



Shabach Ministries International

March 8th 2010: Jared Kohler Documents "The Event of January 12th"

Shabach Ministries International (SMI) has hired photographer Jared Kohler to document the work that SMI is doing in Haiti. Jared arrived in Carrefour, Haiti, on Saturday March 6th. Immediately upon arrival he began documenting "the event of January 12th" (as it has come to be called in Haiti). What he has found so far on his five-day visit is what many of us have already seen: destruction, hunger, desperation etc. However, that is not all he has seen. Amidst the crises he has also found an unconquerable spirit of hope and even peace.

On Friday Shabach Ministries International (SMI) opened its doors to about 500 students. In lieu of school the ministry is offering what amounts to vacation bible school at the main campus. The purpose of the unofficial school is to keep children off the streets, to give them a little education, and to give them a little food. Word got out over the weekend and today each of those 500 children brought three or four of their friends and family. The volunteers at SMI did not turn anyone away and what was intended to be a half day event turned into an all day event. Before it was done the kitchen had run out of rice and was improvising with bread and sauce. Nevertheless, scores of hungry children waited patiently for what would probably be their one meal of the day. Everyone was eventually fed. The volunteer staff which was comprised of church members was exhausted but one of them expressed to Jared that it was worth it as he said in broken English, "Children are... what is it that opens a door... a knob... no... a key... yes, children are the key." It is our hope and intention to run this impromptu school for one month until April 5th when regular schools are scheduled to resume.

The volunteer that Jared talked with is also a leader in the church and on another occasion he expressed to Jared that before the event of January 12th many of the people in the church had an ideal understanding of God's peace; that is to say they knew God's peace but it was easy to know because things were going good. The event of January 12th put that sense of peace to the test and he was happy to report to Jared that, "when the earth shook it was not enough to take the peace away."

This sense of true peace in the midst of chaos is evidenced all throughout the church at SMI as Jared reported that the Sunday morning church service was as filled with joy, hope, and the love of God as it was before the earthquake (if not more so).



Children at vacation bible school

Equipping Kingdom citizens for a global impact



An elder of the church cuts bread for communion



Members of the church

March 4th 2010: Taifer School Update

On Thursday Pastor Jean Heder Petit-Frere was able to go up to the mountain school in Taifer to see what damage there was. Along the way they came across many small refugee camps full of people that have been displaced by the earthquake. At the school they found that it was still intact (as had been reported) but in need of substantial repair. As with all other schools, classes will not resume until the structure can be repaired.



Refugee camp along the road to Taifer



Taifer School (Breath of Life Christian Academy)



The cafeteria at Breath of Life Christian Academy



Pastor Jean feeds some hungry children near Taifer

March 1st 2010: Rebuilding Starts at SMI's Main Campus

On Friday, the 26th a construction team from Charlevoix, Michigan and Guatemala arrived at SMI's main campus in Carrefour, Haiti, to begin reconstruction efforts. During the time that they were there they reconstructed the media room which was totally destroyed and began repairing several columns throughout the campus. During their time there cleanup crews continued their daily task of removing rubble from the campus grounds.



Working on the new Media Room



Working on a column in the church



Demolishing a portion of the damaged perimeter wall



Cleanup Crews

February 22th 2010: Carrefour Census

Even though it has been nearly two months since the January 12th earthquake there are many things that needed to be done by the government that have not been done. One of those things is a census. Officially, for the past two months the government has had no idea how many people have actually died, or lost homes, or are living in refugee camps; its all been guess work. When the Mayor of Carrefour asked Pastor Jean Heder Petit-Frere to help draft an official request for aid on behalf of the city of Carrefour the first question that needed to be answered was how much aid was needed. The Office of the Mayor, however, had no conclusive numbers to offer. The need for a census became an immediate priority. However, the Office of the Mayor was ill-equipped to handle such a large task in such a short amount of time. Not to mention, many Haitians do not look favorably on any government body and would refuse to participate in a census organized by the government.

Therefore, Shabach Ministries International (SMI) stepped in to help. SMI organized a group of young volunteers to take the census data. Their payment: food. SMI used the ministry vehicles to transport the volunteers to their respective areas. After picking them up at the end of the day and taking them back to the main campus another group of volunteers entered the data into computers.

