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METHODIST
WORLD MISSIONS

Missions Hotline

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Special Edition



Haiti

Report from Bishop David Roller: We join with the whole world in grieving this tragic earthquake in Haiti. Our hearts and minds cannot imagine the level of devastation and we fear that the news of the next few days will compound our grief. I write on behalf of Dr. Art Brown and FMWM, as well as the Board of Bishops.

Yvonne and I left Haiti just 48 hours before the earthquake. All last week we celebrated a wonderful annual conference with the Haitian church. The Free Methodist Haitian Church is vibrant and strong, numbering some 15,000 members and our hearts break with yours in this time of loss.

We do not have any good information yet from the Haitian church leaders as to the level of destruction of churches and schools, nor regarding the loss of life. We are working to open lines of communication with Haitian FM leaders, but have so far been unsuccessful. As soon as we can, some of us will go to assess how we might best respond to the needs. I am confident that the worldwide Free Methodist Church will again show itself to be a generous and faithful partner with our Haitian brothers and sisters.

There were 17 North American FM missionaries in Haiti at the time of the earthquake and unfortunately Jeanne Acheson-Munos, Merle West and Gene Dufor are still unaccounted for. We believe they may have been in the multi-story FM work-team building in Port-au-Prince. That building collapsed in this seismic event and we have grave concern for those three. We call the church to pray for them.

Another two of the 17 missionaries sustained injuries and are being med-evac'ed out of Haiti. We are hopeful, praying and expecting a rapid recovery for these two. The rest of the 17 are well, although not without minor injuries.

Free Methodist World Missions is proceeding with a plan to extract its non-essential missionary personnel from Haiti. We of course want to be available to the Haitian church for assistance but recognize that, to some degree, they could be a burden on the National church at this point.

We appreciate the many volunteers who have stepped forward offering to help in Haiti. However at

this time, sending more people to Haiti would be non productive and would only complicate matters for those on the ground. We ask that no one travel to Haiti unless FMWM calls upon you as part of the response team.

We do know that our brothers and sisters in Haiti will have immediate and long-term financial needs. You may respond by giving to either Operation Hope or the Bishops Famine and Relief Fund at P.O. Box 535002, Indianapolis, IN 46253-5002. Both funds have already released money for Haiti. An on-line giving option will be announced soon.

Again, thank you for your solidarity with the Haitian church. Your prayers and love are extremely meaningful to them and to us in these days.

We will send updates as information becomes available.
Bishop David Roller

If you have concerns regarding a loved one in Haiti, call the U.S. State Department at 1-888-407-4747.

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