

a future for Haiti



Photo by Sophia Parris/UN

Displaced people line up to receive water delivered by a non-profit organization. In some areas, access to clean water has been provided by Calvary Chapels.

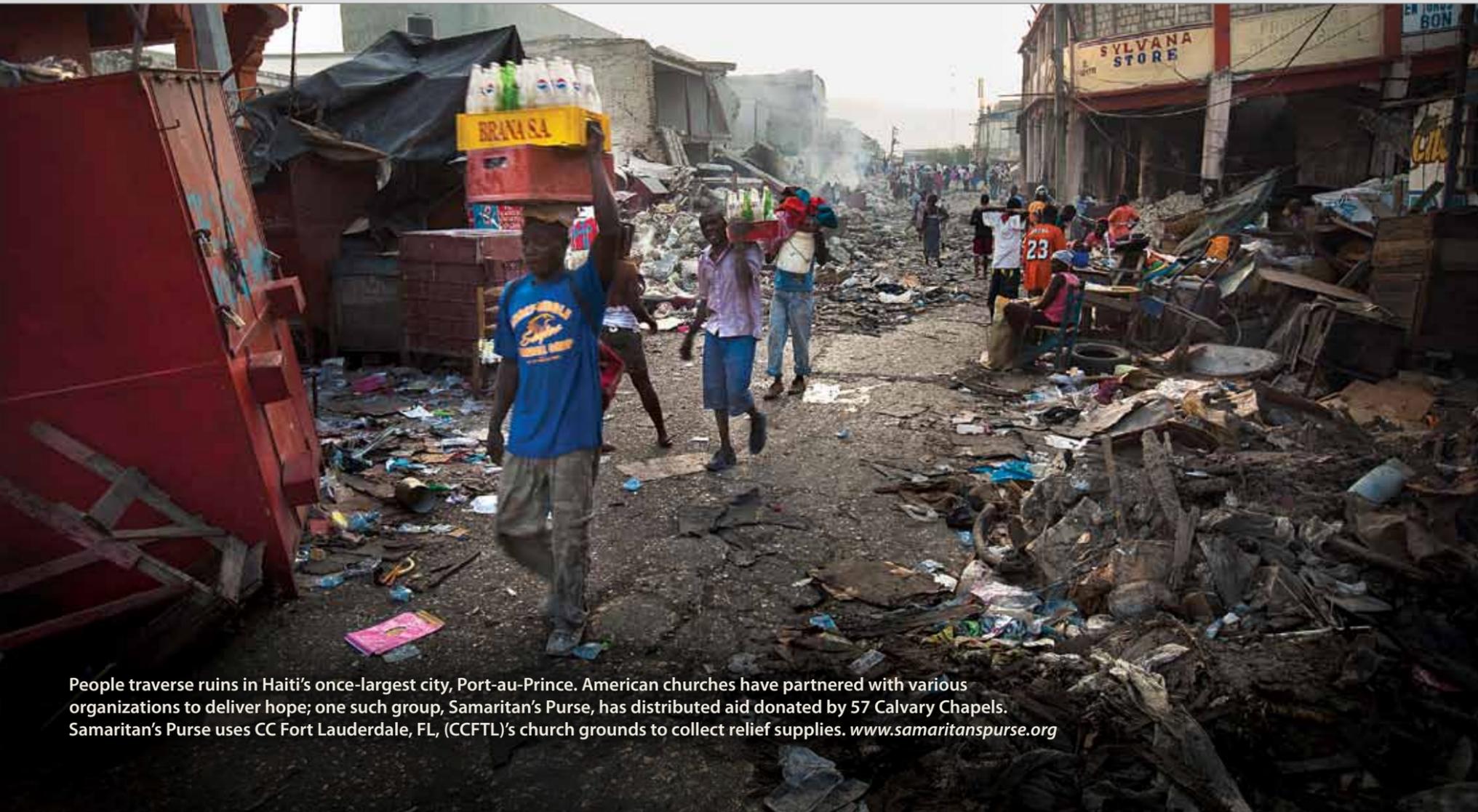


Dr. Chilove Viard, left, and David Amona baptize new believer Darlyne Domond. Since the earthquake, more than 50 have been baptized at CC Port-au-Prince.



