

DATELINE: Tue 09/13/2005 9:29 PM

Blessings to you from Almighty God, who is greater than any hurricane; whose power supersedes any flood.

This is the first of (hopefully) many quick messages meant to communicate where we are in our response to Hurricane Katrina's devastation. I have included everyone who gave me an e-mail address when they signed up to volunteer. If you know of someone who wants to be kept informed, ask them to send me their e-mail address (but be careful, getting on this list means you're volunteering to work).

First, give thanks to God for the generosity and compassion being shown by Americans in general and Christians in particular. People are sacrificing, opening their homes, giving until it hurts. Our elected leaders could learn a thing or two from the people they are supposed to be leading, but who seem to be miles ahead of them.

Janice Durant works for Acuity, the makers of Zep brand cleaners. Her company donated everything we could possibly need to clean, disinfect, deodorize, sanitize and polish our empty houses. She even threw in bug spray. You may have heard that our five empty houses have mold infestations in varying degrees. Zep makes a product for that. After this week we can probably do a testimonial for the product.

Tomorrow (Wednesday) Cindy Roberts is going to begin cleaning the house in the morning (Cindy, I hope you've recruited some helpers!). Then, at 3 p.m., I'm leading a crew of six to finish what Cindy started. We'll begin with removing the mold in the bathroom and in the hallway. Then, we'll wash the walls (and ceilings where needed). Then, the baseboards. Then we'll clean the floors. We'll pull all the nails out of the walls and remove the outdated drapery hooks. We'll clean the kitchen and bathroom really good. And we'll throw the two refrigerators (neither of which works) out on the street. And we'll pull the carpet up in the enclosed porch.

Wednesday or Thursday, Eric Roberts will bring in a crew of carpenters to fix and patch anything that needs fixing, like wall paneling that's loose, the front door, which is in disrepair, and other odds and ends.

John Aycock will probably also drop by on Wednesday to help with the fix-it jobs.

Thursday afternoon, painters from DeKalb Medical Center will come in and finish patching and sanding all the scars and nail holes in the walls, and on Friday morning at 6 a.m., they'll come in and paint the house from ceiling to baseboard.

Bill Tatum will coordinate the volunteer painters to assist these skilled professionals. The paint crew will prep the house on Thursday, laying paper on the wood floors to protect them, and beginning the wall preparations.

Once the house is painted (it' ll take two coats, according to the pros), we' ll be ready to outfit the house with furniture, linens and kitchen utensils. Many, many people have volunteered to donate these materials. I will enlist one of the donation volunteers to serve as a coordinator for gathering the donated items and placing them in the house.

Don' t worry if someone has already donated what you wanted to donate. We have four more houses . . . If we finish setting up this house and have enough stuff left over, we' ll start on the next house.

The other pressing job is the yard. I' ll tap two of the yard volunteers to serve as crew leaders (one for the front yard and one for the backyard). The overgrown bushes right against the house make the house look a lot worse than it really is. Cutting back the overgrowth will make the house look 100% better. Yard work can also be done on the weekend because it won' t hold up the preparation of the house.

This is your hurricane response coordinator, George Miranda, signing off.

DATELINE: Wed 09/14/2005 9:34 PM

**WE HAD OUR FIRST BIG EVENT TODAY!**

Actually, it was like three events, because some folks couldn' t make the 3pm cleaning party, so they held their own parties at other times.

Now I know I will overlook somebody' s names, so please let me know who I left out.

Cindy Roberts, Sarah Guzman and Charlotte Lail showed up this morning and began cleaning the house. Later on, Tricia Sale and some as yet unnamed assistants showed up to clean even more.

When I got there at 3 p.m., Shelly Roberts, Allison Spangler, Ann Wooten, Brad Rouse, Earl Finley, Pat and Chris DeVisco, Connie Carbone were already working hard on cleaning the house.

Bill Tatum was there coordinating the preparation for painting. John and Joe Aycock showed up a little later and trimmed back all the overgrown bushes across the front of the house.

Brint came by with three cases of bottled water and ice, and Tom put on his workclothes and helped pull up old carpet and tear out rotted wood in the porch. Cathy Strain came after work and scrubbed baseboards.

The house looks a different place. And I will tell you honestly that Zep mildew remover is the best such product I have ever used. Of course, it also removed three layers of my lung tissue, until I put on the respirator mask like I had been instructed to anyway.

#### OH, BY THE WAY . . .

An astute member of our congregation suggested that it might be easier to find the house if I tell you where it is. He suggested sharing the address. And I would if I remembered it. It' s either 2052 Clairmont Road. Or 2060 Clairmont Road. Or something in between. Anyway, the EASY way to find it is to park in the little side parking lot next to the Family Life Center on the Clairmont Road side, and then walk through the yard to the first house on Clairmont Road. It' s the one with the refrigerator and scrap lumber in the front yard.

#### THE HOUSE IS IN GOOD SHAPE EXCEPT . . .

We were all surprised at how well the house cleaned up. The only other surprise (and it was not a good one) was the amount of rotten wood in the enclosed side porch. We will actually have to do something more substantial with the porch then just clean up, spruce up and paint.

As soon as I recruit a coordinator for carpentry and repairs (we have about six volunteers on that crew), I' ll assign them the task of figuring out what to do with the porch.

#### DEKALB MEDICAL CENTER: RIGHT HERE RIGHT NOW FOR CLAIRMONT PRESBYTERIAN

The hospital is supplying the paint and three painters to paint the interior of the house. They' re showing up at 6 a.m. Thursday morning and they' ll work until 2 p.m. They' ll come back on Friday morning at 6 a.m. To finish the job.

BILL TATUM is serving as coordinator of the volunteer paint crew. He' ll probably be calling some of you after the professional painters are finished on Friday to arrange for any touch up painting they didn' t get to. You can reach Bill at [wpt330@comcast.net](mailto:wpt330@comcast.net).

#### YARD CREWS

We' ll need three yard crews - one for the front, one for the back and one

for the cellar (technically not a yard crew, I guess). I' ll be calling three of you folks who signed up for yard work to ask you to coordinate these teams. It' ll be up to the coordinators to actually schedule the yard work, but I' m suggesting THIS Saturday morning. Thanks to John and Joe AycocK, a lot of the heavy duty stuff is already done!!

#### PRESSURE WASHING PARTY

After the AycocKs cleared out the overgrown bushes, we realized how much the outside of the house really does need pressure washing. Brad Rouse will bring his pressure washer on Sunday, and we' ll spray the house after lunch (say, 2-ish). This won' t take more than two people, but it sure is a lot of fun to do, so anyone who wants five minutes with the sprayer is welcome to join us.

#### SECOND HOUSE CLEANING

After the painters are done, we' ll need to finish cleaning, especially mopping the wood floors with wood floor cleaner. The new house cleaning coordinator (whoever that lucky person is) will arrange this second cleaning party. Think about Sunday or Monday.

#### DONATIONS KEEP POURING IN

Thank you, Linda Bennett, for agreeing to serve as the coordinator for donated furniture, linens, appliances, etc. She will be calling those of you who signed up to provide these items. We have a good problem, and that is an abundance of offers, including three refrigerators, three dining tables, and lots of linens, pots and pans, etc. So, unfortunately, we won' t be able to take EVERYTHING right away, but please don' t let go of your stuff until either Linda calls you to bring it in or I e-mail you to tell you we' re done. You see, there are five empty houses, and if the generosity and need both continue, we might end up using ALL of your donations.

#### KEEP ON TRUCKING FOR THE LORD

I need trucks. At least two but preferably four. And truck drivers. And movers. We need your help getting the furniture and heavy appliances to the house from the folks donating them. If you have a truck, or a strong back, and are willing to help pick up and deliver furniture, give me a call (404) 325-2724, or e-mail [gmiranda1@comcast.net](mailto:gmiranda1@comcast.net).

DATELINE: Thu 09/15/2005 11:04 PM

Greetings in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The Lord continues to move among our congregation in a powerful way as we come together to make a difference in the lives of at least one family displaced by Katrina.