The blue shirts that the volunteers are wearing say "Kingdom Volunteer" on the back and include the logo of SMI's church in Carrefour, Famille Tabernacle de Louange (FTL). It was necessary to equip the volunteers with these shirts so that the general populations wouldn't suspect them of being government workers and refuse to participate (or worse).

Census data will be posted on this website as soon as it is prepared. Before the earthquake there were reportedly 426,024 people living in Carrefour and the surrounding county.



SMI's Eau Vive truck transports census volunteers

The back of the t-shirts



Entering the census data into the computers

February 4th 2010: Clinic Day at Family Tabernacle of Praise

On Thursday, a group of doctors and nurses were able to spend the day at the church on Shabach's main campus in Carrefour, Haiti. The response was enormous. The waiting area was constantly packed and there was a line right out of the courtyard and into the street. The variety of patients that were served brought to light the extent of the earthquake's impact; young and old, men and women, no one was left untouched.

Despite the primitive conditions everyone was very thankful to receive help. How fitting that these people received healing in the church.







February 3rd 2010: Food Distribution

Through the continued support of so many faithful partners, Shabach Ministries International has been able to purchase a substantial amount of food. The food is purchased from a wholesaler and then repackaged for distribution. In the smaller black parcels there are rice, beans, pasta, sugar, wheat, corn meal, and soy food; enough food for a family of five to live on for a week. Five hundred were distributed the first day and the crowds were thick. Only 40 people at a time were let into the courtyard so that the church was not overrun and so that Pastor Jean Heder Petit-Frere could share with them a simple message of hope amidst troubled times and pray with them. Over the next two days another 360 parcels were distributed.



February 1st 2010: Earthquake Refugee Camp Near Carrefour, Haiti

There are still considerable needs in Haiti due to the earthquake. Everyone is still living on the street even though their home may be standing. This is due, mostly to the frequent tremors that continue to shake the country. Until the tremors stop, most people do not go indoors unless they have to. Even then, it is very dangerous. One family went inside only briefly to get supplies. While they were inside there was a tremor and the house came down, killing all of them. Stories and experiences like this keep the people in constant (and healthy) fear of the structures around them. Until the tremors stop and buildings can be inspected life cannot return to normal; homes cannot be lived in, businesses cannot be opened, and schools cannot resume.

Until that time, we need to be vigilant in supporting our Haitian brothers and sisters, many of whom are as unfamiliar with life on the streets as we would be. Already the international news coverage of the aftermath of the earthquake has begun to wane yet the needs remain the same. May our awareness and support be more steadfast.

Following are pictures of a refugee camp near Carrefour. There are estimated to be around 14,000 people at this camp alone. It is at this camp that Shabach Ministries International installed a water purifier.



January 29th 2010: Water Purifier

Shabach Ministries International was able to purchase two water purifiers which can purify 10,000 liters of water in several hours. The unit was shipped down to Haiti and tested before being installed at a refugee camp near Carrefour. Safe drinking water is hard to find in Haiti after the earthquake. Because of the lack of electricity many water purification businesses have not been able to operate and many water reservoirs and wells have been destroyed.



January 25-26th 2010: Trauma Seminar

Due to the severity of the earthquake everyone in Haiti (and every Haitian around the world) has been effected; homes were destroyed, places of employment were demolished, and loved ones were lost. Even if someone were fortunate enough to escape these three tragedies, there is still the constant strain of being around those that have. These factors contribute to substantial emotional and psychological trauma that the Haitian people must endure on top of all the physical destruction.

We believe that the church must also address these issues. To accomplish this Shabach Ministries International held a two day seminar for training on how to deal with trauma victims. There were about 325 people in attendance. We were furthermore honored to have George Rhoades from Hawaii and Patrice Weibezahl from Canada come and speak at the seminar (both are psychologists).

The first day lessons were given and then all of the attendants were sent out to put into practice what they learned. On the second day they were evaluated and more lessons were given. We were blessed to be able to provide lunches for all of the attendants.

