



## Cast your vision!

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Let me borrow the phrase, "Cast Your Vision!" and use it as the theme of our spring newsletter. This phrase is a popular slogan found in both contemporary religious and secular circles. It is often applied within a group of people that share a common bond (an organization, a nation and of course, a church) and describes their need to communicate clearly with one another about who they are, what they believe and perhaps most importantly, **what they can become!**

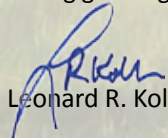
So, please allow me in the lead article of our aptly named Vision newsletter to describe in more detail our shared vision for the future of our district. Further, let us explore why our initiative for 2010, the "Work of Ministry", is so essential to this vision. In this manner I would like to "Cast Our Vision" to every congregation so that all can embrace and help create it.

Additionally, I have asked our apostles, bishops and district leaders to take the lead in casting our vision across the country. They will be conducting a series of Town Hall Meetings in your area to share our future plans. What is a Town Hall Meeting? It is simply a more informal and interactive method of communication that allows for the sharing of new ideas and that *encourages discussion*. In this edition, you will find a report of some regional workshops and Town Hall Meetings conducted recently.

Also in this edition, you will find an update on the circumstances in Haiti as well as our efforts to assist in the massive humanitarian relief work necessary following the tragic earthquake.

And finally, please find an article entitled Reflections on Mother's Day. I wish much joy and blessing to all our mothers, both in a natural and spiritual sense, on this special day. ✨

Loving greetings to all,



Leonard R. Kolb

## Stepping Forward: A work of ministry

In November of 2009, we announced our plans to launch a new initiative for 2010 called A Work of Ministry for all congregations within the NAC-USA district. As the New Year progresses, we would like to provide a clearer picture of this initiative in the hopes that each member will perceive the value and consider participating with an open heart.

Together with the circle of our apostles, I see the future of our district revolving around vibrant, healthy congregations. This would be a good moment to carefully read the NAC Mission and Vision statements. For me, these statements are not catchy phrases that make a good plaque for our walls. Rather, they describe precisely what we want to create together and to experience together. More specifically, please visualize with me a future where every member participates in creating and enjoying the following benefits in their local congregation:

- **Culture.** An atmosphere of peace and belonging where each of us feels we are an integral and indispensable member of the body of Christ. A place that radiates the acceptance, understanding, compassion, selfless giving, reconciliation and hope that Christ and His apostles exemplified and taught.

- **Divine Service Experience.** In addition, I see all of us experiencing in every service a moving, relevant message authored by the Holy Spirit,

Continued from page 1

integrated with inspirational music and culminating with the high point of forgiveness and communion with Christ.

• **Pastoral Care.** Lastly, I see all of us enjoying the benefits of enhanced pastoral care; relevant programs for children, youth, seniors, parents and singles delivered by caring “ministers”, as well as access to assistance for the sick, suffering, grieving, hungry and lonely via informed and appropriate collaboration with our local communities.

Clearly, these ambitious expectations require a multi faceted plan. By now you know that we call this plan “Stepping Forward”. One very critical component of this initiative is the Work of Ministry. As I described in the recent Winter edition of the Vision newsletter, the Chief Apostle outlined the blue print and the rationale for this strategy within a meeting using the text from Ephesians 4:11-12. Therein he suggested that each of us have a unique God given calling to minister as well as the gifts by which we can help edify the body of Christ.

I realize that use of the word “ministry” within this context may be unusual for us as we have associated it exclusively in the past with ordained ministries. Perhaps it would help to think of our “ministry” as the gifts and the calling to serve Christ by serving each other.

**Central to this initiative are the following questions:**

- What is my calling?
- What are my God given spiritual gifts?
- How will I integrate my calling into the larger body of Christ?
- How will I develop my gifts to best serve others?

**T**here are no easy answers to these deeply personal questions and no one can answer them for you. Further, let us not rush into quick, shallow self assessment or hasty decisions. Rather, in 2010 let us all take a journey of introspection, self responsibility and discovery whereby we inquire diligently into the will of our Heavenly Father and His plan for us. Let us also examine honestly our conviction and resolution to help Him edify the body of Christ.



Self discovery does not mean travelling alone. The Work of Ministry initiative will revolve around an ongoing process in each district with a menu of resources available to each participating member.

