



Plain Compassion Crisis Response

2 - 2023 | a helping hand in time of need

2nd quarterly
Newsletter

bringing
hope
into disaster

Updates from the
director's desk

One of the many joys of my job at PCCR is to help with our First Response Training. As I reflect on my past as an unrepentant teenager who lived a life for myself and ignorant of the Lord's work, I am reminded of how God continues to redeem. Not only did God redeem me personally through His son Jesus, but he continues to redeem my past by giving me an opportunity to be involved in these trainings and equip our youth for the mission field. Having the opportunity to be involved in the lives of today's youth, while having wasted mine, is truly redemption and I don't take the opportunity for granted.

This training is designed to prepare our volunteers for the mission field and to help them navigate the challenges that come with it. While I am writing this, we are in

the middle of another training. This one is the first of its kind, because all of the training happens in-house and at one location in Stevens, PA.

Today, we heard the news of major flash floods in Vermont and other New England states. We deployed two volunteers, one of which has gone through the training, to respond to the flooding and see how we can best help. It has been a lot of fun to see the trainees step up and lead when the need arises.

Merv King

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Ukraine

a recap of the past three months

As I scroll through my photo gallery from the past three months, memories come flooding back. As I think back to the challenges we had to face there is a mix of emotions, but there is also the sheer enjoyment of serving the Ukrainian people. Looking back at the pictures of all the smiling faces, I'm honored to play a small part in bringing hope and healing in the midst of death and destruction.

April brought with it the first real signs of spring, as the trees budded, and the landscape changed from the drab browns of winter to the solid green of spring. This made distributions in the frontline villages so much more enjoyable,

and once again gave access to places, where the field roads had been too muddy for our vans to get through.

The month of April also brought huge changes in the team, as Kendall and Lucy, who had been an integral part of the operation since the beginning, moved to the States; and Trevor and Don, who had been serving throughout the winter, ended their terms.

Spring turned into summer, and as May came upon us, we shifted gears and were able to fill a need in the medical field as we focused more on medical evacuations. We also began supporting those recovering in hospitals with our "Pizza project". Together with Chaplain Leonid, this gave us new avenues to minister to the people and share the Gospel, and has been, and continues to be, a resounding success!

We entered June with so much uncertainty as to how the project would continue, but this past month has just flown by! First, Daniel Beiler, who had started the Ukraine project in February '22, moved back to the States with his family. And as our small team of four adjusted to the change, continuing to visit the frontlines together with



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Design: Thea Gorber
Authors: Merv King, John Heinzel, Andrew Faller, Mervin Beiler

Leonid, we wondered what direction things would go.

Then the Nova Khahovka dam in Kherson was blown up, causing a disaster on a scale that we have not yet seen here. As the water from the reservoir poured out, the rising waters flooded multiple islands and villages along the river and over 23,000 homes.

Responding to this incident was at a whole other level as the river is the current frontline. This meant that operational security for the military had to be maintained during the crisis, making navigating the area extra difficult. Thankfully, we were able to get permission to go where we needed to most of the time, and the Lord kept us safe even as we heard reports of volunteers being shelled, and boats being shot out of the water.

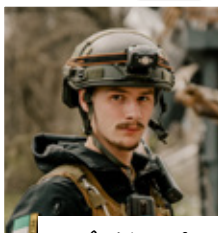
Running evacuations, providing aid, and supporting the people here, kept us busy at a time when the

dire needs on the eastern frontlines had dwindled considerably.

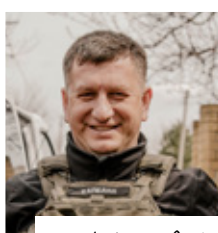
Moving forward, I'm so excited to see what God will do, and what He has in store for us as we once again look at different directions the work could go, but I know He has a plan.

I can't number the lives that have been touched these past few months, and we may never know the spiritual impact that has been made as we bring the Gospel to the front lines. But one thing I know is that God has been with us every step of the way, and throughout all the struggles we've been through there's a thread of God's faithfulness that is woven through it all!

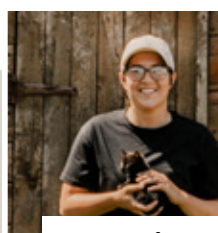
by John Heinzl
Field Director in Ukraine



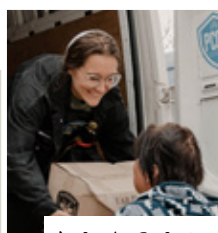
John Heinzl



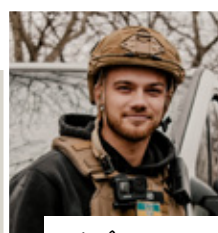
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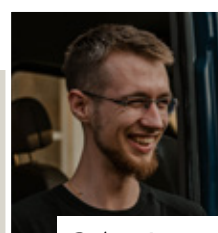
Jessica Melanson



Yolanda Stoltzfus



Arthur Jones



Dodgan Peterson

~ the current team in Ukraine ~

Board Member Introduction

Chad Martin

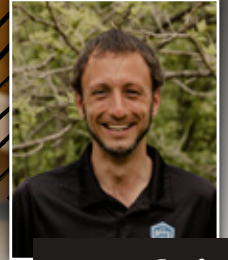
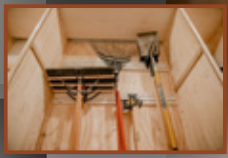
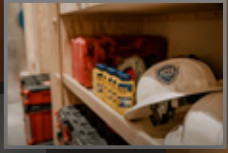
Chairman of the Board

My name is Chad Martin, married to the love of my life, Jenell. Together, we have three children: Kylie, Jordan, and Zivah. I currently serve as chairman of the board and have served with PCCR since 2015 in Iraq, Nepal, and Puerto Rico.