### THE NEXT BIG EVENT: YARD PARTY

I could call it Yard Work, but "Party" sounds much more enticing. The Yard Party is this Saturday, Sept. 17, from 9 a.m. Until 1 p.m. I have alerted everyone who signed up for the yard crew, either by phone or e-mail, and currently have six RSVPs in favor of showing up. There' s plenty of bottled water (thanks to Brint). Just bring your gloves and a couple yard tools, if you have ' em. Thanks to John Aycock, a lot of the heavy duty stuff is already done. We' ll need to trim hedges, whack weeds (sling blade for you old-school folks), rake, shovel and prune. A lawn mower or two might be beneficial, but I won' t expect anyone to lug theiLawnBoy to the church. If you can' t come for the whole time, come for part of the time!

### THE LIST OF POSSIBLE FAMILIES NARROWS

We are looking at a list of seven patients at DeKalb Medical Center, as well as several other families not related to a hospital patient. As information is gathered on these families, it will be presented to members of our task force and key members of the Session so that the candidates can be prayerfully considered and the Lord will lead us to the family to whom we are called to offer hospitality.

### 2036 CLAIRMONT ROAD

I told you last night that the house was 2052 or 2060 or somewhere in between. I was wrong on all three counts. The correct address is 2036 Clairmont Road. Again, it' s the house closest to the Church on Clairmont Road, and the best place to park when you' re coming to the house is in the small parking lot on the Clairmont road side of the Family Life Center.

### PAINTERS MAKE SIGNIFICANT PROGRESS

Four painters from DeKalb Medical Center arrived at 6 a.m. This morning and painted the ceilings, primed the woodwork and painted the first wall coat. Tomorrow they will come back and do the second coat on the walls and finish the woodwork. These pros will pretty much finish the job in two days, and whatever they don' t finish will be assigned to Bill Tatum and his paint crew to wrap up. If you' re signed up for the paint crew, and you are needed for minor touch up painting this weekend or early in the next week, Bill will be giving you a call to line you up.

### THE MARINES HAVE LANDED

We uncovered some significant but manageable water damage in the enclosed porch, as well as an unacceptably large gap between the bottom of the front door and the threshold. John Aycock was at the house this afternoon after work installing a new raised threshold to repair the door. Later on, he' ll replace the broken window pane in the door.

Eric Roberts is an actor on the situation comedy "Less than Perfect." He is

NOT the church member who is a building contractor. THAT would be Eric SULLIVAN (who is much cuter than Eric Roberts . . . Or so my wife tells me). Anyway, ERIC has agreed to serve as the coordinator of the carpentry and repairs division of EXTREME MAKEOVER - CLAIRMONT CHURCH EDITION. But don' t expect him to display the manic energy of Ty Whatshisname from the ABC TV version of the show.

Eric will lend his expertise in helping us save the porch, which will involve restructuring the walls so they aren' t infiltrated by rain water. It was this poor design that led to the damage, but which can be reversed relatively efficiently between Eric' s ingenuity and our cheap labor.

#### MORE HOUSE CLEANING NEEDED

There were a few things that we didn' t want to do before the painting specifically, cleaning the bathtub and bathroom floor (because the bathtub would be used to wash brushes, etc.); and cleaning/polishing the wooden floors (because we' ll have to scrape paint and remove the paper barrier first). Also we didn' t get to the wall behind the washing machine, and we didn' t scrub the fireplace. But that' s about all that' s left in the way of cleaning.

I don' t have a house cleaning crew coordinator yet, so unless I take care of that before Saturday, you' ll be hearing from me again to arrange a second house cleaning party, this one smaller than the last, for either Sunday afternoon or Monday morning, depending on the completion of painting.

#### PRESSURE WASHING PARTY

Man, pressure washers are fun! Brad Rouse is bringing his pressure washer to the house on Sunday afternoon at 1 p.m. He could use two or three volunteers to assist him with the pressure washing. If you' re interested, call Brad at 770-452-1420, or call ME at (404) 325-2724.

#### PRESBYTERY JOINS THE GAME

Greater Atlanta Presbytery approached us last weekend about housing a family. The Session voted to invite the Presbytery to join in this ministry by adopting one of our houses and preparing it for a hurricane evacuee family. North Avenue Presbyterian has stepped forward and requested a house. We are talking with them now to work out the details, including which house is available and what our expectations are about the upkeep of the house, expenses related to fixing up and maintaining the house, and the way in which the house is used for this ministry (e.g. As transitional housing, not a permanent residence).

The excitement about this opportunity is spreading even beyond our

presbytery, and other churches in our area have made inquiry about joining us in this mission. It' s wonderful to see the Church of Jesus Christ crossing boundaries and divisions to become ONE in ministry.

That' s all for tonight, Thursday, September 15. This is your Hurricane Response Coordinator, George Miranda, signing off!

DATELINE: Fri 09/16/2005 10:17 PM

#### YARD DAY IN THE A.M.

If you haven' t RSVP' d for the yard party but you still want to come, well come on! We have a lot to do: front yard, back yard, overgrowth on the street blocking driveway view, attic full of "period pieces" and a cellar that needs some sweeping out.

If there are even more folks than we need for those jobs, we can start the post-painting house cleaning.

#### TUYMITES!

Yep, we found ' em in the porch Kind of a good news-bad news. I mean you' d rather not have termites, but if you DO have ' em, it' s better to know about it and deal with it. Luckily, the church has a termite bond on the house, so the repairs will be covered.

#### ALICE SCOTT STEPS FORWARD

Alice Scott volunteered to be co-coordinator with Linda Bennett for donations by church members of furniture, appliances and housewares. If you have any of these items that you want to donate, e-mail Linda at lgb25@comcast.net or Alice at tidyalice@hotmail.com.

#### NORTH AVENUE WANTS A HOUSE

Saturday morning, a representative from North Avenue will come by to look at one of our empty houses to see if they feel they can take on a family and a house.

#### CALLING ALL LAWNMOWERS

We REALLY could use two or three lawn mowers tomorrow morning. I know they' re kind of a hassle to get to the site, but it would make a huge difference in the outcome of our work tomorrow. Also, an extension ladder would be nice so somebody who is not acrophobic can clean the gutters (ie not me).

#### SESSION CALLED MEETING

Tom Pipkin has called a meeting of Session for 10:45 a.m. (before the 11 a.m. Worship service) in the Session room to entertain another request from

another church to participate in our hurricane ministry.

Short letter tonight . . . It' s Friday night and time for a short break from the work. This is your (somewhat tired) Hurricane Coordinator, George Miranda, signing off.

DATELINE: Sat 09/17/2005 10:38 PM

Grace and Peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.  
(I always wanted to say that).

**YARD DAY BRINGS CLAIRMONTERS OUT OF THE WOODS**  
And the yard literally was a wood . . . A thicket . . . An impassable forest.

But not for long, thanks to the tireless efforts of these Clairmont members and, YES, PROSPECTIVE members, who cleared overgrowth, trimmed hedges, mowed grass, pulled vines, cleaned gutters, and hauled trash:

Jay Scott, Jack Oltman, Eugenia Rucker, Ysbrand van Duys, Bob Siegman, Scott Ambrose, Debi Schoepke, Megan Dickherber, Jennifer Dickherber, Tom McRae, Amy Lockwood, Sara LeDuc, Elizabeth LeDuc, Chuck & Barbara Powers, Herb Edwards, David Roberts, Bruce Sundstrom, Bill & Nena Thompson, Bonnie Billington, David Zimmerman, Evan Secor, Pat DeVisco and Eric Sullivan [NOTE: I might have missed a few names, because some folks didn' t sign the attendance sheet].

The party was planned for 9 a.m. until 1 p.m. But a handful of folks stayed until after 4 p.m. A TREMENDOUS amount of biomass has been redesignated as non-essential cellulose. Additionally, we had enough people to assign some to the inside of the house to work on cleaning windows and blinds.

