



MISYONNÈ NOUVÈL

The Newsletter of Life Connection Mission

Volume 9 | Issue 2

Fall | 2016

Letter from the President

Turning a page, looking forward to the mission ahead

Greetings in Christ! It is with a tremendous sense of joy and enthusiasm that I write what will be my last letter as President of Life Connection Mission.

I have been humbled and honored to serve as LCM's leader for the past 9 years. I have had the privilege of watching our mission grow in scope and effectiveness in so many ways. Our mission school has grown from an 8 classroom primary school into a complete Pre-K through 13th grade school

with dozens of classrooms. I was blessed to participate in the merger and eventual absorption of the Haitian Connection Network higher education mission into our school so that we can help our best students achieve a college degree. I got to see a health clinic built from the ground up to serve our community. Numerous community wells have been dug. Many new homes have been built. I have witnessed thousands of people in desperation being fed and receiving life-saving medical care. I grieved alongside our Haitian family in the aftermath of the devastating 2010 earthquake and have rejoiced in their hope of a better future through Jesus Christ.

As you can imagine, leading an effort like LCM is, to be blunt, exhausting. Attempting to manage a large organization operating in a difficult environment takes its toll on even the strongest and most dedicated of people. As a result, over the past year I have been praying and seeking God's guidance with regard to my future within LCM and wisdom for our Board of Directors to identify someone who can lead us into the future with renewed energy and vision. Earlier this month, we

unanimously determined that this new leader would be Christie Anne Short.

Matthew 20:26 says "he who wants to be a leader among you must first be a servant." Christie Anne has been an extremely dedicated and passionate servant to the Haitian people. As a teacher for many years and now Principal of St. Patrick's Catholic School in Rockville, Maryland, her entire career has revolved around her love and passion for children. Since her first trip to Montrouis in 2008, she has made it her personal mission to coordinate the sponsorship program and to work side-by-side with our mission school director and the mission staff on a host of humanitarian projects. She is a change-maker who has passion and vision for our work in Haiti. Who could ask for anything more in a leader to move LCM forward?

Of course I will still be heavily involved in LCM's day-to-day operations, planning, etc. LCM is a huge part of my life and God's purpose for it. But now I can confidently hand the reigns of leadership over to a trusted friend with the abilities and enthusiasm to enable LCM to do God's work in Haiti in ways I may not have even considered. So it is, indeed, with great joy that I write this last letter to ask you to join with me in welcoming Christie Anne as the new President of Life Connection Mission!

IN THIS Issue

- 2 All Children Deserve New Flip Flops**
by Paula Patterson
- 3 New Computer Lab**
by Ostane Odvylles
- 4 The Greatest Blessings**
by Tammy Tate
- 5 Seeing the Bigger Picture**
by Julia Derry
- 8 A Love of Music**
by Manuel Dorantes

Life Connection Mission

23 Grey Pebble Court
Germantown, Maryland 20874
www.lifeconnectionmission.org
301.370.6426

All Children Deserve New Flip Flops

by Paula Patterson

Helping to meet a basic need that all of God's children deserve

"Flip Flop-ing into Haiti" was the current theme for residents of The Villages in Florida who wanted to contribute to my 2016 spring mission trip to LCM in Montrouis.

The 15 "little dresses" that I had taken last year miraculously grew to 51 dresses made from pillowcases on my next trip. The dresses were precious, but the aging hands that made them were stiff and sore. Therefore, I promised a reprieve for this trip; we would collect as many flip flops as possible. Almost every day, I would open my door to bags of flip flops, most given anonymously.

Since all the flip flops were donated, I was able to use my own funds at thrift shops. I guessed wildly on sizes, knowing only that I wanted a new outfit for each child, aged 3-12, at a tiny orphanage called "All God's Children" in Montrouis.



Paula Patterson and a sweet friend.

