

DIOCESAN MISSIONS SEEKING VOLUNTEERS

Two exciting missions to New Orleans and Kentucky are being offered to Diocesan churches in 2010.

New Orleans is the mission destination from the 12th through the 21st of November. Twenty volunteers will be staying at the Bishop's Guest House near the French Quarter. The Guest House was converted to a disaster relief facility in the aftermath of Katrina. It is in the heart of the Garden District near the Episcopal Cathedral.

Rebuilding homes damaged by the hurricane continues. Hundreds of families evacuated from New Orleans are still waiting to return. In many cases, volunteers are their only hope. On last year's Diocesan mission, volunteers repaired a home for a family on Robert E. Lee Blvd. just north of downtown. The family was living in Arkansas since 2005. After fleeing Katrina the day before the storm, the family lived in homeless shelters in Little Rock unable to raise funds for repairing their home. Thanks in part to volunteers from St. Mark's in Coldwater, St. Barnabas in Portage, Church of the Resurrection in Battle Creek, St. Luke's in Kalamazoo, and St. Paul's in Elk Rapids, the family has returned home. This year the Diocese hopes to help another family in a similar position.

In addition to home reconstruction, volunteers can choose to work on beautification and landscaping projects. Many New Orleans residents, especially the handicapped and the elderly, are unable to return their property to its condition before Katrina. Volunteers from St. Phillips in Beulah, Christ Church in Charlevoix, Church of the Nativity in Boyne City, St. Paul's in Greenville, and St. Timothy's in Richland planted flowers and gardens, put a new coat of paint on a home, repaired fences and porches, and provided a much needed clean up to property for those in need.

Kentucky is the mission destination from the 18th through the 25th of September. Thirty individuals can participate in this mission. There are already twenty-five committed volunteers. This mission targets southeastern Kentucky in Appalachia. The congregations of the Episcopal Diocese of Lexington are the sponsor of St. Timothy's Outreach Center at Barns Mountain. In this area are located sixteen of the hundred poorest counties in the United States. Volunteers may plant a garden, clear brush, build a deck, repair a floor, paint homes, or help a crew add a room to a house. This mission also staffs a hospitality house with volunteers who help families of individuals in Lexington area hospitals.

To inquire or register for either the New Orleans or Kentucky missions contact Terry Dorcy, Mission Coordinator, at tjdorcy@aol.com or call him at 269-349-3625. Terry is a member of St. Luke's Episcopal in Kalamazoo.