



The Rev'd Erl G. Purnell
Rector

59 Tariffville Road
Bloomfield, CT 06002
860.508.1898 cell
860.242.4660 church
860.242.5537 fax
puckpurnell@mac.com
www.OldStAndrews.net

**An Interim Report on the Good Samaritan Rebuilding Fund
to the Vestry and Parishioners of Old St. Andrew's Church
and Other Volunteers, Donors & Interested Persons
by
Puck Purnell, Rector, Old St. Andrew's Church**

March 12, 2010

Background

Thirty minutes after the 7.0 earthquake in Haiti on Tuesday, January 12, 2010, I was on the phone with Danelie Millien to find out what had happened to her parents. Jean-Elie was in Greenwich. A day later, when we learned Mona had survived in Carrefour, an emergency medical relief and rebuilding effort was launched.

Clear goals were published:

- 1. Provide immediate medical relief and support to the community by setting up a clinic and feeding our children and others at EBS.*
- 2. Assess the damage to the School; make the necessary repairs or rebuild to include a permanent health and wellness clinic.*
- 3. Recover our students and reopen the School and clinic.*

Phase I

Within two days we had formed a leadership team of *Coordinators*: Travel, Medical, Supplies & Logistics, Volunteers, Public information, Finance, and Construction. My role was Coordinator of Coordinators.

By Sunday, January 17, about \$8,000 had been donated. Another \$7,500 came in the following week; more money was received daily.

A running commentary began on the Old St. Andrew's website which eventually became our Blog. Two new web pages were created—one for general information and one for volunteers.

Team 1 was formed. It was comprised of Jean-Elie Millien, his daughter, Danelie Millien, Luc Louisgene, Jean-Elie's son-in-law, Gaelle Louisgene, Luc's daughter, Dr. David Reed of Stamford Hospital, Ann Giuli, also of

THE WORD IN THE WILDERNESS

Stamford Hospital, and Dave Desmarais, a retired firefighter, EMT and builder. They left Stamford on Thursday, January 20th with medical supplies and other humanitarian aid in 47 large duffle bags and traveled free-of-charge on JetBlue from JFK to Santa Domingo, Dominican Republic (DR).

Travel from the DR to Port-au-Prince was via a rented bus, a significant economic efficiency considering the high cost of commercial shipping and volume of supplies we were transporting. The bus stopped at an all-night market in the DR and Team 1 purchased, \$800 worth of food, 150 gallons of diesel fuel, and cases and cases of bottled water.

Since the school had been badly damaged, Mona Millien had secured use of a disco-dance hall and guest house about 200 meters from the school as an operational center for the emergency clinic and a place for volunteers to stay.

Team 1 arrived in Carrefour and immediately opened the clinic. Mostly they treated traumatic injuries that were a result of the earthquake. Right away between 80 and 100 patients were being seen daily. We also set up a pharmacy in support of the doctors and nurses. This was staffed during clinic hours by our volunteers.

Dave Desmarais determined that the school building would probably need to be razed and a new structure built.

Teams 2 & 3 were constituted and the above scenario was repeated. In addition, we began to distribute food and humanitarian aid from the back of the clinic. Each trip from Santa Domingo to Carrefour, we bought more and more food and water to meet the acute demand.

Phase II

Four weeks post-earthquake, it became apparent that our acute emergency response was no longer needed. The clinic began to care for on-going ailments—diarrhea, scabies, infections, sore muscles, vaginitis, parasites, dehydration, asthma, urinary tract infections, etc.

The hunger in Carrefour, however, was becoming even more desperate. Our food distribution center was drawing huge, unwieldy, crowds. A potentially dangerous incident occurred and we needed to suspend and then cease large scale food distribution in Week 5.

Our focus shifted to more sustainable humanitarian aid program, supplying diapers, clothes, infant formula, and discretely, small amounts of food. We

also started to distribute several dozen tents and tarps that had been brought down.

In week 6, Team 4 arrived, followed 12 days later by a Coordinator Team and Team 5. Our clinic system was running efficiently, however our volunteer pool was shrinking. We did not have a doctor on either Team 4 or 5. Still, our nurses at the clinic continued to see 180-220 patients per day.

