

Merger Sponsorship Newsletter

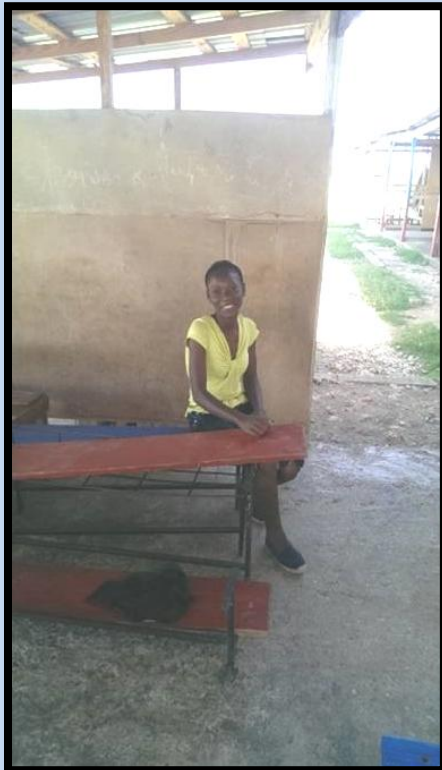
August 2014

"Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms. If anyone speaks, they should do so as one who speaks the very words of God. If anyone serves, they should do so with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory and the power forever and ever. Amen." 1 Peter 4:10-11

Mason Young finds himself in Merger on a regular basis. He is used to seeing students at CENV (New Life Education Complex) during the school year and hearing their laughter fill the warm, humid Haitian air. In the middle of summer however, things are usually quiet on the campus, so imagine his surprise when he arrived at the school last week and saw fifteen students being taught by a young woman in one of the classrooms. When he inquired about what was happening, he heard an exciting story unfold. These fifteen students had never been to school so Johny and Rosadite started a summer class to help them prepare to enter the first grade class this fall. While this is encouraging and exciting in itself, the story of who was teaching them was even greater.



Bettyna Exantus grew up (and still lives) in Merger. As a native Haitian, voodoo had a strong influence in her life, especially during her childhood. As a child, every December 31st, Bettyna's mother made a special tea for her children to drink that would supposedly protect them from evil spirits. This changed when Bettyna was eight years old and accepted Christ as her Savior. When December 31st of that year came around and her mother brought her the tea, Bettyna said, "I cannot drink this because I have been saved through Christ." What a strong faith for an eight year old to have! Due to her firm stance that day her brothers and sisters also refused to drink the tea and have since accepted Christ as well. Her mother, who at the time was very surprised by Bettyna's stand for the gospel, also gave up this voodoo practice and now works at CENV and is in a growing relationship with Christ.



As Bettyna grew so did her faith and trust in Christ and the people He had placed in her life. She was the first young woman to come to Johny with a boyfriend and seek his advice and counsel on relationships. She also brought her parents and the young man's parents together to seek their approval.

Bettyna is now the Secretary of Sunday School at the Merger church, a third year nursing student and as Mason saw as he walked into that summer classroom, she is a young woman who loves Christ and wants to influence the next generation for His glory.

God is changing hearts in Haiti and he is using Johny and Rosadite and the many young people whose lives they have touched!

Please Pray For...

- Continued safety for Mason & Lauren Young (and family), Johny, Rosadite & the students and teachers of CENV.
- The upcoming school year which is scheduled to begin September 7th.
- New sponsors for the nineteen students we have waiting.
- Safe travel for Wadestrant (WaWa) & Josette Jean-Baptiste and Johny & Rosadite as they travel from Haiti to the United States in September.

Praises For...

- The safe arrival of Mason & Lauren's baby girl, Ashlyn Joy!
- A recent shipment of Bibles to Merger...now each student at CENV will have their own Bible!
- Safe travels for Connor Haggerty who spent three weeks in Haiti working with Mason.



Johny & Rosadite Philippe

Mark Your Calendars!

Wadestrant (WaWa) Jean-Baptiste, President of STEP (Theological Evangelical Seminary of Port-Au-Prince) and his wife, Josette, will be in Vancouver at the end of September. Wawa will be preaching during all three services on Sunday, September 28th.

Johny and Rosadite Philippe will also be here and will be sharing about their ministry in Merger at Glenwood's Haiti Ministry Night from 6:30-8:30 on the evening of Monday, September 29th.

We hope to see you all there!



The Jean-Baptiste Family

Please Remember...

