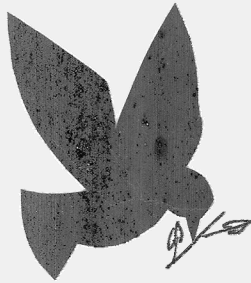




HARVEST TIME

An Invitation to Participate in a Haiti Partnership Circle

Dear Friends...



We are writing to invite you to consider being a part of a new circle that Harvest Time is calling!

This circle will focus on raising money for our partners in Haiti and exploring how giving money can become a bridge to creating authentic partnerships across vast economic and national differences. Unlike other Harvest Time circles, a specific fundraising goal will be an explicit aim of this circle. That is, everyone who participates will be asked to make a gift to support Harvest Time's Haiti Partnerships. As with other Harvest Time circles, we will work with money and the dynamics that come up when we give in order to deepen the spiritual and economic freedom of everyone involved. Our hope is that taking time to explore these issues will lead to greater life for all of us as individuals and a sustainable organizational structure for Harvest Time and its partners in Haiti.

In short, the goals of this Haiti circle are:

1. To raise money for Harvest Time's Haiti Partners.
2. To open up the issues that come up when money moves from people of wealth to people with few economic resources.
3. To create authentic and effective partnerships.
4. To join Harvest Time board members and staff in discerning the organizational structure that best supports Harvest Time's Haiti Partners.

Who is this circle for?

1. People who want to make gifts to Harvest Time's Haiti Partners (or who are already doing so) **AND** who are open to exploring the issues that come up when we give money to Haiti.
2. People who are willing to enter into partnership with Harvest Time around discerning the organizational structure that best supports effective partnerships.

The facilitators of this process will be John Engle, Rose Feerick, Juanita Mangan-Van Ham, and Greg Rasmussen.

If this invitation sounds like hilarious (or terrifying) good news, read on!



WWW.HARVESTTIME.CC

Mission Statement

Harvest Time invites people to come together in circles to work with money as a doorway into spiritual transformation at the personal, communal, and systemic levels.

Harvest Time is rooted in the biblical vision of economic justice which calls us to receive the gifts of God's abundant harvest in such a way that everyone has enough.



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Harvest Time & Haiti: Some Background

During our July 2007 board meeting, John and Merline Engle helped us to understand the history of Harvest Time's relationship with our partners in Haiti. We came to see that the greatest strength of Harvest Time's Haiti partnership program is the fact that it is rooted in long-term relationship. The trust that has developed through years of staying connected in the midst of political and economic violence is the foundation on which money has flowed in incredible ways from those who have more than enough to grassroots organizations serving those who are financially destitute. While Harvest Time was not intended to become a fundraising organization for Haiti, we have long recognized that being in relationship with courageous grassroots leaders, teachers, and human beings in Haiti is a privilege and a source of joy.

Our intention all along has been to work with money in the context of these relationships in ways that are sustainable, healthy and life-giving to everyone. But we recognize that there are centuries of political and cultural forces, assumptions and blind-spots at work on both sides of these relationships that can make embodying this vision challenging. In recent years, Bryan Sirchio, John Engle, and our partners in Haiti have been working hard to shift these dynamics. The shift is happening – and it takes time.

In the meantime, we are

committed to providing financial support for our friends in Haiti whose needs are very real. During this fiscal year, the financial dimension of that commitment amounts to \$304,300 or about \$26,000 a month.

During the past several months, as we have been reviewing these financial commitments, Harvest Time board and staff have been working with how we might best respond to the needs of our Haiti partners. We have, for instance, wondered whether management and financial responsibility for the Haiti Partnerships program is best held outside of Harvest Time – i.e. in a separate organization dedicated to fundraising for Haiti. Since Harvest Time's primary call is to companion people of wealth wherever the Spirit leads, we have questioned whether the tension created by Harvest Time's financial commitment to friends in Haiti continues to serve the overall mission of Harvest Time or whether it puts financial pressure on the organization that makes it difficult for us to remain appropriately detached in our companioning program.

Historically, these partnerships have served that mission in the sense that the trips, relationships, and opportunities to respond financially to the needs in Haiti have been life-changing for several people in our network. But we also recognize that some people come to Harvest Time with



Merline & John Engle

commitments to other places and we do not want Harvest Time's financial responsibilities to get in the way of the unfolding of individuals' unique calls. That is why we have wondered whether Harvest Time continues to be the best container for the Haiti Partnership program.

The board and staff sat with this question extensively at our February 2008 board meeting. After much conversation and listening, we realized that while we have dedicated significant time and energy to working with our partners in Haiti to shift the dynamics present in our relationships there, we have not yet focused our attention on transforming the North American side of these partnerships. We wondered (with excitement!) what kind of partnerships might emerge if we were simultaneously working on transforming dynamics among our partners in Haiti as we were also doing

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that work in the US. Opening up this process of exploration definitely felt like the work of Harvest Time.