**NENA THOMPSON VOLUNTEERS TO COORDINATE CLEANING CREW**  
Nena has already begun organizing a cleaning party for Sunday at 1:30 p.m., in response to popular demand. This group will focus on cleaning out the attic, finishing the windows and blinds, cleaning the wood floors and the bathroom.

If we don' t finish cleaning on Sunday afternoon, Nena is arranging a Wednesday cleaning party, 3 pm til 6 pm, like last week. If you want to contact Nena, e-mail her at [nena@ctatlanta.com](mailto:nena@ctatlanta.com).

Allison Spangler gets to paint the wallpaper behind the washing machine.

### ERIC SAVES THE PORCH

Eric Sullivan worked diligently with a couple members of his crew and our own valiant Jack Oltman to rescue the enclosed porch from the ravages of water and termite damage. The room is far from finished, but it' s future as a cozy sunroom is secure.

### WE MIGHT HAVE A FAMILY!!

My contacts at the hospital have finally produced a good candidate family. The ministers will meet and interview the family Monday morning and we' ll discuss the "covenant" that we' ll have for the next 12 months (maximum); specifically, the family' s intention to get work, pay utilities, save money and find permanent housing - whether here or in New Orleans (or wherever else God leads them) before the end of the 12-month period.

In return, we are going to stand by the family throughout the year, assist them with accessing services entitled to them because of their status as storm evacuees; help them with food, clothing, health care, school, finding work, etc.

If this all works out, we' ll be introducing the family to you a week from tomorrow (Sunday, September 25) during worship.

### WE' VE ONLY JUST BEGUN . . .

At the end of next week, we truly hope to have a livable, furnished house with a stocked pantry. It will be far from perfect. There are a few water drainage problems. The counter top, the linoleum in the kitchen . . . Well, let' s just say Architectural Digest isn' t knocking down our door with camera in hand.

We' ll be discussing long-range upgrades and maintenance of the property with the Building and Grounds Team and the Long-Range Planning Committee of Session. And this is just one house . . .

### WE STILL NEED TRUCKS

Especially Sunday and Monday. We need to pick up a refrigerator on Sunday and a bed on Monday. If you are available to drive a truck (with or without trailer) or lend your back to the effort, give me a call at (404) 325-2724 or e-mail [gmiranda1@comcast.net](mailto:gmiranda1@comcast.net).

This is your Hurricane Coordinator, George Miranda, signing off.

DATELINE: Sun 09/18/2005 8:59 PM

We continue to make lightening speed progress (again for our denominational pattern). It was just one week ago today that we announced we were going to get a house up and running and move in a family that lost everything to the hurricane. It's been just four days since we had our first workday at the house to inaugurate this effort. During that time, we have cleaned and painted the whole interior of the house (except for one wall behind the washing machine that still needs to be painted, and the floor in the living room dining room still needs to be cleaned). The rotten wood in the sun room has been ripped out and the room has been reframed. The yard has been hand-bush-hogged by a veritable army of Clairmonters. The outside of the house has been pressure washed.

What remains to be done: some cleaning (outlined below); finish repairing the sun room; finish cleaning out the attic and removing the rodent that was spotted scurrying through the piles of cardboard boxes up there; moving in furniture and a refrigerator; fixing a leaky kitchen faucet; replacing a broken window pane in the front door; removing all the trash (yard debris and construction debris, and Antiques Road Show rejects from the attic). And some other stuff I'm sure I'm overlooking.

This is what we need to accomplish this week so that the family (we are currently interviewing one) can move in next weekend. So expect some phone calls and e-mails for favors that might be what you signed up for, or might be another work crew calling you.

#### CLEANING PLAN

Nena Thompson is the cleaning coordinator:

ena@ctgatlanta.com

(404) 325-0006

Dawn Pipkin and Ginny Secor spent several hours cleaning all three bedroom floors this afternoon. Mary Burgin scrubbed down the tub and the bathroom floor. Brad Rouse pressure-washed the exterior of the house.

Nena is organizing another cleaning party for Wednesday, tentatively one in the morning for the women who have more free time then to work; and another one from 3-6pm for some others of us. But anyone who wants to clean on Monday or Tuesday should feel free to do so. Please contact Nena to let her know what you're doing, so we won't duplicate efforts.

Allison Spangler will be painting the wallpaper behind the washing machine on Tuesday afternoon. The wallpaper is not in the greatest shape all the way around, but serviceable for the time being, and the painters warned us

that we would be opening Pandora' s box if we tried to strip it down to the bare walls. But this particular wall, behind the washing machine, is in significantly worse shape, with tears and stains, etc., and about the best we can do with it at this point is to paint over it.

We need to finish cleaning out the attic and hauling the attic trash to the street. There are a few treasures in there for those of you who consider them such. For instance, today I pulled out a portable manual typewriter in perfectly good working condition (I had to tell my 13-year-old what it was . . . Reminded me of my father' s stories about walking eight miles to school uphill both ways . . . In the snow . . . In semi-tropical Brazil).

Anyway, if three or four guys wanted to take that on, that would be great!

The wooden floors in the living room and dining room need to be sanded and refinished. But we' re not going to do that. We' re just going to clean them with another fabulous ZEP product, ready-to-use spray-on wood floor cleaner. Just spray, and wipe with a lightly damp cloth mop. Before cleaning the wood, however, the paper paint barrier needs to be pulled up and thrown out. And the paint spots that dripped between the paper and the wall need to be scraped up (it never matters how hard you try to cover the floor, does it? That darn paint drop always finds the one place you didn' t tape or cover).

If you choose to clean in the house before Wednesday, please e-mail or call Nena to let her know what progress you made, so the next person doesn' t repeat what you' ve already done.

## PORCH REPAIR

Eric Sullivan has a list of volunteers who signed up to help with carpentry and repairs. He' ll be working this week to finish the sun room (hanging sheet rock and veneer paneling, mostly). There are other repairs that need to be made: the kitchen faucet is leaking and needs to be replaced; a small partition needs to be built in the "secret passageway" between the middle bedroom and the kitchen. The purpose of the partition would be to make the passage into a bedroom closet (on one side) and a very thin pantry on the other (you could store spaghetti, and loaves of bread if you stand them on end).

We also found the closet door for that "passageway" (it was in the attic). The door needs to be re-hung and painted. The cellar does not have a door, and one needs to be installed there. The insulation under the floor needs to be pulled out and thrown away and replaced with mold-free insulation. And a little thing, but an important thing: the AC filter needs to be replaced.

Eric will be calling on some of you to help him. You can also contact him, especially if you have special skills in any of these areas, by calling him at  
(404) 606-4411  
Or e-mail him at shomesinc@hotmail.com

### BRINGING IN THE SHEAVES

That' s an old harvest metaphor. We harvested a tremendous amount of non-necessary botanical material on Saturday, and it currently is residing in a half-dozen massive piles throughout the yard. Numerous persons have asked what will be done with those piles. A few others have offered (unsolicited) advice on what to do with those piles. So I thought I' d let everyone know, because truly they are an eyesore.

Eric Sullivan is going to arrange for a tree removal firm to run all the yard debris through a chipper and haul it away. We will use some of the money donated for the Hurricane effort to cover the cost of the debris removal. It' s just too much foDeKalb County to take.

However, we will let DeKalb have the non-biodegradable trash (attic stuff and construction debris). So another thing that volunteers can do before Wednesday is to haul anything that is not leafy and green to the street. To that end, anyone who has old trash cans that they can donate to the cause, we would appreciate it if you would bring them by the house.

You can put your name on those trash cans so that you can retrieve them later. But if you' re really attached to your trash can - if you have too much history between the two of you to risk losing your trash can forever, then leave it at home, because I can' t guarantee that your trash can will be waiting for you when you come back.

### EXTERIOR REPAIRS DESPARATELY NEEDED

After we cut back all the brush that was effectively hiding the house from view, and after Brad pressure-washed it, we discovered that maybe it' s not in as great a shape as we originally thought. The house is very nearly ready for a family to move in; however, after they move in, we need to do some things to maintain our property, like, for instance, painting the outside; replacing the shutters OR caulking the screw holes for the shutters; repairing exterior window trim; replacing loose flashing and rotten soffet board under the roof (one of the sources of water infiltration in the sun room); dumping dirt against the foundation to re-grade the slope to pull water away from the house. And several other projects.

