

Winter 2023



# many hands

Quarterly

## A Well-Spring of Hope in Haiti

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Many Hands shares stories of how God has been moving through our programs in Haiti.

**p. 08**

## LIGHTING THE PATH

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Tim Brand reflects on 2023 and looks towards the future for the organization.

**p. 03**



## IN THIS ISSUE

Winter 2023

# 02

### NEW FACES

Many Hands announces the addition of two new staff members.

### FEATURE:

Lighting The Path  
p.03



# 05

### TEAM NEWS

Many Hands shares news from Christi Gabhart and the recent board trip to Abaco.

# 07

### HAITI NEWS

Many Hands shares updates from the newest Love in Action center at Mè Bel Mè and other accomplishments in Haiti.

# 11

### IMPACT NEWS

The re-imagined Impact Breakfast moved west to Lutheran Church of Hope and featured three speakers sharing their stories of choosing Blessing Over Brokenness.



## Board of Directors

President of Board..... Eric Recker  
Vice President of Board..... Tim Van Maanen  
Secretary of Board..... Kate Guess  
Treasurer of Board..... Greg Ebeling  
Director..... Jennifer Douma  
Director..... Kendra Meyer  
Director..... Jenny Sorheim

# “

Many Hands, led by Mr. Brand, exemplifies love in action, transforming lives not only in Haiti but now in the Bahamas as well.

-Celekah Mills

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[mh4a.org](http://mh4a.org), and  
[manyhandsthirt.com](http://manyhandsthirt.com)



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COVER IMAGE: Herby stands under the waterfall at Bassim Zim, Haiti.

## NEW FACES

Many Hands is excited to announce the addition of two new staff members. Krisha Foreman and Celekah Mills started their positions in the Fall of 2023.



### Krisha Foreman

Grimes Store Manager

Krisha Foreman brings a wealth of experience and expertise as she joins Many Hands as the Store Manager for the Grimes location. With 18 years of experience as a Territory Manager for a professional beauty supply distributor, overseeing multiple stores in the Midwest, Krisha is well-versed in managing operations and ensuring customer satisfaction.

Having been a customer of Many Hands Thrift for the past couple of years, Krisha has firsthand experience of the organization's exceptional service and positive impact on the community. When she discovered the opportunity to join Many Hands, Krisha was amazed by the breadth of work the organization does for people in the Caribbean while giving back locally. She is enthusiastic about being a part of such an incredible organization that makes a real difference in people's lives.

With her extensive experience in retail management, she brings a unique perspective to the team. "The Grimes team does such an amazing job," shares Krisha. "I am hoping with my experience, we will continue to be successful, and everyone that shops here will have the best thrift experience possible."

Krisha firmly believes that her role at Many Hands is not just about managing a store. "I'm so proud to be a part of such an awesome place that does so many good things. Being here truly makes my heart full."



### Celekah Mills

ARK Teacher and Librarian for Many Hands for Abaco

Celekah Mills is a passionate educator and will serve as an ARK Teacher and Librarian with the Many Hands' educational team at Central Abaco Primary School.

The ARK program aims to bridge the gaps in literacy and numeracy skills resulting from the challenges many students faced after Hurricane Dorian and the pandemic. "Working with students from grades 1-3 as a librarian, I enjoy leading engaging library lessons that incorporate character education, Bible stories, songs, activities, and independent reading," Celekah shares.

Celekah has extensive knowledge in the field of education and brings with her 11 years of experience to the Many Hands team. "My connection with Many Hands came through the incredible Lisa Berg, who welcomed me into the ARK Program and became a supportive mentor," Celekah shares. "Witnessing teams of volunteers from diverse backgrounds joining forces to serve the community has been truly inspiring."

Celekah states that she believes a big part of God's purpose for her life is to impact children through education. "Serving as a part of the educational team with Many Hands, I hope to make an impact with students by helping them to gain confidence in learning by letting them know that perfection is not a requirement to succeed and that everyone's educational journey looks different," Celekah says. "It is my desire to let the love and light of God shine through everything I do, and I think that He will use that and the gifts He's given me to serve and help others."

# LIGHTING THE PATH

## Tim Brand Reflects on 2023 and Looks Forward to the Future

A man and woman transport laundry from a nearby river in Pignon, Haiti.



Murphy Town Community Center grand opening ceremony.



Denny Brand Dedication at Mè Bel Mè center.



Ribbon Cutting Ceremony at Indianola.