**A**dditionally, members can select their own level of participation based upon their comfort level and interest. At the most basic level, an individual will have access to resources exploring the various gifts of ministry and their Biblical origins.

For those members who are interested in a greater level of interaction, we foresee ongoing group sessions where the discovery process can be shared with and supported by brothers and sisters. Where this has been implemented successfully, participants experience a new understanding of their calling to serve Christ, develop stronger bonds of Christian love between congregational members and share a more joyful appreciation for the wisdom and grace of our Heavenly Father.

Finally, it is our hope that this initiative will inspire a desire within some to take their calling and gift to a whole new level. These members will have an opportunity to collaborate closely with their rector about where their gift fits into the larger congregational plan.

Clearly, the implementation phase will take us into 2011 and beyond.✿

*Please find a summary on page 7*

# HAITI UPDATE

BASED ON A REPORT BY DISTRICT EVANGELIST STEVEN TILDERS

In December of 2002, Chief Apostle Richard Fehr came to Haiti and served in Petion-Ville, a section of Port Au Prince. The venue was the Hotel Christopher and over 700 members from all over Haiti gathered there. This same building was completely destroyed in the earthquake of January 12, 2010. What was not destroyed was the promise made by the congregation to the Chief Apostle in a beautiful hymn: "We will keep our faith alive!"

## January 12, 2010

The catastrophic events of January 12, 2010 in Haiti elicited worldwide attention and an outpouring of sympathy. Our District Elder in Haiti, Wilfrid Thenor, is a medical doctor and his wife Marie is a nurse. For many days after the earthquake they were engaged in life saving work at the local hospital and his medical clinic, and also in make-shift open field treatment centers. When we found out that all of our church buildings were standing and intact, we immediately converted them to "community centers," providing much needed shelter for those who had lost their homes. A spiritual emergency response came when our ministers began holding divine services every day for the week after the earthquake. As souls searched for comfort and strength, church attendance sky-rocketed in the following weeks. Presently, soul care is available almost every day in the form of divine services, religious instruction, and fellowships.

## NAC USA Response and Action Plan

District Apostle Kolb immediately formed a task force in the USA to help coordinate our response, support, and relief efforts. In the mean time, fast help came from our members in the Dominican Republic, the neighboring country which shares the island of Hispaniola with Haiti. Bishop Euclides Segura of the Dominican Republic packed his car with as much food, water, and medical supplies as possible and made the 7 hour journey to Croix Des Bouquets to find our District Elder Thenor. He then drove through Port Au Prince, found our members in Leogane, and delivered food, water, and medicines. This task force began organizing weekly food and water shipments via truck to both Croix Des Bouquets and Leogane. To date, five such "mercy missions" have taken place. The short term plan is to continue to send food, water, and necessities until May and then reassess the need. To date we have expended a total of \$77,000 in relief.





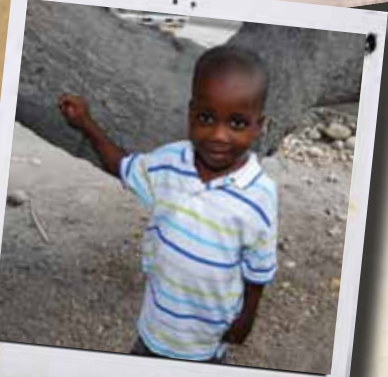
The weekend of February 14, 2010 had been in the works for over a year. It was to be the much anticipated weekend of the retirement of District Elder Thenor. Our District Apostle was scheduled to hold divine services in three locations: Ranquitte in the north, Beauge to the east of Port Au Prince, and finally Leogane for the special retirement service. A new District Elder had been announced, the current District Evangelist Davenel Lauredan.



The unforeseen disaster of January 12 profoundly affected all of our members' lives. With God's grace, our District Apostle was still able to make the visit with some modifications to the original plans. A scaled back plan decreased the number of visitors from many relatives and friends to a smaller team consisting of the District Apostle, Apostle Fendt, Bishop Segura and me. In the mean time, the President of Haiti, Rene Preval, had announced a three-day period of prayer from February 12 to February 14 in honor of the one-month anniversary of the tragedy.



