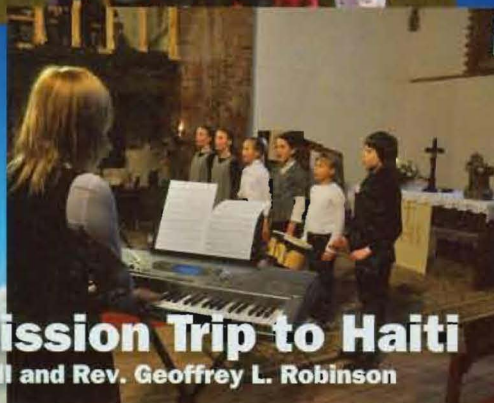
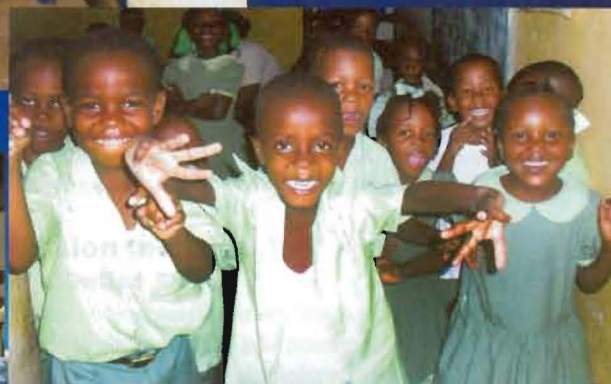


For the Life of the World

Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne

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Student Mission Trip to Haiti

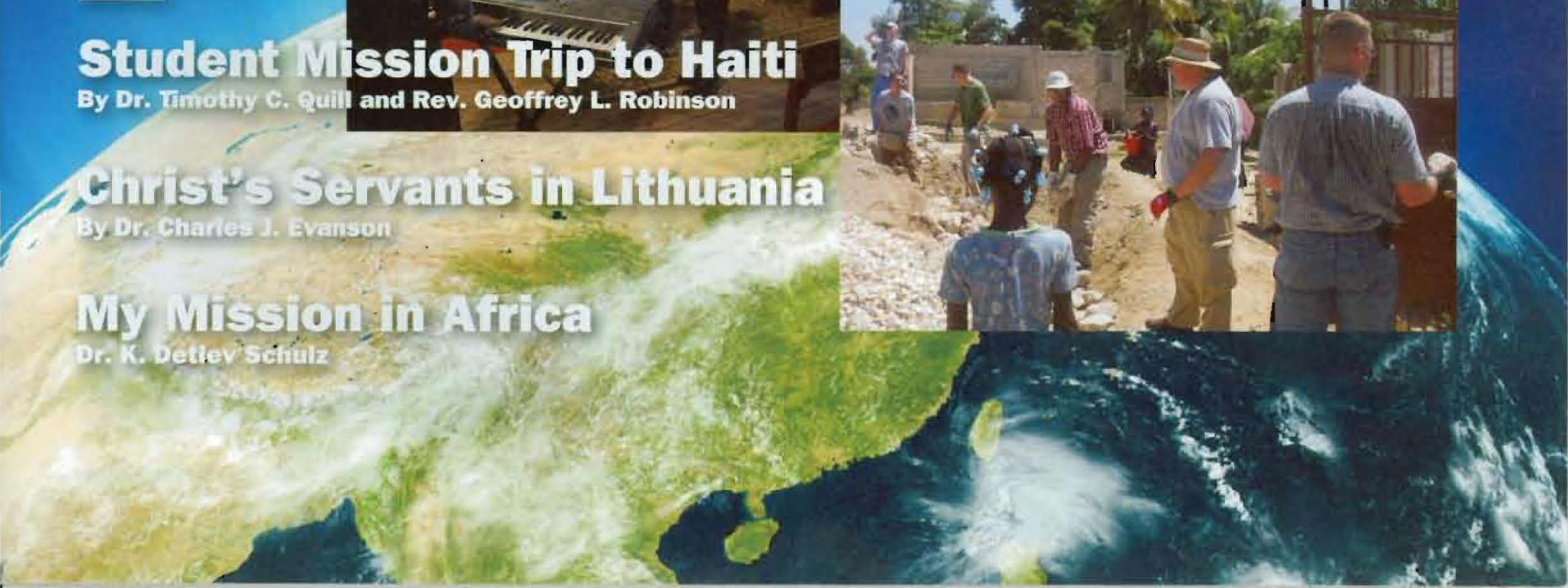
By Dr. Timothy C. Quill and Rev. Geoffrey L. Robinson