Photo by Seige Poteau

Pastor Seige Poteau of CC Port-au-Prince dedicates a child to the Lord. The church currently worships in the yard behind their damaged building. Photo by Kathy Blecker



Courtesy of Samaritan's Purse

People traverse ruins in Haiti's once-largest city, Port-au-Prince. American churches have partnered with various organizations to deliver hope; one such group, Samaritan's Purse, has distributed aid donated by 57 Calvary Chapels. Samaritan's Purse uses CC Fort Lauderdale, FL, (CCFTL)'s church grounds to collect relief supplies. www.samaritanspurse.org

In the wake of Haiti's devastating earthquake, Calvary Chapels in Haiti and across the U.S. are comforting the suffering with food, shelter, and the Gospel of Christ.

Story by Debra Smith
Photos by Gary Meek, unless otherwise noted

CC Port-au-Prince

Stanley hesitated. Should he really do what he was considering? First Corinthians 15:33 seemed burned on his mind—"Do not be deceived: 'Evil company corrupts good habits.'" He couldn't let go of the idea: He should move out.

Stanley Michel, 24, had given his life to Christ a few months prior at Calvary Chapel Port-au-Prince. He was attending Bible studies led by medical doctor and pastor-in-training Chilove Viard, but he was still staying with his sister and her husband—where he was required to help his brother-in-law, a voodoo priest, lead daily ceremonies. Without a job, he had no income to move elsewhere. Yet, Chilove said, "Led by the Word of God, Stanley began to have faith in God's promises to provide for him and guide him. He realized that even without a job or parents, he had to leave where he lived, in obedience to 1 Corinthians 15:33

and to prevent confusion of his witness for Christ." Stanley's brother-in-law threatened him, but the young man stood firm. Stanley now lives in CC Port-au-Prince's tent city.

Since the January earthquake, CC Port-au-Prince has nearly doubled in attendance. The church currently holds simultaneous services in the backyard of their former building, which is unsafe to enter, and in their tent city. Situated on a field owned by a church member, the tent city on the outskirts of Port-au-Prince houses nearly 200 people in more than 70 camping tents. The church hopes to relocate the families into more permanent housing before the intensity of the spring rains, which have barely begun. About half of the residents were church members before the quake and half their friends or family. Many of the new people have come to Christ; thus far, the church's emerging leaders have baptized more than 50.



Photo by Seige Poteau

Anthoby Pierre leads a Bible study in CC Port-au-Prince's tent city. Anthoby is among 20 young leaders being trained through the church's School of Ministry.

Pastor Seige Poteau and his wife Dinette planted CC Port-au-Prince in 2007. They were sent by CC Melbourne, FL; Seige is a Haitian-born software engineer who lived in the U.S. for 20 years. "A few Sundays before the quake, I preached about how all our earthly wealth is just dirt," Seige said. "We pile up dirt like it's something important, but the Lord is interested in people. We as a church want to focus on loving people."

Seige aims to multiply his impact by training future leadership, so CC Port-au-Prince began a School of Ministry in 2008. The 20 students have not yet resumed classes since the earthquake, but they are practicing ministry daily—in the tent city's thriving Bible studies. "At 7 a.m. we have small groups, and after that is a large meeting for all the people together," explained young leader Anthoby Pierre. "Then we do the same thing in the afternoon." Anthoby oversees a small group, and afterward he, Chilove, or Seige preaches. So far, the men have taught through Genesis, Leviticus, Luke, 1 Corinthians, Galatians, and 1 Timothy. Seige said, "When we know the Lord, realizing that He is all-knowing, all-powerful, and loves us, we don't have to worry. He said, 'I am the LORD your God' (Exodus 20:2)—and we can trust Him." ☞

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Jacmel

Calvary Chapel Haiti Initiative

Twenty-five miles southwest of Port-au-Prince lies Jacmel, Haiti—the principal city in "an area that was gravely hit," according to Chet Lowe, outreach pastor for CC Fort Lauderdale, FL. Jacmel is the base of operations for a new Calvary-wide partnership called Calvary Chapel Haiti Initiative (CCHI). Led by CC Fort Lauderdale and CC Costa Mesa, CA, CCHI aims to transform the region by sending a missions team into Jacmel each week for several years.

Calvary Chapel Haiti Initiative has rented a house and a nearly five-acre property to serve as a base for the project. Since February, "We've had a team on the ground nearly every week," reported Tim Wylie, director of disaster relief ministry at CC Costa Mesa. The groups, which generally stay from Saturday to Saturday, come from Calvary Chapels across the U.S. "There are huge windows of opportunity," Tim said. Needs include construction, medical supply inventory, evangelism, and children's ministry. "This venture is huge," continued Tim, "And I think it's a chance for us as believers to unite and show Christ's love to the world."

