

**Finances Related to Hurricanes Katrina and Rita
(Report as of October 31, 2006)
Don Cottrill**

The Louisiana Conference has been in the midst of responding to the results of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita since the fall of 2005. Our Conference Churches and those of the United Methodist connection have been exceedingly generous in the financial support of these efforts. We are indeed grateful for the monetary gifts, volunteer hours of hands-on ministry in the communities, and the many prayers that have continued to bolster the response.

There have been many sources of funding and there have been several channels for giving gifts. Listed below are the sources and the ways in which the resources have been used and projected to be used:

Humanitarian Response through UMCOR and the Louisiana Conference Storm Recovery

The funds that have come through the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR) are designated for humanitarian aid. These funds are to be spent on recovery of individuals and not on pastors and their families, or on church property, unless it is related to assisting in the recovery process. These funds have been received through the General Church Katrina and Rita offerings. The United Methodist Church received a sum of \$64 million to assist with this effort throughout the Gulf Coast region (Louisiana, Mississippi, Texas and the Alabama-West Florida Conferences). This money is requested by each Conference through the development of a plan for assistance in recovery and the building a budget to support that plan. A request for funds is made quarterly, along with a report on the use of previous funds.

An amount of \$1,500,000 was received and spent between September, 2005 and March, 2006 for the initial response to both hurricanes. These funds were used to begin the process of relief efforts through the building of a nucleus of a relief and response team, the establishment of a call center for volunteers, the purchase of equipment and the establishment of offices for housing the relief, promotion of the presence of the United Methodist Church for response, and in the area of environmental and structural site evaluations.

The Louisiana Conference was awarded the amount of \$7,349,299 from April of 2006 through March of 2007. A similar amount has been earmarked for April of 2007 through March of 2008. This amount covers 1.) Expenses of direct aid in the gutting and rebuilding of homes and other assistance to the victims of the hurricanes, and 2.) Salary support for persons assisting in the response. The Staff is responsible in primarily two areas: a.) Relief Stations and Volunteer group support and rebuilding, and b.) Case Management. Case Management provides the victims of the storms with help in developing a plan for personal recovery, and in identifying available funds for rebuilding their lives either back to their homes prior to the hurricanes, or to new homes.

A team of eighty persons has been hired in order to care for the multitude of needs in the recovery process. Forty staff persons are located in the Storm Center and in six stations that have been established throughout the Louisiana Gulf Coast (four in New Orleans area, one in Abbeville and one in Lake Charles.) The remaining forty work in Case Management throughout the state.

The Quarterly report for the first six months of the grant include expenditures for salary and benefits in the amount of \$1,288,239, travel of \$86,384, operational costs of \$222,946, and Direct Assistance of \$743,833. Direct assistance has not been spent at the rate anticipated since the New Orleans area is not yet in the process of rebuilding. These funds will be held in reserve until the time is right for rebuilding.

An additional amount of \$1,050,000 has been designated to provide for the renovation, rental or building of long term housing for volunteer teams. The sites for this housing include; St. Mark's Community Center in the French Quarter, People's Community Center in mid-city New Orleans, Slidell, Dulac Community Center, and Lake Charles.

Mission Zone and Pastoral Support

In order to respond to the need for local church ministry, rebuilding of our churches in the effected areas, and pastoral support in these areas, the Louisiana Conference and the General Church developed separate funding sources to meet this urgent need. These funds have come through three primary sources: 1.) the Louisiana Bishop's Appeal, 2.) the Katrina Church Recovery Appeal, and 3.) the Church Partnering Program. The funds from the Louisiana Bishop's Appeal have been given by both the Louisiana Conference and other Conferences and by individuals and groups. These funds have been used for the recovery since the hurricanes as a way of caring for the pastors. Few funds have been expended thus far for rebuilding of church buildings; the funds have been needed for pastoral support, and the decisions regarding individual congregations are for the most part still in process. Local churches are working as well with insurance companies on payments, while they are deciding on their future.

The Katrina Church Recovery Appeal was first received on the 1st Anniversary of Hurricane Katrina. Thus far, \$2,000,000 has been received for this offering. This will be shared between Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama-West Florida Conferences. Louisiana Conference has been granted \$1,000,000 from the funds received thus far.

