

# Devastation and Many Hearts

By Kathleen Mosey

*Lyrics to hymn "In Haiti, There is Anguish"*

*By Carolyn Winfrey Gillette.*

*Sung to the music of the popular hymn*

*"Beneath the Cross of Jesus."*

*Song written in 2010, the year of the earthquake.*

Haiti is located on the island of Hispaniola between Cuba and Puerto Rico in the Caribbean. The land of Haiti shares a portion of an island with the Dominican Republic. The estimated population in the year 2020 is 11,371,000. Haiti was once the jewel of the Caribbean but even the most sparkling jewel can fade to dull.

*Verse 1*

*In Haiti, there is anguish that seems too much to bear;  
A land so used to sorrow now knows even more despair.  
From city streets, the cries of grief rise up to hills above;  
In all the sorrow, pain and death, where are you, God of love?*

With 100,000 people dead and 350,000 people wounded and a total damage was \$7.8 billion to \$8.5 billion dollars, Port-au-Prince the Capital of Haiti was a target of the 2010 earth quake. Being the most populated City, the devastation was catastrophic. Everything came to a halt for the whole country, even though some parts were not affected as much as others.

Buildings shaken by the ground below, as they crumbled by the vibrations until they are left in ruins; part of the aftermath of the 2010 earthquake. Picture unsettled dust, as people cover their mouths and noses, so not to inhale it. People are trapped under rubble for hours with some alive waiting to be rescued, but most have perished. They suffered with the loss of friends and loved ones.

Reliving a nightmare eleven years later Haiti got hammered again. A magnitude 7.2 earthquake struck Haiti's Southern Peninsula. August 14, 2021 is a date that once again changed the lives of many Haitian people.

There has been a history of earthquakes over many years in parts of Haiti. Some causing extreme damage, some causing severe damage and some causing moderate damage.

Earthquakes have shaken this country's foundation.

*Verse 2*

*A woman sifts through rubble, a man has lost his home.  
A hungry, orphan toddler sobs, for she is now alone.  
Where are you, Lord when thousands die-  
the rich, the poorest poor?  
Where you the very first to cry for all that is no more?*

Around 40 to 50 percent of the population of Port-au-Prince are children who, with their fragile bodies, can get hurt far worse than an adult. These precious children could be orphaned, abandoned and neglected. Fourteen of every 100 children will die before the age of one; thirty of every 100 children will die before the age of ten. Over half the population is under sixteen. The average life span in Haiti is fifty.

Natural disasters are not uncommon in this country. With tropical temperatures, hurricanes can be more frequent. Haitians also face a variety of diseases, like diarrhea, respiratory infections, malaria, tuberculosis and HIV/AIDS. Natural disasters and such diseases are the leading causes of death.

In difficult times will they cry out in the language of French, Creole, or English... to Satan? Or God?

Voodoo practises were and are very popular in Haiti. Where they worship Satan instead of the heavenly Father. It is a secret society where only members are chosen. One that people are desperate to join to get health and protection. Practices mostly occur during the dark of night and are passed down through traditions and generations. There is no written book to follow like Christians with the Bible. Every place that participates in Voodoo has its own rituals, which has not changed for some people to this day. Satan has a hold on Haiti.

Because of H.E.A.R.T.S. and other missionaries Christianity is spreading and more are turning to God.

*Verse 3*

*O God, you love your children; you hear each lifted prayer!  
May all who suffer in that land know you are present there.  
In moments of compassion shown, in simple acts of grace.  
May those in pain find healing balm, and know your love's  
embrace.*

One of the many hearts belongs to Roy Griffiths, a man from St Andrew's Presbyterian Church in Fergus Ontario Canada. A local man that resided on a farm in the country. Roy was part of Men for Missions International, a committee that travels from Canada to Haiti to install water wells. His love of the Haitian people grew as he helped quench their thirst with clean water. In the late 1980's he met a young Haitian Pastor named Emmanuel (Mano) Eugene from Ebenezer Baptist Church in Cap -Haitien; the second largest city in Haiti. Both Churches formed a partnership. Once he returned to his home town Roy started "The Pipe Line of Hope" with the help of the people of St. Andrew's. The group was coordinated in the late 1980's.

