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2010
Issue #4

Responding to the cry of
Lazarus in Haiti [Luke 16:19-22]

CHANGING RELATIONSHIP WITH *FOOD FOR THE POOR*[®]

For over 15 years the Lazarus Project has been a part of Food for the Poor's growing ministry among the poor of the Caribbean basin and Central America. During these 15 years the Lazarus Project has also grown and developed. The Lazarus Project Board and Food for the Poor both agree that it is time for our Project to spread its wings and begin to take over the responsibility for administrating its own affairs.

This is viewed as a positive step by all concerned. Some initial steps have already been taken to begin the process for the separation which is expected to be completed by the end of 2011. Food for the Poor has committed to assist the LP project in any way it can to ensure a smooth transition. They have also agreed to continue to provide shipping services for the LP materials and supplies into the future.

It all began back in 1993 when a few pastors and lay people who had visited Haiti agreed with FFP to relate to and support a specific ministry in that impoverished country. In 1993 and 1994, at the height of the embargo in Haiti, all funds collected were used to feed starving people in and around Port au Prince. Then in 1995 Village of Hope was selected as the primary focus of ministry, and a modest financial goal (although it seemed overly ambitious at the time) was set. Over the years, through the devotion and generosity of God's caring people, we have been Blessed with an increasing number of churches and individuals committed to supporting our Ministries in Haiti: • VOH school which has grown from 60 students to over 600 • Little Children of Jesus orphanage • Marie Major's ministry at Grace Mission • the Ranquette school and orphanage • Hope House and • Administrative staff in Haiti.

Once we operate independently of Food for the Poor, our administrative costs will increase, however this will be offset by an increase in disposable income. It has been the practice of Lazarus Project to give a tithe of regular income to FFP to cover expenses. That 10% will now remain with Lazarus Project for use in supporting our Haiti missions.

For the time being the transition process poses no change in how sponsors, congregations, and other donors provide their support. **But do watch future newsletters for information on changes as they take effect.** One thing that will **NOT** change — contributions from individual donors will still be tax deductible, as the Lazarus Project already has its own 501C3 status as a charitable organization.

We will miss our long-standing relationship with FFP and thank them for the support they have provided for us over the past 15 years. We are confident God will bless us on our way as we continue to do this important ministry among the poorest of His poor children!



CHRISTMAS IN HAITI

Christmas always comes early for our children in Haiti — while school is still in session, and when a “Christmas Team” can go over to help with the celebration. This year preparations began the week of November 30th to December 4th with some “elves” from Pennsylvania (see article elsewhere in this issue). It was set to conclude the week of December 13th-17th with a team from Christ Our Redeemer, Temple Terrace, FL, and Peace, Alexandria, VA. But they couldn’t fly into Haiti.

American Airlines cancelled their flight due to the post-election unrest and angry demonstrations. So Debbie set “*Plan B*” in motion for the distribution of all those Christmas Kits prepared by people in churches all across our Lazarus Project family from Florida to Virginia to Wisconsin, Iowa, Tennessee, and points in between!

Our **THANKS**, and the **THANKS** of Haiti’s children, to all of you who helped in any way, and to FFP for shipping the many boxes of kits over to Haiti for us. And **SPECIAL THANKS** to **Lisa Ehler** (Our Savior, Bettendorf, Iowa) for taking on the job of coordinating this effort, which means so much to the children we serve in Haiti in Jesus’ name.

For those who may not know, this year’s kits included such items as pencils, pens, pencil sharpeners, tooth brushes and tooth paste, soap, sugarless chewing gum, jigsaw puzzles, beads, cosmetics, deodorants, handkerchiefs, shoe polish kits, baseball caps, jump ropes, etc. Contents varied for different age groups and for boys and girls.

Unless one has been there and seen it, it is hard to imagine the joy and gladness that these simple gifts bring to the hearts and faces of our Haitian children.

EMMANUEL DRAMA CAMP

It would seem there is no end to creative ways to support the Lazarus Project’s work in Haiti. Emmanuel Lutheran (Vienna, VA), offers a great example. They held their first (which they hope will be an annual affair) **Youth Drama Camp** this past summer. With the help of professional staff donating their time, Emmanuel’s talented youth spent a week preparing the production of “**Peace In The Kingdom**,” a musical parable about Shalom.

