

OCTOBER 2005

# FELLOWSHIP

COOPERATIVE BAPTIST FELLOWSHIP OF SOUTH CAROLINA



## Hurricane Katrina relief efforts

Where to start? What to do? Where to go? Those are some of the questions that Missions Coordinator Beverly Greer has been asked since the mass devastation of Hurricane Katrina became evident at the end of August.

There's no one answer to any of those questions.

Here are some suggestions and other points for consideration from Beverly and the Missions Committee:

1. Recovery efforts will be going on for a long time.
2. With evacuees coming into several cities and towns in South Carolina, there is much work that can be done at home like:
  - find jobs and housing
  - provide school supplies for children
  - provide diapers and formula for infants
3. CBF National would like to coordinate the efforts of volunteers who want to work in the hurricane-affected area. Beverly has the information needed.

4. There are so many ways to help and so many needs that the task looks overwhelming.

Updates are being posted regularly on the SC/CBF website, [www.cbfofsc.org](http://www.cbfofsc.org) and at [www.thefellowship.info](http://www.thefellowship.info).

**R**emember, our resources have already been stretched, and now with this added emergency more funding will be needed as quickly as possible.

—Beverly Greer



This photo shows what just one family is facing as a result of Hurricane Katrina. The structure still stands but everything inside was ruined. Photo by Sue H. Poss

## Churches respond quickly to specific requests for help

Five days, five hours and fifty minutes from the time the call came, the compassion and concern of Fellowship people in South Carolina rolled toward Louisiana in the form of towels, wash cloths, large plastic containers, flip-flops and antibacterial hand sanitizing liquid. These items had been specifically requested for Fellowship relief work in Louisiana.

Money to rent a truck to transport the goods was contributed by Boulevard Baptist Church in Anderson, and Wallace Power from Laurens volunteered to drive the truck to Covington, LA. Money to pay for gasoline was contributed by a Sunday School class at Trinity Baptist Church in Seneca; and money for other delivery cost and related trip expenses to Covington was contributed by the Beckett Sunday School class at First Baptist Church in Clemson.

Missions Coordinator Beverly Greer learned about these specific needs on

Friday, Sept. 16. Collection drop off sites were set up in Anderson, Aiken, Beaufort, Charleston, Chesterfield, Columbia, Conway, Florence, Greenville, Greenwood, Rock Hill, Spartanburg and Walterboro.

Volunteers at each of these sites brought the goods to Eau Claire Baptist Church in Columbia where the truck was loaded.

"Our people responded in a massive way to fill a 15-foot truck front to back, top to bottom," Beverly said. "Everything came together like the pieces of a beautiful puzzle thanks to the dedicated work of people across the state. Small describes our state – large describes our heart."

The needs of Fellowship relief sites in Louisiana and Mississippi are constantly changing. Please do not send goods that are not requested, especially used clothing. This only slows down the distribution process.

# How lonely sits the city that once was full of people

“How lonely sits the city that once was full of people.” So begins the book of Lamentations.

As I write this column, the news videos are filled with the devastation and destruction wrought by Katrina. The entire city of New Orleans lies under flood waters and the Mayor is calling for total evacuation of remaining residents. Entire towns along the Mississippi Gulf Coast have disappeared; nothing remains in places but piles of rubble. There is no way at this point to count the losses—in terms of lives lost or in terms of dollar costs. This disaster is overwhelming, simply beyond our comprehension.

What are we to do as people of God? How can we respond?

CBF of SC, under the leadership of Beverly Greer our Missions Coordinator, has a plan for receiving contributions and for assisting volunteers who will go to the area. Certainly we are all called to give sacrificially, to serve by going to offer personal aid, and to pray earnestly for the people who have lost so much and for those who will provide care and resources for months and years to come. This will be a long-term effort, one that will parallel the magnitude of the 9-11 disaster relief.

As people of faith, we are called to witness, in the midst of the horror of the scenes before us, to the grace and mercy of God. Though the book of Lamentations honestly declares the lament of the Hebrew people as they mourned the total destruction of Jerusalem, it also witnesses to a note of comfort:

The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases, his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness. (3:22-23)

As people of God, we are called to give testimony to the hope that lies within us, to the grace and love of God revealed in his Son Jesus Christ. We are to embody that love in a new way each day to the world’s people who need to hear it and see it. That does mean giving and praying. But in this disaster it also may mean for many of us going, speaking, and loving in ways that are personal and real.

Louisiana and Mississippi aren’t far away. Sometimes the people in need are a world away and we just can’t get there. This time is different. We can really do something this time. Will we bear witness in flesh and blood to the steadfast love of the Lord that is new every morning?



By Ginger Barfield  
Interim Coordinator

Ginger is director of the Baptist Studies Program at Lutheran Southern Theological Seminary and is acting coordinator during the sabbatical of Marion Aldridge.

## Justice Committee suggests churches participate in Children’s Sabbath

Justice Committee  
Melanie Tidsworth, Columbia  
N. Andrew Cooper, N. Augusta  
Ivory Woods, Charleston  
Evelyn Oliveira, Charleston

The Justice Committee of SC/CBF has encouraged congregations to participate in the **14<sup>th</sup> Annual Children’s Sabbath on Oct. 16**, an event sponsored by the Children’s Defense Fund.

“It is a sad fact that today, in a land as rich in resources as our own, more than one in six children live in poverty,” said Melanie Tidsworth, chair of the committee. “The causes for this are legion and have been the topic of much debate in our culture, with many viewpoints and suggestions as to what may be done to solve the problem. We all know that poverty lies at the core of much of the societal ills we are so concerned about in our country.