Roy was constantly collecting clothing for all ages and sizes. The garments, along with other supplies, would be packed into boxes and be transferred by vehicle. Ashley Woods and Ron Russ drove out of the country of Canada into the United States, down to the very South of West Palm Beach, Florida. The cargo was lugged onboard a plane called Mission Aviation Flights to reach the destination of Haiti. After a few years of shipping to Haiti using this method, it was expensive, but they did it out of their own pockets and with their good hearts they kept it up.

Mano was the founder of Ebenezer Baptist Church. The congregation he led created a place of hope out of a hopeless piece of land filled with garbage in Cap-Haitien. He welcomed the help from St Andrews Church. He knew his country was in great trouble.

Pipeline of Hope sent this church shipments through the early 1990's.

In 1995 St Andrew's Presbyterian Church in Fergus, Ontario, had changed the name of the group from The Pipe Line of Hope to a team called H.E.A.R.T.S. named and founded by Julie Groves and Russell Gammon.

The heart is the part of the body that beats with love during every pump. Although their hearts are big, the letters represent the reason of the group:

**H**aitians  
**E**ducated  
**A**nd  
**R**eady  
**T**o  
**S**erve

H.E.A.R.T.S. not only serves food to grumbling tummies but also provides education and Christian teaching. These words are the mission that has now been in action for over twenty- five years.

Back in 1995, the Groves family (also members of St Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Fergus) packed up a vanload of supplies and drove to Florida where it would be transported to the island of Haiti. They made contact with Mano who was residing in Florida. He was there studying for the ministry as he worked two other jobs.

Mano shared gruesome tales of his homeland to the Groves family. During their conversations they bonded as friends. A question arose as they were engaged in one of their heart-to-heart talks, when Julie Groves asked a heavy question: "Would Mano ever go back to Haiti?" The reason, to organize a system where he will be at the receiving end of the help of St Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Fergus. Mano had to ponder hard about that placement; whether to return to the Country he tried to escape.

Mano's master plan was to take a job as a pastor at a South Florida Church and bring his wife Raymonde and their three girls from Haiti to the land of the free, The United States of America.

After some time, Mano made a brave decision to join his family back in Haiti. Back to his home city of Cape-Haitien. Back home to the people of the church.

Together St Andrew's Church's H.E.A.R.T.S. team and Mano formed a partnership. From the H.E.A.R.T.S. end they would provide food and clothing for the students and their families. At Mano's end he would teach at an elementary school that he formed inside the church. In reality some of the children are orphans and like their other classmates they will be offered support.

In 2003 was the Grand opening of The Stella House orphanage in Fougerolle; built thanks to H.E.A.R.T.S. and Joy and Hope of Haiti. (A group from Hamilton, Ontario) to give children a roof over their heads. Their goals were to feed the children of the orphanage.

Pastor Emmanuel (Mano) Eugene went to be with the Lord in 2003 at the young age of 43 from a common disease. Someday he will be reunited with the family he left, his wife Raymonde and their 3 girls. As a legacy after his death Raymonde carried on his ministry.

Raymonde continued on until 2015 with the Stella House and 2016 for the church/ school, when the knot that tied the groups together loosened, they had to let go. H.E.A.R.T.S. and Joy and Hope of Haiti withdrew their support for these projects.

For many years, H.E.A.R.T.S. have provided scholarships to honour young Haitians so they can receive more academic potential at a University and other post-secondary education levels. To also move on and prepare them for careers such as doctors, nurses and other skilled professions, to use their abilities to serve their country.

A personal story shared by a H.E.A.R.T.S. team member Annette Grasman shows everyone what an impact this educational support has for the youth of Haiti.

In December 2013, her family enjoyed a trip to the Dominican Republic. While they were there, her daughter Erin had a small mishap while they were enjoying a fun day in the water park. In conversation with a Resort Doctor, it came about that he was from Haiti. They mentioned their church, St Andrew's supports many schools in Haiti through H.E.A.R.T.S.

The Doctor got quite emotional when he realized he may have been a recipient of the care and support of H.E.A.R.T.S. He shared he went all the way through elementary and high school knowing he was only there because of an overseas church generously sending money to provide food, uniforms and education supplies. He couldn't say that it was H.E.A.R.T.S. or even that the church was in Ontario, but many of the details of their stories matched up. The Doctor acknowledged that he wouldn't be where he was had it not been for programs like H.E.A.R.T.S. allowing him to attend school and going on to university to become a Doctor and having a secure job in his profession.