These projects are more long term (except for fixing the soffet leak) and

beyond the scope of our Hurricane Response effort. But we will discuss this issue with both the Long-Range Property Use Committee and the Building and Grounds Team to schedule and budget for these very necessary maintenance items.

#### INTERIOR UPGRADES ALSO DESPARATELY NEEDED

To name a few: a new kitchen counter; new flooring in the kitchen; re-glazing the bath tub; refinishing the floors, etc. Again, these are things that should not hold up the family moving in; they are also things that are not necessary to make the house habitable, but are appropriate repairs and upgrades for us to maintain our property responsibly, as well as giving the message to our guest family that we respect them enough to want them to live in the same environment that we live in.

To that end, we will be discussing with Building and Grounds, and maybe with Missions Team, an ongoing task force to work with the guest family to schedule and finance these repairs and upgrades throughout the coming year.

#### MOVING DAY

We will attempt to arrange to move as much furniture as we can during this week. Unfortunately, most of us who traditionally in our society function as volunteer movers (ie the men with stronger, younger backs) are all working during the week. So the amount that we actually accomplish during the week will be minimal.

So . . . We will plan a BIG MOVING PARTY for Saturday, September 24, with at least two trucks and six or eight movers. Nena Thompson is working on getting a truck donated by Home Depot. We will be borrowing some of your husbands and their trucks to round out the fleet. Trailers, too. Tom Lockwood secured a furniture dolly for us to use (as early as tomorrow).

Somebody (unfortunately, probably me) will be in touch to schedule the pickup time. Linda Bennett and Alice Scott are contacting the folks who have stuff to donate that we can use prior to my call. If you don' t get to donate your stuff right away, don' t despair. We are just working on the first of as many as five houses. We' re going to need more stuff!

#### MT ZION AME CHURCH JOINS US IN MINISTRY

Session voted in a called meeting this morning to approve loaning one of the empty houses to Mt. Zion AME church to house a hurricane evacuee family. Actually, Mt. Zion is already housing They will move this family to the THIRD house from the Church on Clairmont (I think the number is 2060).

Mt. Zion will clean the house and the yard, move in the family and sponsor

them for an estimated six months while they get back on their feet. In partnership with Mt. Zion, we will offer some of our enthusiastic volunteer energy to help them get the house ready.

You may remember that about three years ago, Mt. Zion had to tear down their quaint, historic white clapboard church on La Vista Road (right past Oak Grove) because of damage from termites and the ravages of time. During the year that they razed that structure and replaced it with a brand new sanctuary, they worshiped in our Family Life Center. We had occasion to join together from time to time, especially at the end of their tenure with us, when we had a wonderful, joyous, spirit-filled joint worship service with our two congregations in the Clairmont sanctuary.

In the glow of that relationship, we made great plans to continue working together in ministry. But they got busy, and we got busy, and we never really got around to following up.

NOW, however, we have a renewed opportunity to join hands in ministry. It's going to be great!

It's 9pm and I still have to call some of you folks to line up trucks before tomorrow, so I'm your Hurricane Response Coordinator, George Miranda, signing off. God bless you!

DATELINE: Mon 09/19/2005 11:43 PM

#### GUEST FAMILY ACCEPTS OUR INVITATION TO MOVE INTO OUR HOUSE ON CLAIRMONT FOR UP TO ONE YEAR

It's official. We have a guest family. I will tell you a little about them, without betraying any confidences, or stealing their thunder.

Bennie and Sherilyn Jasper (gee, I hope I spelled that right . . . The first rule of journalism is get the name spelled correctly) are a young (er than me) married couple with a ten-year-old daughter named Jasmine. The Jaspers hail from New Orleans, but actually lived in Atlanta for ten years before returning to New Orleans three years ago, after her mother died (on Sept. 10, 2001).

Bennie and Sherilyn evacuated N.O. With their daughter and an elderly female member of their church, who also had family in Atlanta. They have been staying temporarily with an elder in their home church, Bouldercrest Church of Christ, but need to leave the crowded situation in deference to the elder, but also so they can concentrate on getting their lives back together.

Sherilyn shared that she was able to find their home on a satellite image on the internet. Only the top of the roof was showing above the flood waters. She said, "It's so difficult. You finally have

everything you need and some things that you want, and then one day it' s suddenly all taken away and you have nothing."

Bennie added, "I still can' t believe this happened. I keep waiting for my wife to wake me up and say, 'Bennie, you fell asleep on the couch again.' And then I' ll get up and realize this was all a bad dream."

Because the Jaspers already belonged to Bouldercrest CoC for 10 years before returning to Atlanta, they very quickly and naturally resumed their relationship with that congregation. Bennie said that when they get more settled, he' ll get involved in the evangelism team again, and the both of them will join the choir.

Nevertheless, we assured the Jaspers that they are also part of our faith community, and we told them about the other events we have in the life of our church, like the sports ministry at the FLC, which is perfect for Jasmine, and Wednesday Night Alive.

The Jaspers will join us for worship this Sunday, Sept. 25, at the 11 a.m. Service. Hopefully they will move into the house the same day.

#### CLAIRMONT HOUSE BEGINS TO TAKE SHAPE

Thanks to Curtis Smith, Gene Callaway, Tom Lockwood, Thomas Lockwood, Earl Whittington and (visitor) Anita Palmer for moving in the first appliances and furniture tonight; and thanks to Gene & Chrisinte, Anita and the Tansills (David and Alice) for donating tonight' s load (a double bed, refrigerator, microwave, wing chair, book shelf, TV stand and VCR, table and lamp).

#### WEDNESDAY CLEANING PARTY

The floors in the living room and dining room still need to be cleaned. That will be the lion' s share of what gets done at the Wednesday party. Before then, the attic still needs to be cleaned out. Thanks to the mystery volunteer who picked up all the junk I threw out the attic window. I made a dent, but only a dent, in the mess up there.

Other folks are needed to pick up the non-yard debris and carry it to the street. A tree removal service will be contacted to remove all the yard debris.

#### CALLING ALL MAINTENANCE PERSONS

The following jobs still need to be completed. If you are knowledgeable, capable and interested, please call the construction/repair coordinator, Eric Sullivan, at (404) 606-4411.

- replace the leaky kitchen faucet
- nail down door jamb in middle bedroom
- install handle on oven door
- hang sheetrock and/or paneling in the sun room

replace insulation in cellar  
re-hang door in middle bedroom closet  
build partition wall between pantry and bedroom closet  
replace broken window in front door

Furniture pick-up during the week

To meet the goal of the Jaspers moving into the house this weekend, we hope to have most, if not all, of the donated furniture picked up before Saturday. We'll use Saturday to catch up on whatever is left. Ray Davis is organizing a furniture pickup for either Tuesday or Thursday. He may call you to help. If he does, say yes.

#### SESSION APPROVES PARTNERSHIP WITH MT. ZION AME

I think I already told you yesterday that Session enthusiastically approved inviting Mt. Zion to take on one of the houses. Well, they didn't waste any time. There was a crew of 20 or 30 Mt. Zion congregants (actually it was only about five or six, but they moved like many more) at the house on Clairmont, two doors down from ours, washing walls, cleaning AC vents, unclogging gutters, painting, scrubbing bathrooms, and raking leaves.

Mt. Zion's coordinator (my counterpart), LaVerne (I'll have to remember to ask her what her last name is . . . I don't pay much attention to last names) will provide a schedule to me, which I will share with you via this organ. Because, in the case of Mt. Zion, we want to support them in their ministry to a hurricane-displaced family by rolling up our sleeves and joining them in the work that needs to be done to prepare the house.

While Bennie and Sherilyn were visiting with us this morning, we took them by the house in which they will be staying, and then we took them down to meet the Mt. Zion crowd. It turns out that the family Mt. Zion is ministering to was there, helping with the cleaning and painting. There are four adult persons (husband, wife, two grown kids . . . By grown I mean 19 or 20 . . . Which, technically, is not grown at all)

Turns out, again, that the two families lived less than a mile apart in New Orleans, although they had never met each other. Now they get to be neighbors again, but this time, they will know each other quite well.

