

Turmoil in Haiti prompts concern

Prayer was requested for the country of Haiti and l'Eglise des Freres d'Haiti (the Church of the Brethren in Haiti) by the Global Mission office last fall. The request came during a time of continuous threats of gang violence and after gangs blocked a major port, leading to fuel shortages across Haiti. Adding to the crisis was a lack of clean water and outbreaks of cholera. The United States and United Nations at the time were considering armed intervention.

Despite the difficulties, construction continued by the Haitian Brethren including a new church built in the com-

munity in southwest Haiti that was hit by an earthquake in 2020, as well as a temporary headquarters for the church and the Haiti Medical Project in a safer place outside of the capital city.

Interviewed by the *Los Angeles Times*, Jeff Boshart of the Global Food Initiative explained the difficulties facing the Haitian church: "It had a main base in Croix-des-Bouquets, near Port-au-Prince, but the area has been an epicenter of gang activity. . . . Earlier this year one of the program's drivers was kidnapped—though later released—and his vehicle stolen, Boshart said, prompting the church to suspend all its activities in the Port-au-

Prince region. The remaining programs, involving agriculture, drinking water projects and home construction, are mostly in rural areas far from the capital and staffed entirely by Haitians. Boshart said the church also has sharply curtailed a mobile medical clinic program because several of the Haitian doctors who participated have fled to the U.S."

Ilexene Alphonse, who pastors in Miami, Fla., and who has been working with the churches in Haiti, reported from a visit made last fall that "the crisis in Haiti is worse than ever." About the rebuilding of earthquake-damaged homes, he wrote, "Five of the houses are completely done except for painting and 5 of the first 10 houses need roofing and doors. Now, we are about to start with 11 new houses. . . . There is a lot more to be done but what the Church of the Brethren is doing here no one has done before. . . . God has a way of taking people to places that he only can do."



Brethren Volunteer Service Unit 332 completed orientation in October: (back row, from left) **Ben Brubaker** of Crest Manor Church of the Brethren in South Bend, Ind., is serving at New Bethany Ministries, Bethlehem, Pa.; **Dan McFadden** (staff); **Silas Seil** of Kiel, Germany, is placed at Creation Justice Ministries, Washington, D.C.; **Elisabeth Berthel** of Berlin, Germany, has gone to Camp Stevens, Julian, Calif.; **Clara Grabenhorst** of Westfalen, Germany, is serving at Creation Justice Ministries; **Kurt Malchow** of Cologne, Germany, is at Camp Stevens; (front row) **Caleb Samland** of McPherson (Kan.) Church of the Brethren is working at La Puente Home, Alamosa, Colo.; **Emily Bowdle** (staff); **Patrice Rupp** of Württemberg, Germany, is working with WATER in Washington, D.C.; **Pauline Liu** (staff); **Michael Brewer-Berres** (staff); **Emma Dowd** of West Hartford, Conn., will serve with Corrymeela in Northern Ireland as of January 2023; **Val Brubaker** of Crest Manor church is at New Bethany Ministries.

Committee begins work on covenants with agencies

The Standing Committee of district delegates to Annual Conference met Oct. 25, via Zoom, to make plans for how to move forward with developing covenants of agreement with the three Conference agencies—Bethany Theological Seminary, Eder Financial, and On Earth Peace.

New polity regarding agencies, adopted at Annual Conference last summer, assigned this task to the Standing Committee. The committee was to call a subcommittee to create a structure for the covenants, to ensure consistency, and to work with each agency to develop the agreements.

Heifer International welcomes CEO Surita Sandosham

Last fall, the board of Heifer International gathered in Little Rock, Ark. Nathan Hosler, director of the Office of Peacebuilding and Policy, represented the Church of the Brethren. In addition to meeting in person, the board met new Heifer CEO Surita Sandosham, who had joined the organization only 20 days earlier.

Heifer has grown both in size and complexity since Dan West began the work over 75 years ago. As such, the work of a new CEO requires vision as well as understanding an organization that spans many countries and regions with hundreds of staff.

Sandosham discussed her apprecia-

tion of the 12 cornerstones of Heifer and engaged the board in dynamic discussions of strategy, board develop-

ment, and Heifer's core work of addressing food insecurity by working with small-holder farmers.



courtesy of Heifer International

Church funds distribute grants

From the Emergency Disaster Fund:

- \$47,250 financed completion of a Brethren Disaster Ministries rebuilding project in Waverly, Tenn. The project rebuilt homes affected by flooding in August 2021.
- \$49,500 supported the work of Puerto Rico District to put in place a small farmer recovery program following Hurricane Fiona, assisting 32 farmers with small grants of up to \$2,000.
- \$20,000 went to flood recovery work by the Christian Solidarity Program for Honduras last fall. Food, drinking water, hygiene supplies, and medicines were distributed to 1,000 families.
- \$17,500 was given for a flood relief program of the Church of the Brethren in Uganda, following heavy rains last fall. The church helped meet needs of the most affected 300 households.
- \$10,000 supported the landslide and flood relief program of ASIGLEH (the Church of the Brethren in Venezuela), after heavy rains last fall. Affected families received food, drinking water, clothing, and psycho/social support.
- \$5,000 supported the response to

Hurricane Ian by Children's Disaster Services and Brethren Disaster Ministries.

- \$5,000 was given to North Fort Myers (Fla.) Church of the Brethren for its Hurricane Ian Relief Program, a feeding ministry.
- \$5,000 supported the food pantry at Sebring (Fla.) Church of the Brethren following Hurricane Ian.

From Brethren Faith in Action:

- \$5,000 helped Alpha and Omega Church of the Brethren in Lancaster, Pa., construct a driveway and street entrance to enable food deliveries for a food outreach ministry.
- \$5,000 was given to Camp Pine Lake near Eldora, Iowa, to help fund a community meal program using the camp kitchen.
- \$5,000 was received by Daleville (Va.) Church of the Brethren to upgrade audio and video equipment for streaming worship and meetings.
- \$5,000 helped Eden (N.C.) First Church of the Brethren as its soup kitchen ministry became a USDA Soup Kitchen Partner.
- \$5,000 was granted to Eglise des

Freres Haitiens in West Palm Beach, Fla., for a van to transport community and church members.

- \$5,000 went to Living Faith Church of the Brethren in Concord, N.C., for its food pantry and blessing box.
- \$5,000 was given to Tabernacle the Restoration, a Church of the Brethren congregation in Lauderdale Lakes, Fla., for a food pantry and grocery distribution.
- \$4,999.65 went to the WildWood Gathering in Olympia, Wash., for tech upgrades, community garden enhancement, signage, and a monthly food and educational gathering.
- \$3,325 supported Papago Buttes Church of the Brethren in Scottsdale, Ariz., in its community outreach events.
- \$1,500 was granted to McPherson (Kan.) Church of the Brethren to host a performance of *We Own This Now* by Ted and Co.
- \$1,000 went to Roaring Spring (Pa.) First Church of the Brethren for the Recharge Program for children and families.
- \$755 given to Hanover (Pa.) Church of the Brethren paid for an automated external defibrillator.