



"He spent his last breaths singing" -- Ben's wife, Renee Splichal Larson

Click here to read the **sermon** offered by Pastor Rafael Malpica Padilla, ELCA Director of Global Mission, at Ben's memorial service.

Read ELCA **news release** regarding the recovery of Ben's body in Haiti.

Scroll down to read a statement made by Ben's parents, former La Crosse Area Synod bishop, April Larson, and Pastor Judd Larson.

Please see the attached **bulletin insert** for information regarding another way that your congregation can help Ben's wife, Renee and cousin, Jonathan, on their road to recovery from the trauma of the earthquake.

The Larson family has also encouraged memorials be directed to one of the following places:

- **ELCA Disaster Response for Haiti**
- ELCA Global Mission for the Eglise Luthérienne d'Haiti (Evangelical Lutheran Churches of Haiti) www.fbsynod.com
- St. Joseph's Home for Boys www.heartswithhaiti.org

Lutheran World Relief announced today that it is launching a text-to-give campaign to raise funds for its response to the devastating Haiti earthquake. On Friday, Thrivent Financial for Lutherans announced that they will match members' gifts to LWR for Haiti, giving \$1 for every \$2 donated. The \$1 million challenge, "Helping Haiti," is expected to generate a total of \$3 million for Haiti relief through LWR, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod and the Lutheran World Federation.

Starting Sunday, January 17, to support LWR from your cell phone, just text the keyword "LWR" to 40579 to donate \$10. Remember to reply YES to the confirmation. It's quick and easy, and the donation will appear on your next cell phone bill. Standard messaging and data rates may apply. Donations can also still be received at www.lwr.org/Haiti.

Thrivent Financial members interested in making a financial gift to help earthquake victims in Haiti can make their donation online at www.thrivent.com/helpinghaiti or by phone at 1-800-236-3736 between 7 a.m. and 6 p.m. Central time, Monday through Friday. When prompted, please say "directory" then enter ext. 83003. Thrivent Financial will add a maximum of \$250 per member donation, and donations will be accepted through March 31, 2010.

Jan. 14, 2010 6:30 p.m.

A personal statement from Pastors Judd and April Larson

As an infant Benjamin Judd Ulring Splichal Larson was wrapped in the arms of God in the waters of baptism, and from those waters, his life was an outpouring of love and joy, laughter and play, in response to God first loving Ben.

Ben's love of God, walking in accompaniment, passionately loving others, listening and learning from those who are poor across the globe, drove his serving.

We give thanks to God for the incredible joy of knowing Ben. His laughter, playfulness, passionate heart for those who are hurting was manifest in his daily life. He delighted in the privilege of serving and knowing God, laying out his life in joy.

We are blessed by still being able to hear Ben's music. His father Judd says, "If you want to know Ben, go to his music." In his tender music remains some of the treasure that is Ben: what he believes, what he cares about, his deepest soul.

Most of the people who died in this deadly earthquake in Haiti are the poorest of the poor in this hemisphere. Ben went to Haiti to teach theology and scripture in the new Lutheran Church of Haiti; but more deeply to learn from these people loved by God. In his young death his life joins the bodies of the poor. In the Haitian rubble Ben's life joins these dear beloved people of God: all those parents crying for their children; young widows calling out for their husbands; new orphans searching for their parents.

God have mercy on us.

Contact information for the Larsons is as follows:

Address:
6030 E Superior St #308
Duluth MN 55804-2567

E-Mails:
April - acul Larson1@gmail.com

Judd - judd Larson8@gmail.com

