



# IN THE LOOP

January/February 2010

The devastation of the earthquake in Haiti is one of the worst natural disasters that I can remember. For the Volunteers in Mission and UMCOR programs it has been a great loss of our leadership. The Rev. Sam Dixon, the head of UMCOR and Rev. Clint Rabb the head of the VIM program were attending a meeting at the Hotel Montana in Port au Prince. Trapped in the collapsed hotel with three other members of their meeting they prayed, sang, and talked of their families, while waiting to be rescued. Sadly Sam died before he was rescued and Clint was rescued after 55 hours in the rubble. Clint passed away in Florida hospital on Sunday January 17<sup>th</sup>.

I had the privilege to work with Clint since 2002 on various mission projects. He was passionate about helping those in need and lived his faith by action and deed. He was always ready to help me if I had any questions or problems, I will miss him. While our hearts are heavy for the families of these two men we remember that their lives made such a difference in the lives of others. Please pray for Sam and Clint's families.

Continue to pray for the relief effort in Haiti. Pray for the Haitians who are injured and the ones who have lost loved ones. Continue to pray for the rescue teams and those behind the scenes who coordinate this disaster's response.

*Mary*

## **New Mexico Annual Conference**

### **Volunteers In Mission**

**Mary White  
Coordinator**

[mwhite1@elp.rr.com](mailto:mwhite1@elp.rr.com)

**6313 Jebel Way**

**El Paso Texas 79912**

**915-494-3177**

# How to Help Haiti

At this time the United Methodist Committee On Relief (UMCOR) and the United Methodist Volunteers in Mission (UMVIM) are asking those who wish to help the people of Haiti, who are suffering from the earthquake to do so in four important ways:

## **Donate money:**

Gifts to support UMCOR's Haiti Relief efforts can be made to Haiti Emergency, UMCOR Advance #418325. Checks can be made to UMCOR with Advance #418325 Haiti Emergency in the memo line. Checks can be put in your church's offering plate or mailed to UMCOR, PO Box 9068, New York, New York 10087.

Or to speed your giving to those in need: go directly to the General Board of Global Ministries (GBGM) Advance Giving website for the Haiti Emergency Relief and follow the instructions given there: <http://secure.gbgm-umc.org/donations/umcor/donate.cfm?id=3018760&code=418325>.

100% of gifts made to this Advance will go to help the people of Haiti.

## **Health Kits are needed:**

Please see the following UMCOR website for instructions on preparing the health kits: <http://new.gbgm-umc.org/umcor/getconnected/supplies/health-kit/>

Please provide as many kits as you can to your local church. The kits will be gathered by the churches into the designated warehouses within each UMC conference for shipment.

Importantly, UMCOR asks that you DO NOT stockpile clothing for relief at this time. All warehousing and transportation resources must first be utilized for medical supplies, health kits, and other items essential to help stabilize the situation.

## **UMVIM Teams:**

Volunteers in Mission, GBGM and UMCOR have worked together to launch a National Database [www.umrespond.org/Haiti](http://www.umrespond.org/Haiti) for volunteers wishing to go to Haiti. You need to go online to register your intent. There will be specific requirements that must be met to be invited to be on a team. You will need to have "Haiti experience." Once a week the database will be forwarded to the Jurisdictional and Annual conference coordinators. We will form teams once the invitation is issued from the Methodist Church of Haiti.

Please remember many UMVIM teams will be needed for years to come. GBGM/UMCOR will advise when UMVIM teams have been invited. No doubt you are hearing of United Methodist teams going in to Haiti. They are not Volunteer in Mission teams approved by jurisdictional coordinators or GBGM. While the desire to offer immediate help is universal among Christians, please understand that at this time prayerful waiting is the most faithful witness we can offer. Please read an updated memo from Bishop Martinez, Interim Secretary of General Board of Global Ministries. <http://new.gbgm-umc.org/media/pdf/haitivolunteersjan10.pdf> . He repeats his earlier request that teams do not go into Haiti. The first teams to go to Haiti will be medical teams. Team members with the proper credentials will be invited to join a medical team. Requirements remain the same as when the earthquake struck two weeks ago. All team member must have Haiti experience, have been on an UMVIM team or team leader training, the ability to speak French, Creole Haitian or Spanish will be helpful. Please continue to encourage people to register on the website [www.umrespond.org/Haiti](http://www.umrespond.org/Haiti) . I cannot stress enough this is not the time to “cut your teeth on a disaster project.” Please read the following article by Dr. Jeanne Le Blanc about her recent experience in Haiti.

