

Update: August 7, 2011

Thanks for the prayers!

This week we spent a lot of time preparing for the tropical storm named Emily. This turned out to be time overall well spent because even though the storm didn't have direct affect it still gave us trouble. It was expected to come right across Haiti and bring lots of rain and wind with it. Well, there were also lots of prayers of protection offered up, and the storm lost steam and fell apart. Of course this was nice for us as we only had increased winds for a few days this week, but for the thousands of people who are still living in tents and other temporary shelters after the earthquake last year this was more than nice. There was enough wind that the harbor was closed for a few days. The first day it was closed on the prediction that the storm was approaching and as it turned out the ocean was calmer all of that day than it usually is. Then the wind picked up and there were rough seas for a couple days that did warrant the closures. For those living in temporary shelters I know the wind was bad enough, but rain could have really been life threatening both because of the direct effects of the weather as well as the increased risk for disease that come up with all that water. One lingering disruption from the storm is that we still cannot purchase diesel on the island which was something we have been enjoying most of the time this year.

There were some people on the island who seemed a little bit disappointed by the lack of storm though! We spent the week with a super neat group from St Louis. There were 3 leaders for the team and 7 college students. They all seemed a little bit up for the adventure of hunkering down through a tropical storm or even a hurricane. Of course they didn't want to see any of the people suffer, and they really didn't want the weather to interfere with the plans they had for the kids, so overall they were also happy the storm fell apart. I did get a number of volunteers to go along if the water line broke again, and even one afternoon we visited the water lines in the ravine and most of them climbed the hillside to where we needed to do the repair last weekend.

During the week the team led Bible School for children down at the church on the saline as well as doing sessions playing sports, teaching music, and learning English at the WISH Youth Center. On Friday they had a program for the parents of the children that went great until they unleashed the chaos which can only be seen when handing out candy to children in a crowd. Even with that little bit of chaos at the end, the program was a great success and everyone really enjoyed it. The team seemed perfectly fitted for working here in Haiti and it was so fun to see the leaders in the town as they went around running into old friends they had made years ago when they were here themselves as youth. It was also very encouraging that many of the young men and women who we interact with were the ones who had been in the Bible Schools taught by them 10 years ago.

Of course our family really enjoyed getting to know these fine young people, but I think none as much as Garin. He was able to go along to the Bible School and participate, but he was also smitten by one of the girls on the team. When they were getting ready to fly out on Saturday he gave her a very long hug and then sat on the ground sobbing for a long time over how sad it is when teams leave. They even left some notes behind regarding some funny things so we continue to laugh and enjoy this team even though they have left.

Blessings,
Rod