

many hands

QUARTERLY

Transforming together, to be love in action, in a broken world.

JULY 2020 - THIS ISSUE

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P.O. Box 204 Pella, IA, 50219
www.mh4h.org | 641.629.6633



SERVING THROUGH THE CRISIS

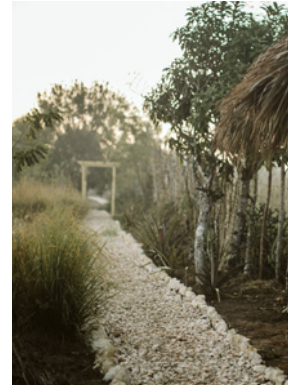
Tim Brand, Executive Leader



Staff share a brief moment together on campus during a food distribution



Program participants and their distribution packages



Prayer path on campus

I wanted to take this opportunity to update everyone on the most recent events in Haiti, as things have become increasingly difficult with COVID-19, economic downturns, and lack of transparency. We need to be the body of Christ now more than ever for each other. As it says in 1 Corinthians 12, if one part suffers, every part suffers with it. We are one through the body of Christ.

The outbreak of COVID-19 has changed ministry for the time being. Haiti took early steps of prevention, closing the borders for travel to and from Haiti in mid-March. On July 7th, the Haitian government opened the borders back up, allowing travel for citizens and those with certain visas. However, hefty fines and even imprisonment for anyone caught without a mask in public remain in place, with no group meetings of people with 5 or more allowed.

It is said there are 10,500 people for every 1 doctor in the country, as well as less than 50 operating ventilators for a population of 11 million, so no one depends upon the health care system if they do get sick. Everyone knows they are pretty much on their own. In regards to COVID-19, there are roughly 6,400 diagnosed cases and 113 deaths attributed to COVID, but everyone knows there is zero ability to truly test and diagnose people. "COVID-19 is ignored by so many in Haiti, even the government is not dealing with it. The pandemic is spreading pretty quick these days," lamented Jean-Ronel Joseph, Chaplain and Leadership Development Manager for Many Hands for Haiti.

In addition to COVID-19, the inflation rate of the Haitian Gourde is a major, major problem. This is absolutely crippling to a country that imports the majority of its goods and for people with scarce income. "Inflation right now is climbing trees. Everything is expensive and I personally think famine will kill more people than the virus. It is impossible to confine someone who does not have food at home," commented Jean-Ronel. This is so deflating for our brothers and sisters who work incredibly hard to earn a little bit of money for their families.

On July 7th, the Minister of Education in Haiti released information on the re-opening of schools. The government has set August 17 as the day schools will open. The 2019-20 academic year will run through October 9, with the 2020-21 school year officially starting the next month on November 9. The prospect of opening our school has given us hope for sure. However, this is mixed with a healthy dose of the respect COVID demands, as we look at the new challenges of learning in a classroom setting. Staff and student safety are vital, and our teaching staff is planning to implement social-distancing practices should we decide it is safe to re-open. "We are all optimistic that we will be able to get things going again for our students and instructional staff. It will undoubtedly look different, but it will be good to get the kids learning again," shared Darryl DeRuiter, Organization Development Manager. Currently, we are not planning to re-open of our School of Light preschool.

We do ask each of you to pray for our brothers and sisters in Haiti, as they need our continual lifting of prayer. I can also tell you, they pray for you and the country of the United States on a daily basis. Please don't forget them in your prayers. As well, if you feel called to give financially, it would be very appreciated at this time. We know support has been difficult over the past months and will continue to be difficult for the time being. We also KNOW that God has called us to be love in action through reciprocal relationships and He will move the right people to give financially to make this possible. Maybe you are one of them that is being tapped on the shoulder to give sacrificially right now. We are thankful for these promptings and pray for God to equip hearts to continue the great work that is happening.

In closing, Jean-Ronel says it best. "Haiti is really in need, so anything anyone can do to save more lives in our communities is needed. Please do not hesitate to do so through "Many Hands", as we make it our model to be love in action for those in need. Thanks in advance!"

GIVE AND BE LOVE IN ACTION

\$50 provides families with much-needed food and supplies. Look for the gift here: mh4h.org/givejoy

NEXT STEPS FOR STAFF

Despite the appearance of a worldwide epidemic, the Haiti-based team continues furthering the Gospel, albeit, in a manner slightly different than in times past. Many of our missionaries are currently stateside. Now that the international borders to Haiti are re-opened, they are anxious to have their “boots on the ground” once again. During the last few months, they have been seeking out meaningful ways to serve, being Love In Action right where they are. Read their individual updates below.



Craig and Christi Gabhart

The Gabharts' sabbatical came at a time that could only have been pre-planned by God. Being stateside during the pandemic has allowed the Gabharts to provide ongoing support to our staff in the U.S., especially while serving at the Many Hands Thrift Market in Clive.

