

Give these Lay Missioners opportunities to share with the congregation as the mission comes into focus. In this way others can become partners with them in prayer and keep up with them. It is important for the church to claim ownership in their mission.

The seventh step is to give them opportunities to share with the congregation as their mission comes into focus. In this way others can become partners with them. It is important for the church to claim ownership in their mission so that when there is a change in pastors they will still have re-enforcement.

When one has a heart for doing the will of God, he is not to be guided by what he thinks is to be done; nor can it be completed by a plan devised by humans. It must be given by God: God-centered; God-powered; God-driven.

CHURCH HOME ADOPTION PROGRAM

By Lamar Beard

Can you imagine as a Lay Man being sent by God into the devastation of Pass Christian, Mississippi with the mandate from God to "*Bear one another's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ*" (Galatians 6:2)?

I surveyed Mississippi all along the coast a few weeks ago to find where the United Methodist Men of North Georgia could best be used. As you go west across the coast in Mississippi, the devastation is amazing. I traveled west to Pass Christian, about 10-15 miles west of Gulfport on U.S. 90. This lovely town was really hit hard by Hurricane Katrina and the aftermath, much more destroyed even than Gulfport.

Across the years I have worked with Disaster Teams in Florida through several hurricane seasons. Never have I seen anything like this. Everything is gone. This is where we are sent. This is where we are to "bear one another's burdens."

When teams go into such situations, three things have to be determined: Where can we eat? Where can we stay? Where can we get gas?

A "tent city" has been erected in Pass Christian. The tents are about the size of small green houses. They are well-lit, air-conditioned and heated. They are fairly roomy, and sleep fourteen people each on cots. Cots are provided.

A team of men from North Georgia is at work now rebuilding the home of a fireman and a police officer in Pass Christian, Mississippi. People in this town that was leveled by Hurricane Katrina, have lost so much. In addition to losing their homes and their city, their families and other things which have meaning for them have been scattered.

FEMA used these tents to house the population of the city from September 2005 until March 21, 2006. The townspeople moved out of the tents into FEMA trailers. The tents are now owned by the city of Pass Christian and will be used for volunteers who come to help them recover. Several tents have been reserved for North Georgia teams.

Bathroom and shower facilities and a laundry tent are easily accessible nearby. As you enter Pass Christian from the east you will notice two large tents on the right. This is "God's Kitchen." The coordinator of God's Kitchen is a United Methodist from Lexington, Kentucky named Tommy Baker. Let him know how many people you have and how long you will stay. The food is free. And good. But he needs to make arrangements to have enough food.

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This is the vision we have for CHAP - *Church Home Adoption Program*. North Georgia Conference churches have an opportunity to adopt the homes of the United Methodist People in Pass Christian. At this time we have teams going to help people who have enough of their homes left to rebuild. More teams are needed.

The next phase is *Square Foot Ministries*. The plan is to build homes from scratch for people whose homes have been leveled. David Clark in North Georgia heads up a 15-church program (there are probably more now) south of Atlanta. This program is different from Habitat for Humanity. Homes of 1,800 square feet are built in the sheltered site, broken into two sections and shipped via flatbed trucks to a site in Mississippi where a CHAP team has cleared the land and will complete the erection in a couple of days. The homes are basically at the point of being "dried in" with plumbing, electrical, and HVAC working before they leave Georgia. The sheet rock has to be added.

The beauty of Square Foot Ministries is that new homes can be partially constructed by volunteers in the Atlanta area who may not be able to travel to Mississippi and finished later by volunteers in our CHAP program on site.