Christ's Servants in Lithuania

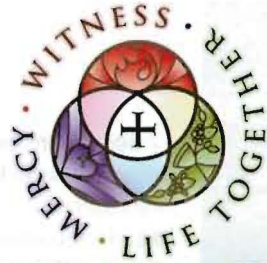
By Dr. Charles J. Evanson

My Mission in Africa

Dr. K. Detlev Schulz



Student Mission Trip to Haiti



By Dr. Timothy C. Quill and
Rev. Geoffrey L. Robinson

July 11, 2010, will be remembered for an earthquake that transformed the structural landscape of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS). The epicenter of this seismic event was the Synod Convention in Houston, Texas, as delegates approved resolution 8-08A on Structure and Governance. Gone were the six program boards, including Missions, Communications, Black Ministry, District and Congregational Services, Higher Education and Human Care. It all took just eight seconds. Now our Synod is working together to form two new boards of National and International Mission.





Six months earlier, on January 12, 2010, a massive 7.0 earthquake struck Haiti. The epicenter of the upheaval was 16 miles east of Port au Prince in the town of Léogâne. Within 30 to 40 seconds entire blocks, along with their inhabitants, were simply gone. Since then, Haiti has been struggling to rebuild. The nation's superstructure and government were left in shambles. Homes, roads, hospitals, businesses, schools, churches and families need to be rebuilt. It is an enormous task that includes not only money, resources and expertise, but also emotional and spiritual care. The LCMS was among the first to respond. Within days, emergency and medical personnel and

supplies were mobilized by LCMS World Relief and Human Care and arrived in Haiti. As the rebuilding continues, the LCMS is working closely with the President, pastors and people of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Haiti (ELCH).

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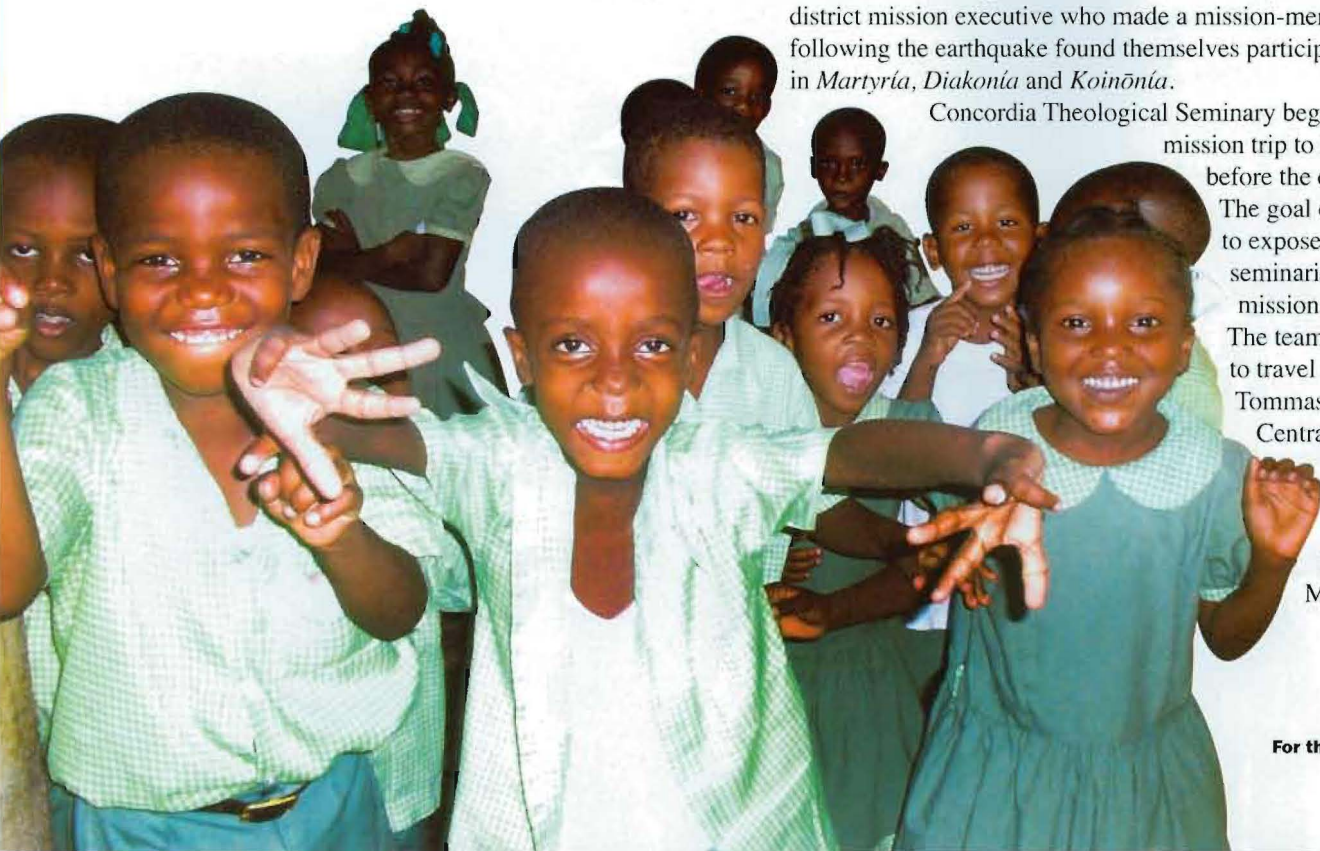
These are challenging times of change and rebuilding for Haiti, the ELCH and also for the LCMS. These are also exciting days and a time of opportunity for our churches as we engage in evangelical witness, worship and works of mercy. President Matthew Harrison has articulated a theological foundation that will give an evangelical shape to the new synodical structures. All the work undertaken by the two new synodical boards (as is the case with congregations) is nothing more than concrete expressions of the church's *Martyria* (witness), *Diakonia* (mercy) and *Koinonia* (life together). Witness includes the proclamation or preaching of the Word, witness to Christ in one's vocation and mission/church planting. Life together includes *Liturgia* (worship), doctrine and practice, church fellowship, Lutheran schools, universities and seminaries. Mercy includes works of charity to those both within and without the body of Christ.

