

CHRISTIAN OUTREACH OPPORTUNITY

Haiti recently suffered an earthquake of 7.2 magnitude. Haiti is a country of nearly 9 million of our brothers and sisters in Christ and a country with which Charleston Atlantic Presbytery has formed significant relationships and partnerships over the past ten years. Still reeling from four hurricanes that slammed Haiti less than two years ago, the Haitian people are yet again confronted by a disaster for which they are totally unprepared and unequipped. There is no government infrastructure, no internal disaster program, no relief funds - and they will be totally dependent on those of us outside of the country for help.

Our presbytery has had a long relationship with St. Josephs Home for Boys and the three houses that serve abandoned children. We have heard from folks connected to St. Josephs and here is what we know. St. Josephs Home for Boys in Port au Prince collapsed and is a total loss. Miraculously, most of the boys were outside the house at the time of the earthquake and were unhurt. One child was trapped, but was able to be dug out and Bill, the Director, was injured but is going to be okay. Wings of Hope, the home for special needs children just outside Port au Prince, suffered major structural damage and the children cannot occupy the building, but again, no one was hurt. (Where do you take 33 special needs kids to sleep when they suddenly have no home?) Details on Trinity House are sketchy. It is the third home for children on the southern coast in Jacmel. We do know a hospital in Jacmel collapsed and is turning away people, so we know the impact of the earthquake was certainly felt at least two hours away from the epicenter. The [Hearts with Haiti website](#) will contain updates as news becomes available on the three homes that so many of our churches have been involved in supporting.

WHAT CAN WE DO?

Charleston Atlantic Presbytery is recommending our churches initially respond in one of two ways (in addition to responding with prayer): (1) give funds designated for Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (which is an immediate response by the denomination of people, resources and funds and which has set a goal to send one million dollars), or (2) give funds designated for Hearts with Haiti (which will directly benefit the St. Josephs Homes for Children). Both of these can be sent through the Charleston Atlantic Presbytery Office and will be distributed weekly so that money is immediately available to the two groups.

If you would like to contribute funds, you can make a check out to Bethel Presbyterian Church with either "Presbyterian Disaster Assistance" (or "PDA"), or "Hearts With Haiti" written at the bottom. Or you can place cash in one of the brown pew envelopes and write either of those two descriptions on it, and place the funds in the collection plate. The church will then send a lump sum checks to the Presbytery Office.

