

Haiti

June 15 – 22, 2011

A small delegation of 5 people from the Southeast Association of the Wisconsin Conference traveled to Haiti, meeting with CONASPEH representatives, visiting churches, schools, and orphanages. CONASPEH (the National Spiritual Council of Churches of Haiti) is an umbrella organization for Protestant churches and organizations in Haiti with over 5000 members with whom the Southeast Association has had a 15 year partnership. We went to confer with their leaders to determine what Wisconsin could do to be most useful during this time of reconstruction and recovery.

What we found at their headquarters in Port au Prince was a new administration building, up and functioning, footings for several schools almost complete, with the hope of the buildings being completed by the time students return in fall. We visited the multipurpose building in Pont Sonde, finding students in 6th and 12th grade taking their state examinations, similar to students all over Haiti during our time there. (In fact, we were in awe of the students at CONASPEH headquarters taking their exams in open tents, with the noise and bustle of chickens and birds, to say nothing of the construction workers toiling only feet away on their newly emerging buildings!)

All in all, we were encouraged by the good things we saw happening in Haiti. These include, but are not limited to some new roads which greatly speed travel around Haiti (with retaining walls to prevent washouts), garbage collection (!) in Port au Prince, and new roadside businesses springing up selling reclaimed bricks, concrete blocks and other building materials throughout Port au Prince. Great devastation remains, as well as immense poverty, and there is much work ahead for the Haitian people, who, as ever, praise God for their blessings.