



If not you, then who?

If not now, then when?

Friday, January 15th 8:15 P.M.

Dear fellow servants,

Here we are again, right in the middle of your inbox. While we don't want to weary you with our frequent e-mail messages, we know that many of you have been asking for information. So, we are trying to stay as current as we are able. If you wish to be taken from our e-mail list for these earthquake updates, just reply with the message to discontinue them. We will comply immediately.

We did receive some news today. Granted, it was by a circuitous route, but all news is welcome. The following news was forwarded to us by our Practical Compassion President:

January 14, 2010, Lawrenceville, NJ. Staff persons of the Presbyterian Church of Lawrenceville received word today that the mission group they sent to Haiti expects to be transported to Santo Domingo today or tomorrow, and depart by Saturday. They are currently in the U. S. Embassy, and able to communicate via text messages. The group also consists of delegates from Shiloh Baptist Church in Trenton, and Kingdom Church in Ewing.

The group had made it to the small village of Thoman, in the mountains Northeast of Port au Prince, just before the quake struck. According to group members, they were able to help over 300 persons in that village before they left for the Embassy, where they have set up a medical clinic and are assisting the injured.

“We have been able to help so many,” read one of the texts received from a member of the group.

The delegation includes three doctors, one nurse, and others experienced in first aid, in addition to The Rev. Darrel Armstrong, the Pastor of the Shiloh Baptist Church.

The delegation was being hosted by Pastor Luc Deratus, head of Harmonie Ministries in Haiti, which operates a church and a school in each of its three mission sites: Port au Prince, Thoman and Leogane. Staff at the Lawrenceville Church received reports that members of Rev. Deratus's church did not fare as well; the main church in Port au Prince collapsed during the earthquake while a prayer service was in process. It is unknown how many were hurt or killed.

The church and school in Thoman suffered only small structural damage. There was no news about the church and school in Leogane.

Two of the three school sites mentioned in the above release were built by Practical Compassion over the course of the last 15 years - the Thoman school (pronounced toe-mah) and the Leogane school (pronounced lay-o-gahn) . Practical Compassion has also been integrally involved in the Cite Soleil School in Port-au-Prince. Our personal involvement with Luc Deratus predates the beginning of the building work in Cite Soleil in the mid seventies. If the news above is accurate, that complex is totally destroyed and many people are killed or injured. The complex consisted of four large buildings -- a church which boasted a thousand worshippers on Sundays and three

school buildings, two of the school edifices were two-story structures. (See our Face Book page for Practical Compassion for pictures:

<http://www.facebook.com/home.php?#/pages/Lebanon-PA/Friends-of-Practical-Compassion/222738163386?ref=nf>

We also heard from one contact, Judith, who lived and worked in Haiti for years. She relayed the encouraging information that Cite Soleil was not totally obliterated. About 50% of the buildings were directly affected. Less sketchy information will likely be forthcoming soon as phone access becomes available.

CNN televised an interview with an American volunteer teacher who was caught in a collapsing building in Leogane. She was treated and evacuated, but she had no news as to the extent of the damage in Leogane, a small coastal city which lies west of Port along the fault line running through Haiti. So we know that Leogane was hit, but just how badly we cannot say.

We still have heard nothing of the children residing in the orphanage in Leurboug, nor has there been any word of Madame Luc who cares for the children and runs the orphanage.

We will keep you posted as we learn more. Again, thank you for caring and praying.

Your servants,

George & Suzie Zimmerman