The simple fact is that where poverty exists, children suffer the most and we as believers in the good news of Jesus Christ can and should do something about it.”

The annual Children’s Sabbath is an inter-faith event designed to encourage communities of faith to examine the tradition and resources of their faith communities and to participate in making this world a better place for all children.

A manual of resources that can be used to plan and implement a successful Children’s Sabbath is available through the Children’s Defense Fund at [www.childrensdefense.org](http://www.childrensdefense.org).



Oakland members Bo Coleman and Tom and Judy Luke talk with a young Arab man and Sis Green, the daughter of CBF Field Personnel Nell and Butch Green. Sis was in Belgium with her parents this summer. This fall, she began her second year as a student at the University of South Carolina.

## Needs in Belgium: Oakland sends two teams to help

*By Phillip Reynolds, Oakland Baptist Church, Rock Hill*

The call came for help in Brussels, Belgium, from CBF International Field Personnel Butch and Nell Green. The need was an English camp for neighborhood children and a group to have a prayer encounters experience.

Oakland Baptist Church in Rock Hill answered the call and traveled to Brussels in July.

### Children's English Camp

Team one planned for months to teach English to children using crafts, worksheets, activities, games, and songs. Topics included family, greetings, colors, animals, foods, and numbers.

"We planned to be simple because we had no clue of the ages or English-abilities of the children," said Ann Lister, retired education professor. "We ended up having too little knowledge to feed them — they devoured everything we taught them."

Team members had to be careful with their southern accents, American customs, and improper grammar. One of the children, a 10-year-old Belgian boy, picked up on Minister of Music Sheldon Timmerman's hint of a southern twang.

"He was having trouble forming his mouth to say 'eight' and when he finally got it out correctly, he sounded like he had been born and raised in the South," said Timmerman.

The focus of this team's work of teaching English was to connect these children and their families to the Greens through their ministry center, called The Oasis Centre. At the Centre, no evangelizing or preaching the gospel occurs. It is a social center that has community outreach through adult and teen English classes, a coffee house and movie nights for Arab young people, and other holiday and special events. The Greens show the people the love of God through living the example in their lives and ministries.

"We need an outlet into the neighborhood: a non-threatening way to reach people and to show God's love," said Butch Green. "Our teen and adult ESL classes do this well, and an ESL children's camp will bring even more families to our center so that we can begin building relationships with these families."

### Prayer Encounters

Similar to prayer walking, *prayer encounters* is a term coined by Nell

The partnership between the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship of South Carolina and Baptists in Belgium receives funding through the State Mission Offering. The goal this year is \$110,000.

Green and describes what the second team did while in Brussels. The group experienced six days in which they visited the people, places, and ministries the Greens work with, support, and fellowship with. Most of the people they met were from countries in the Middle East or Northern Africa. Sunday included a trip to the church the Greens attend that is an evangelical church, and that is supported by the Fellowship. The membership is very diverse and the team was overcome with the spirit and compassion of the church members.

"They were so proud of their church. They fixed it up. They renovated it. They made it their worship center," said Carlton Huestess. "I've never seen such devotion for a church like that." About 20-40 people worship there each Sunday with ages ranging from teenagers to senior citizens.

The group also visited with some of the Arab young people of the church. A problem facing them is cultural gaps—the young people are growing up in a country and land different than that of their family and their cultures. The United Nations calls them Third Culture Kids (TCKs), and Sis, the Green's daughter, is considered one of them.

"The U.N. has identified TCKs as a vital group of young people,

(continued on page 4)





## October 2005

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To help Belgian children learn the names of animals in English, the song "Old McDonald" was sung with the help of these face cards as demonstrated by Sheldon Timmerman. The children cannot be shown for privacy and security reasons.

## Oakland volunteers in Belgium (continued from page 3)

important to organizations and governments in looking at conflicts, problem solving, and issues in a very different way like no one else," said Charles Gregory.

Also included in the week was a visit to where the refugees are housed when entering Brussels. Petit Chateau is the name of this facility that holds thousands of people until they are given permission from the government to live and work in Brussels with some people having to wait for months, others for five or even ten years.

The group met with British missionaries on another side of town where they have a multinational church that has outgrown its worship space. Many other experiences were had during the week, including going to a traditional Arab market.

"What we learned this week is that we need to pray harder and more often for them," said Tom Luke. "Cash, donations, and volunteerism are necessary, but nothing in comparison to the power of prayer. The Greens and the three-year missionary with them, Janeé Angel, need our prayers of encouragement, love, and compassion."

CBF of South Carolina, the Belgium Baptist Union, and Butch and Nell Green have a special partnership through the summer of 2007, when the Greens will have completed 10 years of work in Brussels and will go on home assignment for a year. Oakland Baptist has a unique friendship with the Greens as they frequently stay at the missions house adjacent to the church while they are in the States

## Retreat for women planned

March 2-5, 2006

Third Annual SC/NC CBF  
Clergy and Women of  
the Church Conferences.  
Marriott Resort at Grande  
Dunes, Myrtle Beach.

Speaker:

Eileen Campbell-Reed

Clergy: March 2-3

Laity: March 3-5

Topic for Clergy: "What is  
Sabbath When You Work  
Every Sunday?"

Topic for Laity: "Keeping  
the Sabbath: Honoring  
God and Self"

Registration information  
to be available soon.

## Budget Report

SC/CBF needs \$40,950  
per month to meet its  
budget. After two months,  
we are behind by \$13,000.