

# VICTIMS SAY 'THANK YOU'



Photo by Shyla Daltifor

Anaheim Police Officer Tim Wylie of CC Costa Mesa, at podium, prays for law enforcement during the National Day of Prayer banquet at CC La Habra.

When Hurricane Katrina hit the Gulf Coast last August, various Calvary Chapels came together to serve the devastated area and formed Calvary Chapel Relief. Nearly 2,500 people from over 70 different churches have done relief work through the camp in Bay St. Louis, MS.

Focusing on the effect of prayer in the relief effort, Calvary Chapel La Habra hosted a banquet on this year's National Day of Prayer, May 4. Several members from the Bay St. Louis community attended, giving thanks and honoring God for sending help through the Christian teams.

Calvary Chapel volunteers have helped clean out and/or repair nearly 200 homes so far in one of the hardest hit storm areas, according to Keri Whitley of CC La Habra. About 40 community members come regularly to the church services at the camp on Sunday morning and Wednesday night, and several faithfully attend new believers' classes.

After having been in the area for one year this August, the Calvary Chapel Relief Center is looking to lease a more permanent facility or site, as CC leaders have committed to be there for two more years.

## Victims' Letters

Several victims and visitors to the relief camp shared gratitude and praises to God through letters:

Speaking of Calvary Chapel, Jerry B. wrote: "For me and my family, [you] were truly God-sent. ... You will never be forgotten, and you are always welcome in our homes. Your kindness and love for God have shown me personally that, no matter how hard things seem, there is hope. ... Our faith in others, and especially in the Lord, has been rebuilt. ... You are my family. Thank you."

A volunteer patrol officer from Virginia wrote: "[Yours] was the one center where the officers on night shift could take a break around midnight every night and feel welcome. Your volunteers [made] us feel like we had a place of refuge during the long nights. They waited on us like we were the only reason they had come to Mississippi!"

A local Christian couple, Emmett and Wanda, said: "We were able to bring our granddaughter, 13-year-old Kimberly. We had a wonderful dinner! We also had some time on the precious computers ... to check email. Thank you!"

Susan, whose husband is working far from his South Carolina home, wrote: "I can't tell you how comforting it is to know that he is being fed well and has a place to go each day to fellowship with other Christians. He is so thankful for your ministry ... [you] are ministering to more people than you see. ... I will continue to pray God uses you for His glory."

Another shared: "Dining in your tent nearly brought me to tears. Thank you for your devotion, kindness, and generosity. You are truly making a difference."

A Christian volunteer from Tennessee wrote: "Your people there...nourish the spirit as well! They ooze with the love of Jesus and are a light in a lot of darkness. Human compassion helps for a while but... you have shown divine compassion."



CC relief sites along the Gulf Coast.

# NEW ORLEANS



Ten months after Katrina, relief work continues. Above, workers pile polluted debris for removal.

As a new hurricane season starts, Calvary Chapel New Orleans is still working to rebuild their community after Hurricanes Katrina and Rita last fall. Relief efforts of many Calvary Chapels to New Orleans have brought much progress and spiritual fruit. Many area residents have come to Christ and have been attending CC New Orleans in its new meeting place.

During the spring, much relief work included "gutting" area homes of damaged dry walls and flooring. "We have assisted close to 300 families with clean-up," said Pastor Kevin Cox. Hundreds more have been impacted for Christ through handing out gift cards, Gospel tracts, and visiting area residents in their homes. "Recently, we have focused more on trailer-to-trailer visits," Kevin said. "Many people are living in damaged properties, so stress, depression, and chemical abuse is at an all-time high. The need

for biblical encouragement at this time is extremely important."

Several of the homes that CC churches worked on have been completely restored, and families have moved in again. "We are pleased to see that the labor of love through God's people is not in vain," Kevin said.

"We have cause for rejoicing because several people have given their hearts to Christ and have joined our fellowship."

The Lord provided CC New Orleans its own facility. After CC Prescott, AZ, helped them renovate a 2,800-foot office space, the Lord provided the financial means to purchase it. "We could never have accomplished such a great work without their service unto the Lord," Kevin said. "We also are grateful to the Calvary Chapels and their generosity that helped us purchase our new place of worship." Calvary Chapel relief groups continue to come, staying at the new facility, which sleeps 20 people and has a full kitchen and bath. CC New Orleans meets in two locations—in Mandeville on the North Shore and in Metairie, farther south—due to commuter traffic and widespread reconstruction.

