

[Here is the challenge]



1. Read, preferably out loud, a chapter a day from the New Testament.
2. Fast, the first day of the month. You can choose to fast from food, TV, the telephone or the Internet. Spend some extra time in prayer that day for a special need in the district, congregation, or pray for all students who are returning to school.
3. Be in prayer daily for someone who needs to know Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior

Ronald D. Beachley, Annual Conference Moderator

Note from the S/Central Indiana District

Dear Pastors & Chaplains,

John Bunch, District Disaster Response Coordinator, is asking that members of South/Central Indiana District answer the call to help in the recent disaster from Hurricane Katrina. Suggestions are to designate a Sunday or a month of Sundays to take up a collection and send it to the District Office earmarked for Katrina disaster victim's aid. The district will then send all that is collected to the National Office for distribution.

Denominational Update on Hurricane Disaster - The Brethren Send Materials and Grant Money and to Aid Hurricane Survivors

The Church of the Brethren has begun responding to the needs of survivors of Hurricane Katrina with an initial grant from the General Board's Emergency Disaster Fund (EDF) and a shipment of relief materials from the Brethren Service Center warehouses in New Windsor, Md. In addition, board staff Roy Winter, director of Emergency Response, and Helen Stonesifer, coordinator of Disaster Child Care, have been requested to participate in the coordination of mass care for all the survivors, working out of Washington, D.C., with the Red Cross.

On Aug. 29, Hurricane Katrina slammed into the northern Gulf Coast causing massive destruction in the city of New Orleans, and in other areas of Louisiana, and Mississippi. The storm also affected the Alabama coast and Florida panhandle, reported Emergency Response/Service Ministries (ER/SM). "The storm is tracking up into the Tennessee and Ohio Valleys, where widespread flooding is expected," ER/SM said. According to press reports, death tolls may rise into the hundreds, and most of the half-million residents of New Orleans-- which is being completely evacuated--will be unable to return home and need temporary shelter for weeks if not longer.

A shipment of relief materials left the Brethren Service Center last night, Aug. 30, bound for Baton Rouge, La. The shipment of 5,000 blankets and 5,040 Gift of the Heart Health Kits was prepared for Church World Service (CWS) by the staff of Service Ministries. It should arrive this afternoon, said Diane Gosnell, secretary for Emergency Response. Service Ministries also is preparing a shipment of 540 Health Kits for CWS to send to West Memphis, Ark.

The initial EDF grant of \$15,000 responds to a CWS appeal for \$300,000 for the disaster. The funds will support shipments of Gift of the Heart Kits, material aid, and the organization of long term recovery. CWS anticipates that its response to Hurricane Katrina may be the largest US relief and recovery effort in its history, a press release today reported. CWS executive director John L. McCullough is traveling to Louisiana to personally assess emergency and long-term recovery needs and to meet with area faith leaders. "Church World Service is particularly concerned about the plight of what we anticipate to be a high percentage of poor people, the elderly, and other vulnerable populations," he said. "Stories of individuals who had to stay in their homes because they couldn't afford to evacuate personify that crisis." For more about the CWS response, see www.churchworldservice.org.

Church of the Brethren Disaster Child Care volunteers are standing by, and will likely work at shelters as well as in service centers. The child-care deployment is being organized and priorities are being set with the Red Cross, Winter said. A call to remember those in Biloxi, Miss., who received Brethren aid to rebuild following a storm in the late 1990s came from Stan Noffsinger, general secretary of the General Board. He recalled in particular a grandmother named Miss Grace, who lived with three generations of her family in a