Proceeds from freewill offerings and camp tuition fees were given to the Lazarus Project to be used for the Health Center Fund or for earthquake relief purposes. Emmanuel Lutheran has been a strong supporter of our ministry in Haiti for several years. In addition to sponsor donations, special Lenten offerings and solar energy teams, this congregation gives another kind of support — prayers in worship every Sunday, and in daily individual devotions. **Thanks** be to Emmanuel, and **Praise be to God**, for such faithful, devoted service!

NEBRASKA CHURCHES JOIN LAZARUS PROJECT FAMILY

Back in September Pastor Wolber visited a two-congregation parish in Nebraska (Grace in Cook and Hope in Burr). The visit was initiated through the efforts of one of Pastor Wolber’s old classmates at Capital University, John Efken, a life-long member of Grace Church.

He and his wife, Evelyn, picked Pastor Wolber up at the Omaha airport and hosted him in their home during the visit. Both congregations have diminished in size over the years, and now have a combined Sunday attendance of less than 100. But that was no measure of their response to the Lazarus Project message.

Pastor Steve Billington had arranged for this to be their annual “Mission Festival” in both churches, and the response was truly magnificent! The next day Pastor Wolber met with the pastors of the local “Cluster” of ELCA churches and shared with them the Lazarus Project story. What a blessing that visit turned out to be for our Haiti ministry. **Thanks be to God, and to His faithful people!**

PITTMAN PARK MEDICAL TEAM

Another new addition to our Lazarus Project family is Pittman Park United Methodist Church of Statesboro, GA. They learned of our work over a year ago when plans for a medical mission trip in Haiti faltered and they helped out at Village of Hope instead. Since then the leader of their mission trip efforts, Dr. Randy Smith, has become a valuable addition to our Lazarus Project Board of Directors. And they recently sent another team to Haiti, (October 17th-23rd).

On this trip they conducted mobile medical clinics at VoH, (3 days), at an earthquake camp in Croix des Bouquets (1 day) and at the Little Children of Jesus ($\frac{1}{2}$ day), concluding with a “house call” at Grace Mission.

They administered care and treatment to over 672 persons (students staff and community residents). Ailments covered

a wide range from common colds to skin infections to hypertension. Dr. Smith performed a surgical procedure for one of the VoH students who had a large abscess under his chin. Nurse Practitioner, Maria Smith, administered an antibiotic injection to a little girl with a serious chest infection and high fever. What a miracle to behold when she came back the next day completely changed and well on the way to recovery!



And then another miracle. When the team visited the metal workers village their vehicle broke down as they were leaving. Neighborhood folks summoned someone to help — **a very young teenage mechanic**. They were skeptical, but in just a few minutes he had the vehicle running and back on the road!

Team members besides Dr. Smith were Dr. Randy Smith (leader), Jocelin Cesar, Diane Johnson, Susan De Bonis, Beth Nelson, Lois Roberts, Walter Roberts, Sandra Smith, Teresita (Maria)Smith, Barry Standridge, Nancy Waters, Hilda Reinauer-Stark, Jim Starkm and Barb Spoar.

The last three listed were not from Pittman Park, but from Canada (Debbie's homeland). How excited she was to have these first Canadians to be introduced to the ministry of the Lazarus Project! Debbie nicknamed this team "The Slick Team" because they worked together like a well-oiled machine. Their organization and efficiency made their moving from one location to another so smooth and easy.

“SOCK-IT-TO-EM” TEAM RENOVATES COTTAGE

That's the nickname Debbie gave to the team of workers from Advent, Boca Raton, who were there November 10th-13th. Friends for many years, the six-man team punctuated their hard work with jibes, wise-cracks and "insults" back and forth, all in good humor of course. In spite of all that, Debbie reports, it was obvious how much they cared for each other. They worked together tirelessly renovating the Hope House cottage: • new plumbing, • doors, • shelving, • lighting fixtures, • painting and other finishing work. And they still found time for other repair work around Hope House.

There was a stressful moment when the electricity failed due to something going wrong with the inverter. But Debbie, with manual in hand, and Scott Dingle looking over her shoulder, managed to get things going again. Members of the team were: Scott Dingle (leader), Doug Parker, Sergio Santovenia, Brock Erikson, Mark Eglinton, and Pastor Ron Dingle, who has been a Lazarus Project stalwart since the very beginning. He added to the team's enjoyment with his wealth of stories — all appropriately embellished from the past. The team learned about shopping for building supplies in Haiti, and about Haiti traffic jams. After a stop at the metal workers village in Croix des Bouquets, before going to the airport, a traffic jam threatened to interfere with their scheduled departure. But Debbie knew of a "short-cut" (a circuitous route through a residential area) and much to their relief they made it to the airport on time.

