

November 21, 2018

Dear Friends and Family,

We have just returned from our November mission to Haiti. I have to say that our trip was trying, filled with emotion, amazing, exhausting, and for me, it far exceeded any of my expectations.

As the first four of us arrived at the airport in Port-au-Prince (PAP) on Friday, the 2nd, the unrest in the country escalated. We learned we could not travel to the clinic in Lozandier as we had planned. It would not be safe to travel in a school bus filled with white people and supplies. Lozandier itself is safe, but the road to get there has several places that are conducive to a road block – and there is only the one road. Once the road is barricaded, there is no getting back.

After much consideration and weighing all the options, we decided to travel north rather than south of PAP. The unrest is much less north. But in order for us to do clinic anywhere else, we would have to travel to Lozandier to get the medical equipment and supplies and equipment we had kept there. So we agreed that the four of us and Pastor Yves (our mission coordinator in Haiti) would travel to Lozandier at night to get the necessary medical supplies and eyeglasses. Our only other option was to cancel the project entirely and call the rest of the team and tell them not to come. So we made the six hour drive to Lozandier, spent an hour gathering what was most important, and a six hour drive back.

Pastor Yves mentor is a man by the name of Pastor Prevail. He has a large compound that has been a work in progress over 50 years. It is located in the mountains; the countryside is incredibly beautiful. There is a mission house that can accommodate many people. There is a pre-school, an elementary school and high school. The younger children go in the morning and the older kids in the afternoon. There are a total of 279 children enrolled at this time. Also part of the compound is an orphanage that opened while we were there. There are 12 children at this time although the building can accommodate 30 children. Not all of the children there are without parents. Some are there because their parents are unable to care for them. There is also a large church. On Sunday morning the church was packed. The service started at 10:00 a.m. and lasted until 4 p.m. Now that's a sermon!!!! This compound became our home base for the week.

Once we got the medical supplies from Lozandier, we spent the next few days preparing for the rest of the team to arrive. We had to call home and have the items that we had packed for Lozandier taken out of the suitcases and replaced with tarps, rope and extension cords. We had to purchase cement blocks and plywood that Mike and Rudy used to make exam tables, chairs, benches, and tables to set up for the eye glass portion of the mission, and designed a pharmacy.

The rest of the team arrived Wednesday evening, the 7th, with the remainder of our supplies. Because of all the weight and the steep inclines in the mountains, they had to get out and push the bus uphill a few times!!!!

On Thursday and Friday we traveled 1-1/2 hours to our first clinic. Mike, Rudy, Jody and I had been there earlier and everything was set up and ready to go. We did clinic in a little mountain church built out of mud with dirt floors. It was very small but we managed to create four private exam rooms, a room for doing vision testing, and a pharmacy in the middle. There was no electricity, but the pastor borrowed a generator to run the medical equipment. The eyeglass fittings were done under a tarp outside the church. We called this place the "Mud Hut". We saw over 200 patients the first day and we had to quit

when we could no longer see the number for reading blood pressures or the labels on the medicine bottles.

Jody and Mary had quilted an absolutely beautiful altar cloth that was to be given to the church in Lozandier. Because we knew we weren't going to Lozandier, they decided to give it to the pastor of this little "Mud Hut". It was quilted on both sides, one saying "Jesus Loves Me" and the other side with a Christmas manger scene saying "Jesus Is Born" both in English and Creole. We constructed an altar out of cement blocks and a piece of plywood. The pastor is a very humble man, very gracious and warm. He was thrilled beyond words. A perfect home for a beautiful piece of art made by loving and caring hands.

Our second village was also 1-1/2 hours from the compound. Pastor Yves had taken Mike and I to scout it out. I immediately said "no". There was no possible way to get the bus there. It would be at least a mile and a half hike down this very rugged terrain. It was very rocky and the soil was heavy clay that stuck to your shoes making it difficult to walk and when it rained, it became very slippery.

After much conversation the pastor stated that he was so desperate to have us come he would hire a truck, get the church people to help with the gear, and he would make us lunch. I gave in and agreed. That meant everything from the "Mud Hut" had to be taken down and moved to the second church and set up. It was very remote although breathtakingly beautiful. The church was much bigger in size giving us more room and better air flow. Don't get me wrong – it was still VERY HOT – and no electricity there either except for another borrowed generator. We did clinic here two days. At the end of those days we had to take everything down and move it to the last clinic location.

We had an amazing team. At the end of those five days the 14 of us had seen more than 1000 patients. The meds were gone and many, many pairs of glasses had been given out, and that was a miracle all it's own. The eyeglass portion of our mission was conducted by four Wisconsin Lions Missions Eyeglass Team members who had to work with less than ¼ of their supply of glasses due to several complicated issues. They were missing whole sections of prescriptions and had no interpreter nearly half of the time. And yet, somehow those volunteers were able to find excellent glasses for everyone who needed them. It truly seemed like a "loaves and fishes" miracle.

Thank you to all that donated items to be given away. I can't even begin to tell you how many pairs of underwear, socks, dresses, boys shorts and t-shirts, hair barrettes, sunglasses and hats were given out.

Just a reminder, the annual board meeting is Tuesday, December 11th at 5:30 p.m. at the Spooner Ag Extension Building. Please feel free to join us.

Please continue to pray that the Lord blesses us with His mercy and that He will provide us with the strength and knowledge that is necessary to continue His work in Haiti.

Blessings on your day,

Sue Dodd

Jody will be updating the pictures on the website so if you have an opportunity, please take a look – www.healthcare4haiti.org

Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain. 1 Corinthians 15:58