

The Emmanuel/Livenson/Haiti Relationship

How did Emmanuel in Venice, Florida get involved with Eglise Lutheran d'Haiti (The Lutheran Church of Haiti)?

In December of 2006, Pastor David Johnson presented a letter from a pastor in Haiti for funds to build a church. With a budget surplus of approximately the amount of the request, the congregation voted to send the funds.

Joseph Livenson Lauvanus, a student at the seminary in Jamaica, heard about the gift and wanted to meet the pastor and see the church which had done this thing for his people. He came to Venice and met Pastor Johnson. A bond was formed. When Livenson (as Emmanuel members know him) graduated from the seminary, he was accepted as an intern at Emmanuel. He quickly endeared himself to the congregation and the bond with Pastor Johnson grew much stronger.

A group from Emmanuel attended the ordination of Livenson and other Haitians in Port au Prince in January of 2009. Pastor Livenson maintained his close contact with Pastor Johnson. With his ability to speak English, the good relationship with the congregation of Emmanuel and the respect of his Haitian peers, he was elected President of the Lutheran Church of Haiti. With mentoring from Pastor Johnson, Pastor Lauvanus was able to obtain recognition of Eglise Lutheran d'Haiti by the Haitian government. This legitimized the church and allowed for spreading the Word beyond the original congregations with greater credibility.

Our support is CRITICAL to the success of the Lutheran Church of Haiti. We have a Covenant (agreement) with Pastor Lauvanus. We provide his only support and he comes to preach twice a year. Because he is a citizen of Haiti, he does not qualify for support by the wider church as a Missionary. As a result, the wider church cannot support him. What else has Emmanuel done in support of the Haiti efforts?

Following the earthquake of January 2010, we sent significant cash with Pastor Lauvanus, who was here at the time, back to Haiti to help in whatever ways possible through the Eglise Lutheran d'Haiti. We also sent additional funds for water tanks at the church at Carrefour, which provided drinking water for the community. When funding expired from the wider church and vehicles needed repairs, we sent funds for maintenance. We also provided the funds from the David Johnson Memorial fund to purchase the land in Pasquette. A new church was built and a well for the community funded by the wider church.

We have just sent \$5,000.00 to train and provide seed money for ten women to begin a small business cooperative. This is a change of focus from things to people. Your contributions to the Pastor Livenson Support Fund provide for his stipend. This is his ONLY support. The David Johnson Memorial Fund is a backup for any shortfall in the Pastor Livenson Support Fund and provides funds for support and projects on a "by request" basis. Currently our funds are running low. We have enough to support Livenson through the end of this year, but will not be able to do any projects or other support without your help.

Please support the Pastor Livenson Support Fund and remember the David Johnson Memorial Fund as well. To continue the efforts in Haiti we must ensure that our support for Pastor Livenson does not fall by the wayside.

Blessings and Peace,

Jane and Robert Riggs
Co-chairs Global Missions Team