SMALL TEAM -- BIG HEART!

They were only three in number, but Debbie dubbed them the "Braveheart Team" for their courage and determination in making the Haiti trip in the face of the uncertainties and turmoil caused by the national elections and other upsetting factors. They came from Zion Lutheran, Broadheadsville, PA. These three courageous ladies are: Frances Ferrari, Philippa Brotherton-Haynes and Nancy Joy Koch.



They took on the role of Santa's elves, putting together Christmas gift bags for the VoH staff and a host of other recipients. And they dreamed of those little blue bags each night because they were stacked in neat rows on the top bunks of their beds! They also shared in the Christmas party at the Little Children of Jesus home, helping Gladys with the buffet table, serving drinks, and helping feed some of the children who cannot feed themselves.

At the VoH they enjoyed staying after the student assembly to observe the Kindergarten classes at their "fun time," singing songs and dancing to the drum beat provided by one of the teachers. A special highlight was visiting the Quisqueya Christian School's annual Christmas Bazaar, where they were able to purchase a number of beautiful souvenirs and gifts. A stop at the metal workers village in Croix des Bouquets rounded out their activities. This was the first visit to Haiti for these three "Brave Hearts," and the first time anyone from their church has visited our ministries in Haiti. We thank God for them, and are confident their witness will result in the full participation of Zion in our Lazarus Project.

How You Can Help

Are you already a child sponsor? If so, please keep your sponsorship payments current (\$30 a month, \$360 a year). We do not bill sponsors. We count on your faithfulness! **Want to be a sponsor?** Fill out this form and send it to Darrell Pfeffer • 3551 SW 23rd St. • Delray Beach, FL, 33445. **Want to make a one-time Christmas gift?** Fill out the form and send to Darrell with your check. **Make checks payable** to Food for the Poor, unless it is for the Health Center, in which case make check payable to Village of Hope, Inc.

Name _____ Phone: () _____

Address _____ E-Mail _____

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Please check appropriate box: Current Sponsor New Sponsor One-time Gift

Amount included \$ _____ Church Membership _____



THEN MORE CANADIANS CAME

October 23rd-30th Hope House was blessed with the presence of an eight-member team from Mohawk Community College, Hamilton, Ontario, (Debbie Berquist's hometown) representing that school's "Students Aiding Global Advancement" society. They busied themselves putting together: "goodie bags" for the children at VoH consisting of packaged rice meals, soap, toothpaste and tooth brushes, dinky toys, binders, and coloured (*different spelling used in honor of the Canadians*) pencil crayons.

They also painted school desks, prepared pay envelopes, did inventory of the Christmas gifts, and moved everything out of the cottage in preparation for a construction crew coming in November. It was back-breaking work, but they did not complain. A touching experience came when they helped serve lunch at The Little Children of Jesus.

They also helped the local economy with souvenir purchases at the metal workers village in Croix des Bouquets and other shops. In addition to the three "carry-overs" from the previous week (see Pittman Park article), the team consisted of: Donna Hensbee, Sarah Mizzi, Annette Wilks, Christina Dolge, and Jordyn Brown. Debbie named them "The Hometown Flirts," because they smiled and waved to everyone from the back of the truck as they made the rounds, and their friendliness was noted and much appreciated at every turn.

REGIONAL GATHERINGS

Two **Regional Gatherings** of the Lazarus Project are scheduled for early in 2011. The first will be in the Northern Virginia area (location to be announced) the week end of March 26th-27th. The second will be at Advent Lutheran, Boca Raton, FL the week end of April 2nd -3rd. Watch for more details in future announcements. Plan to attend if one of the two is in your area.

FINANCIAL REPORTS

Complete financial reports for 2010 will be available in late January upon request by active donors or congregations. Contact Darrell Pfeffer at d_pfeffer@bellsouth.net. Thanks to the faithfulness of our many sponsors, other individual donors and congregations. The year 2010 has been a good one, in spite of the sluggish economic situation. **THANKS to all** who help us bless the poorest of God's poor children.

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This newsletter may be reprinted in part or in whole for local distribution.

Check out the Village of Hope web site: lazarusprojecthaiti.org

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