On Saturday February 13, we arrived in the Dominican Republic. The seven hour car ride to Croix Des Bouquets ended with an emotional and joyful reunion at the home of District Elder Thenor. Those gathered shared an evening of memorable fellowship with wonderful stories of survival and God's grace.



The next morning, all travelled to Leogane. The route took us through Port Au Prince; the sights we met there cannot be described in mere words. Buildings, food lines, and markets that once teemed with activity were now demolished and eerily quiet. The mood in the car was quite somber in respect of the plight of this desperate nation.

Our arrival in Leogane found us at our church, jammed to capacity and overflowing to the outside. The Leogane church currently houses at least 45 "homeless", and additional tents line the outside. In the car ride over, the District Elder had another surprise and some additional "blessed work" for our District Apostle. Thirty-four believers were prepared to be sealed with the Holy Spirit! Upon entering in the sacristy, the District Apostle opened the bible and his eyes fell upon Joel 3:16, which he read to the brothers:

**"The Lord also will roar from Zion, and utter His voice from Jerusalem: The heavens and earth will shake; but the Lord will be a shelter for his people, and the strength of the children of Israel."**



A total of 400 members had gathered for the special day. Of particular significance was a soul-stirring celebration of Holy Communion for the Departed. Our District Apostle asked District Elder Thenor to remain active in his ministry for a few more months in order to assist during this crisis period. He also proceeded with the ordination of the new District Elder Davenel. The two will work together closely to assure a smooth transition of responsibility. At the conclusion of

the service, several choirs gave unique renditions of Haitian inspired worship and praise hymns.

After a wonderful fellowship, we decided to visit the site of District Elder Davenel's school in Leogane, which had "pancaked" in the earthquake. Thankfully, two of three inhabitants escaped without harm and the third survived with a bad leg injury.

The school has around 480 students, many of whom are New Apostolic. The District Elder Davenel had already purchased a nearby plot of land to build a new, more functional school. This new project will now utilize donations from the New Apostolic Church and related relief organizations worldwide. Plans are being considered for an initial temporary edifice, and later a permanent structure once new building codes are established.

The journey back on Sunday afternoon took us into the heart of Port Au Prince. We stopped at the site of a nursing school which had been destroyed; it was reported that about 94 students were still buried under the rubble. This is only one of numerous sites which serve to illustrate the magnitude of the catastrophe.

On Monday, our District Apostle held two divine services in the congregations of Pernier and Croix Des Bouquets, attended by 136 and 109 respectively. In the last service, three more souls were sealed. The group returned to the Dominican Republic on Monday afternoon.

We have one final, moving event to report. At the conclusion of the divine service in Leogane on Sunday, something very special took place.

A small children's choir got up and began singing a hymn, very quietly...



itudes in the  
ion!  
ne LORD is near  
of decision.  
on will grow

And the stars will diminish  
their brightness.  
16 The LORD also will roar from  
Zion,  
And utter His voice from  
Jerusalem;  
The heavens and earth will  
shake;  
"But the LORD will be a shelter  
for His people,  
And the strength of the  
children of Israel.

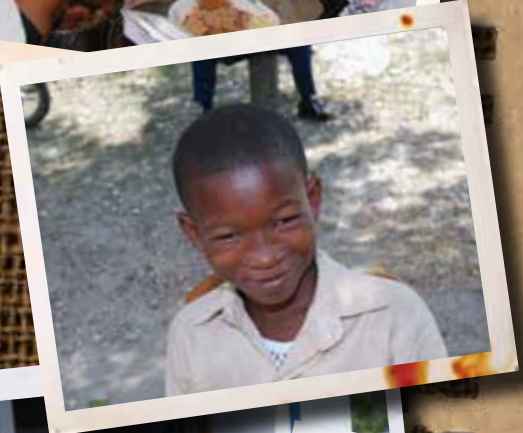
17 "So you shall know that I am  
the LORD your God,



*"We will keep our faith alive"...then the choir got up and sang:  
"We will keep our faith alive"...then the whole congregation of 400 in  
resounding fashion exclaimed in song: "We will keep our faith alive!"*

Our NAC World Relief Fund has been receiving impressive donations from many New Apostolic members, as well as donations from co-workers, friends, and neighbors. One attraction of our World Relief Fund is the pledge of 100% application to disaster relief. Corporations have also been generous and gracious, providing assets such as transportation, time off for relief work, satellite phones, and logistical support. A company in upstate New York worked with our relief fund to send (2) 40 foot containers of bottled water that will be delivered to our key areas for distribution to the community. Each container contains 5000 gallons of bottled water. We are also organizing specific medical supply support to qualified medical responders.