#### PRESBYTERY MARCHES ON

We are still entertaining the possibility of North Avenue Presbyterian Church adopting a house and a family. The issue will be discussed at staff meeting in the morning, after which their representative will contact me to discuss the parameters of our relationship with regard to the house.

Meanwhile, Emory PC has also contacted Presbytery with interest in borrowing one of our houses.

I'm falling asleep as I type (maybe because it's almost midnight), so I'm going to let you go to bed, too. This is your hurricane response coordinator, George Miranda, signing off. Good night.

DATELINE: Wed 09/21/2005 12:39 AM

Tuesday, September 20, 2005

### WE MAKE PROGRESS ON THE HOUSE IN FITS AND STARTS

Because of the intricacies of weaving together everyone's schedules, we have had to begin collecting donated furniture and delivering it to the house before we've finished cleaning the common areas of the house. At the same time, repair work in the sun room is continuing, which means that building supplies are spilling over into the dining area.

But the bedrooms are clean, and we've even started setting up the furniture in those rooms.

Thanks to John Aycock, Ray & Andrea Davis, Darrell Jones, Naomi Nelson and Larry Sale, who picked up and delivered furniture today (Larry, you'll have to tell me if you recruited anyone to help you so that I can give them credit).

Thanks to Jake & Melba Hull, Mae & Joe Aycock and Ruth Kageorge, who donated the furniture that got delivered today.

Roy Burke replaced the kitchen faucet, and Eric Sullivan and his capable assistant Matt continued to work on the sun room (and it's looking good!). Allison Spangler painted the wallpaper behind the washing machine and did a marvelous job.

Eric Sullivan (shomesinc@hotmail.com) is coordinating the repairs and maintenance.

Donations of all kinds (furniture, bedding, kitchen utensils, etc.) are being coordinated by Linda Bennett (lgb25@comcast.net) and Alice Scott (tidyalice@hotmail.com).

### WEDNESDAY SCHEDULE

The cleaning crew was alerted that we will have two cleaning shifts on Wednesday (9-12 and 3-6). The yard crew can come out as well to move house debris to the street and consolidate some of the vegetation debris. We still need to finish cleaning out the attic. We could easily employ 15 people during each shift.

Nena Thompson (nena@ctgatlanta.com) has posted to-do lists for the cleaning crew. I'll be around to supervise the yard crew and the attic crew.

## MT ZION MOVES MOUNTAINS TO OPEN HOUSE #2

No sooner was the ink from Clerk of Session Evan Secor's pen dry on the notes that he took at Sunday's called meeting of session, than Mt. Zion's congregation descended on the third house down Clairmont from the Church (I believe it's 2060 Clairmont Road). Actually, they waited until the following morning at 10 a.m. The folks from Mt. Zion are excited about the ministry they are having the opportunity to perform in conjunction with Clairmont.

My counterpart at Mt. Zion is LaVerne Byas-Smith (except that she's much prettier and better organized than I am). And LaVerne doesn't need X-14 mildew remover. She just looks at that mildew out of the corner of her eye, and the fungus knows she means business. It just packs up and leaves town before she has a chance to spray it.

LaVerne is scheduling work parties twice a day all week long. The morning shift is from 10 a.m. Until 3 p.m. The afternoon shift is from 5 p.m. Until 8 p.m. As of yesterday, the Mt. Zion crew was washing walls and then painting them; cleaning out gutters; caulking exterior windows and doors and beginning to tame the yard. They were also going to tackle the kitchen today.

The church had hoped to be able to move their family into the house by week's end, but it looks like the middle of next week is more realistic.

Unless, of course, we help out. You can just show up at anytime during the abovementioned shifts. Bring yard tools. If you want to work inside, we have tons of top-notch ZEP cleaning supplies stored at the Church office that we can carry down to the Mt. Zion House. If you'd like to join hands with Mt. Zion and work with them on their house, please call or e-mail me and let me know. I'll coordinate your involvement with LaVerne so that we get the most efficient use out of you. With your help, Mt. Zion will be able to get their family into their house on the same day we welcome our family into our house.

## MOVING NEEDS ON WEDNESDAY

We need two trucks with two movers each on Wednesday after 4 p.m. One truck will go to the home of Reid and Janet Hartsfield to pick up some bedroom dressers. The other truck will go to the home of Jasmine and Brian Lawson, who are donating a chest and a dresser for the other bedroom. I'll have mapquest directions to each house.

If you want to volunteer your truck or your finely toned physique, give me a call at (404) 819-5518, or e-mail at [gmiranda1@comcast.net](mailto:gmiranda1@comcast.net). I'll be putting out some phone calls to the list of volunteers anyway. Remember, I'm an equal opportunity volunteer coordinator. I have no problem with women lifting heavy objects.

## MYSTERY CLEANERS REVEALED

Yesterday I wrote that someone mysteriously removed most of the debris I jettisoned from the attic window and carried it to the street. Our diligent sources have identified the coy trash hauler as Pam Scott. Thanks, Pam.

In addition, Brad Rouse informed me that Jim Hankins also brought his pressure washer to the house on Sunday and the two of them washed the house from either end and met in the middle. Gosh I wish I was there. There's nothing more fun than a high-pressure stream of water.

## DONATIONS OF GOODS AND MATERIALS ARE TAX DEDUCTIBLE

And there's nothing wrong with that.

If you have donated any furniture, housewares, building supplies, etc., to this project, you can deduct the fair value of those items from your income as a charitable contribution. Bill Spinks, the church's administrator, designed a donation receipt that we have available to give to you for documenting your donations. The IRS requires that the donor set the value of the donation in these instances, so we'll be giving you blank receipts and letting you fill them out.

If you need a blank receipt, call me (404) 819-5518 or e-mail me [gmiranda1@comcast.net](mailto:gmiranda1@comcast.net)

## DONATIONS OF MONEY WORK, TOO

Don' t forget that gifts of money, either in the form of cash/check or gift-cards, are also valuable and needed. The Jaspers will need to be able to buy groceries, gasoline, clothing, school supplies, toiletries, etc. Gift cards to Kroger, Publix, Target, Wal-Mart, etc., will allow them to purchase their necessities. This will also let them choose the pattern on their shower curtain, and the brand of pork and beans they want to stock in their pantry (well, actually, I suspect it' ll be red beans and rice).

With gift cards, the Jaspers can begin buying stuff that belongs to them, that they like, that they chose. Because as appreciative as they are of our generosity (and they very much are), there' s just something unsettled about wearing somebody else' s clothing, sleeping on someone else' s sheets, and ultimately, living in someone else' s home.

I used the word "unsettled," rather than "unsettling" because it is the more appropriate word. When everything you own, except your child' s baby pictures, is covered in polluted mire and mold, or lost altogether to the rushing waters . . . When the house that provided you shelter is under water . . . When the car that facilitated your ability to work, earn a living, and pay your own way in this world, is reduced to a block of mud-encrusted rust . . . When you can' t go to work because the building where you worked, and the business that was housed in that building, no longer exist . . . When you' re feeling all this, you are not settled. You are homeless. You are drifting without a rudder. You need something secure to hold on to.

That' s what the Jaspers need. An anchor.

In addition to our guest family' s need to meet their ongoing obligations (eating, sleeping, working, schooling, etc.), the church has also spent some money (not much) on supplies and services that we couldn' t provide with volunteer labor or donations. An example is the rebuilding of the sun room. The amount of damage from termites and moisture was so extensive that it needed to be fixed by someone who knows what they are doing, and using the right materials to repair it properly.

We' ll have to remove a tremendous amount of yard debris - more than we can in good conscience put on the street for Dekalb County to confront. So we' ll be hiring a tree removal service to haul that stuff away. We need donations to cover some of those costs.

