

Evacuated New Orleans congregation establishes new church in Georgia

DECATUR, Ga. (AP) — Hurricane Katrina brought grief and loss to Zelda Richard and her family — it even drove them from their New Orleans home. But after they evacuated to Georgia, their local church followed.

"We lost some of our friends, family and everything we cherished," Richard says. "Church was the one thing that made us feel connected and gave us a sense of home."

Greater St. Stephen Full Gospel Baptist Church was a major congregation in New Orleans with 20,000 members at three locations. The largest was destroyed in Katrina's floodwaters, while the others sustained minor damage.

With many in his flock not planning to move back, Bishop Paul Morton decided to come to them. He's opened a permanent church in suburban Atlanta to serve the spiritual needs of those who have found a new life hundreds of miles from their once-flooded homes.

"We wanted to be one church in two cities," Morton said.

The church's staff traveled with Morton in the days and weeks following Katrina to Baton Rouge, Houston, Dallas, Memphis and Atlanta to minister to evacuees. As his two remaining churches in New Orleans were being repaired, Morton preached at his brother James' church in Decatur, east of Atlanta.

Morton said he had no plans to start a new church outside New Orleans, but eventually felt compelled to lay down roots somewhere where he could help evacuees. Under the same name of his ministry in New Orleans, Greater St. Stephen Full Gospel Baptist Church opened its doors in an abandoned strip mall in Decatur.

About 2,000 people packed the new church for its first service on Jan. 29, and hundreds more were turned away because there just wasn't enough room. In just four weeks, the church's registered membership grew to 1,000. They join a ministry with up to 5,000 members attending services again at Morton's two remaining churches in New Orleans, which reopened in November.

Many have offered money and gifts to help the church in its rebuilding efforts, including \$500,000 from playwright and actor Tyler Perry, best known for his hit movie "Diary of a Mad Black Woman." He declined to comment on his donation.

"Every giving person helped out more than they'll ever know," said Raymond Steib, first assistant pastor of the ministry.

Richard, who attended the church

in New Orleans that was destroyed, said she's been revived by the camaraderie at the Decatur church — one of the main reasons why she is staying in Georgia.

"For us to have this church here, it was almost like a touch of home," she said. "It was almost like a baby finding their mother. It's the one thing I can hold on to and remember all the good things, instead of the bad."

Richard, 43, evacuated with her two teenage daughters, sister, niece and 85-year-old mother, Mary Watson. The family didn't leave before the hurricane hit because Watson was just released from the hospital and couldn't travel under doctors orders.

Watson lived through Hurricane Betsy in 1965 but said the aftermath of Katrina was much more disturbing. The family traveled through nine hotels before finally landing in the Atlanta area. "Two hurricanes in one lifetime is enough," she said.

The six family members shared two oxygen masks as they endured the toxic atmosphere in New Orleans for two days before they were able to leave. When the masks began to malfunction, they started to lose hope. But Richard said they formed a circle and prayed.

"We thought we were going to die," said Richard, whose family was holed up on the top floor of a New Orleans hotel during the flood. "The building was shaking and the water was up to the fourth floor. So, we prayed and that brought us through."

Now helping as accountant at the church, Richard said the experience resonated with her when Morton preached soon after the storm about the importance of being faithful in desperate situations: "If you lose hope, then you can't make it," he said.

Donna Hubbard, a member of Greater St. Stephen in New Orleans for 30 years before fleeing to Atlanta, knew the transition would be tough when her 10-year-old daughter asked over and over about going back to Louisiana. But the church gave both comfort, making it an easy decision to stay.

"The church has been our anchor," said the 47-year-old Hubbard, who is now an administrative assistant for a government agency.

Longtime Atlanta resident Debbie Campbell recently joined Greater St. Stephen in Decatur, say-

“ Church was the one thing that made us feel connected and gave us a sense of home.”

Zelda Richard
New Orleans

ing she was impressed by the unity of the congregation. "This church has given me an extra edge on how to handle trials and tribulations," Campbell said. "With everything they've gone through, they know how to overcome."

Morton understands that most evacuees won't forget about home, but he's hoping to expand their capacity to believe.