Shelter for a Village Church

Dieupie Cherubin is pastor of Hosanna Baptist Church in Jacmel and coordinator of the Pastors' Association of Southeast Haiti. One afternoon shortly after the earthquake, he received a phone call from a mountain



Aaron Mondok of Calvary Chapel Haiti Initiative (CCHI) teaches weekly at Gospel Church of Lamandou. Aaron moved to Jacmel to help with CCHI.

village called La Valle. The pastor requested prayer for his church, whose building had been completely flattened. "Right after I got off the phone, Dave walked into my office," Dieupie said. Dave Bird and his wife Darlys of CC Chino Hills, CA, recently moved to Jacmel to direct CCHI locally, under the oversight of Chet Lowe at CC Fort Lauderdale. "Dave said he had a team ready to work and asked what they could do," Dieupie recalled. He excitedly relayed the need, and the two began arranging transportation and supplies. "We took two days to prepare," Dieupie said, "and then we went. The team started building, and by 6 p.m. they had finished. In one day, they put up a temporary building for this church to worship God." The fellowship met in the structure that evening. "It was amazing to see the people's joy—it was overwhelming," said Dieupie. "Partnering with Calvary Chapel is a great thing, because we are all trying to please God and rejoice in Him together."



Field Director Dave Bird presents the Jacmel property that CCHI plans to use for housing future mission teams, storing medical and construction supplies, and reaching the area with the Gospel.



The CCFTL team and local volunteers from Grace Community Church pray together before beginning construction of a temporary school and church in one.

Let the Little Children

Before her recent trip to Haiti, Brigitte Maetzler of CC Fort Lauderdale (CCFTL) said she remembers thinking, *I don't know if I'll be able to do anything valuable. They need people to do construction and I don't know how ... I'm not sure if I should be going.*

But by the end of the week, "I didn't want to leave," Brigitte said. "I wanted to stay at the orphanage." Her team of six, mostly from CCFTL, visited two orphanages, returning

to one of them repeatedly. A Catholic home run by Mother Teresa's order, the orphanage houses disabled, ill, and extremely poor children. Team members fed the babies and toddlers, played with them, and—primarily—sat and held them. Teammate Michele Eade of CCFTL explained that due to a high ratio of orphans to caretakers, the children are tremendously needy for affection. "Just going to those orphanages and holding those kids for a few hours makes a huge difference," Michele said. "The minute they

saw the gate open, they came running to us yelling. They knew we didn't have presents; we were coming just to hold them, and they were desperate for that."

Outreach Coordinator Aaron Mondok from CCFTL moved to Jacmel in March to help Field Director Dave Bird lead CCHI. Together, they guide the short-term teams and provide long-term direction to the project. Aaron visits the Catholic orphanage several times each week, taking whatever CCHI



Michele Eade of CCFTL feeds a child at the Sisters of Charity orphanage in Jacmel. Beyond her, teammate Alan Rogers of CCFTL does the same. The believers visited the orphanage of disabled, ill, and extremely poor children several times throughout their weeklong trip with Calvary Chapel Haiti Initiative.



Tim Wylie of CC Costa Mesa

team is in Haiti at the time. Michele said, "Aaron has nicknamed one little boy Ray-Ray, after Ray Charles, because he's blind. He's about a year and a half old, and the minute he hears Aaron's voice, he stands up in his crib and starts intoning in a high-pitched voice, 'Hello, hello,' to get Aaron's attention. It's the only English he knows, and he says it over and over till Aaron comes and picks him up. Then Aaron holds him until he leaves."

Rescued Medicines

Tracey Shorey, a volunteer with Community Coalition of Haiti, was recently in Jacmel for two months. She managed a storehouse

of medicine and medical equipment for all non-profit organizations in southeast Haiti. On a Monday in March, Tracey learned that government officials were coming in a few days to inspect the medical depot. If the equipment was not stored according to regulations, the authorities warned, it would be confiscated.

The task was overwhelming. The facility was brimming with uncategorized medicines and equipment, some of which was out-of-date. Meeting the requirements, Tracey explained, would involve "Sorting through mass quantities of medical donations—something regular volunteers couldn't do without the expertise to put things in the right place." Additionally, storing the medication properly would require shelves to elevate it off the ground. But the team of local

builders Tracey had hired for the task never appeared, and she needed the shelves that day in order to meet the deadline.

