

RESPONDING TO THE CALL

meeting needs

Disaster Relief

Throughout the year several devastating natural disasters gave the Oklahoma Disaster Relief Team opportunities to express the love of Christ to thousands of hurting people.

Southern Baptist Disaster Relief Teams represent the second largest trained volunteer organization in the nation and prepare

an estimated 80 percent of the hot meals distributed by the American Red Cross in the United States. There are over 1,150 trained Baptist disaster relief volunteers in Oklahoma.

In 2005, teams responded to tsunami victims in Indonesia, and Thailand, where over 150,000 people lost their lives. Oklahoma Baptist teams traveled to the

region taking care of medical needs and assisting local hospitals and clinics. In all, 27 Oklahoma teams, made up of 132 volunteers, provided relief in the tsunami stricken area.

Oklahoma Baptist Disaster Relief Feeding Units were the first Southern Baptist Disaster Relief Teams preparing hot meals for victims following Hurricane Katrina, the largest natural disaster in the history of the United States.

By early October, over 200 Oklahoma Baptist trained volunteers had logged over 21,000 man hours, prepared over 300,000 hot meals and cleared fallen trees and storm debris from over 250 homes. Disaster Relief Chaplains accompanied each mobile unit to minister in word and deed.

Forty Southern Baptist State Convention Disaster Relief Teams combined to prepare over 6 million meals within six weeks after Hurricane Katrina.

At the request of Governor Brad Henry, over 1,500 Oklahoma Baptists volunteered to greet and assist hurricane victims from the Gulf Coast Region at Falls Creek Baptist Conference Center. More than 3,000 beds were prepared and over 5,000 Buckets of Blessing care packages were delivered in less than two days. Although the Federal Emergency Management Agency ultimately decided not to utilize Falls Creek, Oklahoma Baptists were prepared to serve survivors, the state and our Savior.

One hundred percent of the funds received for disaster relief are used to meet the needs and minister to affected people because Oklahoma Southern Baptist churches provide for the operating expenses with their Cooperative Program gifts. ■



5,000 Buckets of Blessings were distributed.

Blessings In Wake of Disaster

Chainsawing a Path for Victims of Hurricane Katrina

The greatest blessing I receive through our experiences is from the visit with the homeowners to pray with them and for them. It is always wonderful to share about Jesus; that's why we are here, not only physically, but spiritually. Even if we don't see them come to know Jesus Christ as their Savior on our rotation, we plant the seeds for another crew to come along, water and possibly see the harvest. ■

— Ted Wilson
Member of Oklahoma Baptist Disaster Relief
Chainsaw Team

Ted Wilson was a part of the many chainsaw teams that cleared fallen trees and storm debris from over 250 homes in the New Orleans area after Hurricane Katrina.

Volunteers prepared thousands of meals for victims.