**Reflecting back on 2023, there is much to be thankful for in the work God has accomplished through us. Coming into this year, the word spoken over the organization was stretch, and that word has proven to be prophetic for the year.**

As a whole, we've been stretched more this year than in any previous year. Haiti's troubles have continued to deepen, yet God made a way for us to provide more day-to-day help to people in need through our Stretch Out Your Hand campaign and opening a new Love-in-Action center in rural Mè Bel Mè. We officially launched Impact teams to Abaco, Bahamas, and walked with nearly 200 people desiring to be transformed by God in community with others. We also grew in our community development in Abaco, rebuilding an entire community center and launching new programs in the public schools for hundreds of kids. On the Thrift side, we opened a new store in Indianola, Iowa, as well as updated systems and processes to be able to meet the growing demand for the services we offer in our other four store locations.

Our reach grows daily, as the Lord continues to provide His daily bread to each of us, even when it looks like we

can't stretch anymore. He is faithful through it all, and we are thankful we can be a tool in the hands of an Amazing Sculptor. When looking at all we have accomplished throughout the year, we stand in awe of the amazing achievements and firm confirmations that Many Hands holds. The numbers show that, regardless of the turmoil that persists in the world today, our convictions remain solid. We are faithfully called to be Love in Action in our broken world.

I hope this encourages you to see good things are still happening. All is not lost, even during the most troubling times in our world. We stand against the darkness to light a path towards God for others to follow. We cannot do this alone, and we thank you for your generosity and continued stewardship of dollars to us. It is truly a blessing to do this work together.

Moving into 2024, the one-word God is giving us is *selah*. Now, this might not be a word you are familiar with, so let me explain this prophetic word God has given me. *Selah* is as mysterious as it is beautiful because there is no direct translation, but rather, it is transliterated. Taken from Psalms, it can mean to pause or contemplate. Tak-

en from Kings, it also can mean a rock or strong fortress to be exalted. Another transliteration would lean towards its meaning as forever or everlasting. As I prayed for this year's word, God revealed *selah* to me. For this year, we are to take a breath, a pause for contemplation while we solidify the organization as a rock and strong fortress for the Lord in the years to come. He isn't building something for next year, but for eternity, as we point to something greater than ourselves. Yes, on this side of heaven, things can seem bleak or overwhelming, but in God's heavenly timing, He makes all things new. Each of these beloved souls we get to know has an opportunity to spend forever with their Creator, and we have the privilege to walk with them in the here and now, through the good times and the bad. What is happening in the world doesn't change our resolve or calling. And right here, right now, He wants to restore our souls with His timely breath from heaven. A beautiful time of *selah* together.

We invite you into this time of *selah* with us. It isn't passive – the picture I imagine is of an army that has been on the frontline for weeks on end. Their commander comes and says to cease fire and regroup as he brings more help to the front lines. We need you to show up on our front lines to give us the needed reinforcements for the next wave of activity. Your prayers, encouragement, and financial resources are what keep us moving forward. We are humbled by your years of giving, volunteering, and prayers, which keep us going in those challenging moments. We ask for you to not be discouraged because we see God working through us in so many encouraging ways. We do this together as each of us plays a role in the Body of Christ to bring shalom to the chaos.

Be blessed,

*Tim*

Tim Brand  
Founder and CEO, Many Hands  
tbrand@mh4h.org

## 2023 BY THE NUMBERS

- 211 people gave their life to Christ or were restored
- Provided food, medical, spiritual, & educational assistance for over **500 mothers & children**
- Performed **728 health checks** on babies & mothers
- Added 39 jobs**, bringing our total to **131 international employees**
- Grew & purchased **98,050 lbs of food**
- Led 95 people through Lead Like Jesus training
- Built **5 homes** & poured **26 cement floors**
- Conducted **3,221 pastor visits** to homes & hospitals
- Added the 5th grade** to our school, bringing the total to **183 students**
- Distributed 108 goats** & performed health checks
- Fed over **3,000 plates of food** each day in our school feeding programs for **19 schools**
- Performed world-class training for **29 teachers**
- Delivered over **3,400 gallons of water** to areas with no well-water access
- Married 42 couples**, bringing our **total to 209**
- Built a library**, providing books to over **600 students**
- Established an academic recovery program in Central Abaco Primary School, working with **70 students**
- Rebuilt a community center** & improved it to a full-functioning hurricane shelter
- Built our fourth Love in Action center in Mè Bel Mè
- Improved our solar power capabilities** & became energy self-reliant in Haiti & Abaco
- Welcomed **196 Impact members** & an additional **94 service-oriented volunteers** to Abaco
- Shared over **500 Impact stories**
- Opened a fifth thrift store** in Indianola, Iowa
- Sold **1,135,201 donated items** & recycled **460,617 lbs of items** that didn't sell
- Rang up **416,211 customers** at our thrift stores
- Blessed other Iowa-based non-profits with over **\$25,000 worth of resources**





Many Hands board members pictured praying over and speaking with Abaco community members.

