

Biloxi Mission Trip Update
Sunday, March 29th, 2009

Hello Everyone,

Just wanted to update you and let you know that we arrived in Grenada, MS last night at a little after midnight. All 33 of us were tired, **(but living)** when we said goodnight and closed the motel doors! When we departed Plainview at 5:20am, we had no idea that the trip, which was routed through Illinois would take us nearly 19 hours! We had good traveling, no snow in Illinois, but lots of rain nearly all the way to Memphis. Eating took a little longer than we thought (the Underdahl's GPS told us nearly 3 hours out of the trip!) but everyone is well! Today, after we gather for worship at 9:30am here in the motel, we will travel another 5 hours south through Mississippi to Biloxi, and should arrive there in late afternoon. Thank you for your prayers as we travel and look forward to serving here in Biloxi.

We will update you again tonight.

The Biloxi Team

Biloxi Mission Trip Update
Sunday, March 29th, 2009

Hello Everyone,

Once again a late night. We arrived in Biloxi late this afternoon, just in time to join with the church in their evening worship service. Amazing friendships were made in that short week last summer, and for Sherri who has had so many trips here, it is like old home week! Upon arrival, we promptly registered for the week with the church, and 4 of us went out to look at the projects for the week. There are many. The church here is seeing finances fade as the economy struggles and awareness of need for Katrina diminishes. Therefore we will be involved in wrapping up projects on 3 homes currently under construction with many small jobs, rather than larger more focused projects. They don't want to overspend and start projects they cannot finish....good biblical counsel! After surveying the construction sites, we returned to the church and set about the task of mobilizing 33 midwesterners in Katrina construction! Tomorrow we'll see how it works! Late this evening at about 9pm we wrapped up the day with worship and devotions and now all but a few are sound asleep.

As one of our people put it, "it is so humbling to see the way God is working down here". The diligence and commitment of this small church, matched with the infinite power of God is an amazing thing to behold! And we are just a small part of what God is doing, not only here, but around the country and world! Here in Biloxi, this little church continues to change the way people see God, by sacrificially building homes for those who are in deep need. Isn't that what a church is supposed to do? The truth of Jesus is nothing about religion, but instead is everything about seeing people become "new creations" in Christ! What can you do? Please pray for us that God will use us to be a blessing and help to the work here. Pray that this will be not just a "mission trip", but truly a "God" event in our lives and in the lives of those we serve and meet. But more than that, pray that God will be glorified to the people whose homes we are building. What good does it do a man to gain a home and go to a Christ-less eternity?

May He be praised in all that we do here! We'll update you as much as we can!

In Christ,
Kevin (on behalf of the team)

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Monday, March 30th, 2009

Once upon a time in a far away land named Biloxi, 33 hard working, good-looking, sweet Plainview Church of Christ members started off their day with a home-cooked breakfast, which was amazing! it took a while to get to all of the work sites today, being the first day that was expected, although all of the individuals had a great attitude. some of our team went to a home that our first team worked on. it was wonderful to see the progress that was made while we were gone and even better to spend time with the homeowner Lillian. Other members of our team dug in the dirt, mud, and sewage. God bless those who worked hard in those jobs. a few individuals built shelves, put in new faucets, were working on roof tops, and many more hard working jobs. tonight was a special night as we were joined for dinner with old friends from the church. we are all getting along well and learning more stories of the storm. we are getting ready for worship soon and we can't wait to have some sharing time of our first real, working day in south Mississippi.

please keep us in your prayers: we would love some good sleep, health for everyone, and a beautiful connection with your team and the church here. we thank you for your support and look forward to telling you more about our trip when we get back. God bless y'all.

Your servant team.

Biloxi Mission Trip Update
Tuesday, March 30th, 2009

Greetings from Biloxi,

WE ARE STILL ALIVE! we have survived another day and it's lovely to have the temperatures above 40 degrees but less than 150. some rain came our direction today but didn't pour for as long as we expected, even though some still managed to get soaked! oh well, i guess it's part of the adventure.

our jobs of the day:

- 1) some of us continued to rake out (NEVERENDING) oyster shells from the "high" house. (high = 10 feet off the ground).
- 2) another group went to the "cat" house (30 cats, ahhh!) and mowed the lawn, weed wacked, and did other miscellaneous yard work chores. some finished up the painting job and happy to know that the house is just about finished and the owners will be able to move in soon!! :)
- 3) another small group of men were stationed at the "rat" house (swamped with rats following the hurricane) today. they dug a trench for water drainage, fixed a fence, removed a stump fool of fire ants, reset a tree, yard work, and landscaping.
- 4) this afternoon we had a group build a play ground set for the church because their other set was taken away by Hurricane Gustav last year.

all in all we had a very good day. we not only were able to get lots of projects completed but also had great conversations with the locals and also grew closer to each other as the PCC group. we've enjoyed our trip and are awed by what God is doing down here. how GREAT and POWERFUL He is!!!!!! :)
see you guys soon...hope all is well up there! :)

Eryn and Drew (and the Biloxi Team)