Arnold, who works for LCM, has noticed that I am very drawn to orphanages. On my previous trip, he asked if I wanted to visit a small orphanage run by his friend, David. David is a young man who had been the only teacher in a small school in the mountains. One day, the families who had hired him came to him sadly to say they could no longer pay his salary.

As David was preparing to move down to Montrouis to find work, some families came to ask him if he would take their children with him. The parents reasoned that although they would greatly miss their children, they trusted that David would provide them a better life. Therefore, buoyed only by his faith, David trudged down the mountain with 20 excited but scared children.

I have learned that many Haitians of small means have huge hearts. David was given a tiny plot of land with a small, crumbling building. From this, he and some friends created two dorms with bathrooms, a small common area, and a kitchen/dining room. There is barely any outside area to serve as a playground.

When I first visited him in the fall of 2015, he posed for a photo next to a bare plank bunk bed with a rough, cement wall behind him. On my next visit four months later, he had painted the beds and walls of the boys' dorm completely in red and blue. The girls' dorm and beds are



The children pose for a group photo with their new clothing and flip flops.

pink, with touches of lavender and pale turquoise.

The children were delighted with their new flip-flops and (new to them) clothing, and posed happily (albeit wiggly) with David for a group photo. They were not aware that as he chose a pair of flip-flops for each of them, he also tucked away a pair in the next size for them to grow into.

At the end of the day, Arnold and I returned to the orphanage for a forgotten item. Jimmy, who had come to LCM with a Louisiana team, asked to join us. I didn't realize until we reached the orphanage that he had brought along two 50-pound bags of rice and beans, enough to feed the orphanage for at least 2 months!

I have been moved by the goodness of 33-year-old David and hope others visiting Montrouis will have the opportunity to serve in this way.

New Computer Lab

by Ostane Odvylles
Expanding computer learning at LCM



For real sustainable development, education is the key, and nowadays the use of technology in the classroom is crucial. Why do we think it is important to include computer labs in LCM's High School?

Well, first of all, the use of technology in the classroom can enhance learning. There is a whole world of online tools that allow teachers to provide more knowledge on building skills than ever before. Learning to use a computer can provide even the youngest students early knowledge of the necessary professional skills. In turn, these skills prepare students for better employment opportunities.

Computer skills also allow a child to become exposed to new ways of thinking, using both their creative and logical thinking processes. Math, science, art, and other subjects can

be incorporated into lesson plans in fun and interesting ways for children of all ages and learning abilities.

We were fortunate to receive a donation from a local partner of 15 desktop computers to begin implementing the computer lab. We have already established an internet connection, which is really helpful to give internet access to some of our students for homework and research.

Our goal is to develop a computer lab containing 40 computers, 2 smart boards, and other modern technologies. Certainly we need more financial support to achieve this goal. We rely on our loyal sponsors, who believe in the important work that we are trying to accomplish in Haiti. Thank you to those who have already done so much and who continue to help us to do a lot more!

Christmas Gift Reminder!

How fast the summer flew by! Now it's time again to think about Christmas in Montrouis. Please send gifts for your sponsor children to the mission by October 10 to guarantee Christmas delivery. Let's put a smile on their faces once more this season!

Vocational Training Center

We are proud of the higher education opportunities we are providing through HCN. However, as we all know, college is not for everyone. It can be extremely difficult to find gainful employment in Haiti without a marketable skill. As such, LCM's long-term plans have always included establishing a vocational training center as part of our educational outreach. We are hoping to get this project underway in the near future.

The goal will be to establish a number of workforce programs designed to promote high-demand, income-generating jobs to raise more people out of poverty. Potential programs include plumbing, block/cement masonry, carpentry, electrical, tile setting, welding, auto repair, photovoltaic technology, and computer repair/networking. This skill-intensive training will lead to dramatically increased rates of gainful employment among our students and potentially others within the local community.

Please consider supporting this new project and helping us promote sustainable community development. Helping our mission school graduates find a good job is vital to creating a prosperous future for them and for Montrouis. Establishing a vocational training center is a logical next step in expanding our education ministry.