## THE JOURNEY IS IN THE OBEDIENCE

### Many Hands' Board Visits Abaco

In November, the Many Hands board traveled back to Abaco, a year since their last visit. The board spent critical time getting a first-hand look at work on the ground and dreaming about what is possible. Led by CEO Tim Brand, they held strategic meetings and prayer, reviewed the foundations the Abaco team has laid, and considered what God is calling our organization to do in 2024.

The board met with the government, which has actively supported Many Hands. Tim Brand led conversations with key government officials, who shared their insights into the education, food insecurity, and housing issues facing the people of Abaco. Delving deeper into these gave the board essential insights into the ways Many Hands can develop our key programs.

The board also spent time in the community, meeting with local leaders to uncover families' daily challenges, aiming to see how Many Hands can best come alongside Murphy Town, empowering and equipping the community. They also visited local Bahamian and Haitian families, sharing conversation, prayer, and gifts of much-needed food.

Kendra Meyer, a medical specialist on the Many Hands board, shared her insights from the trip. Kendra was reminded of God's love and the hope in the community. "Alongside my dear friends on the Many Hands Board of Directors, we observed and we led. We laughed, we

cried. We listened, we guided, and we dreamed. But most importantly, we heard stories and prayed with the people of Abaco. While the healing here is far from finished, we saw light, and we plan to walk with this community."

The board felt that the trip solidified God's call on Many Hands in Abaco. One thing became clear: God has moved ahead and prepared the way. Kendra believes we are called to listen and act on His call.

"We know we cannot fix the ways of the world, but we are reminded of a God who can. We can be a highway of His love," shared Kendra. "The good works we do won't earn us God's love. But rather, we work with Him and let His love transform us. The journey is in the obedience."

Kendra and the board hope that many will hear God's call to support the work being done in Abaco.

"As we continue our walk in Abaco, come, volunteer with us and support our work! We have teams booking through 2024, including one of my own. We invite you to partner in our programs."



Scan to watch  
Kendra's  
Generosity Story



Christi speaking with a Mè Bel Mè community member.



Christi walking to "Goat Land" in Sylvain, Haiti.

## GOD'S GOT IT!

### Christi Gabhart's Road to Recovery

By Christi Gabhart, U.S. Lead of Ministry and Benevolence

**Christi Gabhart, U.S. Lead of Ministry and Benevolence in Haiti, was diagnosed with Chronic Lymphocytic Leukemia (CLL) in August 2022. CLL is often a slow-progressing cancer. Living and working in Haiti poses its own challenges with medical care, which is why she has chosen to start the treatment for CLL at this time.**

#### Here is an update from Christi on her treatment:

In mid-September, Craig and I returned stateside to see family and have some medical checkups. My blood work shows a white blood cell count that is too high. After a CT Scan and a meeting with the oncologist, and considering our individual life circumstances, we have decided that I will take chemotherapy treatment to get this in check. I started on Oct 18.

My experience the past 2 months has been one of feeling the love and support of so many faithful friends, stateside and in Haiti, praying very specifically for me in the middle of chemotherapy treatment.

After ONE round of treatment, I had already seen and felt tremendous improvement. At the beginning of round two, the oncologist reported the results of the blood test that all the 'levels' were already back in range of what they should be. So God's GOT IT! Up to this time, the side effects have been minimal, with some low days but not lasting long at all. I have had normal energy, good sleep

for the most part, and not too many issues with food. I have heard people comment on having 'Chemo Brain,' and I say, I am just NOT going there!

I have been able to continue to collaborate with Haitian staff through messaging and WhatsApp calls. And each time, I receive such encouragement. The hardest part is that Craig is there 'spinning all the plates'. The Haitian staff are doing SUCH good work; there is just a LOT going on!

We don't have anything official, but I am very hopeful to think I might be able to resume my part of the work in Haiti possibly by the end of January. The time this has allowed me to be together with family has been so good. I am grateful for every moment. I am thankful for the hospitality and a place to live temporarily.

I ask for continued prayer and that can include prayers of Thanksgiving.

**The Many Hands team shares our unwavering support to her and Craig as they navigate this challenging phase. Any inquiries or messages of encouragement for Christi can be shared by emailing [info@mh4h.org](mailto:info@mh4h.org).**

**We pray for her during treatment and recovery and join Christi in her confidence that God will work His good through this season.**





## LOVE IN ACTION UNDERWAY AT MÈ BEL MÈ

By Kethlin Vilbon, First 1,000 Days Program Manager

The First 1,000 Days program is underway at our newest Love-in-Action center in Mè Bel Mè, and the benefits have already provided hope for many in the area.

