

Churches lend their support to Katrina victims

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able food. All proceeds from the concert will be distributed to relief organizations, with funds going directly to those affected by the disaster.

"This is a real example of how the church must be a beacon of light and hope in times of crisis," Claude R. Alexander, senior pastor of UPBC, said in a statement from the church. "We are inviting the community to help us lift the spirits and send a message of love to those displaced by the hurricane."

Dye echoed a similar sentiment about churches reaching out to help.

"When somebody is in need, New Hampton has always come running to their rescue. We just feel like it is time for us to start taking care of our own black people," she said.

Dye added that the church not only takes care of evacuees' physical needs by providing clothes and food, but also takes care of their spiritual needs.

"They can come to the church and feel welcomed. We're not doing this for publicity, we're doing this because this is what we are called to do," Dye said.

University City Church has collected two truckloads of items that they will send to the Gulf Coast and the

church has arranged for evacuees to receive free haircuts at Premier Barbershop in Eastland Mall.

"Here's my thought," said Pastor Michael Stevens Sr. "When you see the footage, those are our people. They say that it takes a village, well it takes the church to raise the village."

Stevens said the church has sent elders and pastors to the Charlotte Coliseum where hundreds of evacuees are being housed to minister to them.

"It is especially rough for them at night," Stevens said.

And though it has been over two weeks since Katrina ripped into the Gulf Coast,

the need is still great. Churches are still collecting items.

New Hampton, which is located at 211 Hampton Church Road is accepting clothing and food donations. There is a need for brand new underwear.

University City Church is accepting non-perishable food, bottled drinking water, first aid supplies, diapers and clothes. Collection will be at the University City Church campus located at 7829 Old Concord Road in the University area from 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. through Monday. A second collection/drop off point will be at Premier Barber and Salon located on the Second

floor of Eastland Mall.

University Park Baptist Church's benefit concert is set for Saturday at 6 p.m. at UPBC's main campus, located at 6029 Beatties Ford Road. Doors open at 5:30 p.m., and admission is free to the public. The church will be collecting cash donations

and clothing to distribute to Hurricane Katrina victims through various agencies that are assisting the displaced in Charlotte, like the Red Cross and Salvation Army.

Why did the Bible allow slavery?

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Curp is fairly critical.

Some church decrees opposed slavery, Curp writes, but the popes endorsed Portuguese and then Spanish slave-taking "out of cruel necessity." That necessity, he explains, was that European Christianity was scrambling for survival against Muslim invaders who had enslaved "hundreds of thousands of Christians."

Churchmen used "every available means" of defense, including complicity with slavers. Though historical circumstances explain the papacy's performance "it's a scandal nonetheless," Curp says - interesting from a conservative magazine.

Curp also pins some blame on the Bible, saying Old Tes-

tament society was "as dependent upon slave labor as any other in the ancient world" and neither Jesus nor Paul demanded abolition.

Nineteenth-century Christians vigorously debated how to interpret these biblical materials. The Old Testament passages received detailed examination in "The Bible Against Slavery" (1837), a book whose text is available on the Internet. Author Theodore Weld, who experienced a dramatic evangelical conversion, became the abolitionists' chief lobbyist and strategist.

Weld's argument was in the first place theological, saying the Ten Commandments ("you shall not steal") oppose stealing a person's very self and that Genesis teaches each person is created in the image

of God, not to mention scriptural themes of human freedom in Joseph's kidnapping or the liberation of Israel from bondage in Egypt.

Weld further contended that biblical slavery was far different from the chattel system in the American South. Most important, it was essentially a voluntary system of indentured service whereby needy people could enter six-year arrangements (see Exodus 21:2 and Deuteronomy 15:12-18) and obtain employment, room and board. Biblical law regulated the prerogatives of slaves and even demanded freedom if masters were abusive (Exodus 21:26-7).

The New Testament depicts only household slavery, which generally involved affection

and virtual family membership. Interpreters think Paul implicitly appealed for a slave's emancipation in the epistle to Philemon.

The tiny Christian minority, of course, had no power to overturn such a universal economic system. Instead, Paul radically opposed distinctions of social status, which gradually had its own revolutionary impact: "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus" (Galatians 3:28).

On the Net: Weld text: <http://medicolegal.tripod.com/weldbas.htm>

Crisis magazine: www.crisismagazine.com

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