Tears were shed; a phone call to his Mom was made. He told her about the Canadian family he met and shared their conversation. Acting as her translator the Doctor's Mom thanked them for their part in her family's experience and receiving first hand, blessings from heaven. As a thank you, he didn't charge her for any of his services. He gave her a wheel chair, crutches, and pain medication. He couldn't have been more thankful for the opportunities he'd been given through the generous people who listened to and acted on God's calling to be generous and help those in Haiti.

The 2019/2020 funding summary shows that \$56,000 Canadian was sent over the year, to four schools. (They must also consider the U.S.A. dollar exchange rate.) The H.E.A.R.T.S. team are connected with the four Pastors from Haiti working as teachers.

The Faith School's Leader is Pastor Bruno Cherenfant. He teaches, guides and preaches to children in Madeleine. It is located 6KM away from the city of Cap-Haitien. H.E.A.R.T.S. started funding this educational facility in 2007 to give support for Teacher's salaries, and an occasional food program. The grades available to the children are Jr Kindergarten to Grade 6. The enrollment in 2020 is 112 students.

The New Life School's Leader is Pastor Job Vilma. He teaches, guides and preaches to children in the high hills above Grison Garde approximately 15KM from Cap-Haitien. H.E.A.R.T.S. started funding this educational facility in 2008 to give support for Teacher's salaries, school supplies, and an occasional food program. The grades available to the children are Jr Kindergarten to Grade 6. The enrollment in 2020 is 80 students.

The Heavenly Brightness School's Leader is Pastor Vilmer Paul. He teaches, guides and preaches to children in Madeleine. Located approximately 3KM from Cap-Haitien. H.E.A.R.T.S. started funding this educational facility in 2011 to give support for Teacher's salaries and the occasional food program. The grades available to the children are Jr Kindergarten to Grade 11. The enrollment in 2020 is 1,087 students. Pastor Vilmer Paul has been invited as a welcomed guest speaker, at St Andrews Church in the past.

The Eben-Ezer on the Mountain School's Leader is Pastor Ezekiel. He teaches, guides and preaches to children in Baron, a 3 hour hike up the mountain, approximately 30KM South- East of Cap-Haitien. H.E.A.R.T.S. started permanent funding this educational facility in 2016 to give support to teacher's salaries as well as a food program in 2017. The grades available to the children is Jr Kindergarten to Grade 9. The enrollment in 2020 is 126 students.

The children in every grade at the four schools receive nourishment for their bodies, their minds and souls. Each school is a safe stable place to learn and grow in faith.

Some of the fundraisers that the H.E.A.R.T.S. team coordinates throughout the year, and ways to support H.E.A.R.T.S. are:

- The Spring Bling Thing; where donated jewelry and accessories are sold. You can jazz up your appearance in the month of March.
- The Haiti 5K Walk and Run is held in October with soles of shoes trekking among colourful autumn leaves, where each participant collects money from their sponsors.
- Give a Special Occasion Gift to honour friends and family by providing tuition and nutritious meals for a student. Instead of traveling from store to store searching for the perfect gift, or going to the local store to purchase a greeting card for a special occasion, you can honour your friends and family by giving items that will help Haitian students. Please cross your gift selections in the boxes on the gift card, available at the St Andrew's Church office.
- The Scott Woods Christmas show. Come and enjoy a festive violin concert full of music. Accompanied by other talented guest musicians.
- Also, on the first Sunday of every month, members of the team serve a hot dog lunch, a time for fellowship and filling people's stomachs.

Every cent H.E.A.R.T.S raises goes to Haiti.

H.E.A.R.T.S. is thankful for all the support and funds provided by St Andrew's and the community.

Do you have the Heart of a servant?

The Heart can feel compassion, especially for those who are suffering or experiencing misfortunes.  
“So then, my dear friends, stand firm and steady. Keep busy always in your work for the Lord, since you know that nothing you do in the Lord's service is ever useless.” (1 Corinthians 15: 58)

The Church of St Andrew's Fergus always welcomes newcomers to the H.E.A.R.T.S. team.

List of Folks who had made the trip to Haiti over the past years....

#### **St Andrew's Church Fergus-**

Roy Griffiths, Julie and Wayne Groves, Nick and Luke Groves, Russell Gammon, Jeremy Woods, Young Fellow YPS friend of: Dave Whitecross, John and Dorothy McCluskey, Jo Lomas, Carolyn Woods, Sandra Woods, Kathy McLeod, Bob Cooper, Booy Family, Caroline Laing, Brad Buzza, Jan Valeriote.

