

The Cayman Council of the United Church in Jamaica and the Cayman Islands has now (April 2010) remitted a total of US\$47,096 for earthquake relief efforts in Haiti following the 9th January earthquake that devastated Port au Prince. The funds were donated to Ministries in Action (MIA), the Luke Society, Centre Chretien do Developpement and the Church's own missionary nurse in Haiti, Joan Bain. In addition, Rev. Louis Sully chartered a plane in February to fly in air-mattresses, bedding, food, etc., purchased in Cayman, a project to which some other members of the Church as well as the Council also contributed.

Most of the funds, just over CI\$31,000, were collected by special offerings in the Church's congregations and another CI\$6,700 was donated through its Cayman Prep and High School, which also made additional donations to the Red Cross for relief efforts in Haiti. Members assisted MIA directly as well. The congregations and schools of the Church in Jamaica have also been donating relief supplies and money to the relief effort.

Its mission partners in Haiti have now reported on the relief work they have been doing to provide tents, food, water, medicine and medical services to the surviving victims of the earthquake. Some have also been involved in initial rebuilding efforts, where feasible. The Luke Society, which is based in the Dominican Republic and was able to take medical and other emergency supplies overland, along with their doctors, recently reported that they were still reaching devastated areas where no other help had arrived yet. But they were particularly touched by the people's urge to be led in worship and obtain Bibles to replace those lost in the earthquake. MIA also received such requests. MIA also flew in a medical team of 19 to work on the front lines of the devastation. They also assisted a network of local Pastors there to set up and run 15 feeding stations. Mrs. Joan Bain, who for many years has been running a clinic and training persons to provide community nursing services, has also been providing a meal service for a long time, primarily, though not rigidly, for children. However, with the flood of homeless persons moving out of Port au Prince after the earthquake into her area, she has also been endeavouring to assist these persons who are without food. All of the Church's mission partners in Haiti are acutely confronted by the tremendous suffering that still needs to be addressed. In addition to trying to continue to help with the urgent needs of the survivors, the United Church has determined that it will seek to provide some help specifically for persons who lost limbs in the earthquake and help partners to generate employment through rebuilding, education, etc., as well as continuing its long term mission efforts in Haiti. Members of the Church, especially from Elmslie United, visit Haiti and the Dominican Republic as often as possible to assist with mission projects and Mr. Chuck Mobley from that congregation is an Area Representative for MIA and works closely also with the Luke Society.