

Haiti Mission Trip Summer 2016

This summer mission trip was traditional in the sense that it was similar to what we have been doing for the last couple of years such as combined ministry to do Vacation Bible School with 200 kids, youth ministry with combined choir, leadership training, and construction ministry foundation of a waiting room for the clinic. (The cistern was finished prior to the arrival of the team). However, the 2016 summer ministry was vastly different this time due to the fact that the whole group stayed in Canaan for the first time during the summer. This gives us a greater opportunity for interaction and fellowship with the church and the children

We had the following blessings A) we participated in 4 nightly charismatic services, led every night by different leaders... men and women with full youth and children participation. B) The kids and adults watched xian movies at night after the service in the school yard since we had a laptop and a projectors. Most were watching movies on a big screen for the very first time. It was a great social event. They would go home after 11 pm. C) we participated in the overnight Friday prayer meeting...with songs, prayers, testimonies, etc. and countless of other informal meetings on a one to one basis. Also Two of us participated in the early Morning Prayer meeting around 4 a.m. D) The kids took early morning walk, played soccer together in the afternoon, ran around. Thus, by staying in Canaan and by having more time at our disposal we had the opportunity to be even more incarnational during that mission trip. However, our joy was tempered by two grieving events.

The first one was the mini local hurricane. On Thursday afternoon, there was a violent storm with the fiercest wind I have experienced in Canaan. It flattened many houses in the area and literally carried away five houses belonging to members of the church. The deacons worked through the storm and they brought these families with children to take refuge in the school. We fed them.. Shared our clothes with them and we prayed with them.

After the storm we went with the deacons to investigate. In many instances there was nothing left... clothes, belonging, roof, the wind carried away everything. in some cases the whole house was uprooted and was nowhere to be seen, in other cases the the roof was on the ground and everything torn apart. Some families found refuge with friends who had sturdy houses, but two families are staying in the school. The deacon's estimation to rebuild small houses that can weather such storm would be about \$ 400.00. They would build a foundation, and the studs would be 2x4 etc. and they would offer free labor to help them rebuild.

The second tragedy was the unfortunate death of a 13-month-old baby. She was in church with us and her parents on Sunday. She died on Thursday night. According to the parents by Monday, she had diarrhea and she was vomiting. By Thursday she had trouble breathing. They took her to a hospital by Thursday afternoon and she died at the hospital. It was very emotional for one of the brothers to carry the mom and the baby wrapped in a towel to bring them back to Canaan on a motorcycle. The leaders contributed to build the coffin and to have a decent funeral on Friday

afternoon. Pastor Simeon and the deacon officiated. The funeral took place in their humble courtyard. We chose not to share that tragedy with the young kids in our team since most of them were High schoolers and were already dealing with the tragedy of the storm.

So we left with a sense of Joy for having been among the people for a full week, for laying the foundation and starting the construction of a waiting room for the clinic, for having ministered and been ministered to. But we left also with the sadness of a death that we think was preventable. And we left also with the hope that we would be able to raise the money to provide a sturdy home to these families who lost everything during the storm.

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