Eventually, we' ll want to fix the things we just patched together to get the Jaspers into the house as soon as possible. Things like re-glazing the tub where the finish is worn off. Replacing the Halloween orange counter top (Editor' s Note: the outdated kitchen décor seems to bother us a lot more than it bothers the Jaspers. They' re just thrilled to have a kitchen to cook in).

Then there are the glamorous upgrades, like dumping fill dirt against the house to create a slope to draw water away from the foundation. Replacing weathered window sashes that leak into the house. And on and on. These projects, while not terribly expensive, will require money that's not currently in the budget.

At the end of this Hurricane Response project, if all goes well, and God wills it, our five empty houses will be filled with five families getting back on their feet. The houses will be livable, respectable even, because I intend for every one of them to be fixed up enough so that we aren't embarrassed to ask someone to live in them for a year.

### LONG-RANGE PLANS DOVETAIL WITH DISASTER RESPONSE

Many of you know that Clairmont has been struggling for years over what to do with the eight rental houses that we own. Recently, the Session, at the urging of the Building and Grounds Team, appointed a long-range land use planning task force, which immediately began exploring ways in which our property could be used for ministry.

Then came Hurricane Katrina, and God told us, in effect, "Here's what you're going to do with these houses." For the short term, anyway.

Our Hurricane Response Task Force has been working hand-in-hand with both this special long-range task force and the Building and Grounds team, in order to ensure that we are all working toward the same goal. To that end, the long-range task force has initiated the development of a common area ("green space"), which will involve most of the back yards of the eight houses. Central to this project is the repair of water drainage patterns from the Family Life Center retention pond to the storm drain under Azalea Drive at the corner with Clairmont. We have a sneaking suspicion that much of our mold problem is related to the obvious water problem in at least two of those houses, which, in turn, are probably related to the drainage patterns on our property.

Our hope is that the result of this project will be a reduction in water seeping into our houses, as well as an attractive, open park in the center of our block where our children can play, our various groups and classes can plant flowers, and our dreamers can sit on park benches and dream dreams.

### READ THE PRESBYTERY'S DISASTER RESPONSE NEWSLETTER

Greater Atlanta Presbytery is mobilizing to assist its constituent churches

in providing relief to the victims of Hurricane Katrina. Currently, the presbytery is assisting churches who are providing short-term and long-term temporary housing for evacuee families. The presbytery is also establishing relationships with churches in the storm-ravaged areas. Look for the presbytery to broker mission trips to these areas in the coming months (probably at least six months from now).

It's easy to bash the Church for its penchant to lumber along in its committee structure and consequently delay taking action. But in fact, the connectional nature of our denomination is the very reason our church is able to respond so nimbly to the disaster. And while the PCUSA is nowhere near as large, nor does it get as much publicity, as the Red Cross or the Salvation Army, still we are able to exploit our intricate network of presbyteries and churches to move supplies rapidly to where they are needed, and to communicate efficiently what those needs are.

A little known fact is that, because the Presbyterian Disaster Response unit is a funded function of the denomination's central office, NONE of the money donated to the Presbyterian Church for Hurricane Katrina relief gets spent on administrative overhead. That's already been budgeted for and paid.

I'll ask the office to post the most recent Presbytery newsletter, HURRICANE KATRINA RESPONSE, on the church's website [www.clairmontpres.org](http://www.clairmontpres.org)

#### WHAT'S NEXT?

North Avenue Presbyterian Church is still pondering. They are taking this opportunity to their Deacons for them to discuss and vote on.

Emory Presbyterian Church's session is meeting Wednesday night to discuss how they want to respond to the Hurricane. They should be calling us Thursday morning to let us know if they want a house.

There are three empty houses yet. While we are waiting on our sister churches to make their decisions, we're just going to go ahead and start working on the next house. God will provide.

This is your hurricane response coordinator, George Miranda, signing off.

DATELINE: Wed 09/21/2005 11:36 PM

Wed., Sept. 21, 2005

A LITTLE COMPETITION IS A GOOD THING

We were going to settle for clean wood floors. Worn, faded, dull, but clean wood floors. But we made the mistake of visiting our brothers and sisters from Mt. Zion AME as they were working on their house (the third house down Clairmont from the Church). Mt. Zion had scrubbed their wood floors with a power floor cleaner and then refinished them with polyurethane. They were shiny! They were purty! They were very nice. And they made our wood floors look like . . . Like they really needed to be refinished, too.

Well, if a little competition is a good thing, a little cooperation is an even better thing. Brother Walsh, a Mt. Zionist who has a real estate business, was the man behind the superior floors at their house. He told me as we were working together on the Clairmont house' s floors that he put himself through graduate school by rehabilitating old properties. He did everything himself because he couldn' t afford to pay anyone else to do it. Now he has folks that do the maintenance for him. But the Mt. Zion House he did himself as a labor of love.

The Clairmont House, also, was a labor of love for Brother Walsh, but also an opportunity for him to teach an eager disciple (yours truly) about refinishing floors. Several of our folks had already done the lion' s share of cleaning the floors, which made the work with the electric floor scrubber go all the more smoothly and quickly. Tena Stephens, Nena Thompson and Anne McCoun assisted with the wet mopping behind the scrubber, to remove all the loose dirt. The Middle School boys Ropes Group helped by moving all the furniture, building supplies, and miscellaneous materials off the wooden floors and into the house next door. At 5 p.m. We were planning on settling for dingy and dull. By 9 p.m. We had shiny and restored wood floors.

Depending on how well the first coat takes, we' ll either add a second layer or just touch up any thin spots we find tomorrow.

IN THE MEANTIME, please refrain from walking on the wood floors until Friday. Access to the house can still be gained through the kitchen (which has a linoleum floor).

#### THE ATTIC IS TRASH- AND RAT-FREE

I swear that rat was alive when I was introduced to it on Sunday night. When Tena Stephens and Anne McCoun found it tonight, however, the rodent had already made its way to the big cheese factory in the sky. Tena and Anne cleaned the whole attic, removing every bit of trash (including Chuckie Cheese). The only thing left is a rather heavy pine twin bed frame, which we' ll get a couple guys to bring down from the attic over the weekend.

John Aycock replaced the missing window pane in the door and left a note taped to the window asking us please not to use the new window pane as a key to the house.

Also spotted in the house this afternoon by yours truly, cleaning the floors in the living room and dining room, and the fireplace, were Janet and Callie Kennedy; Tricia Sale; and Pat DeVisco. Tom McRae and Brad Rouse were out in the yard hauling trash, scraping old paint off the windows, and other various chores. And I'm sure there were other folks that I didn't see. You observant readers out there remember to e-mail me with the names of anyone I left out.

#### KEEP THOSE CHECKS AND GIFT CARDS ROLLING IN

Gift cards are a nice way to provide for the necessities for the Jaspers. Cold hard cash, on the other hand, is the preferred vehicle for defraying the Church's (and my) expenses related to this project. Some of you brothers and sisters can't give your time and talents to the Hurricane project, for whatever reason. But you can always make a monetary donation. As I mentioned in last night's UPDATE, there are a few things that Clairmont will have to do for these houses that will require skills beyond the capacities of our volunteers.

#### FORECAST FOR THURSDAY: SLOW AND EASY

It seems counter-intuitive, if our goal is to turn the keys over to the Jaspers on Sunday, for us to take it easy on Thursday, but that's what I'm asking us to do. The wood floors are curing and may very well require a second coat of polyurethane tomorrow. And the sun room is close to, but not yet, finished. So we're going to focus on these two aspects of the project on Thursday, and return full force on Friday and Saturday. I'll spend some time tomorrow planning out the events of the weekend - the biggest challenge being the dispatching of furniture retrieval teams to pick up the remaining pieces of furniture designated for the Clairmont House.

I'd like to move the furniture back into the house from next door on Friday (hey, what a GREAT idea for a TGIF program!!). Donations coordinators Linda Bennett and Alice Scott will also be working Thursday and Friday to "stock" the house with linens, kitchen utensils, etc. Saturday, we'll dispatch four or five trucks to pick up the remaining furniture.

