

2012 - November 19



## Haitian Artisans for Peace International

*... encouraging creativity, promoting gender equality, creating economic opportunity,*

*nurturing spirituality,*

*growing healthy communities...*



### Sharing the 'good things'

*This has been a FULL year: full of anticipation, realization, trials and triumphs! As Executive Director of Haitian Artisans for Peace International (HAPI), I am often caught up in the details and 'busyness' that accompany organizational life.*

*Then I pause to breathe in the wonderment of what God is creating...and exhale my gratitude.*

*A message from Matthew 6: 25-34 reminded me that the admonition is not to worry about our physical necessities, but rather to "Focus on those good things that I (God) have brought to you...and move towards them."*

*The 'good things' brought into being when we "desire first and foremost God's kingdom." ~Matthew 6:33*

*I often recount HAPI accomplishments that address meeting physical needs in tangible, measurable terms. I am grateful for these visible gifts, but today I share my thankfulness for a few of the “good things”:*



Increased equality and respect between men and women as women labored side by side in the construction of Merlet Center.

Connection in mission across the miles, as the global members of The United Methodist General Conference raised their voices in singing along with the [Shalom Singers' music video, 'Jezu de Nazaret.'](#)



The church *being* the church at UM General Conference as members received HAPI messenger bags. I envisioned the hands that had prepared them and gave thanks because the artisans had a little more ‘shalom’ in their lives.

Celebrating a friend's faith journey to walk away from "a good job" to apply his faith, skills and knowledge to create jobs and educate Haitians in new technologies for a more prosperous, healthy future: “Here I am, Lord.”



Joyful faces of children who experienced their first taste of salt water on a field trip that brought the ocean closer than a park mural.

Cross-cultural friendships, new and continued, maturing in understanding and respect as we share our faith, work, knowledge, technology and ideas.



Conversing with a diverse group of community members and hearing: *"The face of our community is changing [because of Merlet Center]!"*

*"HAPI is different than other organizations because it sustains what it starts."*

*"We can see where HAPI's money goes in the community."*

*"More children in Mizak are in school this fall because many parents found work at Merlet Center."*

*"HAPI contributes to the community, even when it does not benefit them."*

*"In this circle, we have representatives from Catholic, Methodist, Pentecostal, and Vodunist, and we can sit together and talk about how to improve our community."*

Dedicated long term volunteers who empower others to realize their value and potential.



'Micah Way' teams who engage with with justice, compassion and accompaniment. We appreciate their witness and advocacy for the people of Haiti *not* as objects of charity to be provided for, but as people with rights and responsibilities, capable of participating in their own affairs.

HAPI's staff growing daily in capacity and confidence to carry out their responsibilities.



An [Ubuntu journey](#) with United Methodist Women that enlarged Mizak Methodist participants' appreciation for the beauty of their country while also inspiring compassion, not stigma, for those suffering with HIV / AIDS.

Teamwork and pride of workmanship in [construction technology](#) that is 'green' from raw materials to installation, and affords greater energy-efficiency and protection against hurricanes and earthquakes than my home!



'Ripples' of Shalom: attending the grand opening of Creative Women of the World. Lorelei 's product development and marketing work with HAPI led to her 'call' to extend the opportunity of creativity as a solution to poverty to women around the globe. ...

Seeing signs of 'rippling' economic growth in new construction and small businesses in Mizak.



Witnessing a community come together: sweeping and scrubbing, painting playground equipment, crafting decorations, ironing uniforms, rehearsing dance and song--even carrying rocks from the construction site out to the road to fill in the potholes.

Parading children who reclaim the symbols of militarism into a shout for Shalom!



Uniting with friends from Haiti and across the globe in a movement of Shalom.

A young man in Mizak dreamt of leaving his mountain for a “better life.” Then he found work at Merlet Center. In September, he participated in the Merlet Center Service of Dedication and the International Day of Peace. Following these two days of hope and thanksgiving for peace and prosperity, the young man called General Director Paul Prevost and said, “I now understand what it means to be Methodist and to have ‘shalom’ and I no longer want to leave my community; I find hope here!”



“In your peace, I will find my peace!” My heart is FULL!

I pray for all of us in HAPI leadership will remember to “desire first and foremost God’s kingdom” and from that center will flow the promise of the ‘necessities’: “And all these things will be given to you as well.”

How fitting that the very next chapter in Matthew instructs us to “Ask, and you will receive!” :)

Did you know that following Thanksgiving we now have 'Black Friday,' 'Cyber Monday,' and 'Giving Tuesday?!' The second edition of this HAPI holiday greeting will be to share with you new developments and a selection of opportunities for your participation in HAPI Community of Shalom!

Shalom,  
Valerie

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