“During this uncertain time, we were thrilled to stay connected with our family digitally until the time came when we could finally hold our grandbabies in our arms. How PRECIOUS is the blessing of ‘real life’ time spent with grandkids!

“In addition to visiting loved ones, the months of May and June found us in Clive, IA, where we spent many hours helping set up the retail space of the new Many Hands Thrift Market. The time has come to return to Haiti to humbly serve as we know we are called to do.”

The Gabharts are now back in Haiti and have begun reconnecting with staff in Haiti as they resume many of their duties.



Darryl and Shelly DeRuiter

Darryl and Shelly have kept themselves busy while stateside. Darryl communicates with the Agronomy, Education, and Leadership staff weekly. He continues doing the bookkeeping of the Haiti expenses and is looking forward to handing this back to Craig in July! Shelly has the opportunity to write prayer meditations and lead a weekly virtual prayer meeting for the MH4H U.S. staff.

This time has also led them to enjoy unexpected time with family: “One of our favorite positives from this season was hosting our son Jake and daughter-in-law Danielle’s revised wedding in our yard. With lots of help and in a short period of time, we all pulled off a beautiful celebration! We’ve enjoyed spending time with our Grand Rapids ‘kids’ as well as hosting our daughter (Morgan) who is doing her first P.A. rotation in Holland this summer.”

They are looking forward to getting back to Haiti in early August, where they will resume their leadership roles with staff.



Micah Aurand

Though she needed to leave Haiti early, Micah has been able to continue most of her much-needed communication and marketing support.

“These last few months, I have continued working part-time as a marketing assistant, communicating with you lovely folks through our social media platforms, facilitating ongoing updates, as well as updating our website content. Working towards the opening of our second metro location, I was also able to visit the Many Hands Thrift Market in Clive. What memories those visits brought back!

“Regrettably, my time was cut short in Haiti and my heart hurts for the lost good-byes. However, I continue on the path I believe is set before me. In August, I will move to Grapevine, TX, to study Biblical Counseling at a local university.”

Micah leaves full-time work with Many Hands after nearly four years of service. We are grateful for the blessing she has been to us and to the people of Pignon! Pray for her as she follows the plans God has laid out for her.



Liz Clarke

Deciding to stay in Haiti, Liz has been able to stay active as we prepare for the time when our programming activities can continue.

“As the only American living on campus for the last few months, my day-to-day looks much different from the normal routine. All Many Hands’ programming has paused but we have continued to care for the gardens and goat land. I have spearheaded the temporary transformation of our Bundled Bottoms program to a Mask Making project! In addition, we shared 150 Audio Bibles with our First Thousand Days families. They LOVE them!!!

“I had some special personal moments recently as well. In April, I got engaged to a man named Odelin! God made provision for us to purchase a small property next to Many Hands where we plan to build our future home. We’re already growing a small basil and lettuce garden and starting a beehive! Overall, I have enjoyed spending extra time with Odelin and his family.”

A PLACE FOR US

Micah Aurand, Administrative Coordinator



To encourage the families in the First 1,000 Days program during this exigent season, Many Hands, in partnership with Audio Scripture Ministries, has supplied 150 caregivers an Audio Bible. Within our communities, such Bibles have become known as a “ti radyo” meaning, “little radio.” Our fervent prayer is that these families listen to their “little radios” allowing hope to restore weary spirits and thirsty souls to drink from the Fountain that never runs dry. Like tender sprouts budding from a previously parched land, we are seeing signs of renewal as caregivers discuss what they are hearing.

Meet Liliane Orélus and her son, Daniel. As a participant in the First 1,000 Days program, Liliane was invited to a Bible study to receive an Audio Bible. Sadly, she wasn’t able to make the date. Disappointed at missing her chance, Liliane approached Nurse Lerosane to inquire about any remaining Bibles. She was surprised to discover a Bible was being held especially for her!

“I love the Word of God!” Liliane bubbled. “When I’m feeling stressed or worried, I always go to read a Psalm. It calms me down and gives me strength.”

The Scripture Liliane has been meditating on recently is the story of John the Baptist. Specifically, in John 1:26 where the Baptist indicates that he is unworthy to loosen the Savior’s sandal let alone baptize Him. Liliane shares her thoughts, “When Jesus came, John didn’t think he could be useful to him at all. Maybe he thought the work could only be done by Jesus. But Jesus had a place for John, too. For us, I think that means each of us also has a place to do God’s work.”

THIRD THRIFT STORE OPENS IN CLIVE



Many Hands Thrift Market is excited to announce the opening of a new store, located at 8801 University Avenue in Clive, IA, formerly occupied by Babies ‘R’ Us. The store, which is the third location in Iowa for the Many Hands Thrift Market, opened its doors on June 8. Tim Brand, Executive Leader of Many Hands, feels even during these times of uncertainty, this store is needed now more than ever.