At this time a volunteer assessment team is being formed. The team will go to Haiti for a preliminary site visit. Greg Forresster (Northeast Jurisdiction) and Lorna Jost (North Central Jurisdiction) will lead this team at the invitation of the leaders of the Haitian Methodist Church. Both Lorna and Greg have extensive experience in Haiti. The rest of the team will be made of UMCOR members. This visit will be similar to a jurisdictional disaster volunteer management team. The team will assess housing, transportation and resources for teams, project sites addressed by the Methodist Church of Haiti, logistics of materials and detailed planning of resources so as not to burden the very delicate Haitian infrastructure. Mission Volunteers are also working to develop staffing requirements for sending and receiving of teams. More information will be sent as it becomes available.

### **Prayers:**

The relief effort in Haiti will take years, and the need for prayers continues. Pray for the Haitians who are injured and who have lost loved ones, pray for rescuers, and pray for those who are working behind the scenes to coordinate this massive effort. Thank you for your help and patience during this difficult time. We will take teams to Haiti but we do have to be patient and go when the time is right.

Blessing to you and the work you do.

*Debbie Vest*

UMVIM Director for the South Central Jurisdiction

**Letter from Jeanne M. LeBlanc, Ph. D., ABPP(Rp), R.Psych.**

This letter was sent to Vince Gonzalez the NW Texas Disaster Coordinator from a professor at Texas Tech University, Lubbock, Texas. Vince shared this letter with our jurisdiction and asked that we spread the word on the situation in Haiti.

*January 26, 2010*

*Jeanne M. Le Blanc, Ph.D., ABPP(Rp), R. Psych  
Diplomate Rehabilitation Psychology  
Practice in Rehabilitation Neuropsychology  
Registered Psychologist, British Columbia Licensed Psychologist, California  
(CA17925) #437-280 Nelson Street, Vancouver, British Columbia; V6B 2E2 CANADA*

*Hi everyone. Just back from Haiti and I wanted to put forth a few thoughts to those of you who would like to volunteer. I am still reeling a bit cognitively, so I might not be as smooth or mindful of feeling and such as some would like, so let me apologize if I seem a bit abrupt. My goal is to inform as much as I can so that people are not needlessly traumatized in ways that will either render them useless if they choose to go (and hence, a burden on the relief efforts since they will need assistance themselves) and/or psychologically scarred more than they imagine they could be.*

- 1) It is absolutely key and essential that ONLY people who have had large-scale and severe disaster experience go over at this point, right now. Many of you know that I have been to Sichuan—have had many experiences with large hurricanes, Katrina, etc., but I cannot tell you how horrendous and very different this situation is right now. There is no infrastructure...if you run out of water, you face dehydration. If you run out of food you face hunger. If you get hurt, you risk high infection within a day or two, and no medical support. I was there with a team of doctors, in one of the few medical hospitals up and running, but there is essentially no ability for you to be care-flighted or returned to the US or Dominican Republic should an emergency arise. The airport is frequently shut down, and you will not be priority for the military or anyone else to help you. “They” are busy doing the mission they have set out in front of them, and communication and the ability to get help is extremely limited.*
- 2) Rehab needs. The docs I work with pretty much agree that head injuries are at a minimum, in that the people with them have essentially died, or will soon die, (if they are severe). Amputations: Yes...many, many, many. We were doing surgeries almost 24 hours a day...mostly amputations. Unfortunately, many of the people who have had amputations have already become infected within a day or two of surgery (remember essentially no aftercare...they are sleeping outside which actually seems quiet smart, given our earthquake the other day, which personally was terrifying being indoors for...). Any how...many people who had*