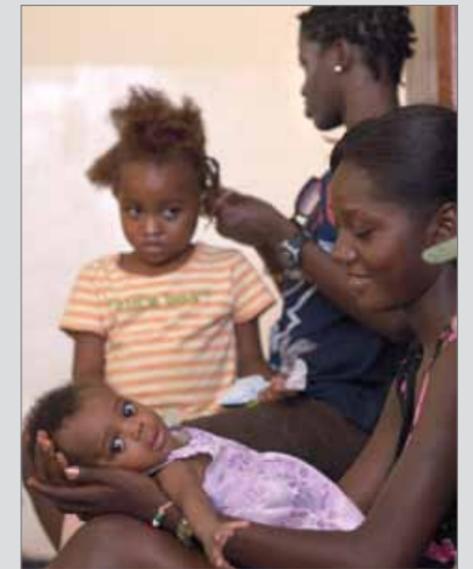
Tracey called Dave Bird at CCHI and explained her predicament. "Within an hour, a team was here," Tracey said. After the believers built the shelves, Michele, RN John Koch of CCFTL, and others spent dozens of hours throughout the week sorting medicines and equipment. "John knew what everything was," Michele said, "so he told us where to put it all. We organized everything according to his instructions." The facility passed inspection, and the materials were not confiscated.



Dave and Darlys Bird of CC Chino Hills



Alan Rogers and RN John Koch of CCFTL organize donations in a medical storehouse for southeast Haiti.



Nerlande Theniscat, a translator from Grace Community Church, holds an orphan while Shirley Francois of CCFTL braids hair for a little girl who eagerly requested she make her pretty.



Brigitte Maetzler of CCFTL holds a child at the Sisters of Charity orphanage.

Partnering with Grace

Abraham Joseph has pastored Grace Community Church in Jacmel since planting the church in his home in 1999. "In our services, we teach the Bible verse by verse," said Haitian-born Abraham. "Our vision is to help people understand God's Word and His initial plan for the whole world. As they are immersed in God's Word, they will be able to face the challenges in their lives." A U.S.-trained schoolteacher, Pastor Abraham desires to teach people to meet the needs of others by using the skills God gave them.

"We are praying daily to have a professional school," said Abraham, "where people can learn about laying concrete, mechanics, plumbing, and electricity—things that can bring income in the country." Grace Community Church already runs an orphanage and a school of more than 600 students.

School immediately halted after the earthquake, however. Though the church was not destroyed, "People are afraid to come under concrete," explained Abraham. Two months after the disaster, school had still



Aaron, left, and Michele, right, play with children at a school in Jacmel. The team led jump rope, made balloon hats, and showed an evangelistic video to the kids.



Ayinde Reid from CC of the Palm Beaches and others construct a bamboo shelter for Grace Community Church. The temporary building enabled the church's school to resume in spite of people's fear of buildings.



Photo by David Bird

A CCHI team builds a church shelter in La Valle village near Jacmel. The fellowship met there that evening.



The completed structure the team built for Grace Community Church and its school of more than 600 students.



Ayinde, center, and Shirley pray with a man they met on the beach on their first day in Jacmel.

not resumed. Parents feared sending their children into a building, and the scorching sun on some days and heavy rain on others made outside classes an impossibility. But, said Abraham, "God gave me the vision for what to do in our situation."

After traveling to the countryside to collect supplies, Abraham called on Dave Bird at CCHI to send him a team of volunteers. Using bamboo poles and leaves, the CCFTL team and local church members created an open-air shelter that can be partitioned into classrooms during the week and used all together for worship on Sundays. Team leader Ayinde Reid from CC of the Palm

Beaches, FL, commented, "Constructing it united the community in service. Everyone jumped in to help unload the trucks of materials; kids were standing around watching; a local man climbed nearby trees and chopped down coconuts for refreshment. We made a 6,000-square-foot space where people can fellowship without fear an earthquake will topple the building onto them."

Beachside Prayer

On the CCFTL team's first day in Haiti, Aaron escorted the group down to the nearby beach to introduce them to Haitian culture. As some swam and others observed from the sandy hillside, Ayinde noticed several young

men playing soccer. Ayinde, who grew up in Jamaica and could communicate some with Creole speakers due to language similarities, was looking for opportunities to relate with people. "I wanted to be conscientious not to come off as an outsider," Ayinde explained. So he approached the group to join their game; but just then another man walked by, and the two began talking.