#### **From Melville Church Fergus-**

Judy Ecclestone, Cumming Family.

These are the tales from two teams from St Andrew's Church Fergus, highlighting their personal Haiti experiences.

*John and Dorothy McCluskey (Written by Dorothy):*

“My, husband John, went to Haiti for the first time in 2002 under the auspices of OMS and MFMI. OMS started in 1902 as the Oriental Mission Society. Having expanded their vision beyond the Orient, today they are simply known as OMS. MFMI or Men for Mission International is the laymen's voice of OMS International. They are one of a number of Christian organizations working in Haiti as well as around the world.

John has been to Haiti 9 times two of which were trips where he was the leader. On the last trip under his leadership in May of 2006

the focus was on the H.E.A.R.T.S. program. Five women and our Founder, Roy Griffiths, went along. I have now been to Haiti 3 times.”

*Caroline Laing and Brad Buzza (Written by Caroline):*

Brad and Caroline are missionaries with One Mission Society – Canada (OMS).

“They are currently serving in Cap-Haitien, northern Haiti with Radio 4VEH (La Voix Evangelique d’Haiti – The Evangelistic Voice of Haiti). Together, they work at the radio station in various areas: Brad is building project manager and Caroline is involved in marketing and communications. The radio station building is already 20 years old and in need of maintenance and repair, inside and outside. The exterior walls and steel roof have to be painted, and the property is in need of TLC (landscaping); and the interior has to be repainted. The work is done by work teams – men and women who are committed to short-term missions, while Brad and Caroline coordinate, plan and organize the teams.

God is doing some amazing things in Haiti through this radio station which started in 1950.

4 VEH is impacting people’s lives with their Christ-centered programming. Brad and Caroline are really excited about participating in strengthening and expanding the work of God’s kingdom!”

*A third Husband and Wife Team, Bill and Carol Baxter*

from St Andrew’s Church Fergus, share their work with the Ontario Christian Gleaners Group. (Written by Carol Baxter)

“We have been involved with the ONTARIO CHRISTIAN GLEANERS since the earthquake in Haiti in 2010. We found out about this opportunity to help alleviate hunger and starvation from a news feature on CTV during the days following the disaster. We checked out the website and went to the Gleaners the very next day.

At the GLEANERS, we collect, dice, and dry surplus produce, mostly vegetables, to send to over 40 countries of the world where food is scarce. Most of the time, the dried vegetables are made into soup. However, some countries use it in other ways such as sauces, vegetable balls or patties.

Usually, 50 to 70 volunteers show up every weekday morning, to help prepare 1800 to 3200 kilograms of vegetables for drying.

Much of the food goes to feeding programs for children. In many countries, food enables children to attend school. Often children get only a few meals a week – not 3 meals a day! Good nutrition is important not only for growth but for general health. In addition, teachers have reported an amazing improvement in students’ concentration and progress once they are fed nutritious food! Some of the food that is shipped to Haiti actually goes to the schools that our congregation supports through H.E.A.R.T.S. Twice a year, the JOY AND HOPE OF HAITI sends a full shipping container to Haiti, with Gleaners food and humanitarian items such as baby clothes - some of which are made by ladies in our church.

GLEANERS food is provided free to reputable relief and development organizations already working in various countries. The organization pays for shipping.

It is amazing to be able to assist people, worldwide, in countries experiencing natural disasters, wars, repressive regimes, famine, and dreadful poverty.”

Women on a Mission is a group that gathers at St Andrew’s Church to craft: Pneumonia vests, little baby night gowns, layettes, diapers, sweaters, baby hats, blankets and peri pads for “new moms.” And make sleeping mats from plastic milk bags. With the help of the Westover Layettes Group from Westover Church, together they provide for Haiti as well as other third world countries.

Many hearts combined made and are making a difference in Haiti.

*Verse 4*

*Where are you in the anguish? Lord, may we hear anew  
That anywhere your world cries out, you're there—and suffering,  
too.*

*And may we see, in others' pain, the cross we're called to bear;  
Send out your church in Jesus' name to pray, to serve, to share.*

“Let light shine out of darkness” (2 Corinthians 4:6)