A container of faith

When Eglise des Freres Haitiens in Miami, Fla., decided to ship a container to Haiti to aid Brethren in the Saut Mathurine area affected by an earthquake, the church had no idea how it would play out, how much it would cost, whether there would be enough supplies to fill a 40-foot container, or who in Haiti knew the customs system to help out. But we stepped out in faith and God made it all possible.

The congregation gave money, food, supplies, and their time to box and load the container, with partners including Peniel Baptist Church and pastor Renaut Pierre Louis, Brethren Disaster Ministries, and many other friends—and God multiplied.

The container came out of customs in Haiti a week after it should have. Then some of the unions in Haiti announced a strike for three days to close the country because of lack of fuel. Romy Telfort, a leader in L'Eglise des Freres d'Haiti (the Church of the Brethren in Haiti), helped find drivers who had fuel and were brave enough to make the drive.

Three large vehicles were filled with supplies from the container. In those first few days, only two made it safely to Saut Mathurine. Two drivers left Port-au-Prince on a Sunday at 8:30 p.m. One made it to Saut Mathurine by Monday afternoon, the other by Wednesday afternoon. For those types of vehicles, it's a maximum of 7 hours of driving—but with the situation in Haiti, it took days. There were roadblocks, rock throwing, and bullets flying, but thanks to God they made it safely to their destination.

—Ilexene Alphonse

Relief goods are transfered from the container to one of the vehicles that drove them to their destination in Saut Mathurine.

Ivester Piecemakers

In the spirit of giving, a small group of women at Ivester Church of the Brethren in Grundy Center, Iowa, reconvened in late August last year to meet regularly to wear their masks and do “piecemaking.”

On the first Sunday in Advent, they displayed their quilts during worship and a prayer of blessing was shared. Fourteen quilts found their way to Des Moines, to be given to newly arriving people from Afghanistan. Twelve found new homes through distribution at House of Compassion in Marshalltown, where residents and immigrants have suffered in recent times, affected by a tornado and a derecho plus all the trials of the pandemic. It is in such a time as this that our call to service comes to the forefront. —LaDonna Brunk

Quilts are displayed and blessed during worship.

Do you have district or congregational stories that might be of interest to Messenger? Short items with a photo are best. Send them to Messenger, c/o In Touch, 1451 Dundee Ave., Elgin, IL 60120 or messenger@brethren.org.