"His Creole was hard to understand, so I asked Shirley to translate," Ayinde said. Team member Shirley Francois' Haitian-American background enabled her to speak Creole and French. The man told Shirley that of all who had traveled to Haiti to help

after the earthquake, Ayinde was the first to stop and interact with him. "His demeanor was kind of unapproachable—hard and tough," said Ayinde. "He seemed impressed, almost taken aback, that we would take the time to talk with him. He said that while so many others had come down, he had never sensed a connection with them or felt personally cared about."

It was soon time to leave, but the man followed Ayinde and continued their conversation as the group walked up the hillside. "We began to talk about the Lord," said Ayinde. "He said he had a background in religion but not a relationship with Christ, and that he had done things he thought God couldn't forgive him for." Ayinde

quoted Romans 6:23, "For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord," and explained that God's forgiveness through Christ's sacrifice reaches deeper than any sin. "And I talked about my own brokenness," he added.

The man's interest never waned through more than a half hour of conversation, so Ayinde asked if he would like to accept Christ as Lord. "He answered yes, so I led him in prayer to confess his sin and ask God for forgiveness," Ayinde said. "Then I explained that walking with Christ is a journey—his life may not change overnight, but I encouraged him to look for a Bible-based church where he can grow spiritually." 🙏

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CC Caneille

Pastor Huguener Bastia and his American wife Betty serve in Caneille, Bastia's hometown about seven miles southeast of the city of Hinche. Bastia, who goes by his last name, now leads the church his father established, CC Caneille. The couple was sent by CC Appleton, WI, the fellowship they attended before moving to Haiti.

While this northern region was not strongly affected by the quake, the destruction of Port-au-Prince has caused the population of other areas to swell. As Pastor Dwight Douville of CC Appleton explained, "For years, Port-au-Prince has been Haiti's lifeline. People have left the villages to get a job there and send the money back home. Now it's the reverse—because the city is so devastated and dangerous, people are moving elsewhere. Homes that used to have five or six people now have 15 or 20." Because of this need for housing throughout the nation, CC Caneille has established a tent city on their church grounds. Called Camp Jerusalem, the compound currently houses about 20 displaced families.

One month after the earthquake, Pastor Dwight and Assistant Pastor Lane Gibson visited Caneille to assess the needs and encourage the believers. They noted the camp's dire need for clean drinking water, so CC Appleton used earthquake fund donations to buy a system that purifies 1,000 gallons of water a day. "Most major health problems in Haiti are water related," Dwight said. The unit is solar powered to accommodate Haiti's limited electricity supply.

The church is coordinating ongoing teams from multiple fellowships to construct a kitchen for tent city residents and set up circus tents for shelter from the spring rains. A recent team established a radio station that reaches nearby cities of more than 140,000 residents, Dwight said. The believers distributed 50 hand-crank radios so people can hear the Bible teaching without electricity, and CC Appleton intends to send more.

While Dwight was in Caneille, he preached on Sunday and was approached afterward by a 15-year-old girl asking for help. The oldest of five whose father had previously passed away, she was at home with her siblings when the quake struck. Their mother was out selling produce in the market. The

youngest three children had been outside playing and were unharmed, but she and her 13-year-old sister were inside the house in Port-au-Prince and became trapped for four days. During that time, they prayed—according to their mother's prior instructions for responding to catastrophe. They were eventually rescued, but they had not heard from their mother in the month since.

Dwight asked Pastor Bastia to care for the children as orphans. A few days later Bastia took them shopping for school uniforms, and while they were in the city, the girl's mobile phone rang. It was her mother. She had been medevaced to the Dominican Republic with serious injuries, she explained, and had just returned to Haiti. The family has been reunited and now stays in CC Caneille's tent city. ☺



Photo by Max Rathke

Pastor Bastia, center, tests CC Caneille's newly-established radio station.



Photo by Huguener Bastia

Assistant Pastor Lane Gibson of CC Appleton drinks from the water-purifying system the church purchased for displaced families in CC Caneille's tent city.

CC Caneille, Haiti

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Haiti occupies the western half of the Caribbean island it shares with the Dominican Republic. Its capital of Port-au-Prince was devastated by the earthquake.



Photo by Lane Gibson

Pastor Dwight Douville of CC Appleton, WI, preaches at CC Caneille one month after the earthquake; Pastor Huguener Bastia of CC Caneille translates. CC Appleton, Bastia's sending church, is coordinating teams to volunteer with construction and other needs in rural, northern Haiti.