of our lament we just need to turn our attention to the Lord's character. Because of His great love we will live. Great is His faithfulness!

Again, thank you so much for sharing your blessings with us during so many years and especially during the year 2008. May the King of Kings fill up your heart with joy and peace!

Pastor Thomas Bernard

### **A Letter from Markey Kessa, President of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Haiti**

I greet you in the name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. God, through His love and compassion has certainly blessed us with many wonderful blessings throughout our life in so many ways. The money that you sent was a real blessing for the people of Jacmel after the hurricanes. Many people have been blessed through this generous gift.

Without a doubt, we consider our relationship with each of you, and the opportunity to work with you on fulfilling God's will in Haiti as one of our greatest and most rewarding blessings. We also thank Pastor Thomas for being a wonderful ambassador for our people and our Church.

We pray that God will continue to shower you with His abundant grace. Mercy and love!

Rev. Marky Kessa, ELCH, President

### **A Letter from Eliona Bernard, Pastor of First Evangelical Lutheran Church, Cap-Haitian**

I am Rev. Eliona Bernard, Pastor Thomas' brother. I am the pastor of First Evangelical Lutheran Church of Cap-Haitian and the President of the Northern District of the ELCH. I am writing to you on behalf of all the saints of First Evangelical and four other congregations in my district. I am also writing on behalf of myself personally to thank you so much for the great help and support that you have sent us through Pastor Thomas after the devastating hurricanes.

The money was a great blessing to us and we do appreciate your care and concern. **THANK YOU AND THANK YOU SO MUCH!**

Most of the money was used to buy rice and beans for the people and the other funds have been used to buy school supplies, text books, and uniforms for 10 children of our school, whose parents did not have the money to pay for these items. Without that help those children would certainly have not attended school this year.

We pray that the Lord Jesus would continue to pour out His blessings upon you as you are helping those in need of your generous support.

Rev. Eliona Bernard

## **A Letter from Pastor Thomas Bernard Regarding the “Kids Against Hunger” Food Shipment**

Grace and peace to you from God and our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ! I am pleased to write this to you on behalf of the Haitian families and children attending our congregations and schools. After the hurricanes that have devastated our country and sank thousands of families into real distress and starvation, the situation got worse and became very difficult for many. But at the same time we are thankful to our God for His love and mercy. In the midst of great distress and lamentation He is always our help and deliverance.

The main purpose of this letter is to thank you in a special way for the food you have sent for the Haitian children and families. It is a real blessing for them all. They enjoyed the food and express their thankfulness to you through this letter. As pastor of these churches I put my voice together with theirs to say a very big **THANK YOU** for your Christian love. By doing so you are saving many souls in Haiti from malnutrition and starvation.

I have received 50 boxes and each of them contained 35-36 packages of food. We have used these packages to feed the children at school and we have also distributed the packages to the parents so that the whole family can be fed.

Again, thank you so much and may our loving and mighty God continue to bless you and your ministry!  
Pastor Thomas Bernard

## **A Letter from a Supporter**

Dear Pastor Bernard,

I hope everything is going great with the Mission in Haiti. I pray for the Kingdom of God to work through holy men and women that take up the Cross. I want to encourage you and your family on helping the needy and the less fortunate. I am thankful to help in any way possible. I hope my gift helps many lives and furthers the Kingdom of God. Keep up the good work. Finish the race.

Your brother in Christ Jesus,  
Miguel (Texas)

## **A Letter from a Supporting Lutheran School in Aurora, Indiana**

On behalf of the students of St. John Lutheran School in Aurora, IN, please accept the enclosed donation. Each year our faculty and students choose four separate recipients for offerings collected during our weekly chapel services. The students were very touched by your September 2008 newsletter which told of the devastating hurricanes. As a result, they asked that our 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter offerings be designated for Heart 4 Haiti. Each week we added a heart representing \$10 to a long string of connected hearts. Each heart had a letter so that we eventually spelled out “Heart 4 Haiti Mission Society” and more! We wish you God’s blessings on your work and for Good Shepherd Lutheran School. Our thoughts and prayers will be with you as you continue your ministry in Haiti.



Donated keyboard

People receiving food

New second story classrooms