

From Where I Sit . . .

“LETTER FROM PICAYUNE”

I want to share with our Broad Street readers as well as a host of churches who participated with us in the relief effort in recent months resulting from Hurricane Katrina. As many of our readers will remember, several congregations and towns folk helped us fill a tractor trailer with survival items, plus donated some \$27,000 to be used in the effort. We targeted the church in Picayune, Mississippi, just above Lake Pontchartrain, and this week received the following report from Johnny Hays for the church there:

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Greetings from the church in Picayune. By the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and your generosity, we continue to be blessed and encouraged in the Katrina relief work. After almost 7 weeks, much has been accomplished; there is still much to do. Your continued support and prayers are coveted.

There have been literally hundreds of people helped by workers who stay in Picayune. How many? God only knows. As we helped members, we also helped neighbors and friends. Still, there is still much to be done: 15 houses to be roofed, 20 homes for sheet rock, as we enter the building phase. Amazingly there are 15 houses that still need trees removed and 16 families still need the debris removed from their houses. While we are slowly making progress, the support from our brethren has been encouraging. A small congregation in Oklahoma with a weekly budget of \$1500 has committed to match the contribution for 20 weeks. Teams and individuals continue to come and support the work.

Communication is still a problem. We still cannot get to the internet and have but one viable phone line for people to contact us. Please be patient with us and do not assume we no longer need help. One of our recent contacts said one of their members communicated to them that we had lots of help and didn't need any more. At the moment of the conversation there were only three workers currently staying at Picayune and working in Bay St. Louis. We do still need help. Most people try to schedule over a weekend and we may house as many as 70 people to work across the coast. . . .

Our future plans include trying to help members who lost everything and did not have flood insurance rebuild.... To date we have received approximately \$250,000 and have dispersed to Christians about \$102,000. Of the money dispersed, financial aid consisted of \$68,000 going directly to members of the church who lost everything. The remainder went to Christians to assist in purchasing necessities after the storm or meeting financial needs. As stewards of this fund we anticipate a great need will exist for months to come.”

. . . . Terry Broome

Printed in the *Broad Street Banner*, Volume XX, Number 44, November 2, 2005.