

**Presbytery of Western North Carolina  
Disaster Response Team Report  
November 1-8, 2008  
Orange Grove, Mississippi**

Twenty-seven energetic team members converged on the Presbyterian Disaster Assistance camp at Orange Grove to share the good news of the gospel and also share themselves. Many on the team had traveled to the gulf region before and were joined with a sprinkling of first timers.

Three years after hurricane Katrina it seems almost unbelievable that so much work still remains to be done in order for families to have their homes restored. Houses are in various stages of repair, from small sheetrock repairs and porches to be added, to entire houses with bare 2X4 walls needing electrical wiring and sheetrock installed on walls and ceilings. And survivors are struggling with the same economic difficulties facing so many others in our country. At one of the houses worked on, the homeowner had just been laid off from his job.



As the work teams went about their tasks, they were blessed with gifts of friendship, laughter, conversation, story telling, and gracious hospitality. The people we met accompanied us “on our way” as we accompanied them. There surely is power in what God continues to accomplish through survivors and responders.

God revealed himself one morning where a team had been building front and back porches on a house. The day before, the front porch was prepared for the installation of a tin roof. The days had been quite warm and bright and the heat and sunlight were going to make it a challenge to install the tin. As soon as the work trailer was unloaded the next day, rain began to fall. It poised the question, was the weather going to avail itself to let the team work outside? Rain continued through the morning as the air grew cooler. Just as the team was finishing lunch, the rain stopped. The sky remained overcast and the air cool. It was pleasant to roof the porch after all. And just after everything was completed, the sun came out for photos of the owner and her new porch roof.

So how was our trip? After the days were done, we had seen hands practicing the faith, giving and receiving, We’ll probably never know, to the extend we’d like to, of just how our service to Christ made a difference. But we can be assured that we have been blessed by the experience.

Plans are underway for a Spring ’09 disaster response team. Please keep your response in mind and in your prayers.