The community's response has been overwhelmingly positive since the dedication of the center in June, and there were many applicants eager to lend their support to Many Hands' mission. The goal is to provide life-transforming programs to 90 families in the first year of operation. The center is now serving 17 families in the Mè Bel Mè community with four new moms joining monthly. The population of Mè Bel Mè testifies that for the first time in their lives, they have access to a nice building with a sustainable program.

Many mothers, like Noel Islande, have felt the support that this center provides to the community. "I am pregnant, and without MH4H, I don't know what I would do with the difficult situation that we are facing now," Noel says. "My husband left my house because he did not know what to do about the food situation. More than that, they (MH4H) pay for the medicine for me."

Many Hands has been faithfully building relationships in the community of Mè Bel Mè for several months and has committed to performing home visits regularly to share the gospel and connect with community members. This initiative has had great success, seeing eight restorations of faith and seven new souls for Jesus. Phanord



LEFT: Nerla (in white), PMJ staff Nurse Monette, Nurse and Midwife Madame Phanord, and Spiritual Mother Denise pose for a picture. TOP RIGHT: Nurse Monette teaching pregnant mothers. BOTTOM RIGHT: Nurse Monette conducting a health check with a mother.

Wilnise, the Spiritual Mother for the Mè Bel Mè center, shares that she thanks God for the center He provided for the community and hopes that she can spread the good news of Jesus to the people. "My vision is to see all the people in the zone hear the good news of Jesus and change their lives," Phanord says.

Monette Dehilaire, the midwife for the center of Mè Bel Mè, shared a story that highlights the personal impact we are seeing for new mothers.

"There was a mom who was suffering from high blood pressure. The first time I met her, she was very stressed and worried, afraid of losing her baby. I educated her, encouraged her, and let her know everything would be in place if she [followed] the First 1,000 Days program."

Because of the program and the relationship she built with this mother, Monette was able to direct her to the medical attention she needed. "She visited a doctor, she had tests, exams, and a sonogram. She now has medicine that has lowered her blood pressure, and the baby is now safely born. The mother said she is content with being in our program and happy to be part of the church."

This Love-in-Action center has provided a lifeline to the community of Mè Bel Mè, and Many Hands is committed to uplifting the families in the area for years to come.

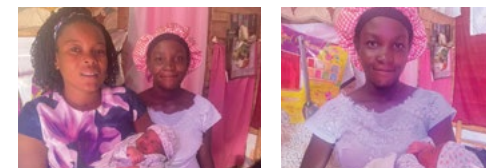
## A WELL-SPRING OF HOPE IN HAITI

Haiti is experiencing one of the worst periods of unrest in its history. With no elected officials running the country, and gangs wrestling for control, life is hard for the majority of Haitians. However, where there would be despair, we are finding reasons for joy. Many Hands has been a well-spring for many, with God working good things through our programs. Here are some recent highlights from our programs where hope can be found during a dark time.



### Gardens at Maliarette

This garden is a testament to the agriculture team's vision. They encouraged the mothers in our Maliarette programs to work together to grow this garden. Months later, here is the result. A much-needed bountiful harvest and a group of mothers catching the vision of what is possible!



### First Baby at Mè Bel Mè

Many Hands celebrates the first baby born into our program at Mè Bel Mè! On November 29th, Mine Dala Joachin gave birth to a healthy baby girl, and wanted the honor of naming the child to go to our very own Nurse Monette who chose the name, Smeralda Lia Chevalier. We are overjoyed and so thankful to God!



### Cement floors

Cement floors continue to be poured where needed most. This family received a new floor as a part of the Jean Boule First 1,000 Days program. An additional benefit is the father was part of the concrete crew, which gave him work for a day.



### First 1,000 Days

Our program assistants care for the children while their moms attend a class. We invest in mothers and children, which is critical. These education opportunities for mothers lay the foundations for change. Their children are the next generation of leaders in the community!



### Many Hands Staff

These days, getting a group shot of our entire staff is difficult, with over 100 employees! Throughout the year, we have been able to maintain a full staff, sustaining families and the community.



### Nurses

Nurse Madeline has been a blessing in Jean Boule. Our nurses continue to see all the mothers in our programs. With the increasing malnutrition threat in Haiti, these health checks are more critical than ever.

