

Building To Educate

*Serving St. John the Evangelist School, Petit Harpon, Haiti*

## OH Christmas Cards Mean So Much For Many Children's Futures

Our Outreach Haiti committee has supported the students and families of Petit Harpon's St. John the Evangelist School since the school began more than 25 years ago.

At any time you can help ensure the school's longterm security by giving to its endowment fund. And this time of year we offer Christmas cards that help meet our students' immediate needs.

**Outreach Haiti's mission is to educate the children of Petit Harpon.**

**Our vision is to facilitate a healthy, economically self-sustaining community through education in Haiti at Petit Harpon.**

**Our Long-term Goals:**

- Build a school
- Handle growth for high school classes
- Support nutritional requirements for learning
- Develop programs for the school to support itself
- Maintain school facilities

**Outreach Haiti Committee:**

Ann Aiken  
Charlie Brock, Treasurer  
Tom Clary  
Jon Dutton, Chairperson  
Cameron Ellis  
Jean Anne Gardner  
Jim Hudson  
Ryan Johnson  
Chris Knight  
Charles Mahan, Newsletter Editor  
Frank McDonald  
Fred Robinson  
Keith Sanford  
Mary Beth Sutton  
The Rev. John Talbird  
The Rev. Ann Weeks

You can honor a loved one this Christmas by supporting a child's education in Petit Harpon. Our annual offering of St. John the Evangelist Christmas cards is a major part of our fundraising efforts.

You may send the cards yourself, or we will send your loved one a card with a cover portrait of Haiti's children and information inside, including your name.

Be sure to include the names and addresses of those who are to receive the cards if you want us to mail them.

It's a meaningful way to remember family, friends, teachers, and co-workers

at this special time of the year.

We offer three levels of giving: providing two months of nutritious meals for a student for \$15 per card/per recipient; one student's books and uniform are \$25 per card/per recipient; and a \$100 donation per card/per recipient covers the cost of one year's tuition for one student.

To order, contact Ann Aiken, 425 West Brow Road, Lookout Mtn., TN 37350, email [archiann51@gmail.com](mailto:archiann51@gmail.com), home phone (423) 821-2032; or Charles Mahan, email [cvmahan@aol.com](mailto:cvmahan@aol.com), home phone (706) 398-3766.



Your Christmas card gift will brighten smiles and help educate Petit Harpon's little ones

## Grateful Petit Harpon Community Appreciates Your Help Caring For Them

Haiti is enduring a very tough time. Earthquakes, hurricanes, rampant inflation, unemployment, gang violence, and the Presidential assassination mean chaos and struggle for its people. We pray for them; we cannot fix the country's brokenness.

But Outreach Haiti has supported one mountain community since 1995 by building and maintaining a school, a church, and a clinic. The people of Petit Harpon are healthy and safe.

Thanks to our generous donors, our friends and partners in Petit Harpon have realistic hopes for better lives. They have asked us to tell you that your caring is clear and strong and sustaining to them, and they pray for us.

In this newsletter some of our faithful volunteers tell their stories of making friends and finding their missions.



### Exactly Where I Need To Stay

By Ann Aiken

On my first trip to Haiti, July 1995, I was terrified. Talk about out of my comfort zone.....

It was hot, humid, dirty, barbed wire was strung everywhere; there were UN Peacekeeping troops holding machine guns on every corner and thousands of hungry Haitians living in sheds on the street. I had never witnessed such extreme poverty and deprivation in my life. The odor of raw sewage permeated our van. We finally arrived at our home for the week, Holy Trinity Cathedral and Convent.

As we pulled in, a big iron gate closed behind us. I felt a little safer, but was still afraid to get out of the van. A tiny little girl, malnourished and dressed in rags, walked over to me and reached for my hand.

Whether she sensed my fear and unease, I will never know, but that precious child of God, with her tiny soft hand holding mine, filled me with love, a sense of calm and a real peace that I was exactly where I needed to be.

Now, 26 years later, with countless contributions, volunteers, and support, I am confident that our partnership with Petit Harpon is exactly where I need to stay!

### Building Quality Education

By Fred Robinson

I have long believed that offering quality education is the best option to advance economic security, whether in Haiti or Tennessee. Having visited Petit Harpon early in the school construction, I understood the great need.

Seeing the kids' curiosity as the school was constructed made me confident they would value the opportunity to learn. Seeing the community working on the school gave me the belief we couldn't do it without them, and they, likewise, could never have built the school without our support. It was rewarding to see that joint effort work.

Witnessing the strong bonds between Ann Aiken, Jim Hudson, Lou Garcia, and others with Haitian friends is an especially meaningful memory.

I'd hope we can continue to have good Haitian leadership at the school and in the Episcopal church, while continuing our stable support that the community could not do without.



## Kids Sharing Smiles and Gratitude, Because We Are There

By Charlie Brock

I wanted to get out of my comfort zone. I attended a Haiti event at Ann Aiken's house in the summer of 1997 to learn more. I was so moved I came home and told my wife I was going on the next available trip, which turned out to be January '98.

Haiti grabbed my heart on my very first trip. We had packed a number of small Christmas bags with various goodies in them. One afternoon we gathered in a classroom with the children and as we started handing them out it became evident that we were going to be short on bags.