*amputations or wound care immediately after the earthquake are having to have higher amputations due to infections. The docs I flew back with came to the consensus that if 30% of the people they operated on survive, they will be lucky. Spinal cord injury...no aftercare, no adaptive equipment, very limited family left to care for them (if any) ...you can imagine the immediate outcome. EVERYONE I spoke to had family killed or missing.*

*As a rehab psychologist, I used all the skill I know. Suicide prevention, letting those with amputations know they will still be loved and beautiful or a “man” ...holding the hand of someone yelling in pain and soothing them, etc.,etc. However, these skills alone—without disaster experience to help give you the emotional steel you need to cope with the situation you are in—will not be sufficient. Not right now.*

*My recommendations are these: Those with SERIOUS disaster experience, consider deployment, but make it short. Know that it will be more severe than you can even imagine. Even the tsunami was in a country where you could find some infrastructure...somewhere. Here—there is nothing. For the first time in my life I truly had to consider survival situations. Yes, my organization had supplies and contacts, but water goes missing and the next shipment of water is on a plane not allowed to land in the airport.*

*If you do not have disaster experience, this is NOT the disaster to begin with. Volunteer stateside, providing support to people and organizations who are doing good work. OR—think about deployment months and months from now, when (or if) an infrastructure is there, so you can have the support that is need.*

*Bless you all with your desire to help. There will be a way to do so...be sure to plug yourself into something that will allow you to function during and afterward, rather than becoming another victim of this situation.*

*Cheer--Jeanne*

## **New Mexico Conference Response to Haiti's Earthquake**

It's time to help Haiti: In response to the Haiti earthquake, the New Mexico Conference Disaster Relief and VIM offices are asking for help to supply UMCOR with health kits. You may download this information on what makes up one health kit at <http://gbgm-umc.org/umcor/prints/kits/> . UMCOR has asked for the kits not to be assembled. Just provide the various supplies that goes into a kit.

You can drop off supplies plus choose to donate a check toward shipping and processing costs (\$1 per each kit) to help UMCOR Sager Brown with sending supplies to Haiti.

Drop off locations in the NM Conference:

### **Albuquerque District**

### **St Stephens UMC**

4601 Juan Tabo Blvd. NE

Albuquerque

Rev. Ruben Thomas 505-293-9673

### **Clovis District**

### **Trinity UMC**

1320 W 21<sup>st</sup>

Clovis

Rev Margot Thompson 575-763-7450

575-693-0059

### **El Paso District**

### **St Marks UMC**

5005 Love Rd.

El Paso

Mary White 915-494-3177

### **Odessa Area**

### **First UMC**

415 N Lee

Odessa

432-337-1527

Kits will be picked up and delivered to Sager Brown the first of March or sooner if enough kits have been delivered to the drop off sites.

You may also make donations to the ADVANCE #418325 for Haiti emergency relief.

For more information you may call Mary White at 915-494-3177 or email [mwhite1@elp.rr.com](mailto:mwhite1@elp.rr.com)

## VOLUNTEERS IN MISSION TRIPS 2010

<b>Port Arthur, Texas</b> First Farmington Hurricane Relief Work Lance Ahl <a href="mailto:lance@fumcfarmington.com">lance@fumcfarmington.com</a>	February 19-March 6
<b>Matagalpa, Nicaragua</b> Western Hills El Paso Medical/Construction Andi Wallace Team Leader <a href="mailto:mseditor2@aol.com">mseditor2@aol.com</a>	March 6-13, 2010  Cost:\$1800
<b>Danli Area Honduras</b> Christ UMC Albuquerque Medical/Construction/Sewing	April 10-18
<b>Sacramento Methodist Assembly</b> First Roswell Use of basic construction tools for youth 3 <sup>rd</sup> -5 <sup>th</sup> graders Stephanie Harmon Team Leader	June 27-30
<b>Pecs, Hungary</b> St. Marks El Paso Construction/VBS Mary White Team Leader <a href="mailto:mwhite1@elp.rr.com">mwhite1@elp.rr.com</a>	June 11-27  Cost: \$2700
<b>Window Rock, Arizona</b> Morning Star Las Cruces General repairs, cleaning & reorganizing thrift shop Adult education/Bible study Judy Burnham <a href="mailto:judyburn@zianet.com">judyburn@zianet.com</a>	July 18-23

**St Petersburg, Russia**

July 24-August 1

St. Lukes El Paso

Work at Pavlovsk Childrens Home Cost \$2750 (appx.)

