

Update From Rev. Phil Esala, Emmanuel Lutheran Church, Kettering Ohio

January 8, 2007

The Situation in Leogane Haiti recently was awful! On December 30, thugs came in the compound during a worship service, locked the gate with their own padlock, and terrorized the place. They said they were going to kill Pastor Joel (he and Rose were not there) and then Pastor Nideau, Joel's brother. Pastor Nideau and a few others escaped by jumping the wall from the girls' orphanage and stayed in the fields and a safe house until morning. They beat several of the men, raped at least one girl, stole any and all valuables—cell phones, money, etc.

Police were called, but would not come, saying "they had no gas." I suspect they were paid off and refused to come.

They are trying to get their lives back in order. The girls have been moved to the Jacmel orphanage, temporarily at least. They were planning their 25th anniversary celebration in February. It may still go off as planned, although all those planning on going down have cancelled, except for Wilson Cohoon, our member and the Caribbean director of BALL, including Haiti.

"God is light. And in Him darkness is not—none." (My literal translation of 1 John 1:5). I included that in my sermon this Sunday, referencing the Haiti situation. Nothing happens without it being filtered through God's hands—ie. He allowed it to happen. God's promises (all of them) are still true.

Please pray for them. If you want more information, you may contact Wilson Cohoon (member of Emmanuel Lutheran Church, Kettering, Ohio). God bless you, Tim.

Update from Wilson Cohoon, member of Emmanuel Kettering who has done Missionary work in Leogan, Haiti

January 8, 2007

Romans 8:28 "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to his purpose".

I talked to Pastor Joel this morning. Word of what has happened has spread all over Haiti and over the world. The President of the Protestant churches in Haiti came to Leogane, our church, yesterday to support them. He says the press will use this and other stories of other churches to bring attention to the persecution of the Church in Haiti. Pastor Joel is receiving phone calls and emails from all over the US and Canada showing support. Those who wish to email your support can do so at joelbeaucejour@hotmail.com. All emails may not be acknowledged because of time and expense, but are appreciated. He and Rose will be leaving

Haiti soon to spend some time in Miami after Pastor Nidaud and others arrive back in Leogane to take charge.

The women who were violated are going to the doctor tomorrow for follow up checks. Our girls who went to Jacmel will be returning soon. My trip may be moved up a week or so do to Mardi Gras preventing my return as planned.

From a personal note; thank you all for your prayers, sympathy, understanding and concern. I have expressed the wide range of all to Pastor Joel and asked him to pass it along to others. Please continue to bring this matter before the throne of our Lord.

Update from Wilson Cohoon

January 15, 2007

I have just finished talking with Pastor Joel. For some reason he is personally being warned about him still being under the threat of death. They were able to conduct worship services yesterday on a modified schedule. Most of the congregation attended, but some are still afraid. Our free school resumed today after the Holiday break. Teachers and students are retuning. Pastor Joel now thinks that it is unwise for me to come to Haiti, but rather meet him in Miami for discussions and prayer. My presence would indicate money which some people in Haiti think we have unlimited amounts of. If I would go, I could not so much as step foot in Leogane, so I cannot risk their lives by my going.

Doctors without Borders are treating the victims without costs to them and Bible League is offering free psychological services to all involved.

Pastor Nidaud is considering leaving the organization. He says he can't minister in an area where his family was so mistreated. I have asked and Pastor Joel has indicated that he will probably take a long sabbatical.

Prayer concerns: 1. Pray for Pastor Joel's safety, for wisdom for he and his family and that they may get out of the country for a season. 2. Please pray for Pastor Nidaud, that he will not take any actions without first being positive that his actions are of God's will and design, not the enemy's. 3. Pray for all the children, that they will not live in fear but in the hope and joy of our Lord Jesus Christ. 4. Pray for our staff, that they will, too, be protected and live in the confidence that Jesus is their source of provision for everything.

Tim, I will send you some pictures of the mission by email today. Thank you for putting this in your news updates.

God Bless,
Wilson Cohoon