

Many people have called or emailed inquiring about our working group and its planned trip to help install a clean water system at the Trinity House home and school in Jacmel, Haiti. We have had limited contact with our partners in Haiti, the St. Joseph Family homes, to which Trinity House belongs. Initial word is that the St. Joseph home in Petionville, which among other things housed a number of former street boys, operated an art center, and was the base of the Resurrection Dance Theater, was destroyed in the earthquake. All but one of the boys were on the roof for afternoon devotions at the time and were unharmed. The boy who was trapped was rescued, but sustained injuries as did Bill- a former resident who was managing the home. The Wings of Hope house in Fermathe, which cares for physically and mentally disabled children abandoned by their families, sustained structural damage, but for now the residents of St. Joe's and Wings are staying at Wings. We have been told that those at Trinity House are okay. While we are grateful for the safety of the residents at all three homes, we were saddened however to learn that a Wartburg Seminary student named Ben Larson who was staying at St. Joseph's was killed in the collapse.

The working group had purchased tickets and had planned to travel at the end of February. News reports continue to pour in detailing the extensive destruction throughout the country. We will be re-evaluating our travel plans as we have a clearer picture of conditions on the ground. Living Waters for the World has an established network of clean water systems throughout the country of Haiti, it has been reported that half of those systems are believed to have been destroyed in the earthquake. Our first concern is for the immediate well-being of our friends. As we are able, we will be in touch with our partners to assess how to proceed and how we can best assist them in the recovery process. Those wishing to make financial contributions in the wake of this tragedy may want to consider donating to The Red Cross, Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, or to Hearts With Haiti- the non-profit that supports the mission of the St. Joseph Family. In the meantime, we weep with those who weep for God's children in Haiti.

*Rev. Matthew Miller ~ First Presbyterian Church Sioux City IA ~ PPH Living Waters Working Group*