Biloxi Mission Trip Update
Tuesday, March 30th, 2009

Hello Everyone,
Just a quick late night note.....Just a few hours ago, Eryn and Drew finished their daily update from us with these words: ***"we are awed by what God is doing down here. how GREAT and POWERFUL He is!!!!!"***

Little did we know that at 10:30 pm tonight, God was going to show us something even greater! **Zack Haas** is a young man (18 yrs old) who lives in Page, North Dakota and has traveled here with us at the invitation of Carina. After our worship and devotions for the night, Zack was moved surrender his life to Jesus Christ. Many from the team had gone to bed when he accepted the call of Christ and expressed his immediate desire to put off the old life and be born again the waters of Christian baptism. And so, from the bunk houses back to the church, we all gathered to witness a most amazing baptism into Christ. You just can't beat a worship service in the middle of the night! **God IS indeed a great God.** Many of us had been praying for Zack, and believed that God was going to do great things with him on this trip! And He did! As of this writing, Zack is forever a child of The Most High God!

So, we ask you to not only join with us in prayer for the work/relationships here in Biloxi, but also for the new life in Christ that God has raised this evening!

To Him be All Praise!
Kevin

Biloxi Mission Trip Update
Wednesday, April 1st, 2009

Hello from Biloxi! It is Wed evening and we had a great day here. First of all the weather was beautiful! About 70, partly sunny and low humidity. Once again our people worked hard. We painted at several houses, put up lattice around the bottom of one house, continued on with various other building projects, weed wacked, shoveled, raked and built muscle and blisters. Some of our people look quite interesting with sunburns and bugbites but no actual casualties. We wound down early today as the church had a supper that we attended. Once again the food was amazing with a multitude of desserts. Don't be surprised to see some of us a with tighter clothing than when we left!! Then there was a prayer service we went to and tonight at 9pm we will have our own nightly praise service.

For myself there has been some really great moments. Obviously Zach's baptism last night , meeting all the great people, watching the relationships form, the kids working and playing together and just the chance to do a tiny bit of God's work. But.....what has really touched my heart is the chance to really, really get to know and see a different side of my fellow travelers/workers/church members. I feel like I am the one who is being blessed more than anything I am giving here.

Pray for our travels!

In Christ's Love,
Kari (on behalf of the team)

Biloxi Mission Trip Update
Thursday, April 2nd 2009

Hello, all y'all!

Today we primed half of the inside of a house. Try to picture 10 people in one small bedroom painting. Kinda funny. But we were all so ready to prime that the sander couldn't move fast enough! A different group worked on playground equipment back at the church. We even had the traditional city workers leaning on their shovels. :) After lunch we were priming some more until a couple little tornadoes made themselves present. We scrambled to get everyone back to the church and into the bathrooms. Dean and Cyndy didn't know it was happening so they stayed and continued their work on sealing grout, at a different site than the painting. Pam didn't hear the sirens and had to be rescued from the shower. Ron says, "Thank you, Kevin." The intended plan for a short day was cut even shorter. The weather cleared and we had a beautiful evening. We said farewells to new friends we worked with this week - Ruth, Elizabeth and Tom from Wisconsin. We drove along the beach and saw the Katrina Memorial. It's so hard to picture the water being up to the second floor windows. Incredible. We stopped at the beach shop and bought sweatshirts so we can survive our return to MN winter. Yuck. We split into three groups for supper - burgers and fries, seafood, and barbecue. We all got full. :) Getting full was never a problem during this week. The cooks here at Lemoyne are absolutely amazing. Yum, yum.

Short devotion planned in a few minutes. Hopefully early to bed because we plan a 6 am departure. Please pray for the youth van to make it back to MN with no mishaps.

Thank you for your prayers this week. We miss you and look forward to seeing you all Sunday in our Biloxi sweatshirts. :)

Ron, Pam, Tony, Jan (and the Biloxi Team)

Biloxi Mission Trip Update
Friday, April 3rd, 2009

Well here I go again - I have tried to send this message three times from the hotel computer but it was not working- will try again.

We are here in Vandalia Illinois. Yes, the white church van is still running and Chuck's prayers have been answered. He called this morning saying he was praying we would make it to IL before we broke down. We hung up and Kevin immediately noticed that the check engine light was on. We called him back and told him not to call us anymore. :)

Seriously, the van is still running - ck engine light is on but we are not too worried about it. We feel pretty confident that we will get to Plainview just fine. We started out the morning at 5:30 loading the van and had breakfast with some of our favorite volunteers who got up to see us off. We closed our week with prayer and hugs good bye and we were on the road by 6:15 am and we arrived here at 8:30 pm.

Many times we have heard team members comment on how blessed they have been this week, how awesome it has been to see God working, how much closer they feel to the other team members and recently today how sick they were of riding/driving. Seriously we have traveled well together we have not left anyone behind or thrown any one out so that is a good sign.

We will eat breakfast at 7 am and load vehicles and be on the road by 8. We hope to arrive in Plainview between 5:30-6:00 if all goes well. Thank you so much for your prayers and support - we can't wait to see you and share with you in person how God has worked this past week.

SEE YOU SOON!

In Christ,
Amy (and the Biloxi team)