

# MERGER STUDENT SPONSORSHIP

May 2016

*Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?" And I said, "Here am I. Send me!" Isaiah 6:8*

## An Open Door

by Annie Knoedler

There is a door in the wall.

Last year when Dave and I went to Haiti with a Global Outreach (GO) team, we saw the door closed. The community outside of the STEP Seminary campus, to which that door leads, known as Grand Ravine, was riddled with gang-initiated violence. The shooting of a seminary watchman is what closed the door.

While we were there, we built a house for a family in the community on the other side of the seminary. There have been over thirty houses built in that community. As the workers labored to provide physical shelter, the seminary students built relationships with the residents. People have, and are, coming to Christ. Although the sights and smells were shocking to me, they were also alive with hope. People in the community smiled and sang with us, they nodded when we talked about Jesus. You could see God's Spirit at work.

This year we ventured back to Haiti to help build a house with our four children. We had heard that the gang leader from Grand Ravine had approached Mason and asked him to begin building houses in that area. We rejoiced in this yet we were a little surprised when Mason told us we would be building on that side.

Remember the four children part of this story?

We flew into Haiti on Monday and began work on Tuesday morning. There were about fifteen Haitians working on the house, along with Mason and our family. Mason introduced us to everyone and said, "They look little but they're strong!"

The first thing we did was prove that statement inaccurate! We made a human chain to transfer the first 100 concrete blocks onto the foundation to begin the walls. The girls did not last the first round. Dave, along with Grant (14) and Rowan (10), spent the rest of the day hauling block and concrete and building concrete frames. Avonlea (16), Rose (9), and I spent time with the children. We played hand games and drew pictures. At night, we had dinner and hung out with Mason, Lauren, James, and Ashlyn. Their family is so hospitable and such a joy to be with.

The second day was more of the same. As we built relationships with the children, I was amazed at the difference between the



Avonlea walking through "the Door"

two sides of the seminary. The children in Grand Ravine knew none of the hymns I sang to engage them. When I talked about Jesus, they shook their heads in confusion. The door into Grand Ravine was open, but the darkness persisted.



Throughout the week, I noticed a change. We taught the kids a Teen Mission song called "Walking in the Light". We taught them "This Little Light of Mine". We played, laughed, sang, and worked. The seminary students walked around and talked to people, sharing the gospel in Creole. God's presence was tangible in that place. As we left that day the children held our hands and accompanied us out of the door while we all sang "Walking in the Light."

Thursday we went to Merger to see our sponsored children. We played on the playground with the two little ones. Our older student, Ricardo, took us to his home. We had a translator and were able to have a good conversation with him. Then we prayed for him just as we pray for him at home, only we were standing in his Haitian house. Dave and I prayed a benediction over him and we prayed God would raise him into a leader and a man of integrity.

When we went back to the seminary we were told that one person in Grand Ravine had responded to and accepted the gospel while we were in Merger.

God is moving everywhere in this world. He is moving in Haiti and He is moving here in Vancouver. He is moving when we open the doors that separate us from the things we are afraid of. He is moving even behind the closed doors, preparing hearts to respond to the ones who share the Good News. He is moving through His people, their prayers, their words, and their actions. He is moving in the hearts of adults, teens, and little children.

There is a door in the wall...  
And it is open.  
And the Light is pouring in.  
Praise God.

We are little but He is strong!



*"Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. <sup>8</sup> For everyone who asks receives; the one who seeks finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened. Matthew 7:7-8*

## Praises for...

A successful school year, which is almost finished.

The ministry of Mason & Lauren Young. Their presence in Haiti is changing lives.

## Please Pray for...

Spiritual growth in the teachers and students.

New sponsors for the available students in Merger.

Stability for the Haitian government as they struggle with their election process and having ethical officials in power.

Wawa and the leaders at STEP for health, safety, and wisdom as they teach and mentor the next generation of Haitian leaders.

Johny and Rosadite – for their health, safety, and for wisdom in their ministry in Merger.



## Reminders

- Include your student's MSP number on all contributions and correspondence. If you do not have this number, contact the church office.
- Please write a separate check for your Merger contribution – do not include it with your regular tithe check – this makes the accounting easier.
- Write to your sponsored student on their birthday, Easter and Christmas. The students love receiving mail and getting pictures from you! Mail your cards and letters to the address below and include your MSP number on the envelope:

**Johny Philippe  
Unit 2109 UEBH  
3170 Airmans Drive  
Ft. Pierce, FL 34946**



If you have any questions regarding your sponsorship, please contact Shelly Kirgiss in the church office at 360-571-3300 or [skirgiss@glenwoodcc.org](mailto:skirgiss@glenwoodcc.org). Thank you for your sponsorship!

## For the Kids

(or the kids at heart)

Test your knowledge of Haiti by answering the questions below. The answers are in the box at the bottom of the page but do not look until you are finished!!

1 What is the capital of Haiti? \_\_\_\_\_

2 What continent is Haiti part of? \_\_\_\_\_

3 What is the currency of Haiti? \_\_\_\_\_

4 What are the official languages of Haiti? \_\_\_\_\_

5 Haiti shares the island of Hispaniola with what other country? \_\_\_\_\_

6 Haiti was the first country in the Western Hemisphere to abolish slavery. T/F

7 Haiti is the poorest country in the Caribbean. T/F

8 What natural disaster struck Haiti in 2010? \_\_\_\_\_

9 The climate in Haiti is? \_\_\_\_\_

10 A taxi in Haiti is called a what? \_\_\_\_\_

11 What famous explorer named the island of Hispaniola? \_\_\_\_\_

**Answers:** 1-Port-au-Prince 2-Haiti is located in the region of North America 3-Gourde 4-French, Creole 5-Dominican Republic 6-True 7-True 8-Earthquake 9-Tropical 10-a tap tap 11.Christopher Columbus