I am passionate about bringing hope to people who are in need so we can share Christ's love with them! I currently live in Lancaster, PA and work for Concrete Walls Unlimited. I love working and doing things in the great outdoors.



outfitted and stocked:
the tool trailer



Mervin Beiler

US Response & Staff Updates

the RV and trailer are done

New Operations Director!

Why did I choose to pick up the responsibility of the operations director?

The main reason is that I am passionate about empowering field leaders in their respective fields in crisis response situations.

Empowering them includes making sure they have what they need to accomplish the mission they are sent on. This includes helping field leaders come up with approved plans, checking that they have the funding, manpower, logistics, and anything else that they need, and helping with communicating between the field and the office team. In the middle of all of this, we continue implementing new systems and improving the systems we already operate in.

So far, I have been focused on making sure the RV and tool trailer are ready for deployment. We have both of them ready to travel down the road together now. The entire rig is approximately 73' 6" long and

weighs approximately 60,000 lbs.

Thanks to many generous donors, we were able to purchase \$25,000 worth of tools to stock the trailer and want to continue organizing the trailer interior for better efficiency. We also did maintenance work and some upgrades on the RV and purchased a used truck and a new enclosed trailer to add to our fleet.

I picked up the responsibility of the Haiti project and recently visited Haiti to meet the field leader and see the project to get a better feel of where things are at in Haiti.

Moving forward, I want to continue visiting projects to learn where we can best walk out the mission, how we can best empower the leaders, and how we can best improve current systems and add new systems where needed.

by Mervin Beiler
Operations Director



Haiti

from our Field Director

When I reflect on our outreach work over the past six months, I am filled with many good and many sad memories. There are memories of hope and of sadness.

When you go to a faraway place, a seemingly forgotten place, and are greeted by a drought-stricken community that depends on the ground for food and doesn't have the means to buy imported rice and beans because of the drought, they are left hungry and without hope. It's not because they didn't work hard or do their part, but because the rain didn't fall when it normally does. When we come, we bring food; we bring hope; and we bring a reminder that God still cares. In almost every message that I have preached with our distributions, I tell them, "Don't remember that a foreigner or even a fellow Haitian came and brought you food today. Remember that God brought provision in a time of need, and it's a sign that God still loves you and is caring for you." Many times this has brought tears, and many times people come to me and tell me that because of the distribution, they truly believe

that God does still care for them.

I remember one time, a little boy, about 8 years old, was waiting in line for food. I could see the concern growing on his face, wondering if there would be enough food for him, if his name was on the list. I went to him and told him, "Don't worry; you will find food." He replied that the day before he had only had a few salt crackers to eat and was really hungry. He couldn't have been happier when he received his food! We have focused on families with lots of children, single moms, and older folk, and there have been many tears of gratitude.

Have we fixed the hunger problem in Haiti? Is the crisis over? I am afraid not. In fact, it's only getting worse. Someone asked me recently if the food we gave a month ago is still doing any good today. I responded yes. Even if their hunger has returned and they're wondering where food is coming from today, I know that we both preached love, and we showed love. It is one thing to say you love; it is another thing to show the action of love. I believe

to make
survival
possible, without creating
dependency

that there are those that have been touched in an eternal way by the work we have done. The pastors we have worked with report that church attendance has grown, and they are hearing many testimonies of how the food people received reminded them that God still cares. People are often convicted of not living for God and feel the need to repent. So, yes, the food we gave last week, a month ago, and two months ago, is still doing good today.

Today we brought 11 huge pots of rice and beans to feed a growing number of prisoners. There are now about 750 prisoners in this prison. Just how much food is this that we take in? 605 lbs of uncooked rice, 100 lbs of beans, and 16 cases of canned fish. The prison, which was once quite a foreign place to me, has become a home of sorts. It's a place that has become very comfortable. Most of the prisoners call me "Papa", and most remind me that we can't skip a week of feeding in the prisons. Almost weekly, they remind me that when we skipped a week back in December, 17 prisoners died. Most are afraid of hearing that we are finished and won't return anymore, or that we can no longer feed them weekly. Many have no visitors, and right now, if you don't have visitors, you don't live. I spoke to some prisoners who have been in prison for 8 years with no visitors! Inmates depend on people from the outside to bring them

food. With the broken government in Haiti, there is no hope except for people bringing them food. One person told me, "All prisoners have been sentenced to death. They may not get

the electric chair, but it is a slow, slow death."

