

Assemblies of God Provides Relief for Victims of Hurricane Gustav

The newly formed Mississippi Assemblies of God disaster response team is serving evacuees still feeling the impact of Hurricane Gustav.



[] After Hurricane Katrina ravaged their area three years ago, Assemblies of God (AG) district leaders in Mississippi say they discovered a new avenue of ministry—sharing the love of Christ with Gulf Coast residents through the creation of a disaster response team reports the AG News Service.

“We are seeing an increasing number of natural disasters that are occurring [in this area],” says Robert Bingham, director of the response team. “It’s a [good] opportunity for the church to show Jesus.”

Last week, in response to Hurricane Gustav, the relief group housed 180 evacuees on two campgrounds. With the help of its volunteers, the team provided 2,000 meals, as well as generators, buckets and fuel for those in need.

“When victims learn that we came from other states just to help them, they’re amazed and say how much they appreciate us and the people who are making this possible,” said Travis Spencer, a staff pastor at First Assembly of God in Mattoon, Ill., who traveled to the South to help with relief

efforts. "We didn't know what we were going to get into when we volunteered to help, but it's been extremely rewarding."

The Mississippi relief group, working in conjunction with the Missouri-based Convoy of Hope, opened a computer center for evacuees to contact the Red Cross. This week the group plans to remove debris and distribute food reports the news service.

Bingham told the AG News Service that the ministry is determined to serve the community in any way they are able. "Volunteers may do anything from assisting in a shelter to minor home repairs, hooking up generators or basically anything that needs to be done," he says. "[They] may be needed to sweep the floor or to just listen to somebody's story."