

• The Michigan Area Haiti Task Force •

• Who We Are & What We Do •

The Michigan Area Haiti Task Force (MAHTF) was established in response to the covenant between the Michigan Conferences of the United Methodist Church and the Eglise Methodiste dHaiti (EMH). For 25 years, the MAHTF has been working in partnership with UMCOR and United Methodist Volunteers in Mission (UMVIM) to reduce hunger, improve school attendance, provide materials and supplies for the Methodist Schools, and increase academic performance through the Haiti Hot Lunch program.

While renewing our covenant with the EMH, the top priority became equipping the nearly 500 Local Preachers who were in the process of being accredited. The Task Force Haiti Local Preachers Academy has trained over 360 Local Preachers so far. This training was provided by 19 UMC Elders (17 of whom were from Michigan) and 15 ordained pastors within the EMH. These sessions were videotaped so that they would be available to candidates in the future.

UMVIM teams, at the invitation of, and working alongside EMH, travel throughout Haiti to deliver school kits, sewing kits, birthing kits, and drinking water filtration systems to those in need. They also hire and work alongside Haitians to build and repair schools and churches. They provide teacher training and salary support and teach Bible School or provide the means for the local church leadership to do so.

After Hurricane Matthew struck last October, the MAHTF allocated funding to provide shipping containers and private aircraft to provide emergency relief supplies to the Jeremie area, which was most heavily damaged. They also allocated funds to repair the damage to the Methodist Guest House in Jeremie, which houses volunteers who travel to Haiti to provide aid.

In cooperation with Water With Blessing, the MAHTF is supporting the efforts to bring clean, potable water to the areas hardest hit by the hurricane. Using Sawyer Water Filters, clean water has already been delivered to more than 5,000 people in the mountain villages around Jeremie, with another 8,000 soon to receive assistance.

Since the new year, UMVIM teams have helped to repair damage to the roof of the Good Samaritan Home, which provides food and shelter to those unable to care for themselves, including orphans, the elderly, and the disabled. The building also received new doors for the dining area and a new water collection tank.

Teams have also worked to build a new roof for the church in Gommiers, which was completely stripped away during the hurricane. The church also serves as a school for about 200 children, preschoolers through 6th graders.