

This provides a brief of our 2018 medical mission trip, one in a chain of trips starting in 2010 for Holy Cross. It was similar to the others, yet quite different in some ways.

The Team. Our smallest medical team, our largest gathering. The team from HCLC was unusually small, 4 participants. However, it became our largest team ever as it worked out:



- HC--Aeron and Jennifer Burns—pharmacists by degree, and they did an excellent job with our med pharmacy
- HC--Vonnice (RN) and Al LaRue (team leader).
- Jeannine DePaolos (RN) from Immanuel Lutheran, Brandon, FL. We met Jeannine at the airport in Miami and she was a blessing the whole trip.
- Del Davis, businessman from Grace Lutheran, Sandy UT. We met Del at MIA airport too. Del helped in clinics with blood pressure screenings, and he is a key leader from Grace in the building of the new church at San Rafael. He was with the team at GRDN and San Rafael, before heading back. He stayed at the Deep River Mission and brought Frankie (Haitian) along as his translator. Great to have Del along.
- The Thedes. Dr Kris and Cory have been full time missionaries in Haiti for 18 years. Cory Thede (botanist, translator who helped in various ways). Dr Kris Thede, cornerstone for our med team. Anna, their daughter, last year of high school, excellent translator for the pharmacy. Adopted Haitian son Fritz, 7, full of life.
- Lil Spilde and friend Lori. Lil leads the efforts of LMA, Minnesota, although she now lives in SD. This was her 17th trip to Haiti, over the past 17 years. Lori is a district officer in LWML (Lutheran Womens Mission League), and key to obtaining a grant to construct the new church building at Gloria Dei (Airport). Their trip overlapped ours, and they joined in. Great to actually meet Lil after hearing so much about her work in Haiti over the years. They brought music to the mission and churches.
- Dr Morency, a Haitian doctor who serves part time at the permanent clinic at Madeline. He assisted the med team at Dondon and Madeline.
- Claudy and Ronald, translators from CH who have served with our med teams for years; and Babby, from CH, who drove the van throughout our trip.
- **Pastor Bernard**, with us throughout. Obviously it takes quite an effort on the part of PB, behind the scenes and otherwise, to make this happen. Thank God for his service.

This adds up to 17 people! Not everyone, every day. But I must say that it takes quite a bit more time and effort to assemble and move a large team than a small team. A few snafus, but no one left behind! It took 3 vehicles to move the team and supplies from place to place (plus Dr Morency drove himself for the 2 days he joined in). For transportation, we had a rented van which carried 7 or 8; the Thede's Land Cruiser which carried all the supplies of the day, plus 4 or 5 people (but not much padding); and PB's rental car which generally carried 4.

The trip—briefly.

Monday Feb 5, 2018. The HC team traveled to Cap Haitian (CLE- MIA-CH), which meant an early wakeup (3AM) and a long day, but no mishaps. It saves a day down and back by traveling thru CLE, but does make for long travel days. PB previously arranged for pickup of our 19 boxes/600 lbs of supplies (transported by MFI on Jan

30, and delivered to Auberge du Picolet--our hotel). We reached our hotel mid-afternoon, and the Thedes arrived minutes later. We used the next couple hours sorting and counting out pill packets, and organizing supplies for the upcoming clinics. Then dinner and a good night's sleep.

Tues Feb 6—The entire team eventually assembled at Madeline, and headed for Grand Riviere du Nord (GRDN). Going to GRDN first worked out well, as it usually takes longer the first travel day to get things moving, and GRDN is only an hour from Madeline. We reached the church at GRDN about 10AM, and set up the pharmacy and various stations for the clinic—registration, blood pressure screening, docs to assess health needs, reading glasses. Jeanine, a quick learner, sat with Vonnie for the first 2 hours of clinics to learn methodology, then took on her role as a doc for the rest of the trip. The teamed served 92 people in GRDN.

Wed Feb 7—We planned for an early start, but it was 8:30 by the time we left Madeline en route for San Rafael. The dirt roads are as usual (awful), except in town, and dusty, but no mishaps. We arrived at 11 and immediately went to work setting up the clinic, while Dr. Kris talked to the waiting patients about caring for their health. The team provided care to 112 people over the next 5+ hours. PB, Del and AI took the half hour ride over to the new “preaching station” on the other side of town. The Bouyaha River was crossed without problems in PB’s rental car, as the river level is low in dry season. When we arrived, we were amazed. Grace Lutheran had purchased property and had a well installed in late 2017, and I expected to see some stakes for a new building. What we actually witnessed was a crew of ~35 men working away on a nearly completed foundation, plus hundreds of concrete blocks, built on site, for the walls! The well was getting quite a workout, supplying water for the cement and for the workers. Apparently God wants to have a church here! By the time we finished seeing patients and packed up, it was approaching 5PM, which meant much of the drive home was after dark, on these terrible roads. It was striking to see so many people along the road--standing, sitting, walking in complete darkness.



Thurs Feb 8—We traveled to Dondon and arrived 10:30. Dr Morency was with us today, and a big help. We provided medical care to all 94 people who came to our clinic in Dondon, and still made it back to CH in daylight. Lil and Lori continued their music mission, which was to teach new hymns at these outlying churches. What a blessing to see a patient we fitted with reading glasses joining in the hymn sing.



Fri Feb 9—This was day one of clinics at Madeline, which is just a short drive across Cap Haitien. We had things set up by 9:30 and saw 101 patients today. It was a slam day for the pharmacy, in part due to also having Dr. Morency assisting here. I met with PB, the engineer and the foreman for the bakery being planned for Madeline. This was a necessary and useful meeting, and we reached agreement on the building size, elements, and cost. HCLC will soon send funds to start construction, and will start acquiring the bakery equipment.

Sat Feb 10 — Madeline clinic for half a day as we only had 52 people to serve. A group of us (PB, Lil, Lori, Cory, Al) visited the new church building at Gloria Dei, which is roughly done and in use. We also visited the Chicken Farm, where 1500 peeps were delivered this morning. These should be grown chickens and ready for market in time for Easter (God willing).



Sun Feb 11—We attended church at Madeline, and it is always a blessing to worship together. Their use of a projector helped us to follow the service, and PB provided translation of the message. We returned to our hotel for lunch and to settle the bills, then headed to the airport. We were greeted there with a long line (1.5 hr wait) as their computers were down, but we left nearly on time. Arrived MIA, did the dance thru immigration and customs, and had some dinner. Afterwards, we said goodbye to Jeanine, and headed on to CLE, and reached home at 2AM on Mon, 2/12.

In summary, we served 451 patients at four churches. The people served at the outlying churches are desperately poor, but malnutrition continues to decline. We saw a new church/school sprouting in San Rafael, and saw the recently built church/school at Gloria Dei (Airport). We made plans to build a bakery at Madeline, in order to provide nutrition and help sustain ministry there. We made some new friends in shared ministry for the people in Northern Haiti, while working with some old friends.

For all of this and more, we thank the Lord for answered prayers of safety, and for blessing our teamwork for His children young and old in Haiti.