

Texas Baptists seek ways to meet needs in Haiti

January 21, 2010

In the wake of last week's devastating earthquake in Haiti, Texas Baptists are mobilizing for service and seeking to multiply efforts when the country's infrastructure is rebuilt to the point that widespread relief efforts can take place.

Individual Texas Baptists have found a few ways to serve in Haiti. Vivien Ingram, a member of Shiloh Baptist Church in Dallas and recent college graduate who has been home schooling the children of missionaries in Haiti and working in a medical clinic for women, continues meeting needs in Port-Au-Prince.

Pastor Sanon Joseph (left), and Chalmagne Benganen (back to camera, below) join other worshippers for services at Second Baptist Church in Delmas Two, Port-au-Prince, Haiti. The church, which was damaged in the earthquake, lost more than 1,000 members to the disaster. Afraid for the building's stability, ministers hold services in the yard nearby. (RNS PHOTO/ Matt Rainey/The Star-Ledger)

Despite difficulty moving through cracked roads and a lack of supplies, Ingram and the group she is serving with continues conducting a clinic. At one point in e-mails sent back home, she describes being awake three straight days and suturing wounds until 2 a.m. In a nearby soccer field, people were lying on the ground moaning. Some people were gathered in prayer.

"God continually provides for us and answers specific prayers," she wrote three days after the earthquake.

"We were running out of fuel and missionaries from a village outside Port

brought a five-gallon tank of diesel yesterday afternoon. We have plenty of food and clean water. None of us are injured or sick.

"My group is so blessed beyond measure. We all got together this morning for the first time since Tuesday and just started singing praises to Christ and sent up so many prayers of thanksgiving. We are so grateful to be here and wrapped in God's comforting love."

Ingram's latest prayer e-mails are posted [here](#).

Ben and Katie Kilpatrick, who are connected to First Baptist Church in Richardson and are serving two years in Haiti, blogged Jan. 19 that aid groups are slowly surveying the needs and working through logistics.

"It's slowly untangling — please pray for it to move faster and better," the post reads.

"Lives depend on it. On the way home, we saw the tent cities for the first time in the light. The hundreds of thousands of homeless are camping out on every spare bit of land- mostly in city parks. No security, no water, no food, no toilets — just making homes out of whatever you can."

The Kilpatricks' blog postings can be found [here](#).

Gaining access to the nation continues to impede widespread relief efforts, including those by Texas Baptist Men, Buckner International and Baptist Child & Family Services, each of which is seeking to send in supplies.

Texas Baptist Men continues trying to get 5,000 water filters into Haiti. Cooperative Baptist Fellowship missionaries requested the water filters — each of which will provide clean water for a family of four — following the earthquake.

The organization has pulled together supplies to build the water filters and is tracking a number of ways to get them into the country. At this point, the

country's infrastructure is so damaged that it is difficult to get aid in.

Joe Detterman, who is coordinating TBM's relief effort, encouraged people to pray God will open a way for relief supplies and efforts to enter Haiti. Needs for medical care and clean water are critical at this point.

"The biggest thing is to pray for the safety of the folks and that these supplies can get there," Detterman said.

To support Texas Baptist Men disaster relief efforts directly, visit www.texasbaptistmen.org or send checks designated for disaster relief to 5351 Catron, Dallas, TX 75227.

Buckner International is attempting to send four large cargo containers of medical supplies and humanitarian aid items such as new clothing, shoes, socks, tents, blankets, baby food, toiletries and unopened first aid kits to Haiti. Buckner plans to ship the containers to the Dominican Republic where they will then be trucked into Haiti.

"One of our biggest needs is for hygiene kits," said Matt Asato, director of humanitarian aid for Buckner International.

Aid will be sent to support Gladys Thomas's Hope Hospital, which is receiving many casualties from the quake. Dillon International, Buckner's international adoption affiliate, has worked with Thomas for 25 years and places children from her orphanage into adoptive families in the United States.

Buckner is asking volunteers to fill two-gallon sized Ziploc bags with specific hygiene items and mail or drop the kits off at the Buckner Center for Humanitarian Aid, located at 5405 Shoe Drive, Mesquite, Texas 75149. To view a list of items needed in the hygiene kits or to financially support Buckner efforts, visit www.buckner.org.

Randy Daniels, Buckner Vice President for Global Operations, reported Jan. 21 the first container could arrive by air as early as Jan. 26 if there is room on the flight, or on the next plane the first week of February if there is no room. The aid is prioritized by need, so the first container will solely include medical supplies donated in-kind by UT Southwestern Medical Center in Dallas. Later shipments will include medical supplies, shoes, emergency rations and hygiene kits. The shipments will drop in the Dominican Republic and be taken overland into Haiti.

To support Texas Baptist disaster response efforts, visit www.texasbaptists.org/haitiearthquake and click on “give now” or send a check marked for disaster response to the Texas Baptist Missions Foundation at 333 N. Washington, Dallas, TX 75246.

With additional reporting by Kaitlin Chapman