The following is a capitulation of the income and expenditures of the funds for the Mission Zone and the pastoral support for the pastors effected by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita:

Income (as of November 1, 2006):

Total Income from Louisiana Conference churches and individuals (2005 and 2006)
(including Louisiana Bishop's Appeal, and Louisiana Response to Katrina Church
Recovery Appeal)

\$1,224,263

Total Income from Outside of the Louisiana Conference (2005 and 2006):

\$1,942,008

Income from local Churches in the Mission Zone (2006):

\$234,387

Total Income from all sources from August, 2005 through October, 2006:

\$3,400,658

Expenses:

Expenses for salary support and benefits for the pastors in the New Orleans District and
five pastors in the Lake Charles District in 2005:

\$960,594

Expenses for salary support for pastors in the New Orleans and Lake Charles Districts
from January through May, 2006 and for the Mission Zone pastors from June through
May, 2007 (actual and projected):

\$2,325,013

Total Expenses for Pastoral Support from September, 2005 through May of 2007 (actual
and projected):

\$3,285,607

The Partnering Programs have been developed both with local congregations and through
the Storm Center. Additional Partnerships are being developed with some of the largest
congregations of the United Methodist Church throughout our connection. These funds
are not included in the statements as listed above, but will be included in subsequent
reports as they are received.

The Financial Value of our Disaster Recovery Ministry thus far

A summary of the Disaster Recovery Ministry and the financial impact made through the
gifts and volunteer hours are also listed below.

This article is not intended to describe the details of the ministry that has been performed
by our response, for that is a long conversation by itself. It should be remembered that
we are in the midst of assisting people in mapping their own recovery and identifying

resources available through the work of case management, and of assisting in the rebuilding effort through hosting and directing volunteers.

The number of houses that were: (as of November 1, 2006)

guttled	2,311		
roofed	61	roofed	61
debris removal	994	siding	50
sheetrocked	312	yardwork	348
debris removal	994		

Estimated Value of construction Services: Total: \$13,146,000

\$3,500 x 2,311 (gutting \$2,500-\$5,000)	Total: \$ 8,088,500
\$5,000 x 123 (painting \$3,000-\$8,000)	Total: \$ 615,000
\$6,000 x 312 (sheetrocking \$6,000-\$8,000)	Total: \$ 1,872,000
\$8,000 x 61 (roofing \$5,000-\$11,000)	Total: \$ 488,000
\$1,800 x 994 (debris removal \$1,800-\$2,000)	Total: \$ 1,789,200
\$500 x 348 (yardwork \$300-\$1,000)	Total: \$ 174,000
\$2500 x 50 (siding \$2,000-\$3,000)	Total: \$ 125,000

Case Management – PRICELESS (there is no way to estimate the value beyond saying that it is priceless)

Closed Cases:	4,474
Open Cases:	4,483 (512 active and 3,971 pending)
Needs to be determined:	2,900
People served to date:	20,092

Value of Volunteer Hours to date:

	Cases Closed	Clients served This week	Volunteers	Volunteer Hours	Total Value
4 th Qtr to date (since 10/1/06)	485	3,147	1,725	50,051	\$ 875,893
3 rd Qtr total (to 9/30/06)	-----	7,346	5,261	147,284	\$ 2,577,478
Total to 6/30/06	-----	9,599	11,734	1,057,349	\$ 20,541,246
Grand Total	-----	20,092	18,720	1,254,684	\$ 23,994,617

Each volunteer hour is valued at \$17. This amount is reported to the state government each quarter. This amount is credited against the FEMA billing that is sent to the state, thus reducing the repayment Louisiana must make to the Federal Government. As you can see, our United Methodist efforts have financially helped our state in the amount of \$23,994,617 thus far. This of course does not convey the real value of the ministry of the United Methodist Church to the people of Katrina and Rita. The real impact is shown in the stories of those who have received help as they have sought to rebuild their lives. These figures are only a brief summary of our ministry in the name of Christ Jesus.

Thank you for all of your prayers and support for our sisters and brothers. We give thanks to God for you.