The Greatest Blessings

by Tammy Tate
Letting go of fear and following God's commands transforms lives

The greatest blessings come when we let go of our fears and follow God's commands.

1 Peter 4:10 says "Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms." For 4 years, my friend Jenifer has been inviting me to participate in a mission trip to Haiti. Repeatedly my response was, "I can't do that. I don't know enough about the Bible to teach others. I don't have any talents, anything to share or give." Yet Haiti would not leave my mind, my thoughts. Almost daily, that invitation entered my mind and yes, I was afraid. What was God asking of me? Surely I was confused.

I had never been out of the country before. I didn't understand this pull that Haiti had on me. So I began to pray, "God is this invitation from you? Are you calling me to Haiti? Show me God what it is that I can do there." While no clear answer came about what I was to do, it did become clear that I was to go. And so, I booked a flight and began to prepare.

Yet, in the weeks before our departure, I was haunted with doubt, but God was there. In the verses I read, in encouraging words from friends, signs came from everywhere confirming that I was following God's call. But still I wondered, "what is it that I will do there"? Then I thought, "I will take pictures and document

the journey for others." After all, I'm a picture fanatic. So that became my mission. I wasn't going to "get involved" with the Haitian people; instead I would provide a visual diary to the other members of the team so that they could share their stories with others when they returned home.

Well I did take a lot of pictures (nearly 3,000), but God had other plans regarding my "getting involved." In 2015, my friend Jenifer told me of a young man in Haiti who really wanted a camera—nothing fancy, just something he could take some basic pictures with. So I sent a camera to Azor John Kervens (17) thinking "wow, that was easy and I did a good deed." I never thought that one simple act would lead to so much more.

You see, I was able to meet Azor and spend some time with him during the 9 days I was in Montrouis, Haiti. Azor lives in La Gonave, Haiti, which is across the Canal de Saint-Marc from Montrouis. So he traveled by ferry and bus, spending money he really didn't have, to spend time with me. He told Jenifer that it was his dream to work with me and take pictures. Really? I'm nobody. Yet this young boy made me feel like the most important person in the world.

The time we spent together was so precious, and he touched my heart in so many ways. We shared meals together, sometimes just a pack of cheese crackers, but to us it was a



feast. We swam in the Caribbean Sea together, we walked and talked and served together. He confided in me, and in the short period of 9 days, he became my son.

Azor's mother abandoned him at a very young age and he lives with just his father. As we talked over the course of time, he told me he had always prayed that God would send him someone, a mother, to be in his life, and he believed that I was that person. And while he understood that I would not be physically there with him in Haiti, he would always know that I was thinking of him and he would be thinking of me and that would bind us together forever. My heart overflowed.

So here I am, the woman who had no talent and nothing to give. I thought I was going to bring hope to Haiti. Little did I know that Haiti would restore some lost hope in me. I feel blessed beyond belief! Thank you for sharing this blessing with me. It was an unbelievable journey.

Seeing the Bigger Picture

by Julia Derry

Serving God is a beautiful experience that lasts a lifetime

For three summers, I have traveled with Saint Patrick's Parish to Life Connection Mission. I never anticipated the personal relationships and the deep love I would develop for LCM and the people they serve.

Prior to my first trip, my family decided to sponsor an 18-year-old girl, Dania, through LCM. When I met Dania, our immediate connection amazed me. The first words she ever spoke to me were "thank you, thank you, thank you, I love you!" At that moment, seeing Dania's gratefulness, it hit me that LCM is not just making a general difference for the poor, but rather touching and helping specific, beautiful, loving people. After this experience, I wanted my family to share the feeling of knowing the person our donations are serving.

The next year, my brother and father traveled with me to Montrouis, where they fell in love with LCM as much as I did. So much so, that we decided to sponsor a second child. One of my most memorable moments in Haiti was meeting our second sponsor child, Jaerzinko, this past June. We were playing soccer together when he spotted his mom across the road. He ran over to her, pulled her across the street, and said in Creole, "This is my sponsor!" His mom gave me a big hug and Jaerzinko couldn't stop smiling.

