

# Miracle Farm offers refuge to Hurricane Rita evacuees

September 5, 2006

Posted: 9/01/06

Miracle Farm residents display a mirrored tile that was presented as a gift to the Texas Baptist child care ministry by the Little Cypress-Mauriceville Bears. (Photo by Courtney Cole)

## Miracle Farm offers refuge to Hurricane Rita evacuees

**By Courtney Cole**

*Miracle Farm*

BRENNHAM—When Hurricane Rita struck southeastern Texas, residents of communities near Orange found shelter from the storm at Miracle Farm. And everyone involved believed the provision was a miracle—or at least a divine appointment.

“We had extensively planned and were prepared to minister to families that

had been displaced by this catastrophic storm,” said Jack Meeker, executive director of Miracle Farm, a childcare agency for boys operated by Children at Heart Ministries. “We soon realized that God had hand-picked a special group to be directed into our circle of care.”

### **Special: One Year After Katrina**

- [LIFE GOES ON: Crossroads project aims to rebuild in New Orleans](#)
  - [Displaced New Orleans resident finds home at Gracewood](#)
  - [Houston faith communities plan for future hurricanes](#)
  - [East Texas church sends minister to southern Louisiana](#)
    - [Texas Baptists urged to adopt unreached groups in Houston](#)
    - [Miracle Farm offers refuge to Hurricane Rita evacuees](#)
    - [Nederland church marks new beginning in new sanctuary](#)
  - [Nehemiah's Vision helps Southeast Texas recover from Rita](#)
  - [New Orleans churches radically changed by Katrina](#)
  - [Churches become rallying points for New Orleans recovery](#)
  - [Baptist volunteers make impact on Crescent City](#)
  - [Volunteer director feels calling to restore Mississippi town](#)
    - [Sabine Pass churches focus on rebuilding community](#)
  - [Gulfport members learn church is not brick and mortar](#)
  - [Pastor uses retirement funds to help restore church](#)
    - [Couple left family, friends to run volunteer base in Gulfport](#)
    - [Katrina giving did not hurt other charities, group says](#)
    - [Inexperience hurt effectiveness of some Katrina relief groups](#)
    - [Teens from FBC Wolfforth help Buckner get facilities back to normal](#)
-

# Nederland church marks new beginning in new sanctuary

September 5, 2006

Posted: 9/01/06

## Nederland church marks new beginning in new sanctuary

**By Elizabeth Staples**

*Communications Intern*


NEDERLAND—Hurricane Rita destroyed the facility of First Baptist Church in Nederland, but it also reinforced the importance of unity among the congregation.

Winds from the Sept. 24, 2005, hurricane stripped the roofs off all the church's buildings. The steeple fell through the roof, allowing water into the sanctuary and ruining the carpet. Most of the pews, the steeple and carpet in other buildings needed to be replaced. The building suffered nearly \$1.5 million damage.

---

Pastor  
David  
Higgs  
prays with  
a couple  
who joined  
First  
Baptist  
Church in  
Nederland.

The  
decision  
took place  
during the  
re-opening  
of the  
church's  
sanctuary.

 [View  
a video  
clip from  
First  
Baptist  
Nederland  
here.](#)

---

# Nehemiah's Vision helps Southeast Texas recover from Rita

September 5, 2006

Posted: 9/01/06

## Nehemiah's Vision helps Southeast Texas recover from Rita

**By Elizabeth Staples**

*Communications Intern*

VIDOR—Texas Baptists continue to help restore homes destroyed by Hurricane Rita, even as Southeast Texas residents make their way through another hurricane season.

This summer, volunteers from around the state lent a hand through Nehemiah's Vision, a nonprofit organization facilitating disaster recovery ministry in Southeast Texas.

---

Nehemiah's Vision, a nonprofit organization started with the help of BGCT disaster response funds, has brought volunteers from across the state to help rebuild portions of Southeast Texas.