Hurricane Update

# REBUILDING PASCAGOULA

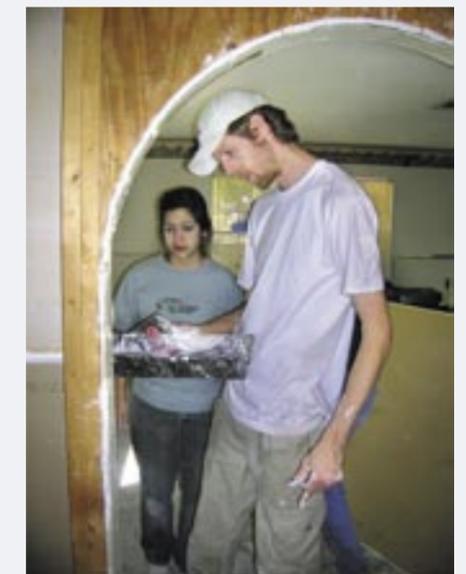
Relief teams have continued to minister in Pascagoula, MS, and Pastor Brad Nichols said many local people have responded with gratitude.

Thursday night Bible study has grown to include up to 15 local people, and many have requested Sunday morning services. "Someone donated a canopy tent," Brad said. "So, Lord willing, this summer we'll start having Sunday morning services." He added that a local couple, the Yberras, got saved through Calvary Chapel teams' ministry and opened up their home for the church Bible studies and Sunday services.

Of the 200 homes which Calvary Chapel teams helped clear out, nearly 100 are still in need of assistance. The work has moved from "mucking out" houses to mudding and interior finishing. "It's a lot

faster work," Brad said. Teams are painting and laying carpet, some even bringing carpet, flooring, and appliances with them. Such help is invaluable, Brad said, since very few will receive any outside compensation. "Unless you lived within two blocks of the beach, no one had flood insurance," Brad said. "But the flood waters went back five miles."

Brad said he knows many Calvary Chapels are working independently in other parts of the Gulf Coast and that many local churches are now able to help as well. "When you look at the numbers, you can feel overwhelmed," Brad said. "But there are other churches helping, and people are rebuilding." He said the Calvarys that send teams have been a great encouragement and witness for Christ in the community.



Karen Gettemy and Josh Grooms of CC Vancouver, WA, finish walls of a home.

# SPRING BREAK MINISTRY



*Elliot Eblin, 14, left, and Robert Kotacs, 18, carry a damaged air conditioner.*

During their spring break, a group of 57 students and families traveled from Corpus Christi, TX, to Bay St. Louis, MS, to serve at the Calvary Chapel Disaster Relief Camp. In the group were teenagers, families, children, and college students.

Pastor Rod Carver of Calvary Chapel Coastlands in Corpus Christi, TX, felt led to take young men from his classes at Annapolis Christian Academy and teach them faith in action. “It was a step of faith, for us as well as the camp, to house and

utilize so many young people at once in such an intense and potentially dangerous relief effort,” Rod said. “Those living in Corpus Christi understand what it means to have such help; we were evacuated immediately after Hurricane Katrina when Hurricane Rita became a threat.”

By the end of the week-long trip, it was obvious that God had done a work through the witness and energy of the young people. One man who gave his heart to the Lord said he was greatly influenced by meeting the teenage boys who gave up their spring break to come serve him. Others noted the incredible energy the young men brought to the work sites. College student Ellen Hissong will return with another group of young women for two weeks this summer.

A group of young girls aged 8 through 11 led worship for the evening Bible studies; children worked in the kitchen, around the camp, and at work sites with their parents. Those from the community said their spirits were lifted by the children’s laughter and activity, as many children have not returned to Bay St. Louis since Hurricane Katrina.

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



*Young believers from Corpus Christi, TX, clean up broken bricks in Bay St. Louis.*

## BILOXI, MISSISSIPPI

“It’s been a wild nine months,” said Pastor Steve Brown of Calvary Gulf Coast in Biloxi, MS. “We have completed the homes in our fellowship. There were about 15 homes we had to rebuild partially or totally.”

He said the fellowship lost nearly half its members to relocation after the storm, but now it has grown to 150. They still need a worship leader and children’s ministry workers, but Steve said God is rebuilding the church—the body as well as the building—in His time. “We’re very blessed, too,” he said, speaking of the location

God provided in the storefront building in downtown Biloxi. “This Friday we’re rebuilding part of our back wall before the next hurricane hits.”

While most of the relief work has been construction, this summer there will be a handful of special kid-centered programs for the community. “Calvary Chapel Heartland (of Fort Valley, GA) will do a VBS, and CC Bothell, WA, will do the follow-up,” he said, adding that he has seen lasting fruit from outreach teams’ visits.

### Hurricane Relief Contact

**New Orleans, LA**  
[www.calvarynola.org](http://www.calvarynola.org)  
[grace@calvarynola.org](mailto:grace@calvarynola.org)  
 504-858-8288

**Bay St. Louis, MS**  
[www.calvarychapelrelief.org](http://www.calvarychapelrelief.org)  
 714-446-6222

**Biloxi, MS**  
[www.calvarygulfcoast.org](http://www.calvarygulfcoast.org)  
[info@calvarygulfcoast.org](mailto:info@calvarygulfcoast.org)  
 228-267-WORD (9673)

**Pascagoula, MS**  
 228-235-2764