So we decided to offer what Harvest Time does well – calling and holding a

circle of spiritual friends - to focus on giving money to Haiti. We expect that taking time to open up the issues that come up when we move money from those of us who are wealthy in the US to people with few economic

resources in Haiti will lead to transformation for everyone involved as well as a much healthier and effective Haiti Partnership program. We are excited!

An Invitation to Participate in This Circle

We expect this circle to unfold in the following manner:

1. During April, we hope to have an initial telephone conversation with those who are interested in participating in this circle. Those conversations will include time for prayer and personal sharing along with an explanation of the history, current vision and questions present in Harvest Time's Haiti partnership program. Those conversations will also include a request to make a gift to support our partners in Haiti. A financial gift - according to your giving capacities and the leading of the Spirit - will be necessary to participate in this process.

2. During May and June, we hope to set up a few conference calls so that we can begin to get to know each other and to plan details for our gathering.

3. At a time that works for those interested (perhaps summer or fall 2008), we hope to host an initial gathering. During the gathering, we will take time to get to know each other, pray and to share our experiences of giving money to Haiti. We will also listen for how we might enter into relationships with friends in Haiti in ways that are free, authentic, and about genuine partnership.

4. If those who gather desire, we will continue to come together as a circle to support each other as we attempt to step more deeply into personal, communal and economic freedom by giving money to Haiti. We may also consider traveling to Haiti together.

As with all Harvest Time circles, we expect that a variety of issues will be triggered in this process. We hope that some of those will be about joy and possibility. Some may be about fear or control. We will welcome and work through these issues when they arise, as we know that in order for authentic

relationship, community and the economy of grace to become a reality, we need to deal with the emotions, assumptions, and unhealthy habits that get in the way. We will do that as we do in all our gatherings - with compassion, love, patience, lightheartedness and the help of the Holy Spirit.

That said, we are fully aware that we will need to learn some things – especially since this type of gathering is new to this organization. We need and welcome the gifts, wisdom and insight of those who hear the Spirit's call to be with us.



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The Financial Reality

As we engage in this process together, the needs of our partners in Haiti will be ongoing. What follows are the details of our partners' work and needs for this fiscal year which ends on September 30, 2008. As we are midway through this fiscal year, about half of these commitments have already been met.

Total Haiti Partnerships Budget: Fiscal Year 2007-2008: \$304,300

Boston Youth Association: \$99,000

BYA is a small group of people who grew up in Cité Soleil (one of the poorest and most violent neighborhoods in Port au Prince) who are organized to help others in their community. In addition to running a feeding program for the very destitute, they also provide: scholarship money for children to go to school, small grants to repair leaking roofs and other much needed repairs, employment for men to clean canals (which frequently get backed up and contribute to flooding), first aid, and help with medical bills.

S.P.A.R.E. \$74,800

(Sponsorship Program Aiding Relationship and Education) Helps some of the poorest children and adults in Port au Prince to advance themselves through formal education. In addition to paying school fees (elementary, high school, vocational and in some cases university) SPARE provides students with support such as computer and internet access, tutors, mentoring, and in some cases a place to live. They also receive emotional and spiritual accompaniment. Students in SPARE maintain regular contact with their individual sponsors in the US.

St Thomas Elementary School \$71,600

Provides elementary education and meals for 140 of some of the poorest children living in Cite Soleil, an impoverished community in Port-au-Prince.

Once the commitment is clear, you do what you can, not what you can't. The heart regulates the hands. This isn't so others can take it easy while you sweat it out. No, you're shoulder to shoulder with them all the way, your surplus matching their deficit, their surplus matching your deficit. In the end you come out even. As it is written,

*Nothing left over to the one with the most,
Nothing lacking to the one with the least.
2 Corinthians 8:11-15 (from The Message)*

Circles of Change \$21,200

A network of Haitians who train teachers and leaders to facilitate a participatory education method. This method enables the people they serve or teach to seek their own voices, to listen to those of others, to build self and mutual respect, and to develop personal and institutional integrity. Approximately 300 Haitian teachers and leaders are completing this 3-6 month training each year.

Partnership Coordinator \$37,700

Includes John's part-time salary and expenses, including six trips to Haiti.

Haiti Circle Gathering and Expenses: *To be determined when we know our numbers and the location of our gathering.*

Harvest Time Liaison and Spiritual Companion:

This position is currently vacant. Historically, Don McClanen and then Bryan Sirchio served as a liaison between our Haiti Partners and our friends in the US, inviting people to participate in Harvest Time's Haiti Partnerships either by making financial gifts or by traveling to Haiti. This person also served as a spiritual friend and companion on Harvest Time's trips to Haiti. The choice to not immediately replace Bryan Sirchio was deliberate – as we needed time to listen for our next steps. Depending on how this circle unfolds, Harvest Time may decide to hire someone to fill this position.

Does this invitation still sound like hilarious (or terrifying) good news? If so, please contact Rose Feerick. Thank you so much for taking the time to read this invitation and to discern whether it is for you!