---

# **New Orleans churches radically changed by Katrina**

September 5, 2006

Posted: 9/01/06

# New Orleans churches radically changed by Katrina

**By Robert Marus**

*Associated Baptist Press*

NEW ORLEANS (ABP)—In once-vibrant New Orleans, the liveliest things in vast swaths of the city seem to be weeds exploding from once-manicured medians, lawns and parks.

And the rats, mosquitoes, mold and nutria—huge rodents that thrive in the Louisiana swamps—are the only other creatures swarming neighborhoods that—a year after Hurricane Katrina—still are largely devoid of human beings.

A boarded-up theater in a once-thriving area of New Orleans illustrates the toll Hurricane Katrina took on the Crescent City. (ABP Photo)



---

# Churches become rallying points for New Orleans recovery

September 5, 2006

Posted: 9/01/06

## Churches become rallying points for New Orleans recovery

**By Robert Marus**

*Associated Baptist Press*

NEW ORLEANS (ABP)—Hurricane Katrina is changing New Orleans' churches as surely as it changed the face of the flooded city itself—and some of those churches are serving as rallying points in the city's recovery.

On a recent sweltering August day, Steven Meriwether sweated through his white T-shirt as he knelt inside the living room of a shotgun home on Toledano Street in the Mid-City neighborhood.

**How to volunteer  
Nehemiah's Vision**

Contact: Andy Narramore

(409) 769-1616

[nehemiahsvision@sbcglobal.net](mailto:nehemiahsvision@sbcglobal.net)

[www.nehemiahsvision.com](http://www.nehemiahsvision.com)

**Baptist Crossroads Project**

Contact: Inman Houston

(504) 482-5775

[i-houston@mindspring.com](mailto:i-houston@mindspring.com)

[www.baptistcrossroads.org](http://www.baptistcrossroads.org)

**NAMB Project NOAH**

Contact: Tobey Pitman

(504) 782-6122

Or (504) 362-4604; (877)

934-0808

[noah@namb.net](mailto:noah@namb.net)

[www.namb.net/noah](http://www.namb.net/noah)

**Baptist Builders**

**International**

(225)775-2053

[info@baptistbuilders.org](mailto:info@baptistbuilders.org)

[www.baptistbuilders.org](http://www.baptistbuilders.org)

---

# Baptist volunteers make impact

# on Crescent City

September 5, 2006

Posted: 9/01/06

Southern  
Baptist  
volunteers  
worked  
alongside  
others in  
building  
new  
housing in  
the hard-  
hit 9th  
Ward of  
New  
Orleans  
following  
Hurricane  
Katrina.  
(Photo  
courtesy  
of  
NAMB/BP)

## Baptist volunteers make impact on

# Crescent City

**By Hannah Elliott**

*Associated Baptist Press*

NEW ORLEANS (ABP)—After serving the homeless for decades in New Orleans, Tobey Pitman finally is making significant inroads among leaders and homeowners in the predominantly Catholic region.

That's not to say he hasn't had noteworthy success with his Brantley Mission Center for the homeless. But since Hurricane Katrina hit, the Baptist missionary has led volunteers to help storm victims in ways other groups—religious or otherwise—have not. And that has made all the difference.

---

## **Volunteer director feels calling to restore Mississippi town**

September 5, 2006

Posted: 9/01/06

## **Volunteer director feels calling to restore Mississippi town**

**By Robert Marus**

*Associated Baptist Press*

PASS CHRISTIAN, Miss. (ABP)—When Amy Hardee came from North Carolina to what locals call “the Pass” immediately after Hurricane Katrina, the place was a mess.

A year after Katrina’s monstrous storm surge virtually wiped Pass Christian, Miss., off the map, it’s still something of a mess. But thanks in part to Hardee, at least it’s a far better-organized mess—and one she is working diligently to return to its former glory as a Southern beach town.