We know with full assurance that our programs are working and impacting lives daily. In one of the most challenging times in Haiti, we are still able to operate. We thank God for His hand in this. Please continue to lift Haiti in prayer. We also give praise for your faithful support. Without you and your generosity, this would not be possible.





LEFT: Pastor Ryan Forbes giving his speech during the Impact Breakfast. RIGHT: Pastor Ryan Forbes, Mary Andringa, and Tim Brand pose for a photo after the event.



## CHOOSING BLESSING OVER BROKENNESS

### Many Hands 5th Annual Impact Breakfast

By Tyler Kamerman, Chief Development Officer

The Many Hands Impact Breakfast remained consistent in its focus to inspire local leaders to Challenge What's Possible, even with a change of name and venue. Formerly the Business Breakfast, the Impact Breakfast moved west to Lutheran Church of Hope and featured three powerful speakers sharing their stories of choosing Blessing Over Brokenness through the trials of life.

Many Hands Founder and CEO, Tim Brand, kicked off the morning sharing his experience of walking alongside his dad through the final months of his life. Tim's daughter Abby touched the hearts of the room through song, with a moving rendition of The Lord's Prayer.

Mary Andringa, Chair Emerita of Vermeer Corporation, walked through the challenges and blessings of leading a large, family-owned business, giving a unique business perspective to the morning. Pastor Ryan Forbes, International Consultant from Abaco, Bahamas, closed the event powerfully with his insight into leading his church and community following Hurricane Dorian, one of the worst hurricanes to make landfall.

With over 300 in attendance, the Impact Breakfast successfully reached a new audience in Central Iowa while also blessing long-time supporters of Many Hands, and ensuring that the Impact Breakfast will be a source of inspiration, hope, and Love in Action for years to come.

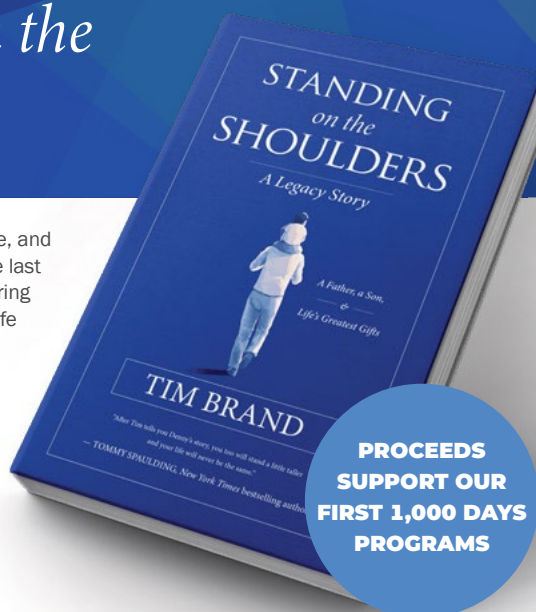
## STANDING *on the* SHOULDERS

A new book from Tim Brand

Guiding us through this inspiring true story of love, hope, and redemption, Tim shares his father's journey through the last months of life. Life's greatest gifts are revealed, exploring the deeper questions of what it means to live a good life and how to leave a legacy for future generations.



**Preorder the new book from Many Hands CEO Tim Brand**



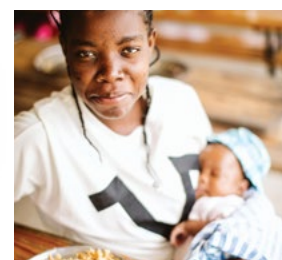
**PROCEEDS SUPPORT OUR FIRST 1,000 DAYS PROGRAMS**

# GIVE JOY

## GIVE YOUR YEAR-END GIFT TODAY!



Scan or visit  
**[mh4h.org/givejoy](https://mh4h.org/givejoy)**  
to donate now!



### Feed a Family

Give hope to the hungry. This gift of a month's worth of meals, including rice, beans, cooking oil, and a bag of spices.

**\$50**



### Library Books

Give the gift of reading. This gift puts five books into our Academic Recovery for Kids (ARK) program library.

**\$40**



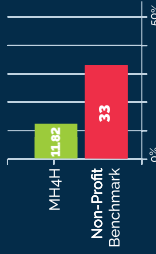
### Medicine for a Month

Provide children with the gift of health. This gift covers the cost of antibiotics, fever reducers, and other needed medication for 50 children for one month.

**\$100**



# We are Accountable



2022 Admin Cost %  
(Based on 990, compared to other nonprofits)

- Program Expenses
- Management/Fundraising

With financial accreditation, including GuideStar Platinum accreditation, you can trust we steward your gift wisely for its intended purpose.



**MANY HANDS**

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