“We are a non-profit organization, serving people both locally and globally. All our profits and services go back to creating life-transformation opportunities for the underserved. Whether that be mothers and their newborn children in Haiti, retirees that need a place to connect with others, or a family needing to stretch their dollar to find high-quality items at a fraction of new items, this is why we exist. One thing I’ve learned through this pandemic crisis is we belong to each other. This store opening couldn’t come at a more needed time for our communities, both locally and abroad,” stated Brand.

The store features merchandise appealing to all kinds of shoppers, with a wide variety of gently-used, secondhand goods such as men’s, women’s, and children’s clothing, home décor, housewares, furniture, toys, and more. The store also holds a wide selection of new items, such as folk-metal art, fair trade items, and Haitian-made products, providing much-needed economic development for people making on average \$1.27 a day.

Jeff Thomas, Many Hands Thrift Market Store Manager, shared what he believes the Clive location will bring into the community. “Many Hands Thrift is not just about great thrifting. It has become a place where people from all walks of life are welcome. We are a family who works, laughs, and struggles together through the highs and lows of day-to-day life. We love getting to know our customers, hearing their stories, and being a listening ear. When you walk into this store, we want you to know that you are valued, not just as a customer, but as a person,” Thomas explained.

The proceeds from the store will go towards feeding and development programs in Haiti and to the store’s Local Impact Programs. The Local Impact Program includes quarterly Give Local events, Surge volunteer events, and resourcing of local nonprofits. Since opening our first store in 2013, the Thrift Markets have been able to raise over \$40,000 benefitting local Iowan nonprofits such as LIFE 107.1, iJAG, Love Spencer, Mid-American Equine Breeders Association, Wildwood Hills Ranch, Central Iowa Shelter Services, MOPS, Spencer Special Olympics, and many more. The stores have also donated over \$15,000 worth of vouchers for families in need.

Lastly, the store will provide opportunities for local residents to connect in service for their communities. Last year, the Grimes store had over 900 volunteers serve to benefit those in need. Those volunteer roles include clothing sorters, cashiers, cleaners, decorators, and hands-on types of people. Brand believes this is the perfect place for those looking for purpose-filled volunteer experiences and a great way to give back.

“Volunteers and donations of items are the heartbeats of our stores. We can fulfill our vision of ‘transforming together’ when we give of our gifts and talents to one another. Everyone has a gift to give to someone else. It is our desire that this store is a place where people can give from their areas of strength with love and compassion for others to receive those gifts with meaning and purpose. It has been amazing to see this happening in Grimes and Spencer with our previous stores,” added Brand.

For more information about Many Hands Thrift Market or volunteer opportunities as they become available, contact Volunteer Coordinator, Emily Van Gent, at evangent@mh4h.org or visit www.manyhandsthrift.com.

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JULY 2020 NEWSLETTER

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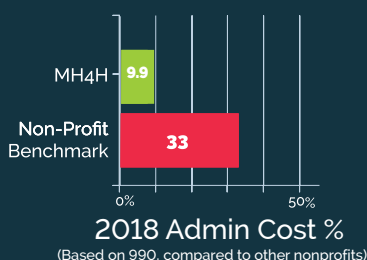


Return Service Requested

We are Accountable



Program Expenses Trip Expenses
Management/Fundraising



DISTRIBUTING HOPE

Micah Aurand, Administrative Coordinator



Our staff working together during the most recent distribution on July 9



As we have done for the past five years, we continue to walk with our brothers and sisters to strengthen their families and help them become champions for their children. We have been unable to hold school or run the First 1,000 Days program since March because of the COVID restrictions.

Normally, children in our area spend half the day at school which includes the breakfast and lunch hours when a hearty plate of food is served. Unable to send their children to school during this shutdown, many have been left to find and prepare extra meals for hungry bellies.

One School of Light parent explains how the restrictions have affected her family's mealtimes. "Growing kids eat a lot when they're home all the time! It has been difficult to make sure that there's enough food in the house for them."

Knowing that hunger is a major problem, we have assembled 315 food boxes for monthly distributions to our Love in Action families and staff. This adds up to 44,100 pounds (22 tons) of food to the families in our area! These extra supplies have brought welcome relief for the families we serve.

"These food boxes have been a huge blessing for us. Thank you!"

EVENTS UPDATE

HOTCAKES FOR HAITI

CANCELED

To keep everyone safe, we have decided to cancel this event for 2020. We hope to bring this event back in 2021!

PIGNON IN PELLA

ON SCHEDULE - SEPT 19

Planning has begun for this event, with staff making adjustments from last year's format to ensure social distancing requirements can be met. Look for coming announcements!

BUSINESS BREAKFAST

ON SCHEDULE - OCT 2

This event is still scheduled with a modified format, including social distancing guidelines to keep everyone safe. Updates coming soon.