

HURRICANE RELIEF

THE BODY OF CHRIST RESPONDS ...



Hurricane Relief

Teams from Virginia pray for the Lord's anointing.

Remember the word to Your servant, upon which You have caused me to hope. This is my comfort in my affliction, for Your word has given me life.

Psalm 119:49-50

*story by Tom Price
photos by Geraldine Wilkins and Tom Price*

When a relief worker from CC Charlottesville offered to fill up her gas tank with fuel, the woman who had lost so much in the hurricane began to cry and ask aloud for forgiveness from her Heavenly Father.

"I woke up this morning very angry with God," admitted 61-year-old Judy Branning, a native of Pascagoula. "I've been a believer for a long time, but this morning I felt that the Lord had given my family more than we could endure." The sun over the desolated coastline of Mississippi baked down on those waiting in line for relief items with a damp and relentless 95-degree heat. Hurricane Katrina had destroyed her husband's auto body shop. All of her extended family had lost their homes.

Judy told her story to Jaymie Smolens, from CC Charlottesville, VA, as he poured gasoline into her car. A



Judy Branning, Pascagoula, MS, felt abandoned by God until a CC Charlottesville, VA, team arrived with supplies. Her husband's business was destroyed as well as the homes of her extended family.



Homes close to the Gulf were ravaged by the storm.



Billy vanHoven, pastor of a new church plant in Virginia, unloads a truck.



Communities on the Gulf Coast lay in ruin after the storm surge came inland.

week earlier he and his pastor, Chad Myhre, had prayed about how their small church could help those whose lives had been devastated. Before the storm became a hurricane, a meeting had been planned to launch a ministry to reach out to others with the love of Christ.

The early television images convinced them to step out in faith. They, along with Chad's son, Evan, and Assistant Pastor Dave Hansen, drove the 900 miles and delivered water and ice to the victims. Buoyed by the urgency they saw and the blessing of being able to fulfill the needs of so many, they re-

turned to Mississippi a week later with volunteers from other Virginia churches and five truckloads of donated relief items.

"I am just overwhelmed with your love and generosity—it has given me hope," Judy said through her tears. She had ventured out to



Tiffany Wright watches over her in-laws' ruined home. She expressed gratitude for assistance offered by Christian groups.



Volunteers from Calvary Chapels in Virginia unload supplies in areas where no other relief agencies had visited.

If a brother or sister is naked and destitute of daily food, and one of you says to them, “Depart in peace, be warmed and filled,” but you do not give them the things which are needed for the body, what does it profit? James 2:15-16



Pastor Chad Myhre, CC Charlottesville, VA, unloads supplies.



An elderly man in a mobile home park waits to receive relief goods.



Cora Washington, Moss Point, MS, lost all that she owned. She covers her face out of frustration and fatigue after almost two weeks of misery.

try to get diapers, formula, and clothes for her grandchild. “This has pulled all colors, our city, and—I pray—our country together. You have given us hope, love, and grace. With those three things, who can be against us if God is for us?”

Jaymie confided later, “Her gratitude choked me up. It makes all the effort worthwhile. The Lord enabled us to become His hands and feet, to reach out with the love of our Savior to those that are suffering, and to encourage someone that had lost hope.”

Pastor Chad added, “Our church hopes that people in southern Mississippi recognize that this relief aid is actually the love of Christ. We pray it brings conviction in their hearts and that a great revival will take place through the entire region.”

Freely you have received, freely give.
Matthew 10:8

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Travis Snider and Mike Rose prayed for and encouraged Judy Branning. Judy also received gas for her car and clothing for her granddaughter.