#### DYING TO DO SOMETHING THURSDAY ANYWAY?

Great! Mt. Zion could use your help. Since they had the foresight to refinish their floors at the BEGINNING of the project instead of at the end of it, they are able to walk on their floors tomorrow. Mt. Zion will be

appreciative of our help. They are currently finishing the painting, putting final touches on the yard, sprucing up the exterior of the house and probably on Friday, moving in furniture.

#### IN TOMORROW' S EDITION OF KATRINA UPDATE

Look for these exciting stories:

- \* Polyurethane dries over 12 hours
- \* External paint peels; Rouse scrapes
- \* Grass continues to grow in yard of Clairmont House

This is your Hurricane Relief Coordinator, Geo. Miranda, signing off.

DATELINE: Thu 09/22/2005 11:57 PM

It has now been 16 days since Session had a called meeting to initiate Clairmont' s response to Hurricane Katrina. It' s been eight days since we started working earnestly on the house. We stretched the project out another two days by deciding to refinish the floors. The initial scrubbing and sealing was last night.

Tonight, Tom Lockwood and I returned to the house with a floor sander and more polyurethane and finished the floors. They need about 24 hours to cure, which means they' ll be "ready" around 8:30 p.m. On Friday night.

Any work, then, that takes place in the house on Friday needs to happen in the afternoon at the absolute earliest. Folks who want to work in the morning can help Mt. Zion with their finishing (yes, finishing) touches. They are now thinking that they' ll be able to move their family in tomorrow night! Dr. Cox plans to have a small prayer service at the Mt. Zion house Friday night, to dedicate the house to this ministry and to bless the family who will be occupying it.

#### THE PLAN FOR FRIDAY . . .

Nena and Bill Thompson will arrive at the house around 7:30 p.m. On Friday and begin to clean up and "unpack" the kitchen, where almost everything in the house was stored to give us access to the wood floors.

Call or e-mail Nena if you want to help ([nena.bill@mindspring.com](mailto:nena.bill@mindspring.com) or [nena@ctgatlanta.com](mailto:nena@ctgatlanta.com)). Folks could start working in the house as early as 4 p.m. (depending on how dry the floors are, and what part of the house you' re working on). Nena can provide direction, but I can already tell you that the bathroom floor and bathtub need to be cleaned again. The floor in the

kitchen will also need sweeping and all the trash taken out.

The furniture that' s still in the house can be redistributed. The washing machine needs to be tested, and there are a couple boxes of dirty rags that will provide the perfect test material. The heavy pine twin bed frame in the attic needs to come down and be inspected to see if it' s worth keeping.

The closet door in the master bedroom doesn' t have any door knobs. The door jamb in the middle bedroom needs to be nailed down.

AND FOR SATURDAY . . .

Nancy Miranda and Nena Thompson will be in charge of the house Saturday. Moving crew folks should expect to hear from me tomorrow, as I schedule several pick ups on Saturday. I' ll be coordinating trucks and teams to go to three or four different locations for pick ups. We' ll need folks at the house to help with unloading the furniture.

We could REALLY use the help of the Youth Group on Saturday morning, moving the furniture back into the Clairmont House from the house next door. And if there' s a lot of you, with a lot of boundless energy, I' ll let you start ripping out the carpet in the next-door house.

EXTERIOR CLEANING

Bill Tatum has shifted his responsibilities to include managing the exterior of the house (including landscaping). He is making arrangements for all the piles of trash to magically disappear. You may volunteer to assist him in any way be e-mailing [wpt330@comcast.net](mailto:wpt330@comcast.net)

THE JASPERS START TO REGAIN CONTROL OVER THEIR LIVES

Bennie, Sheralyn and Jasmine visited Sagamore Elementary this afternoon, which is the neighborhood school for Clairmont. Jasmine is currently enrolled at Rowland Elementary School in the Lithonia area. The Jaspers are trying to protect Jasmine from any more disruptions in her life, based on the probability that Katrina gave the girl enough disruption to last her a life time. On the other hand, they have to consider issues such as transportation (i.e. It' ll be up to them to provide it if they keep her at Rowland).

On a more exciting note, Bennie called me this afternoon to tell me the good news that he has been offered a job at Crawford Communications and he starts this coming Monday.

TRANSPORTATION

Speaking of transportation (as we were above), Now that Bennie is going to be working, he' s going to need some transportation. Currently he is borrowing his father' s car (but his father wants his car back). Bennie hopes to be able to use his grant from FEMA (yet to be received) to purchase an inexpensive used car or truck (he said that he' s not particular). So you guys go rummaging through your garages and see if you might have a spare used car that you' re emotionally prepared to part with. If anyone comes up with a vehicle they are willing to sell to Bennie, let me know.

## PRAY FOR GALVESTON

It' s déjà vu again, and this time it looks like Houston is in the sights. Already, hospital and nursing home patients are being air-vac' d from Houston to Atlanta and six other metro areas. Watching TV these days must trigger some heavy duty post-traumatic stress for folks who survived Katrina. So even as we remember the victims of Katrina who are with us now, let us also pray for the folks on the Texas coast, that they are spared the destruction and suffering that took place in Louisiana and Mississippi.

This is your Hurricane Response Coordinator, George Miranda, signing off.

DATELINE: Fri 09/23/2005 10:29 PM

KATRINA UPDATE  
By George Miranda

For Friday, September 24, 2005

## MT ZION HOLDS PRAYER SERVICE TO BLESS 2052 CLAIRMONT RD HOUSE

Pastor McClellon Cox led a prayer service in the living room of the Mt. Zion house, where the family of four from New Orleans (David, Sharon, David III and Dashawn) were surrounded by a dozen weary but happy Mt. Zionists who had spent hours upon hours all week long preparing the house for occupancy. Nancy and I had the privilege of joining Mt. Zion in worship, as we sang choruses a capella and prayed extemporaneously. In the corner of the room a sheet cake decorated a card table that also offered up plastic cups of punch.

The wood floor glowed warmly, the new polyurethane coat having cured for three days. I was jealous. I couldn' t find any bubbles, thin spots or pools.

The most moving moment for me was when David, the husband and father, prayed for his family, and gave thanks to God for seeing them safely through the storm and saving his family.

"Everything else I can replace," he said. Later, he said, "three weeks ago we had nothing. Today, we have everything." David understood that his wealth was found in his family, his new friends at Mt. Zion, and his faith in God.

After more prayer and more singing, we broke for refreshments and hugs all around.

Mt. Zion started on their house Monday morning, four days after we started on our house. They are on track to have their family move in Monday. Praise God.

## SATURDAY WORK DAY

Tomorrow (today, by the time most of you read this), we will spend the day at OUR hurricane house, 2036 Clairmont Road, putting on the finishing touches. We' ll start at 9 a.m. And go until 5 p.m. You can come all day, or for a four-hour shift, or for any part of the day that you can help. Here' s what' s going to happen:

Persons with trucks, vans, trailers should park in the Church parking lot, then come to the house to find the foreman (I should say, forewoman). We will have a list of about half a dozen furniture pick-up assignments. We'll give each driver one or two assistants (depending on how much furniture needs to get picked up) and send you out with directions and a phone number for the donor. We will call first to make sure we can come pick up.

Middle Schoolers and High Schoolers are needed to transport boxes of household goods from the Church office to the House. Even more teenagers are needed to carry furniture back from the house next door.

We need about five people for the front yard and five more for the backyard with rakes, trash bags, etc., to get up the remaining debris (pine cones, small branches, etc).

Linda Bennett, Alice Scott and Nena Thompson are coordinating the dressing of the house with appointments (drapes, sheets, towels, kitchen utensils, pots & pans, etc.). They can probably use some help, but I'm not the one to ask. I'm still wondering where the deer head is that I donated to Linda for over the fireplace.