The people of Montrouis inspire me every day. One example is in the generosity of the kids. When we host dinners to feed children in the community, more often than not, kids will save half of their plate and bring it home for their siblings. Meanwhile, they may not know where their next meal will be coming from. Despite their suffering, hunger, and illness, they never fail to thank God for their lives. When we attend their worship services on Sunday, the church is so packed that there is never anywhere to sit.

It's so easy for us to take for granted our next meal, our clean clothes, our education. People like Dania and Jaerzinko are just as capable and deserving of the opportunities we enjoy. I think my biggest takeaway from my trips to LCM is how easy it is to help. Just \$40 a month—that's less than one meal out as a family—is all it takes to provide a child with an

education, food, and hope for the future.

People often ask me why a 20-year-old would choose to give up a week of my summer to travel to LCM, when I could be working or interning somewhere. But spending time in Haiti has made realize that there is a bigger picture than my future career. It is just as important to help people who are not given the opportunities they equally deserve.

Each year, going back to LCM, I feel privileged to see children I know looking happier, healthier, and succeeding in school. Watching them feel encouraged, loved, and hopeful because of LCM is one of the best feelings I have known. LCM truly has a piece of my heart, and I think forever will. I am so proud to be a part of such a loving, faith-filled community, whose mission is to serve God in the most beautiful way.



Summer Camp Fun



Thank you to everyone who supported this year's summer camp program! Your donations offered our students vacation Bible school, games, learning, and other activities throughout the summer. The kids also received a vital meal each day.

“ ... he who wants to be a leader among you must first be a servant.”
- Matthew 20:26

Students Who Need Sponsors



Chery Enizarethy



Marie Elie Woosverline



Marth Kethsaina Joseph



Elie Rayvensnord



Matsu Mitsuki Pierre



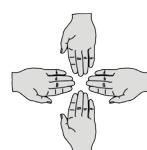
Mike Daniel Rotchiny



Nehemie Lubin



Sendy Wedijina Boyer



Life

Connection Mission

Montrouis, Haiti

Sponsorship Form

Address City State Zip

Home Phone **Cell Phone** **Email Address**

Child Selection

Child's Name (if known)*: _____

Please Choose: ___ Boy(s) ___ Girl(s) No Preference

Please Choose: Age Range _____ No Preference

* For a list of unsponsored children, please visit www.lifeconnectionmission.org

The sponsorship cost of \$40 per month is used to pay for the tuition, books, and uniforms for one child to go to school. The child is also given lunch each school day and medical care if required. Sponsors will receive at least one picture a year along with information about the child's progress.

A Love of Music

by Manuel Dorantes

At a very young age, I was introduced to the mandolin and other string instruments. My family soon realized that if I listened to music, I could play the piece on the instruments.

I had a good home and good parents, but sadly my father died unexpectedly at only 36. Being the oldest, I began playing for entertainment in a local restaurant and became a major breadwinner for my family.

I thought, "I love music. I am so grateful for my God-given talent and how it saved my family and determined my destiny." This love for music inspired me to help others have access to musical instruments. I hope that by donating a keyboard to LCM's Music Ministry, someone else will discover a hidden talent.

Music is universal, and it resonates in our souls. It is a common language that I can share with the members of the Haitian community of Montrouis. It is my hope that I can someday visit Life Connection Mission and meet the musicians. The keyboard can provide music to worship by, entertain, and just enjoy. Hopefully for some, it will help them to earn a living. God bless you all.



Pastor Moleus and Dale Moyers with the new keyboard donated by Manuel Dorantes.

In Photos



Above: Students and teachers line up on the first day of school this fall.

Below: Volunteers from St. Patrick's Church in Rockville, Maryland, assist in the mission clinic.



Life Connection Mission
23 Grey Pebble Court
Germantown, Maryland 20874
www.lifeconnectionmission.org
301.370.6426