

To : The Friends of Haiti
From : Rev Gesner PAUL
President of The Methodist Church in Haiti
Topic : Update & Thanks

Dear Friends of Haiti & of the Methodist Church in Haiti,

We thank God who has spared our lives!

We wish to thank you for your concern and prayers expressed on the occasion of this big shock that has struck our country on Tuesday, January 12, 2010, in the afternoon.



We thank God that all our Haitian Ministers are in good condition with their immediate family members. Broadly speaking, the manses where they live have resisted well though in many cases things inside such as plates, and shelves have been broken. In other cases the fence walls have been struck down, while the main buildings have remained in good condition.

However, the loss is very severe across the country. In Port-au-Prince, several Government buildings are destroyed such as the National Palace, the Justice Palace, Ministries' Palace, Tax Office building, etc... Many church buildings are partially or totally destroyed such as the Roman Catholic Cathedral, the Holy Trinity Cathedral (Anglican Church), the Saint Martin Methodist Church and School.



The Methodist Church in Port-au-Prince may have only received minor shocks as what we can only see with bare eyes is the bell tower that has suffered most apparent damages. We will need expert advice though, before concluding that this is the case indeed.

Nouveau Collège Bird has been severely hit. The entire Primary section and half of the secondary section (Cycle I) buildings are totally destroyed, while the rest is badly shaken. When activities resume, a qualified Civil Engineer will have to come and advise us as to the way forward. So, we do not know when schools will be able to open.

In Petit-Goave, the Methodist Church is still standing but has recorded a severe shock as several cracks have occurred in the walls. The Methodist Clinic, Siloe, has been destroyed, as well as the Book Store.



A lot of people have lost their lives. The figures vary. Estimates run from 100,000-150,000 (according to the Haitian Prime Minister) to 400,000 (US Officials) deaths due to this earthquake. It will definitely take time to know the exact figures. Personalities such as the Roman Catholic Archbishop, the head of MINUSTAH (UN Force in Haiti), a lot of technicians: Engineers, Agronomists,... are among the victims so are the destitute. At the level of the Methodist Church, several members have disappeared such as Roland Rocourt, the son of the late Rev Alain Rocourt; Omilus Saint Louis, head of the Methodist Printing Shop. Almost every Haitian family has lost a relative, or friend, or close one.

Up to now, the main activities in Port-au-Prince are the rescuing of people still under construction debris. Cleaning of streets has started as well as the disposal of the dead across the city. A few supermarkets have timidly opened their doors. We do not know when life will come back to normal, but things should gradually resume probably by next week.



We thank you for standing near us at this time of severe difficulty and continue to count on your support by any means as we try to recover from this very traumatic disaster.

Yours in Christ,

Rev. Gesner PAUL
President
The Methodist Church in Haiti