- To include your student's MSP number on all correspondence, including contributions.
- To write a separate check for your Merger contributions. (Do not include your Merger contributions with your tithe check).
- Christmas is just around the corner! To contribute to the CENV Christmas party please mark your donations "Merger Christmas Party". Money will be sent in mid-November.
- It's not too late to sign up for EFT (electronic funds transfer). EFT is a safe, simple way to have your contributions withdrawn from your checking or savings account. For more information, contact the church office

Building Hope

by Connor Haggerty

After an earthquake struck Haiti in January 2010, 1.5 million people were left homeless in extremely inhumane living conditions. I recently returned from a trip to Port Au Prince, Haiti, where Mason Young, an outstanding missionary and childhood friend of mine, whom I met through Glenwood's Awana Ministry, gave me the opportunity to come visit the STEP (Evangelical Seminary of Port au Prince) campus.

The STEP campus sits in Fort Mercredi, Port au Prince. Outside the walls of the campus the earthquake proved its power in the surrounding homes and streets. Those homes left standing have obvious scars from the strike, and those that were destroyed, now were represented by abandoned piles of rubble or tents. I had the opportunity to rebuild one of the destroyed homes alongside nine to twelve Haitian nationals and Mason.

The family we were building the home for consisted of ten people; the father and mother of the home, both in their sixties; the mother's three sisters, all in their forties; two daughters, eighteen and eight, and three sons,

twenty, fourteen, and six. The oldest son has a job that supports the family but the two younger brothers both have heart defects that limit their ability to do heavy labor. While our team would build the home, the family was required to bring the supplies (water, gravel, sand, brick, and wooden planks) a staggering 50 meters, as the crow flies, to the home. This is more like 75 meters, and navigating through tight excuses for walkways, up poorly made jagged steps, and around open irrigation running with white polluted water. With the oldest son working daily and the younger two in no condition to help the load was completely dropped on the father, his wife, and the women of the family.

I knew Haitians were hard working, but my doubts about the family quickly rose after hearing about their situation. The morning we began work we sat bright and early with the family and our team. Jean-Rebeare, a man whose love for Christ could be seen from every part of his work and life led our prayer. He prayed in Creole, which I unfortunately didn't understand, but in every word spoken I could feel a tremendous amount of emotion from the family and the workers. I knew that what Christ had going on around me was intense preparation for everyone for the trials and tasks ahead.

The women of the family were incredible. As I worked and built relationships with my coworkers I was able to observe their abilities. They made trip after trip, up and down from the street to the home, buckets on their heads full of water and sand. Their work ethic alone inspired me. They would begin before the team started work at 8am and continue until the team left, sometimes around 8pm. Around 10am each day they prepared a meal of bread, sweetened black coffee, and the freshest avocado's I have ever eaten. After delivering the meal they would go straight back to work. I noticed in the afternoon they would sometimes pick leaves from their avocado tree on the side of their house-three or four branches at a time. I thought to myself "I can't imagine the avocado tree will last longer than two weeks at the rate they are collecting branches. Why kill a perfectly good source of food?" A question I didn't have the answer to until the end of the project.



Connor and new friend Tuslin

We entered the second week of work. The foundation was completed- taking a total of three days, digging, placing rebar, tying steel, pouring cement, and placing block. Then working from the ground up-placing more block and mortar. The family's efficiency had decreased marginally (understandably from the first week). Their efficiency took a major blow when the father was struck by a fifty pound bag of flour being carried by a motorcyclist. The cyclist stopped only to collect his flour and went on his way. The father was left with a broken arm, and no compensation for the incident. The never- ending truckloads of supplies would now be left for the women to bear alone.

But like an excellent distance runner their pace held despite the hurdle. Prayers for energy and strength were answered as they helped us complete their home by bringing up the lumber and tin for their roof. Grins and smiles ear to ear on the family as we placed cross beams to support the roof. Again, the women collected avocado leaves. Mason observed it as well and explained to me that the leaves were their source of food. They had worked two whole weeks in awful heat completing labor that would make a strong man cry while navigating through terrible terrain, on a minimal diet of avocado leaves and water.



It's difficult to put into the words the struggles that the family probably went through. Christ was present in every block placed in the home and every bucket of water carried. He provided strength for a family of ten and team of twelve that I have not witnessed before. In the final ceremony of turning the keys over to the family (see picture above), Jean-Rebeare asked me to pray and speak a bit about the journey and Mason would translate. The temperature in the home rose substantially (at least to me) being put on the spot on short notice. "Christ built this home; He gave us strength and used us all as instruments to complete this home. I know that as long as He is present in the lives of those in this home it will stand and be protected until Jesus returns." That's all I managed to muster out but it was my true feelings about the project. He built it, He provided for the family, and now they will be able to make disciples and further His kingdom because of what we all did.

For more information regarding your sponsorship, please contact Shelly Kirgiss in the church office at 360-571-3300 or skirgiss@glenwoodcc.org Thanks for your support!

