

Spring 2024

Asaph UPDATE

Presenting Christ in a Rural Haitian Community...One Lesson at a Time

From: Andy

Greetings from southern Haiti, where we have been enjoying regular rain! The dust we endured earlier in the year is gone. Trees are green and gardens are producing. Animals and people are a little more joyful lately. Along with the joys of rain come the hazards : river washouts have occurred some places in Haiti. BUT, our town has a big new bridge (not quite finished). Rain, as good as it is, also brings mosquitoes and malaria.



Haiti's political situation remains a quagmire. Outsiders are pushing certain solutions. In a "secret ceremony" in Port-au-Prince, a new council of leaders was sworn in. I don't understand how a secret government can lead a nation. There are signs that the airport will open soon and that things will be back to "normal" with foreign troops here to keep peace. My impression is that this solution will be short-lived. This moment is in some ways a golden opportunity to fix deep problems in Haiti. We are praying for that!

ASAPH LEADERS...LEARNING TO SERVE

ASAPH leaders are learning to serve in more ways than one. Each month, ASAPH coaches, teachers, and committee members meet to develop leadership skills. It has been a fruitful time. Together, we discuss and analyze what makes good leadership, and we do so in the light of the reliable Word of God. Nehemiah's story has blessed us with great leadership qualities we can develop in ourselves (discretion, sensitivity, communication, preparation, honesty, faith in God's plan, and many more).

In April, our leaders enjoyed a meal and shared quality time together. Some leaders shared life experiences that helped them grow. Younger leaders mostly listened. We had a delightful time of jokes and riddles as well. It was good team-building!

With a pickleball court right next door, ASAPH leaders often gather for volleyball after a training session. There, we learn how to serve in another way. :) We also learn how to work together, and how to encourage and protect each other.



In April's meeting, one older ASAPH leader shared a story about me from years ago. The story impressed on me that for all of my years here in Haiti I have had terrific people around me guiding and protecting me from mistakes. With this current group of leaders, that is still true today.

THE FIRST OF MAY

The first day of May in Haiti is a national holiday set aside to focus on agriculture and labor in general. Older Haitians share stories about glorious May 1st celebrations of long ago. Sadly, in today's Haiti the May 1st holiday is most often just a day off from school.

ASAPH began celebrating May 1st last year with a small afternoon program. This year, we expanded the celebration into a fair on the local soccer field. With WEC (*Courtois Erntz*) leading ASAPH's agriculture program, we planned exhibitions, games, and information that focused on all kinds of work. The ASAPH Brass Band opened the event and played in the middle. ASAPH's girls choir prepared and sold food along with many other local people. Attendee's enjoyed local delights like : fresh juice, snowballs, fried bananas, home-made sweets and more. Young and old competed in horse-shoes, corn-hole, soccer, and pull-ups. We ended the fair with some races and a scavenger hunt.

That same evening, we gathered in the local church where ASAPH's compa band (Tropic-ASAPH) entertained. WEC's assistant in the agriculture activities shared a powerful testimony of leaving Haiti to make money. He found himself working fields for people who commanded his every move. He realized he could do the same jobs for himself back home and do it with honor, and so returned here to *Pasbwadòm* to farm. He now lives 'comfortably' from the work he does working for himself. WEC also taught a lesson on the parallels that exist between plant-life and people-life.

Last Fall, WEC distributed some seeds we had received. There was frankly little interest. WEC's assistant planted the seeds and recently harvested some great stuff. I ate some Chinese cabbage from his gardens. Mmmm. This week, people were here at ASAPH asking for seeds. It is proof that you can explain until you are blue in the face and not make as much impact as you do by providing one concrete example. ASAPH Agriculture is beginning to flower.

Enjoy these images from the May 1st celebrations...



SOME GOOD NEWS...FROM HAITI!



1. A student successfully recites a series of Bible verses.
2. Fanfa ASAPH rides to a concert performance.
3. Strong men install a free "telephone pole" for lighting.
4. Volleyball under the lights brings people together...for fun!
5. ASAPH's girls choir prepares special treats.
6. Ladies decorate the local church for a week-long conference.
7. Very young musicians develop their talent at ASAPH.
8. AAF soccer team participates in a 4-on-4 tournament.



“Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good. His love endures forever.”

Psalm 118:1

Tax deductible contributions can be made to:

ASAPH Teaching Ministry

Mail to:

Christ Lutheran Church
c/o ASAPH Teaching Ministry
126 W. Main St.
Dallastown, PA 17313

Phone: (717) 244-2605

TRAVEL OUT OF HAITI

Back in March, shots were fired at airplanes landing at the major airport in Port-au-Prince. That stopped international flights, and for good reason.

I decided to schedule a flight home with the AGAPE missionary mail plane instead, but a week after doing so, their plane was damaged in an emergency landing here in Haiti. No flights until July at the earliest for them.

SO, I am still waiting for a safe and reasonable way to travel home. I will do that when it becomes available. There is an airline flying from Cayes to Cap-Haitian and then Miami, but it is expensive. American Airlines hopes to resume flights in May, but their first tickets are selling for \$2000. Ouch! Not for me.

Without concrete plans, I am unable to schedule events in the USA at this point. I still hope to be home in May, June, and/or July. I will share details when they I know them.

www.asaphteachingministry.com



E-mail: andyclairstump@yahoo.com

Cell in Haiti: 011-509-3872-8186

Cell in USA: 717-893-6704

PRAY !

Pray for *WEC* and *Shelterline* as they prepare for a baby this summer!

Pray for the teachers, coaches, and leaders growing here at Asaph...grace and wisdom!

Pray for *Steephenson*, *Wesly*, and *Licency*...faith in God alone!

Pray for ASAPH's many students...growth in all that is good!

Pray for ASAPH board and supporters...blessings!

Pray for Haiti...peace!

ASAPH's Board of Directors:

Andy Stump Richard Cleary George Sipe Kirby Rhodes
Carl Bender Sandy Bender Craig Kenney Nina Kenney

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