The beauty of this threefold emphasis is that it is not an abstract concept or program designed by ivory tower theologians or isolated bureaucrats. It confesses simply what the church is and does. It is profoundly and richly biblical, theological and ecclesial, yet straightforward and concrete. The integrity and reciprocal nature of witness, worship and mercy in the life of the church is also taught in the classrooms at Concordia Theological Seminary. Moreover, the eight seminarians, seminary professor and district mission executive who made a mission-mercy trip to Haiti following the earthquake found themselves participating first hand in *Martyria*, *Diakonia* and *Koinonia*.

Concordia Theological Seminary began planning the mission trip to Haiti months before the earthquake.

The goal of the trip was to expose American seminarians to the mission field in Haiti. The team was scheduled to travel to the city of Tommassique in the Central Plateau in

March of 2010 and work with Pastor Michel Jean Claude Marin (father of




CTS seminary student Blaise Marin). The purpose was to learn first hand how Haitian pastors, teachers, evangelists and laity witness to Christ and the Gospel to people living in fear of the devil, voodoo and spiritual legalism. They would see the church at worship and as it cares for people living in one of the poorest countries on earth. They would also be given an opportunity to teach in the Lutheran schools and churches of the ELCH.

Everything changed when Haiti was struck by the earthquake seven weeks before the mission team was scheduled to depart. Seminarians are preparing to be pastors and missionaries, not doctors and nurses. The earthquake changed the timing of the trip but not its necessity or urgency. Because of the horrendous conditions in Haiti, it was deemed prudent to work with LCMS World Relief. Synod's human care ministries have vast experience in international disaster relief. The mission trip was delayed until June, at which time it took on a new character of both mission and mercy.

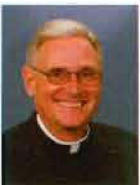
Upon arrival in Port au Prince on June 8, the team traveled immediately up the rugged mountain roads of the Central Plateau. The first task of the team was to roll up their sleeves for some heavy physical labor helping to prepare the foundation of a church in Tommassique. The church center will serve current members and also be used to minister to refugees who moved from Port au Prince following the earthquake.

Rev. Markey Kessa, President of the ELCH, organized an extensive schedule in order to thoroughly expose the students to the Lutheran Church, her congregations, schools, orphanages and needs connected with the earthquake.

From the Central Plateau the team traveled south over the mountainous roads to the coastal city of Jacmel and then to Les Cayes, the home of Pastor Paul Toulette, a graduate of CTS. The Les Cayes experience included visits to large and small congregations and mission stations, Lutheran schools and orphanages, as well as learning about the work being done by CTS Deaconess Intern Alyssa Stone. The students had significant opportunity to worship, share meals and converse with Haitian pastors, seminarians, evangelists, adults and children.

While the seminarians received modest assistance for their trip, the majority of their expenses came out of their own pockets. As a result of their trip, \$10,000 has been raised in donations to the seminary which will be sent to Haiti. This has been matched by LCMS World Relief and Human Care which brings the total to \$20,000. At the recommendation of the ELCH and LCMS World Relief, donations from the CTS Mission-Mercy trip will be divided equally between humanitarian support for orphans from the earthquake and the construction of the Lutheran church in Tommassique. The distribution of the funds is a concrete testimony to how the church's mission integrates witness, worship and mercy. We owe a great deal of gratitude to the seminarians and the friends of CTS who made generous donations. 

Dr. Timothy Quill serves as Dean of International Studies at Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, Indiana.



Rev. Geoffrey L. Robinson serves as Executive Counselor for Outreach for the Indiana District of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.



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