Amy Hardee of North Carolina, volunteer relief coordinator in Pass Christian, Miss., explains some of the plans the Hurricane Katrina-decimated town has for redeveloping its historic beachfront while remaining family-friendly. (Photo by Robert Marus/ABP)

---

# Sabine Pass churches focus on rebuilding community

September 5, 2006

Posted: 9/01/06

Hurricane Rita destroyed the facilities of Sabine Pass Christian Fellowship (pictured) and First Baptist Church of Sabine Pass, as well as nearly half the homes in the small, historic Southeast Texas community.

# **Sabine Pass churches focus on rebuilding community**

**By George Henson**

*Staff Writer*

SABINE PASS—Sabine Pass lost both its Baptist churches to Hurricane Rita. Nearly a year later, the two congregations are looking to rebuild a community as much as they are their church buildings.

Dale Martin, pastor of Sabine Pass Christian Fellowship, has put his emphasis on rebuilding homes lost at the same time the hurricane destroyed his church's facility.

---

## **Gulfport members learn church is not brick and mortar**

September 5, 2006

Posted: 9/01/06

The building  
of First  
Baptist  
Church of  
Gulfport,  
ravaged by  
Hurricane  
Katrina, has  
been torn  
down. The  
congregation  
is rebuilding  
several miles  
to the north  
of the Gulf.

## Gulfport members learn church not just brick and mortar

**By Hannah Elliott**

*Associated Baptist Press*

GULFPORT, Miss. (ABP)—Members of First Baptist Church of Gulfport have learned a lot in the year since Hurricane Katrina destroyed their waterfront church buildings. Mostly, they've learned that a church is much more than an edifice.

"It's an exciting time for us," Pastor Chuck Register said. "Probably the most exciting thing for us has been being forced to rethink the New Testament (concept of) what really is the church. The church is not brick and mortar."



---

# Explore the Bible Series for September 10: Without faith, it is impossible to please God

September 5, 2006

Posted: 9/05/06

**Explore the Bible Series for September 10**

## Without faith, it is impossible to please God

- Hebrews 2:5-18

**By Howard Anderson**

*Baptist University of the Americas, San Antonio*

As we listen to God's word, we are challenged to grow in faith. Without faith, it is impossible to please God. Faith is the substance of things hoped for. Faith is the evidence of things not seen. Faith is trust in an unknown future. Faith is the life-blood of the just. Faith is the shield of Christian armor. Faith is the guarantee of answered prayer.

---

# **Pastor uses retirement funds to help restore church**

September 5, 2006

Posted: 9/05/06

## **Pastor uses retirement funds to help restore church**

**By Carla Wynn**

*Cooperative Baptist Fellowship*

NEW ORLEANS (ABP)—Pastor Lawrence Gaines has spent \$35,000 of his personal retirement funds to help restore his church building, which was devastated by Hurricane Katrina.

“We’ve gotten to the point now where we just don’t have any other (financial) source to keep going,” said Gaines, pastor of Little Zion Baptist Church in New Orleans, earlier this summer.

---

## **Couple left family, friends to run volunteer base in Gulfport**

September 5, 2006

Posted: 9/05/06

The North  
Carolina  
Baptist Men's  
disaster-relief  
team has  
centralized  
operations in  
the Gulfport  
National  
Guard  
Armory with  
plans to build  
600 homes.

## Couple left family, friends to run volunteer base in Gulfport

**By Hannah Elliott**

*Associated Baptist Press*

GULFPORT, Miss. (ABP)—It would take an act of God for most people to quit their jobs, move away from friends and family and commit to living for two years in a camper in Katrina-ravaged Gulfport, Miss.

Martha and Eddie Williams were no different, but they chose to respond to that act of God with cheerful hearts. Along with four other couples, the Williamses, who enjoyed a “comfortable, normal” life in North Carolina, moved to Gulfport March 1 to oversee Hurricane Katrina relief and construction operations for two years.