



Eglise Methodiste d' Haiti

May 2024

Situation on the Street

The violence and chaos continue to escalate. Murder rape, extortion, and kidnappings are a continuing threat. Travel by road is almost impossible with many roadblocks in all directions. Food and fuel supplies are becoming increasingly difficult to obtain. Many of the NGOs such as Food for the Poor are not able to obtain sufficient food for their requested distributions. If they do obtain food supplies, distribution to the people in need is very difficult.

The same is true for Eglise Methodiste. We are still able to make deliveries to a limited number of locations, but it is dangerous and sometimes we must pay a bribe to the bandits at the roadblocks.

The gangs are indiscriminate in their attacks. They have now been attacking police stations, schools, clinics, and hospitals. The gangs have even destroyed the facility that bottles oxygen for the hospitals. As a result, many NGOs including Doctors Without Borders, are shutting their operations down and leaving the country.

Over 3,000 people have been killed in gang related activity since the beginning of the year and the numbers are growing every day. Over 300,000 people have been displaced by gang activity and are now living in temporary camps or have returned to their rural roots. To put that into perspective, the earthquake in 2010 killed about 300,000. The UN estimates that 5 million people, over 40% of the population is suffering from starvation. The UN estimates that over 8,000 infants and young children will die from hunger by year's end.

The Methodist Church and school at New College Bird have been attacked and ransacked. Church services at New College Bird are no longer possible. The zone of Pacot which is where Bishop Dorcely's home is located is under threat. The Bishop is still able to travel to the District Office but is increasingly dangerous. Bishop Dorcely's two daughters are not able to travel to the University and are doing their studies over the internet.

The zone around the Methodist campus at Freres is under increasing threat but has not yet been attacked. The gang leader over the area around the EMH Guesthouse was shot and killed by the police. There is now open conflict between the gang members for control of this gang and its territory. Rival gangs are also trying to exert influence and gain control of this strategic area. Eric's wife Lis and his daughter Jessica have left Haiti under the Biden parole program. Vivianne remains at the guest house with her daughter and granddaughter. Natalie, a long term interpreter, who lives next door, just graduated from the University with a degree in Civil Engineering and is trying to find work. Derly Charles, the engineer who has served the church for many years had his home attacked and ransacked. He was forced to move to alternate housing to protect his family. School at College Freres is on again off again depending on the threat level.

The violence and turmoil are not restricted to Port au Prince. Gangs control the entire country, and their violence and extortion are widespread. The flow of financial support, arms and ammunition into the country continues unabated.

David is still trapped in the US and unable to travel to Haiti. More about that below.

Political Situation

The government still does not exist. CARICOM with help from the US, France and Canada has brokered a committee of nine persons, seven voting and two non-voting members to serve as an interim government to provide stability and to organize democratic elections.

The Committee has been appointed, installed, inaugurated, and is at work. They have appointed an interim Prime Minister. They have also elected five persons to serve as rotating President of the Committee, where each President will serve for six months and then rotate off and be replaced by the next person. Presumably this will prevent any one person from having too much power but there will be a loss of continuity.

The Kenyan government has still not deployed the 1,000 police officers as originally promised and it is now doubtful that their limited support would be sufficient with the increased level of violence.

The US military is now shuttling in two flights a day bringing supplies and civilian contractors to build new housing for the Kenyan troops. These flights are being accompanied by an unknown number of US boots on the ground. Promised aid from the US and others has been promised but not always delivered.

The number of NGOs in Haiti was over 4,000 several years and has now dwindled to only a few hundred and their support is declining.

In any case, the political solution to Haiti's problems will take a long time to resolve. Any short-term solution will be short lived and only result in renewed violence and upheaval at some time in the future. Haiti must resolve her own problems over time and the path to true stability and perhaps even democracy will take a generation or more to come to fruition.

Continue to pray for the people of Haiti and for the nation of Haiti.

Airline Service to Haiti

As of May 10, Sunrise Airways has regularly scheduled flights between Cap Haitien and Miami. It is still difficult and sometimes dangerous to travel by road from Port au Prince to Cap Haitien. May 10, Spirit Airlines announced resumed flights from Ft Lauderdale to Cap Haitien but no flights to Port au Prince. American Airlines is scheduled to resume flight the beginning of June. Airline schedules are in a state of flux and nothing is certain.

David's Travel Schedule

As many of you are aware, David traveled to the US on February 20 for a three-week fundraising tour and furlough to visit family. After he left Haiti, the gangs started shooting at airplanes and hit a couple of Sunrise Airways planes. In addition, the gangs attacked the airport terminal. As a result, all of the airlines have suspended all flights to Port au Prince. Hence David is not able to return to Haiti. The airlines have announced several different plans to resume flights to port au Prince. The latest plan has Jet Blue and American Airlines resuming flights in mid-June. Only time will tell when flights resume, and travel can resume.

In the meantime, David has taken up residence at the Midwest Mission depot in Chatham Ill.

Midwest Missions has graciously given David a room and the use of a vehicle in return for his volunteer services. If you are not familiar with Midwest Missions, I invite you to visit their website, midwestmissions.org. They have a very vibrant and busy program. With accommodations onsite, twenty-six volunteers are on site most every day packing containers for shipment all over the world, manufacturing school desks from repurposed bleachers, sewing book bags, sundress, assembling Personal Dignity kits, tornado kits, cleaning supply kits and a host of other items to support missions all across the globe.

I would strongly urge anyone looking for a way to serve God in the world, to investigate Midwest Missions.

Christmas Shoebox Ministries

More shoebox gifts are ready and were scheduled to be distributed for Easter but were delayed when the airport was attacked, and the planes stopped flying. MFI will deliver the gift boxes as soon as possible after it is safe to return to Haiti.



David Draeger

EMH Mission Volunteer Coordinator