

Chaplains Prepare for Hurricane Deployment

Thousands in Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama are being told to evacuate their homes as Hurricane Isaac barrels its way toward the Gulf Coast.

The forecast track has Isaac aimed at New Orleans on the day of the seventh anniversary of **Hurricane Katrina**, the huge storm that devastated the area in 2005. Hurricane conditions could reach anywhere from the New Orleans metro area to the Florida Panhandle.

Isaac already caused major damage in the Caribbean, killing at least eight people and causing widespread flooding in Haiti.

A Rapid Response Team trailer is staged to leave BGEA headquarters in Charlotte to join the Samaritan's Purse Disaster Relief Unit (DRU) for a location to be determined, while two trailers currently in Jonesborough, Tenn., and Olive, Okla., are ready to deploy this week as needed.

RRT chaplain teams have been identified and are deployment-ready to support the initial response for each location as required, and have been in contact with key Emergency Management in St. Bernard's Parrish.

"We don't know what this week will bring," says Jack Munday, director of the Billy Graham Rapid Response Team. "But we do know that God loves each and every person in the Gulf Coast."

"When a disaster like Katrina strikes," says Franklin Graham, president of BGEA, "we go in the name of Jesus Christ, put our arms around those who are suffering, and tell them of God's grace and strength to see them through their trials."

Rapid Response Team chaplains are currently ministering to

people affected by wildfires in Olive, Okla., and flooding in Johnson City, Tenn. Teams recently provided emotional and spiritual care to the Aurora, Colo., community in the aftermath of the shooting tragedy, and to Colorado Springs, Colo., in the wildfire aftermath.

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