I was getting nervous about how we—and they—would handle it when one of the teachers said something (in Creole of course) and kids just naturally started sharing—"doubling up" on bags. There was no drama, no tears, no fussing—just smiles and gratitude that we had brought them something. It was a beautiful moment.

For the country, I want peace, where Haitians as well as visitors can come and go without fear. I also want freedom from rampant corruption, so that infrastructure can be built that's reliable and creates a platform for future investment, creating stability and economic opportunity. For our friends in Petit Harpon, I want the children of the community to be educated and I want to be able to send some of our graduates on to university in hopes that later, following their schooling, they will come back to Petit Harpon to serve the community and the next generation.



## A Commitment To People for Generations To Come

By Jon Dutton

I got involved in 2009. I was aware of our church's involvement through Lou Garcia, who was my oldest son's Godfather. Lou would talk about the school and the people and all the trips he had made and the impact it made on him. Mainly, Lou would talk about the people; that's what I remember most and that's what intrigued me about the ministry. Our ministry is a commitment to people.

I remember vividly when I came home from my first trip in 2009. I was showing my wife Ginger some photos of the children. One child looked especially cute! He was smiling from ear to ear in his school uniform as school ended for the day.

Ginger told me "we should adopt him!" I laughed and told her that his mother loved him very much! In fact, I remember his mother walking him to school every day and meeting him with his friends at the end of the day. It's been a lot of fun to see that child grow into a young man over the years.

My hope, dream, prayer is we continue our partnership with St. John the Evangelist for generations to come. There is no doubt that Haiti has its issues. Haiti's history is one dysfunctional government after another. Saying that, we get to impact a community and help children grow up with the nutrition and education that can make a difference.

We may not save the country, but I firmly believe we are making a meaningful impact on the people of Petit Harpon through the deep relationships we've forged over the last 25 years. My hope, dream, prayer is that our relationship lasts for generations to come.





## Outreach Haiti

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*Serving St. John the Evangelist School,  
Petit Harpon, Haiti*

[www.outreachhaiti.org](http://www.outreachhaiti.org)

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# Giving a Rural Community a Chance and Earning Their Trust

By Chris Knight, St. Peter's Episcopal Church (St. Louis)



I came into Outreach Haiti as a direct result of Jon Dutton discussing his involvement with our then rector (Luke Jernagen) at St. Peter's Episcopal Church who wanted to gauge the interest of an international outreach involvement within our congregation. He asked me if I would consider working with Jon on it and I agreed to take a trip to Petit Harpon with Jacquelyn VanWeelden, our parish communications director. We made the trip with Jon and some folks

from Church of the Good Shepherd and really enjoyed connecting with them and the people at Petit Harpon. On our return flight, Ann Aiken asked me if I would serve on the Outreach Haiti board representing St. Peter's and I agreed. On that trip Père Banna added a chicken project to his wish list, and since my entire career was associated with the global poultry industry I took that on as a project for St. Peter's Episcopal Church.

During my second trip to Haiti I spent a day with Sam Dumond, our translator, who agreed to help me make some connections with Haiti Broilers, a local chicken company that I had made contact with through my network of folks in the industry. Sam and I spent a day driving from PH to Haiti Broilers to meet with the GM and discuss what we were thinking about and figuring out how we could set up an account that would give us access to chicks and feed and how we would access technical resources from the company. It was an interesting day, talking with Sam as he drove me around the craziness of Port-au-Prince and ultimately getting to Haiti Broilers HQ, north of PAP. We had a great discussion, worked with their staff, and figured out how we could proceed.

Sam was very helpful and very interested in the project as he was very interested in developing something similar to it to

help support widows in the church he worked at. He described to me the fact that in Haiti there was a law that everyone needed to be buried when they died, and that cost about \$300. These widows had no way to pay for their burial. A project like we were discussing for PH could help these ladies earn money for their burial.

That heart-breaking story hooked me and I agreed to provide the capital for Sam to do this project in exchange for his support of the PH project to make chick and feed deliveries and keep us in communication with their progress. That was a big deal for me, but here's what made me feel like I was making a difference.

At the end of the long day with Sam and on our return to Jacmel, as he pulled up to the hotel, he stopped the pickup and turned to me and thanked me for trusting him—not about the project or the future we could produce, just thanking me for trusting him to take me through PAP to our destination and back. It was then that I realized that just being there and being with him was a huge validation to his humanity. I was totally humbled because to me it was really no big deal...

The Petit Harpon school is all about giving Haitians in the rural mountain community a chance. I was asked by a parishioner why we would consider this project, that it did not seem sustainable to him. I say that not educating children is itself not sustainable. That's why I and my wife are engaged in this project with our sense of hope for a future for these people that is meaningful to them and their humanity.

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**For ongoing school expenses,** make checks payable to Church of the Good Shepherd--Outreach Haiti Fund.

**For the Endowment Fund for student scholarships,** make checks payable to Outreach Haiti--Aiken/Hudson Endowment Fund.

Please mail checks to:

Attn: Nicole Seiferth

211 Franklin Road

Lookout Mountain, TN 37350

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