

**Mercy!** : Each morning my Dad would wake and stretch and proclaim, "Mercy" in a voice that woke the household. He never liked being awake, alone! Mom would put a pillow over her head yet eventually sacrifice the peace of sleep to appease the needs of others.

E.H. Peterson implies "mercy" pertains to God's will for others and sacrifice to the righteous "self." Matthew 9:13... "I have come to call not the righteous but the sinners."

We met yesterday with a few conference leaders to discuss the future of KEC mission on La Gonave, Haiti. Our appointment ends in October. Our GBGM Advance contains funds from generous individuals, congregations and several conferences, both undesignated and designated. The Haitian Church is in transition and not able to provide guidance at this time.

Our appointment in 2007 and defined invitation from the EMH was to act as directors for the "development of Sud La Gonave". We were asked to recruit and host teams for projects in 16 church communities. Later we discovered the church was responsible for the entire South portion of the island including a clinic, goat farm and 9 schools, 2 which offered secondary education. The schools, goat farm and a former micro loan program were not part of our responsibility and the clinic was being operated on a volunteer basis by local people.

When we leave in October we will have hosted 10 teams, 11 individual VIM volunteers and addressed 28 projects for or in the name of the church. As Project Directors, countless individual requests and needs in sousafilip and other communities have been addressed. Working in partnership with local community leadership we believe people on Sud La Gonave have felt the mercy and presence of God in their difficult lives. I know we recognized divine presence every moment.

In February of 2008, the EMH underwent a reorganization and our appointment was reevaluated and redefined. We were asked to help with some specific school issues and put all our funds in the EMH account. As we were accountable for donations, especially grants and funds received from GBGM and KEC, we declined but have reported regularly to the Circuit Superintendent regarding activities and funding.

At the Atlanta Consultation we were asked to assist with fund raising to pay teacher salaries, attempt to find an alternative to the UMCOR school lunch program and to stop the use of the clinic due to church liability issues. All funding for schools and feeding programs and teachers salaries go through EMH accounting. We have contacted numerous agencies regarding food for schools, teachers' salaries and we provided money for books and tuitions with little success and no clear accounting. The clinic had been non functioning for some time yet people come from far away in hope of help.

Undesignated funds may be used in several ways when our appointment ends in October. The question now, is do we reevaluate the former KEC mission to La Goanve, or wait until September for guidelines from the EMH and possibly GBGM? **Whatever**, our hope is for focus on mercy rather than sacrifice. In two years we have learned sacrifice does not fill tummies or educate children.

*Shirley, Avril 7, 2009.*

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