The prison doctor often floods us with prescription requests. We fill as many as 50 prescriptions a week. The doctor and nurses recently told us that they have hope again. Before we came, they barely even felt like trying to take care of sick inmates because they had nothing to help them. Now, they are happy to be able to access the meds that they need. We ourselves have seen a huge difference. I remember walking into the sick ward for the first time and seeing a nurse just sitting there. With the condition of the inmates, I was horrified that she could just sit there. After a while, I learned that she couldn't do much else. She didn't have the means to treat anything. Now, with a little help, I see good care being given. Oftentimes, a little moral support goes a long way.

Tuesday morning church has become something that many of the prisoners look forward to. Last week we had to change the day that we held church, and when we arrived a day late, many of the normal attendees told us how they had almost cried because they thought we had forgotten them and that there would be no more church. One young man said that the preaching and Bible passages he hears on Tuesdays stay in his head all week, and when he wants to do wrong, he remembers what he heard and tries to do right. He said that he has to hear God's word every



we both preached love and

showed love

... the food we gave two months ago is still doing good today.

Prisons

Never before in the history of missions in Haiti has anyone been able to establish prison ministries.

When we started feeding the starving inmates, it opened doors for us to bring Jesus into the situation, to bring hope for a new life and change.

There are endless opportunities even in other prisons and the doors are wide open to minister to the inmates and help them turn their life around.

Our vision is to bring hope into disaster, and this is an example of how love in action can bring opportunities and open hearts for the gospel.



Tuesday because, by the time Tuesday comes back around, it's getting harder and harder to do the right thing. Today I was told by a young man, "I am not allowed to attend the church service because of my past crimes, but every Tuesday, I am at my cell window listening to the singing and the preaching. I also received one of the Bibles that you handed out. It is giving me strength to endure being in here."

We experience hard days too. Sometimes it's discouraging. On Thursday I had a meeting with a pastor we have been working with both in distributions and in feeding the Ti Goave prison. I had to inform him that there will be no more food distributions in his area, and he became distraught. He quickly started telling me, "Andy! Andy! The situation has only gotten worse! First, people lost their crops due to drought, and now the flood destroyed more crops, and imported food has never been more expensive! They can't eat! They will die!" He also went on to tell me how the situation in Ti Goave prison has gotten worse again. The churches and other organizations that had been helping have quit. It's just us, and the prisoners need more food.

While I was there, the prison inspector showed up at this pastor's house to ask if there is any way he can help with more food. Two prisoners died this week, and they need more help. Gang activity has blocked any food that the government sends from reaching the prisons. This is a problem for all three of the prisons that we work in. I see the police going from business to business, church to church asking for help. They find some, but the prisons are so full that barely anyone can help enough to even cover one meal, which costs around 1300.00.

I admit that I was discouraged on Thursday. I wish the crisis was over. I wish the problems in Haiti were fixed. I wish the international view of Haiti was different. Most people think that it's all the Haitians' fault that they have nothing. The long history of failed missions and bad mission work and international

programs coupled with the fact that Haiti has a history of always being in crisis has created the idea that Haitians are lazy. That is far from the truth. Ninety percent are hard-working individuals that would rather work than receive a handout. While it is true that Haiti is always in crisis, every Haitian from young to old says that it has never been this bad, a statement backed by statistics and facts.

Haiti needs prayers. I fear we are on the edge of major mass starvation. Haiti is crying out, but it's largely falling on deaf ears. In a country that once had more missions than businesses, today there are very few active missions. Most missions have left due to insecurity, but the need for good help has never been greater. A lady that lost her house in the flood told me, "God is good, and even if it looks like He forgot us, I believe in my heart that He still has a plan for us, a good plan." I believe this too.

In the end, it's not about us or what we can do. It's all about God, and we are called to be God's hands and feet. Helping isn't easy. In fact, this week, I told Bev, "I wish I could turn a blind eye to the needs and not even care." I don't really wish this, but caring is hard and complicated at times. So we look to God and keep our chin up.

Pray that we can accomplish what God has for us, rather than what we think we need to do.

by Andrew Faller
Haiti Project Director



we need **your help** to
continue the work and bring

hope to Haiti

ways to donate

Card: Visit our website:
www.plaincompassion.org
OR: scan the QR code to the right.

Check: Make the check payable to:
Plain Compassion Crisis Response
Write Haiti on the memo and mail to:
PO Box 356 - Honeybrook, PA 19344

Scan to donate



We give thanks
 to God always for you...
 remembering your work of faith and
labor of love...

and patience of hope in our Lord
 Jesus Christ *1 Thessalonians 1:3*



Plain Compassion Crisis Response

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Upcoming Events:

we're looking forward to seeing you there!

Softball Tournament

September 1-2



We're hosting our first-ever Softball Tournament!
 To sign your team up, scan the QR code or visit
lancastertournaments.com/pccr-tournament.

Location: 6 Londonvale Rd, Gordonville, PA

Fall Awareness Event

September 22-23

Mark your calendar for our yearly event!
 Scan the QR code or visit
www.plaincompassion.org/events/ for more details.

Location: 215 S Shirk Rd, New Holland



September '23

sun	mon	tues	wed	thurs	fri	sat
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16