



"We must be willing to let go of the life we have planned so as to have the life that is waiting for us."
E.M. Forester

Hope & Haiti

June 2013

Hello! I hope this newsletter finds you doing well and enjoying the start of summer! Now is the time of year when I get jealous of all the barbecues and summer parties! It is much easier to be away from life in the US when it is snowy and cold in Indiana!

For me this has been a season of learning to let go. I've never been the person to necessarily want to live the "American dream" type of life but I've always had a picture in my mind of what I thought my life would look like. When I first moved to Haiti my plan was to be here for one year. God quickly made it clear to me that I would be here much longer. I still felt "safe" with being here though because I had just enough ties connecting me to my old life in Indiana. I still owned my house, car, and had plastic bins filled with things. To me having all this "stuff" meant that eventually God would call me back to Indiana. Back to that old life of living near my family and friends. And maybe even more importantly to me, back to the life where I was physically, financially, and emotionally comfortable.

Before moving to Haiti I read about poverty, knew the statistics, saw the pictures, and watched the news segments. I had the head knowledge I thought I would need but my heart was so unprepared for what it truly meant to walk alongside those that I was called to serve. I think part of me thought I would come here to help and to do the needed tasks. Sure I would hold cute babies in the process and maybe even learn some things culturally. I knew it would be difficult but I didn't realize how much I would fall in love with those around me. How much my heart would hurt for them. They have become my family and friends so they are no longer just statistics to me or photos of random people. Knowing them allows to me to rejoice with them over baptisms, birthdays, and just normal everyday life. Knowing them also means that I have an inside window into their hurt and struggles. I have the opportunity to walk with them when life isn't easy and when there appears to be no clear answers. (continued on other side)



Prayer requests!

-Things here have felt emotionally very heavy lately. It seems several of my kiddos have been sick, hungry, or just abnormally clingy. Please pray that I would have the wisdom to know who needs the extra time, hugs, kisses and the space on my lap.

-In the process of letting-go I have felt led to sell my house. I know this is the right decision and yet it is still emotionally hard letting go of my first home. Pray that the process will go quickly and that I will continue to let go of the things He is asking.

-That ultimately each and everything I do would show the love of Christ.

Living here has changed me. In so many ways I wish I could go back to my life before I moved to Haiti. I wish I could fit back into life in the States but for at least now I know I can't. I have realized that there was no way God was going to release my heart to leave Haiti in September as I had planned. In April I started to realize that God was also calling me to let go of the things that were "tying" me down to my old life in Indiana (more to come on this another time) and that He was preparing me for committing to another year of living in Haiti. I'm surprised at how hard it has been to let go of the "things" and yet with each step I take it is both emotionally and physically freeing.

I am now committed to serving with NVM in Haiti through September 2014. As I prepare for my third year of serving in Haiti below are ways for you to remain connected and to continue to partner with me.

***Prayer-** I believe that it is only through God's call and prayer that I am able to live and serve here in Haiti. I can't thank you enough for praying for me, the ministry I work for, and for the people of Haiti.

***Monthly support:** to donate online <http://www.nehemiahvisionministries.org/donationtype.aspx?t=missionaries>) and follow the steps. Or you can go to www.nehemiahvisionministries.org and click (top left screen) donate now and then select "missionary support" from here you will be able to select my name and fill in the remainder of the information. You can also donate monthly by mailing a check to Debra Smalley (address in One-time gift). Let me know if you have any questions!

***One-time gift:** Please write all checks to Nehemiah Vision Ministries (tax deductible). In the memo line write Intern 3 (my name can **NOT** be anywhere on the check) and mail to Debra Smalley 7014 W. Yant St, Silver Lake, IN. 46982. To make a one-time gift online please follow instructions listed in "monthly support"- you will be able to select one-time gift.

***Staying connected:** For pictures and stories you can follow along through facebook and my blog: brookessmalley.blogspot.com. Feel free to email me: [brookess_00@yahoo.com](mailto:brookess00@yahoo.com) for questions or to say hi!

I can't tell you just how much it means to me to know that you are on this journey with me- thank you for your prayers, support, and love as I continue to live and serve in Haiti!

Love, Brooke Smalley



Staff Retreat

In the last newsletter I wrote about my desire to have a "healthier 2013" by setting boundaries and choosing to add some of the things I used to love back in my schedule. In April the US staff was blessed to have the opportunity to go on a staff retreat. We drove up the mountain to Le Montcel where a retreat center is located. I'm not sure if you can call the roads we drove on actually roads- but let's just say getting there was an adventure! The views were breathtaking and the retreat center was very nice. We were told it is usually colder in this area of the mountain but none of us were prepared for just how cold it was! I wore each and every piece of clothing I packed during the day and to sleep! We were blessed to have a speaker come and he challenged each of us spiritually. He talked to us about our spiritual gifts and challenged us with our prayer lives. This time away from work and life on campus was much needed. Taking the time to step back and have someone speak into my life spiritually was a huge blessing and something that after the fact I realized I was really missing. Love that we had time together as a team to refuel spiritually and also to see another part of Haiti!



Bath time!

One of my favorite times with the kiddos is bath time! I love to make up silly little songs that involve singing about washing their arms, legs, nose, etc. Of course the children giggle the entire time because it isn't common for someone to sing to them during bath time. I'm pretty sure most of the mommas think I'm crazy! Most people would assume that just because the kids appear dirty and naked in my photos that they rarely bathe or own any clothing. The children actually bathe at least *three to four* times a day. Yes, three to four! A majority of my little friends live in mud homes with a dirt floor and they don't wear diapers- so you can imagine just how long they stay clean! I can't imagine the amount of physical strength and time it takes to walk to the well and carry each and every drop of water they need to use for bathing, laundry, cooking food, drinking, etc. It's amazing how clean you can get a kiddo with just a small bowl of water and a little soap! In the photo it's clear the girls all thought I needed some help bathing Natamara because they both jumped right in once I started! Love these little mommas!