



CHRISTIAN REFORMED
WORLD
MISSIONS

Caspar & Leanne's Update

Sharing about our ministry in Honduras and Latin America
February 2010



CRWRC
Living Justice, Loving Mercy

www.crwmm.org

Dear Friends: Greetings in the new year!

Haiti (by Leanne) We assume most of you have seen images of the devastation in Haiti. Having spent so many years there, our hearts are burdened for our Haitian colleagues and friends. Normal ministry is on hold, as all able-bodied staff of the CRCNA and partners are working on disaster response. Ken Little, of CRWRC's disaster response team, went immediately and has been joined by three International Relief Managers (IRMs). Ad deBlaij, who manages CRWRC's long-term development work in Haiti, has joined them for this initial phase of relief work. The staff of World Missions (Howard Van Dam, Zach Seegar-King and Lesley Millar) is working with ministry partners to distribute food and other articles. Large distributions present issues of security, as people who fear there won't be enough often use force to get to the source. To avoid that, they are focusing on doing small distributions in places (often churches) identified by partners. Packets are prepared at the *Sous Espwa* (CRCNA ministry) office and delivered in normal vehicles to avoid attracting attention. This has been more satisfactory.



After initial assessments and in coordination with other organizations, they have decided to focus their response in the town of Leogane, to the west of Port-au-Prince and near the epicenter of the quake. Estimates indicate that 90% of the buildings there are damaged, so recovery and reconstruction could take years.

Current reports indicate that some things are starting to function again. Gas stations are open, along with supermarkets, banks, and money transfer stations. Praise God for this progress! The latter are critical, since so many Haitians have family members outside the country who normally send funds. The flow under these circumstances will be enormous.

It has been so gratifying to witness the amazing generosity of people around the world. Governments, businesses, and individuals have been moved. Caspar and I appreciate reading about the offerings taken in several of our supporting churches. Thank you so much for this sign of caring!!

Finances (by Caspar) But, as a backdrop to that generosity, CRWRC has faced a severe financial challenge during the last year. Leanne and the Latin America team had to reduce their budgets by 18% and are facing an additional 10% cut in the next year. This might mean terminating development work in one of the Latin American countries and has created a lot of stress for all those involved.

Both Leanne and I fall short in our financial support. We are appreciative of the many supporters we do have, but need more. A simple way of helping would be to share our newsletters with friends who might be interested in partnering with us in ministry. If you are part of a church small group, think of holding a fundraiser for either of our ministries. Please remember that Leanne and I represent two different mission agencies. Leanne is with CRWRC, while I am with CRWM. We ask that you clearly designate your gift for one or the other, or to be divided between both.

Please join us in praying for these things:

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Praise!

- A very positive gathering in January of 36 CRC-Honduras leaders to discuss ministry.
- CRWM and the Association for a More Just Society (ASJ) have initiated a new ministry partnership for youth.
- Newly elected Honduran president Porfirio Lobo was inaugurated on 27 January. He issued a safe conduct order for former president Manuel Zelaya, who was escorted to the airport without violence. What an opportunity for new beginnings!
- The well-being of many friends and colleagues in Haiti!
- Reuben is well and feels challenged in his new position, working with handicapped adults.

Concerns:

- Caspar's safety as he travels through rural Honduras.
- A good start for the Youth Impact program.
- General recovery and reconstruction in Haiti, as well as safety for Leanne, who plans to go there in February.
- Income for both CRWM and CRWRC.

Family note. Since Reuben's new job kept him from visiting us over Christmas, we were blessed to see him in

Winnipeg, Manitoba, in January. We don't really recommend Winnipeg for travel in January,



unless you LOVE winter sports or someone who lives there.

Thank you for your continued support. Shalom from the Geisterfers,

Leanne & Caspar

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