Skip Hodges Team Leader

[skip@stlukemethodist.org](mailto:skip@stlukemethodist.org)

915-591-8126

If you are interested in serving on a team that is listed above please contact the team leader or Mary White. Please share your VIM trips with this newsletter. You may email information to: [mwhite1@elp.rr.com](mailto:mwhite1@elp.rr.com)

**PRIMETIMERS ANNOUNCE UPCOMING EVENTS**

Primetimers [www.primetimers.info](http://www.primetimers.info) provided educational and mission service for older adults. Following is a list of upcoming events: for further information contact Nancy Eubanks 877-882-4724 or [Primetimers@gbgm-umc.org](mailto:Primetimers@gbgm-umc.org) . \* Event costs DO NOT include cost of transportation from home and return.

“Justice on the Border” **February 11-20, 2010**. McAllen, Texas \*Event Cost \$950.00

“A Methodist Primer – Latin America” **May 8-15, 2010**. San Jose, Costa Rica  
\*Event Cost \$950.00

“Alaska: The Last North American Frontier” **August 20-28, 2010**. Auke Bay, Alaska  
\*Event Cost \$975.00

“New Mexico’s Cultural Riches” **October 9-16, 2010**. McCurdy School, Espanola, New Mexico. \* Event Cost \$800.00

“All Creatures Great and Small” **November 7-12, 2010**. Epworth by the Sea- St. Simons Island, Georgia. \*Event Cost \$850.00

“Making Music – Jamaican Style” **January 8-15, 2011**. Brownstown, Jamaica  
\* Event Cost \$900.00



## **VOLUNTEERS IN MISSION OPPORTUNITIES**

### **NEW MEXICO:**

**Sacramento Methodist Assembly** in Sacramento, New Mexico is in need of volunteers. Help is needed in restoration of forest trails, general forest rehabilitation, light construction work, landscape work, assisting in operations and food service as needed. Teams are bunked in dorms and meals are provided. Cost is \$25.00/day for lodging and meals. Help is needed year round. See the website at [www.sacramentoassembly.org](http://www.sacramentoassembly.org). For more information please contact 800-667-3414 or [info@sacramento.org](mailto:info@sacramento.org).

**Casa Esperanza**, Albuquerque, New Mexico provides a convenient and affordable home away from home for out-of-town cancer patients and their family member while the patient undergoes treatment. Needs are for general maintenance, painting, yard work, wash windows, reorganize storage units and many other small jobs. Stay onsite, or at a local hotels or area churches. Contact: Angelica Medina, 505-277-9880. See website at [www.casaesperanzanm.org](http://www.casaesperanzanm.org).

**Presidio Outreach Center**, Presidio, Texas, the parsonage of the Outreach Center needs remodeling of the two bathrooms. The parsonage is a mobile home and if you would like to help with this project by leading a team to Presidio please contact: Rev. Francisco Escalera, 432-229-4703 or 432-934-3402.

### **LOUSIANA:**

Volunteers! The Grand River Station of Louisiana Disaster Response is very much in need of volunteer teams. Teams are presently rebuilding homes damaged by the last two hurricanes. Contact Michelle at the phone, e-mail and address below. You can also register your team by going to [www.la-umc.org](http://www.la-umc.org) and clicking Louisiana Disaster Response. Or contact Michelle L. Hadden, Grand River UMC, LA UM Disaster Response-Grand River Station at 225-659-7450 or [grandriverstation@brcoxmail.com](mailto:grandriverstation@brcoxmail.com).

