

**SMPC Mission Stories – Shelby Ullman**  
Transcript for the March 27, 2026 Interview



**1. Tell us about your trip to Haiti?**

The reason I went to Haiti ... I believe that the Holy Spirit actually told me to go there. I had a profound moment where I really felt a calling. I'd never thought of going on a mission trip. I felt this presence come upon me, this very persistent call; this is something that you need to do. I reached out to David and Judy Nichols and said I'd like to go to Haiti.

If you haven't been to Haiti, what I found while I was in Bayonnais is the intimacy between the people who live there. Their family are their neighbors. Their coworkers are their neighbors. Their teachers are their neighbors. Their classmates are their neighbors. Everyone is everything to each other there. There's just this sense of intimacy that you don't get when you live in a suburban town or a city. No one's walking around with their earbuds in. There wasn't a whole lot of talking on phones. So, most of the time was spent in communication with each other. That was out of necessity, out of entertainment, and I think that's one of the reasons that they were so joyful.

**How has your trip to Haiti impacted your life?**

The mission trip to Haiti had several impacts on my life that I feel have stood the test of time. The first and one of the most important was a realization that you can be joyful with so much less. Maybe, that it's even easier to be joyful when there is less. Almost every one I encountered in Bayonnais had a joyful spirit. It was evident in the way they moved about, the way they interacted with each other, the way they interacted with us.

They need so much! They're not always getting enough to eat. They're living in homes that have a tin roof and look like a shed. And yet, they're happy. That was a watershed moment for me.

A second one is it forever changed the way I look at mission work. I remember thinking We're going to go down and we're going to build relationships? I was very skeptical, but in very little time upon arrival, I realized the wisdom of this kind of work. You respect each other when there's not a power differential or a feeling of, we're coming to help you because you can't do it. A great example was to watch David and Actionnel interact, having discussions, debates, and arguments. Actionnel was able to share with David how he thought we could be helpful to them.

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It was more collaborative and it was led by the people of Bayonnais. By the end of this trip, I'm like, this is probably what kingdom living looks like.

**What message do you want to share with the SMPC congregation?**

An important message that I would like for our congregation to hear is that the people in Bayonnais are not so different from us. They love God. They love their neighbor. want the best for their kids. They have the same hopes and dreams for prosperity and good health and a long life, surrounded by people that they love. I want to convey that message.

My hope for our congregation is to learn more about Haiti, to learn more about Bayonnais and to invest in the people there. I hope they continue to support the school, the medical clinic. My greatest hope is that Haiti becomes a safe and secure nation that we can start going back to visit because I think that other people visiting will love it as much as I did.