

## Into the Future:

The "conservative" Paul, in Ephesians 4, urges us to unity, forbearance and a bond of peace as we "the church" live as the body of Christ in the world. As gifted prophets, apostles, evangelists, preachers and teachers, we are not to be blown about by doctrines, trickery, craftiness or scheming. We are to be joined together with our neighbors.

Martin Luther King said, "We cannot be whole until there is wholeness of our neighbors." It is easy to forget "the body of Christ" was broken, and, in "fragments" may be found. Wholeness seems to be a process of getting the pieces joined together.

We are in the US while Haiti Outreach works on the well at Dent Griern and 19 community leaders completed AAPLAG training. Louis called yesterday afternoon "for the group" and thanked us for the three week training opportunity. They have a "plan" and some gifts from AAPLAG to use as they organize groups and work together to make life better for all on sud la gonave. The broken people are excited about putting pieces together.

The Methodist Church has been "broken" on La Gonave for a number of years. Ordained clergy refuse to live isolated and precariously with limited transportation and communication. La Gonave shares a Superintendent with mainland Petit Guave Circuit which is more prosperous and "connected." Funding for food and teachers, training for pastors and supplies and support seldom make it across the sea.

We met with Pastor Gesner Paul, who will be inaugurated Aug 30<sup>th</sup>, as president of the HMC, before we headed home in late July. Familiar with La Gonave, he expressed gratitude for community development and teacher training our mission has provided. He said he plans to issue an invitation to GBGM for replacements for us, but hoped we would continue the mission until that can be done.

Pastor Paul shared his desire to have an ordained clergy living on the island to strengthen the church and schools. His hope is to build a manse at Nan Kafè as soon as possible and already has a Superintendent "in training". With GBGM Long Term Volunteers to continue community building and a full time clergy to build the church there is hope for "wholeness" for South La Gonave.

We will return, Aug 20<sup>th</sup> to prepare for a Nebraska team, visit and preach at Nan Buchan, and attend the inauguration of Pastor Paul. The process of "joining" the communities and the church has begun and we are excited to be part of it.

Tomorrow's gospel lesson tells us those seeking Jesus found him on the other side of the sea. We believe "our neighbors" are headed in the direction of wholeness, and we look forward to being part of the process of putting pieces together. Together we can build a manse, "the church" and Christ's body.

Pastor Shirley, late Saturday, August 01, 2009. Looking to the future.