For more information on how you can help, please visit the Haiti Relief page on our website: [www.nac-usa.org](http://www.nac-usa.org).



## Upcoming Events

### Chief Apostle Pentecost Service

Delayed broadcast from South Africa on May 23, 2010. Broadcast will begin a half hour before the service commences. Service times are 12 noon ET, 11am CT, 10am MT and 9am PT.

### Youth Convention 2010

The NAC-USA district youth will hold their national youth convention at Purdue University in Lafayette, Indiana from July 9th through the 12th.

### Rector Conference

September 2-4, 2010 in Detroit, MI. All rectors are invited to attend a conference featuring a morning with the Chief Apostle, a Synod to discuss and vote on constitutional matters as well as workshops and seminars designed to assist in building healthy congregations.

### Chief Apostle Visit 2010

September 5, 2010 in Detroit, MI. All members are invited. Look for registration and lodging links shortly on [NAC-USA.org/ChiefApostle2010](http://NAC-USA.org/ChiefApostle2010)



*Continued from page 2*

### A summary of the benefits of the Work of Ministry

If we are successful in implementing this initiative, we see the following ongoing benefits:

- A systematic infusion of new talent, ideas and enthusiasm into each congregation.
- A sharing of congregational responsibilities; a lightening of the work of ordained ministers, thus allowing them to focus on enhancing the divine service experience and pastoral care.
- New levels of pastoral care more relevant to our time and the needs of our members.
- A new level of Christian sharing, fellowship and joy in serving others.
- A new model of shared congregational leadership based upon collaboration, inspiration and respect for diversity.

### Reflection on Mother's Day

Soon we will celebrate Mother's Day. Let us take this opportunity to recognize the blessing and the goodness that God has extended us through our mothers; to embrace them while time permits and to celebrate the lives of those who have passed and await us in eternity. Although the focus of this day seems narrow, it really involves us all. Not everyone is a mother, but we are all the children of one, and therefore can recognize that a loving and healthy relationship between mother and child is the active responsibility of both. Each of us can reflect upon our own personal experiences and relationships.

In addition, let us also consider the many who do not have children, but serve others with a mother's love and devotion. May God grant much joy and blessing to all in our Mother's Day celebrations across the district. ✨

## Town Hall Meeting Workshops

Since mid January, a team from the NAC-USA district office has been conducting regional workshops and Town Hall Meetings in selected locations. These workshops are held on the Saturday before the District Apostle conducts a district service with the intent to maximize the value delivered to local ministers, music leaders and members in a cost effective manner.

The 6 hour agenda includes individual breakout sessions for regional district leaders, local ministers and spouses, as well as music leaders. The district leaders, apostles and bishops participate in strategic planning meetings. The ministers and musicians join together for a workshop called "Integrating Message and Music" with the goal of collaborating more effectively and creating a higher level of spiritual experience for our members in each divine service. Ministers and their spouses come together for an enlightening and eye-opening workshop called "Praying more effectively" designed to assist all those that pray in a public setting.

After a quick supper, the day concludes with a Town Hall Meeting for all participants and local interested members wherein the District Apostle outlines his long term vision for the NAC-USA district called Stepping Forward. The presentation contains a blue print (see diagram on page 2) for enhancing the health and growth of all our congregations as well as an open forum for questions. In addition, the team facilitates a group interactive multimedia exercise called "The Potter" designed to illustrate the process of self discovery that each member may use to find their God given, unique "Work of Ministry".

These regional workshops will continue through June 2010. The apostles, bishops and district leaders will continue to communicate the finer points of Stepping Forward in each local congregation through further ongoing Town Hall Meetings providing each member an opportunity to interact freely and contribute meaningfully to our plans for healthy, growing congregations. ✿



### Schedule of Meetings:

March 13th	Cleveland, Ohio
March 27th	Portland, Oregon
April 16th	Los Angeles, California
April 24th	New Jersey South
May 15th	Detroit, Michigan
June 5th	St. Petersburg, Florida
June 26th	Milwaukee, Wisconsin