

## Haiti, Winter Welfare, Military Service, January 2011

The Bible Companion readings this Sunday include Matthew 4, and there's an MP3 about this at <http://www.aletheiacollege.net/audio/mt4.mp3>

### WINTER WELFARE

We continue to assist a large number of brothers and sisters and their families in various ways, thanks to your kind support. The snowfall in Eastern Europe is extraordinary... driving around Riga [or trying to], we keep encountering our bre & sis and contacts from the night shelters on the streets, life's pretty awful having to be on the streets all day when the streets are unwalkable... so we are running hither and thither for various things. Just a couple of many examples- we saw a sister sitting in the snow at a bus stop, clutching her plastic supermarket bag where she has her few possessions. The bus had just left and she stayed sitting there. "Why are you sitting here?". "Well they've cleaned the snow off the pavement around the bus stop, I am just too tired to keep on walking these snowy streets as anyway I have nowhere much to go until the shelter re-opens".

Or another friend of ours who had damaged his foot and was walking to someone he thought could bandage it up better [too expensive to go to the doctors].

Confronted with cases like these, one can hardly drive on by. But it all takes a lot of time and resources. And it's not hard to go out onto the byways and compel people to come in to hear the Gospel and have a coffee... The new hall is a real blessing and all the sacrifices well worth it. Br Peter Stringer is enjoying himself clearing snow off the roof, but the snow mountains are huge:



### MILITARY SERVICE

There are two countries in Eastern Europe where the Communist party is still in power, and the old style system of military service callup, refusal to recognize conscientious objection to military service for groups like ours, and punishment for those who refuse to go in. There's a young brother in one of those countries now facing all this; his family were amongst the first to be baptized in the former USSR and he is well grounded in the Faith, was baptized about six years ago and has been a faithful supporter of Bible Schools and ecclesial meetings ever since. We would ask for your prayers for our young brother. We're intending to hire a lawyer to try to make a special appeal, but this will be fairly costly, assuming his case will likely go to appeal. We mention this at this stage although the whole process may well go on for at least a year. Please remember brother J in your prayers, and his family, and please do consider supporting the costs involved.

### HAITI

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Greetings in the name of Jesus our saviour and the wonderful hope of the Kingdom which we share. My name is brother Nick Cox from Huddersfield UK. After returning from a recent visit to the ecclesia in Haiti, I received the following request from brother Esmath of the Haiti ecclesia.

*“I know you will not be able to provide everything to us but in a certain ways you can help us if you are willing because there is a Haitian proverb says. Where there is a will there is a way. Helping someone does not mean send money to Him, there are different ways you can help somebody even in a long distance. The fact that they are only 6 persons who are working, you see how difficult the situation is for this people who are prevent from anything. I request your support the way you want, food, clothes, shoes, medicine and so forth. Most of the people do not know what they are going to eat after Church and I would like to provide them even a sandwich and a cup of juice every Sunday after church. Secondly: sending to us some boxes of women and men shoes and clothes would be very meaningful to them due their situation. I am hopeful this email will touch every Christian’s heart that have so many needless clothes and shoes, besides so many people are throwing food into garbidge can while other are dying with Hunger.”*

No doubt you have heard in the news of the many troubles that the Haitian people have had to cope with over the last 12 months. There was the earthquake, tropical storms, cholera and the recent political unrest and violence. During this time the membership of the ecclesia in Haiti has increased from 10 to 46. I have found it remarkable that since my first visit, two weeks after the earthquake, up until now I have not received any requests for welfare even though, with only 6 of the 46 members working, the need is very real. Instead the requests that have been made have been to support the wonderful desire by the brothers and sisters to further spread the true gospel message throughout Haiti.

I’m sure, having read brother Esmaths request, many of you will want to help but don’t know how to, so what I am requesting is 50 individuals or ecclesias who will be willing to foster one member of the Haiti Ecclesia for one year. The idea is that the individual or ecclesia will send one parcel of goods each month directly to one of the brothers or sisters in Haiti. It is hoped that despite the language barriers (Haitians speak French or creole) both parties will be able to communicate enough to foster a family bond in Christ. I estimate the cost of one parcel, including contents and postage, may be up to pound;30 each month, however more details of what is required to be sent and the delivery method will be forwarded once we know that the fostering scheme will be going ahead. In order to provide food at the church service each Sunday, Esmath estimates it would cost around pound ;70 each week. So if you can and are willing to help, either by donating to the feeding program or joining the foster scheme, then please contact me using the details at the top.

May the love of our heavenly Father and that of His son Jesus bless our efforts to help our family in need.

Your brother in Christ,  
Nick Cox