Although not yet mentioned, we employed a number of École le Bon Samaritain teachers as translators and security people.

A new water purification system was installed at the Guest House and our electrical system was brought from the school to the Guest House. An old shed was torn down at the school and a new concrete block shed was built for permanent storage.

Phase III

In week 8 following the earthquake, it became apparent that we no longer had the volunteer strength or the kinds of volunteers we needed to sustain and support the clinic. Reluctantly, Team 6 was scrubbed. Mona and Jean-Elie, however, decided to continue the clinic at a reduced capacity by hiring a Haitian nurse who was assisted by one of our American volunteers.

Plans are now underway to design and create a permanent Health & Wellbeing Clinic in Carrefour which will be connected in some way to our new school building. The concept is that it will be staffed by a Haitian nurse with periodic support from both Haitian and American doctors. The services provided will be generally oriented to the care of women and children. More information about the Good Samaritan Clinic will be shared when it becomes available.

Likewise, initial steps are being taken to address the rebuilding of the school itself. The Milliens have been asked to find a Haitian lawyer so the school property and, perhaps, additional property, can be purchased. We cannot proceed with new building designs and plans until we know what the footprint of the building lot is. That, too, will contribute to the decision about whether or not to expand the enrollment and number of grades (from K-5 to K-8). In other words, we need to know where we are going before we raze the old school and start constructing the new one.

Finances

- We opened a separate checking account for contributions to the Good Samaritan Rebuilding Fund. All contributions and transactions go

through Old St. Andrew's PowerChurch database and bookkeeping system and are overseen by the OSA Finance Committee and Vestry.

- We have received approximately \$73,000 in contributions from hundreds and hundreds of donors.
- We have paid out about \$8,000 for food and water, \$1,500 for fuel, \$4,000 for medicines, \$8,500 for transport and shipping, \$1,800 for the new shed.
- We have paid our translators, Haitian nurses, and security people \$1,600.
- This leaves approximately \$48,000 in the Rebuilding Fund.

Results of Your Generosity

- The clinic was open 6 days each week for a 7-week period. On average, 150-200 patients were treated at the medical clinic daily, which translates into serving approximately 6,300 - 8,400 people (mostly women/children/seniors) to date.
- Our food distribution program, which lasted three weeks, fed as many as 4,800 families. Afterwards, humanitarian aid—diapers, infant formula, clothing, flashlights, personal hygiene items, etc.—was given to 65 - 100 Haitian families each day—approximately 3,900 families as of now.
- We have received nearly 10,000 condoms and each woman who visits the clinic receives a ziplock bag with 20 condoms.
- Donations of more than 1,000 packets of pedialyte have been given to scores of mothers with sick and dehydrated children.
- Dozens of tents, tarps and blankets have been distributed. In many cases, these tents will serve as home for an entire family for months to come (or sadly, maybe longer).

Moving Forward

We have responded to the emergency. Now comes the hard part. We are in the process of throttling back and reorganizing for the long-haul. First we will see how we can establish a permanent clinic. Second, we will tackle the legal property issues and begin the process of rebuilding the school.

A huge challenge is to keep your active interest and that of our other benefactors while inviting even more people to join us. A fund raising goal has not been set, but surely it will be substantial.

We must continue to tell the story of École le Bon Samaritain, our emergency relief effort, and the Good Samaritan Rebuilding Fund. A beautiful PowerPoint video was created which we are augmenting and enhancing. That, in addition to repurposing the media coverage we've received, will help us to continue to tell our story.

PLEASE, please stay in touch with what's happening. Consider making your financial support on-going. Tell others about Haiti and what you are doing. Ask them to go to our website (www.oldstandrews.net) and blog (<http://osa-haiti.blogspot.com/>). Ask them to make a generous donation.

Thank you for your generosity, time, material contributions, financial support, volunteerism, and, most of all, good spirit toward the Haitian people, especially our children and friends in the Waney neighborhood of Carrefour.

Puck.