

PaP and holding: Arrived PaP airport April 1st around 2:45 to a new scene. We deplaned into Embassy buses that took us to a hanger where immigration was set up. Immigration cleared we watched as all the luggage from our 767 airbus was unceremoniously piled in a mountain on the floor of the hanger. Fortunately ours was near the edge and easily retrieved.

We exited to a canopied, gated area to wait for our driver who was in a traffic jam. We were greeted by Jackson, a friend to VIM teams, who we knew lost his wife, home and other family in the earthquake. Across the street was a group of vendors where we elected to wait. We watched as local police arrested and handcuffed a man who was pleading his innocence to something, and Joe was "told off" by an old woman with a big stick, when he said he had no money to give her. Various conversations revealed hope in Obama.

A four day holiday beginning for Easter has all banks and business closed. Our trip to La Gonave is delayed until Monday. The Circuit Superintendent is negative to our visit to the island, due to a conflict concerning church authority over projects. We will be staying in Ti Palmiste and visiting only the well site and goat park, meeting with the industrial association and assessing the area for future building sites.

The last two months have been so busy, this enforced "retreat" is somewhat restful if my novel lasts!. Morning walks reveal streets bordered by neat piles of refuse and rock, and little construction. Street vendors are once again in business as the feeding program ended abruptly yesterday. There are miles of tent communities where small business is providing clothing and supplies. These appear fragile yet similar to how people live on La Gonave.

Conversations with the UMCOR Advisor, here for one more week and the newly arrived UMCOR NGO's who will handle operations in the future months is interesting. All were exposed and impacted by Sam Dixon and accepted this position because of that relationship. The two new men seem highly competent and experienced with little knowledge of Haiti.

Next week EMH leaders and KEC Bishop and leadership meet to discuss projects and ministry needs of the church and how best to provide support. The administration was new when the disaster struck; adding confusion to conflict, so every activity raises new issues. With "new things" I have learned people often do not function with best intentions for the wellbeing of the "whole". Our breakfast topic today was, "what is best for Haiti's future"? Should we also consider, "what is good for all of us?"

Five billion dollars is available for the next few months of recovery and a group of international money managers come with the money to work in conjunction with Haitian leadership. Is it possible to think solely about Haiti, or is it imperative to consider how the future impacts the world, the church and our lives?

Does God's plan for peace, justice and joy, focus on the hurt and hungry only? Is this a test?

Today the tomb contains Christ. Where will he appear in the weeks to come?

Saturday, April 3, 2010, Port au Prince, Haiti. Pastor Shirley, on hold. www.centralumclawrence.org