

Hurricane Zeta puts Miss. Baptist Disaster Relief vols to work at home after stints helping La., Ala.

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Correspondent*

With the landfall of Hurricane Zeta along the Louisiana and Mississippi Gulf Coasts on Oct. 28, Mississippi Baptist Disaster Relief (MBDR) teams are once again aiding those affected – this time in our own state. Trained MBDR damage assessors have begun surveying the area affected by Zeta, and initial mobilizations are providing chainsaw/debris removal and placement of tarpaulins on damaged roofs.

Estimates released Nov. 2 by the Mississippi Emergency Management Agency indicate over 9,300 homes were damaged. A preliminary list of Mississippi Baptist Convention churches damaged by the storm includes:



BIG CURVE – Hurricane Eta is expected to make landfall in Honduras in central America and then make a sweeping inland turn that will put the storm back into the Gulf of Mexico and potentially on track to strike the U.S. Gulf Coast area. The storm is presently too far from the U.S. to chart an accurate prediction of its path. (Map courtesy of the National Hurricane Center)

- Rocky Creek Church, Lucedale. Lost steeple and roof damage.
- Emmanuel Church, Ocean Springs. Lost steeple and roof damage.
- Cambridge Church, Gautier. Roof damage.
- First Church, Ocean Springs. Roof damage and damage to pastor’s home.
- Bay Vista Church, Biloxi. Lost steeple and roof damage.

In Harrison, Hancock, and Stone counties, MBDR is working with Gulf Coast Association (GCBA) to establish an operations base at the GCBA headquarters building on Old Highway 49 in Gulfport.

MBDR teams began arriving on the coast and providing disaster

relief services on Oct. 2. MBDR teams from Calhoun Association in Calhoun City and X-tended Missions Network in Hernando are scheduled to arrive and begin operations in a few days. Those needing disaster relief assistance in the three counties can contact the GCBA office at (228) 832-4311.

MBDR teams from Jackson County Association in Pascagoula have been working to address needs within that county since immediately after the storm. Led by Stan Aycock and Associational Missions Director Philip Price, Jackson County Association teams and local churches have been assisting homeowners with chainsaw/debris removal and tarping of roofs.

Walter Mixon, pastor of Unity Church, Leakesville, and moderator for George-Greene Association in Lucedale, has been coordinating local disaster relief ministry in those two counties, and local church teams are assisting homeowners with chainsaw/debris removal and roof tarping. These efforts are being supported by day-trip volunteers from Temple Church, Hattiesburg, and Simpson County Association, Mendenhall.

MBDR is currently assessing the need to establish an operations base in the George-Greene counties area to provide overnight housing for volunteers. A decision is expected in the next few days on whether it will be needed and the location determined.

Call for Volunteers

Credentialed MBDR disaster relief volunteers who can serve in the coming weeks are requested to check in with the Men's Ministry Department at the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board: dvail@mbcb.org. For the latest information on developing storms in the Gulf of Mexico, visit nhc.noaa.gov.

Donations

In-kind donations (clothing, shoes, diapers, etc.) are not being accepted at this time. Monetary donations may be made

online at mbcb.org/giving. Select "Give as an Individual," and then designate your gift to "Disaster Relief." Check donations are also accepted. Simply make the check payable to the "Mississippi Baptist Convention Board," designate "MS Disaster Relief" on the memo line, and mail to MBCB, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530.

All financial donations given through Mississippi Baptist Disaster Relief are tax deductible and go directly to support relief/recovery efforts in partnership with local Baptist churches and associations.

By making financial donations to reputable response organizations like MBDR, those who give enable the purchase of needed materials in bulk, allowing for the efficient storage and distribution of large quantities of critical supplies using pallets and forklifts and thereby reducing the time needed to get the supplies to the hardest hit areas.

Please encourage financial giving to reputable groups like MBDR operating in the area. Thanks to the generous support shown by Mississippi Baptist churches for the Cooperative Program, administrative costs of the MBDR ministry are covered and all donations go directly to support relief/recovery efforts in partnership with local Baptist churches and associations.

Pray

Please be in prayer for the victims of the many storms of Hurricane Season 2020 as they pick up the pieces of their lives, for the dedicated volunteers who are being deployed yet again after Zeta landfall, and for discipleship of the new Christians who have come to know Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior as a result of the ministry of Mississippi Baptist Disaster Relief.

Yates, pastor of Wess Chapel Church, Louisville, is the interim disaster relief coordinator for Mississippi Baptists.

He will be joining MBDR full-time in January as the disaster relief consultant in the Men's Ministry Department of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board in Jackson.