**SPECIAL REQUEST:** if anyone has a spare U-Haul truck (or suitable alternative) laying around in their garage, we could really do some major furniture hauling in a very efficient manner. If you do have access to such a truck (i.e. Moving van type thing), give me a call on my cell phone: (404) 819-5518

## GREAT STRIDES MADE TODAY CLEANING UP THE OUTSIDE

Passers by have probably noticed the tall piles of yard debris scattered throughout the front yard for the last several days. This afternoon, they were in for a mild shock during their commute home. All the trash is gone. Including the stacks of garbage at the curb, and the free range refrigerators roaming the yard. All that stuff was put in the huge blue dumpster that's in the yard between the two houses.

Look at the house a little closer and you'll notice that the masonry and wood on the front and sides of the house have been repainted and the exterior is now bright, fresh white. Thanks to Bill Tatum for organizing that project. Bill, you can have the weekend off. But rest up. We got another house to do.

## ROBIN'S GARDENING PROJECT

Speaking of the house next door, Robin Roberts has begun taming the front yard today, and will continue tomorrow. Wait until she sees the back yard. She's gonna need help with that. Anyone with a yen for gardening may want to join up with Robin. She's identifying the interesting and flowering plants and making sure they are pruned appropriately. She's also identifying the trash plants and taking 'em out at the roots.

## LONG-RANGE LAND USE TASK FORCE

(by now you might have noticed that I don't really know what this group's official title is, because in every edition of KATRINA UPDATE, I call them something slightly different).

The work that we are doing in hurricane relief is necessarily integrated with the plans being drawn by this task force under the supervision of session. So it's been really fun to see how the puzzle pieces interlock, and how God is putting the puzzle together. As we've talked about short-term and long-range use of these properties we have wandered from time to time into a bit of dreaming. "Wouldn't it be great," some of us have asked, "if we could develop some green space for the church and the neighbors to have some recreation space?"

"Wouldn't it be great," we continued . . . "if we could make better use of all the back yards of all these rental units? . . . If we could use that space to build community and bring people together?"

While the long-range group was dreaming these dreams, the Hurricane Relief folks were dreaming more practical dreams, like, "Wouldn't it be great if there wasn't so much water in this basement?" Or "Wouldn't it be nice if the house would dry out enough for us to kill this mold and mildew and keep it out?"

Well, to make a long story short (I know . . . Already too late for that), God has a way of answering prayers and making dreams come true. And we're scrambling to keep from getting bulldozed (literally) by God's blessing. In the span of about 48 hours, we have received:

a big tractor (I think it's called a loader. I call it the big yellow Tonka toy) clearing out the underbrush, dead trees and trash that has accumulated in the common backyard spaces from years of neglect.

The same tractor will also re-contour the hillside to create water flow AWAY from our houses (currently, by some strange quirk, all the houses are lower than the land around them, so the water naturally flows right into the basements).

a huge dumpster from DeKalb County to remove all the debris created by Big Tonka  
An arborist to mark our trees so that we abide by the DeKalb County Tree Ordinance (and, altruistically, preserve our unique flora).  
that same arborist will work with the Long-Range Land-Use Task Force to design the landscape for our new park (which, in effect, is what that land will now be), including walking paths, a gazebo, and other options which I'm not at liberty to discuss (because I don't know what they are).

By the way, the arborist is our own Gene Callaway. Thanks, Gene, for using your talents and gifts to glorify God.

Oh, and by the way . . . All of it donated. Praise God.

I want to see as many of you as possible out there in the morning. If you know someone who doesn't have e-mail, give them a call and personally invite them to join us. If you can't work, make sandwiches, bring drinks, babysit the children, take pictures, or just come and stand in the yard and sing and pray.

This is your Hurricane Response Coordinator, George Miranda signing off.

DATELINE: Sat 09/24/2005 10:34 PM

Sat., Sept. 24, 2005

THE HOUSE IS READY (Sort of)

Today was quite a productive day, with lots of finishing touches put on the house and yard. Except for the sofa, which is coming tomorrow morning, the house is furnished. And the kitchen cabinets and refrigerator are stocked with food.

We discovered a wonderful flagstone walkway under about three inches of dirt and debris. Thanks to Cindy Todd and her two boys Chris and Josh for uncovering the walkway. The sun room is finished and looks great! Eric Sullivan did an awesome job on the room.

I wasn't there. I had to work all day at DeKalb Medical Center at Hillandale, where we were holding a cancer screening event. So Nancy was in charge in my stead. Nena and Linda were on the scene managing the furnishing and decorating of the house. I showed up around 4:30 p.m. After most everything was done, so I had to get all this information second hand. But here are the highlights, from what I can remember (as always, please e-mail with any names and stories that I overlooked).

Carr Carothers saved the day. This visitor to Clairmont (we like to think of him as a prospective new member) replaced all the hoses and connections to the washing machine. Then he installed a

new medicine cabinet and installed moulding around it. After he finished that, he went down to the Mt. Zion house and repaired the leaking water heater.

Robin Roberts was a veritable gardening machine. She pruned bushes to rejuvenate them, and obliterated weeds and small trees that were basically large, woody versions of weeds. Look for the hot pink ribbons on small trees in the yards of all three houses along Clairmont. These trees have been marked for extermination by Robin.

Nena Thompson and Ann McCoun raided Publix with a shopping list and bought everything on it but one item. Who wrote "wax paper" on the list, anyway? They packed the kitchen with food (along with lots of canned goods that have been donated during the week).

Janet Kennedy and Tricia Sale cleaned up the flower bed in front of the house. Barbara Dillon brought flowers and pine straw from Pike's for the flower bed. Then Janet went to work with the blower, creating a hurricane of her own.

Tom Pipkin and his boys Josh and Luke painted the trim in the sun room.

Linda Bennett and Alice Scott spent hours going through boxes upon boxes of donated materials to pick out the right stuff for this house and family.

In the morning, Elizabeth and Sarah LeDuc, Pam Scott, Tad Burden, Micah Miranda, Brad Rouse, in addition to the folks listed above, worked on the house and the yard, and moved furniture and boxes. In the late morning, Evan Secor, Ann McCoun, Marilyn Clayton, Bonnie Billington, Allison Spangler, Tricia and Larry Sale and their daughter Charlotte showed up and joined in.

So except for two minor inconveniences (the air conditioner broke and the gas isn't on yet), then, the house is ready to go!

## SUNDAY DEDICATION

Tomorrow morning at the 11 a.m. Service, the congregation will be introduced to the Jasper family. After the service, I hear tell that we'll walk down to the house and have a prayer of dedication. Y'all come on down.

## WORK CONTINUES WITH THE JASPERS AND THE CLAIRMONT HOUSE

Our relationship with the Jaspers doesn't end when the Jaspers cross the threshold. We will be following the family throughout the 12 months (or less) that they occupy the house. Allison Spangler, Tricia Sale, Janet Kennedy and Tena Stephens have agreed to serve on a continuing décor committee. They will work with the Jaspers and with the Building and Grounds Team to continue improving the condition of the house.

At the same time, we will work with the Jaspers to assist them with the process of finding permanent housing and accessing their benefits from FEMA and the Red Cross. We expect them to use this time and opportunity to save up their money to make a successful transition to their

own housing, whether that may be here in Atlanta or back in New Orleans. Of course, it's too early yet for them to make any decisions of that magnitude.

#### THE OTHER HOUSES . . .

Emory Presbyterian Church's session will vote tomorrow morning on whether to adopt one of our houses to prepare it for an evacuee family. We should hear from them on Monday morning.

North Avenue Presbyterian Church is presenting this opportunity to their Diaconate Tuesday evening. Presbytery informed us Friday that one of their members took a house off the market to make it available to the Church for housing an evacuee family. They are working on that initiative now, but appear to be still interested in pursuing the opportunity on our block, as well.

This afternoon, a representative from Briarcliff United Methodist Church approached me about sponsoring one of the houses. They will bring a couple folks to look at the houses and report back to their church on their findings.

#### WHILE WE'RE WAITING ON THE OTHER CHURCHES

We will begin working on the next house anyway. We have enough furniture and other donations to at least start a house before turning it over to another church. And the property needs to be either salvaged or demolished. Before we do that, though, I'm going to take a few days off, and I'm going to let you all do the same.

This is your hurricane response coordinator, George Miranda, signing off.