

Miracle Farm offers refuge to Hurricane Rita evacuees

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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

BRENHAM—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.”

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Nederland church marks new beginning in new sanctuary

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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

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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

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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
www.nehemiahsvision.com

Baptist Crossroads Project

Contact: Inman Houston
(504) 482-5775

i-houston@mindspring.com
www.baptistcrossroads.org

NAMB Project NOAH

Contact: Tobey Pitman
(504) 782-6122
Or (504) 362-4604; (877)
934-0808

noah@namb.net
www.namb.net/noah

**Baptist Builders
International**

(225)775-2053
info@baptistbuilders.org
www.baptistbuilders.org

Baptist volunteers make impact

on Crescent City

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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

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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

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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

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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

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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

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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

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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.