## **TEXAS;**

The Southwest Texas Conference still needs volunteers to help with construction projects, rebuilding and repairing home that suffered damage from Hurricane Dolly. Two construction coordinators and eight case managers are in place, but simply need more volunteers to help. If you can help, please contact Susan Hellums at 956-648-8509 or 956-661-9771 or [www.methodistbfc.org](http://www.methodistbfc.org)

## **ALASKA:**

North Star UMC of Nikiski, Alaska located on the Kenai Peninsula south of Anchorage is requesting three teams to work on their church, summer 2010. North Star is a small church dependant on VIM teams to help with construction work on the church. Projects: Playground, storage shed on church property, replace deck at the parsonage(youngest son fell through the rotten wood), build picnic tables from rough cut lumber, gutting the kitchen and bathrooms, work with redoing the kitchen(they have some of the appliances and are finding funds through the Rasmuson Foundation. The upgrades will have to be approved by DEC before the church can open a Soup Kitchen. Contact: Pastor Laura Skiba, 907-776-8732(church) or 907-953-3674 (cell)

## **NORTH DAKOTA:**

Are you interested in getting a taste of the great open spaces and western hospitality of North Dakota this year? They would love to put you to work while you stay with them. Volunteers are needed! They have started the rebuilding process in Jamestown and surrounding are (flooding) from the south central to southwestern part of the state. Besides the fencing, rebuilding projects include installing sheetrock and mudding, electrical, some plumbing, step repair- i.e., general carpentry. If you can help, please contact Joan Buchhop at 800-366-9841 or [LDRvolunteer@lssnd.org](mailto:LDRvolunteer@lssnd.org)

## **MEXICO:**

Teams are needed to help with construction of Sunday School classrooms at Igelsia Metodista Refugio de Paz – Guadalupe, Nuevo Leon. Ten teams are needed and youth are accepted. This site was recently visited by a team from First United Methodist in Irving, Texas who had a wonderful experience. The lay leader there, Peter McNabb would be happy to talk to you if you are interested in taking a team. Contact: 214-906-2921 or [peter\\_mcnabb@hotmail.com](mailto:peter_mcnabb@hotmail.com)

### **CHILE:**

Years of armed conflict in Colombia generated one of the largest displacements in the world, with more than three million refugees fleeing their homes. UMCOR is helping Colombian refugees resettle in Chile expanding micro-enterprise opportunities for the most vulnerable. Through a \$33,000 grant from UMCOR and in partnership with Church World Service Refugee Integration Program and UMVIM, volunteers will be sent to Chile to work with the program. This program will increase congregational involvement in the Refugee Integration Program in Chile, as well as increase and strengthen the capacity of Methodist church leaders. Santiago, Chile and the northern city of Arica, where the refugee program is taking place, host significant populations of displaced Colombian refugees and asylum seekers. If you are interested please e-mail [UMCORRefugee@gbgm-umc.org](mailto:UMCORRefugee@gbgm-umc.org) for more information.

### **NICARAGUA:**

Needed: healthcare providers willing to volunteers for a mission trip to Nicaragua. A mission team from Bloomington, IL will be leaving for Nicaragua in February 2010 and needs doctors, physician assistants and nurse practitioners to volunteer their services. Last year's team of six saw about 1,700 patients! If interested, contact Krisite Gamble at 270-885-4365 home or 270-498-6296

### **CAMBODIA:**

The Louisiana Annual Conference has had a transformational experience with the re-establishment of the Methodist Church in Cambodia. Our teams have gone to support the work in-country and have returned renewed and strengthened in faith. Two missions are scheduled from the Louisiana Conference for 2010. **Medical Mission: February 25-March 10, 2010**, Beverly Dinnel, team leader may be contacted at [dinnels@bellsouth.net](mailto:dinnels@bellsouth.net). This will be the team's third year of medical care in the country; in 2010 the team will move to the Svay Rieng region, and also hopes to visit ministries in Vietnam. This team not only provides medical care, but trains local medical personnel. The team is need of one more doctor or diagnostician to complete the team. Donations for medical supplies and honorariums for local personnel are also requested. **Youth Leadership Camp May 22- June 3, 2010**. Jack O'Dell, team leader, may be contacted at: [pastor@thewellumc.com](mailto:pastor@thewellumc.com). The team will sponsor a second retreat for Cambodian Youth, who will become the leaders of the future Methodist Church. Team member slots are open.