"New Orleans is Greater St. Stephen and Greater St. Stephen is New Orleans," he said. "We are simply spreading our wings of ministry to meet the needs of people in the city of Atlanta."

On the Net:
Greater St. Stephen Full Baptist Church: <http://www.greaterstephenfgbc.org>

Colby churches to host Lent services

The United Methodist, First Baptist, First Christian and First Presbyterian Churches of Colby are sponsoring Brown Bags and Bibles during Lent.

These churches are hosting lunch time gatherings on each Wednesday during Lent from noon to 1 p.m. You are invited for an hour of fellowship, hymn singing, and a brief Lenten mes-

sage. Bring your own sack lunch. Beverage and dessert will be provided.

The schedule is: March 8 at First Presbyterian; March 15 at First Christian; March 22 at United Methodist; March 29 at First Presbyterian; April 5 at First Baptist; and April 12 at United Methodist.

Posters promote Christians

WARSAW, Poland (AP) — A Roman Catholic group in western Poland drew attention to modern-day Christians who have been killed or imprisoned for their beliefs through a poster campaign in public places.

The effort, called "Modern Martyrs" consists of posters of seven victims, including the Rev. Andrea

Santoro, a Catholic priest who was shot dead Feb. 5 while kneeling in prayer at a church in Turkey. He was killed amid heightened tensions over caricatures of the Prophet Muhammad published in several European newspapers.

The posters were displayed at churches, a university and on trains in the city of Poznan.



Worship in the church of your choice this weekend.



TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH, Rev. John L. Schmidt, East 5th & Country Club, 462-3497, Services, Sat., 5:30 p.m., Sunday; Sunday School and Adult Bible Class 9:15 a.m.; Services, 10:30 a.m.

Schedule of church services

ASCENSION-ON-THE-PRAIRIE EPISCOPAL, Rev. Don Martin, College Drive & Wheatridge Rd., 462-3041, Holy Eucharist, 9:00 a.m. every Sunday, Evening Prayer, 5:15 p.m. Wednesday, September through May. Christian Education for Youth, 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, September through May

COLLEGE DRIVE ASSEMBLY OF GOD, Pastor, Jeremy Gundling, 245 W. College Dr. - 462-8234, Early Service - 8:00 a.m.; Sunday School 9:30 a.m., Morning Worship - 10:45 a.m.

BEREAN CHURCH, 1000 S. Franklin, 460-2763, www.colbyberan.com; Sunday School 9:30 a.m., Sunday Worship 10:45 a.m. Awana Clubs, Wednesday, 7 p.m., Middle & High School, Wednesday, 7 p.m. @ the Heartland Christian School Gym

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, Pastor Bradley L. Herndon, Grant & Webster Street, 462-2867, Morning Worship 10:30 a.m., Sunday School 9:15 a.m., Evening Worship 6:30 p.m., Wednesday Bible 7:30 p.m.

COLLEGE VIEW BAPTIST CHURCH (SBC), Pastor Tom Huffman, 1185 Wheatridge Rd. at College Drive, 460-7144, Sunday Bible Study 9:30 a.m., Sunday Worship services, 10:45 a.m.

MINGO BIBLE CHURCH, 420 Main Mingo, 785-462-2992: An independent community church served by Village Missions Pastor Chris Shubert. Sunday School: 9:30AM - all ages. Sunday Services: 10:45AM. Sunday Nights: 1st Sunday of the month: potluck following morning service - no evening service; 2nd Sunday: services at 6:30 PM; 3rd Sunday: informal fellowship - bring a snack to share!; 4th and 5th Sunday: services at 6:30 p.m.

SACRED HEART CATHOLIC, 462-2179, Father Dana Clark, Pastor, Saturday Eve. Mass 5:30 p.m., Sunday Masses 8:00 & 10:00 a.m., Confessions will be heard Saturday 4:30-5:05

p.m. and from 7:30-7:45 a.m. and 9:25-9:40 a.m. on Sunday.

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, Rev. Carol Rahn, 515 W. 4th, 462-6342, Worship, 9:00 a.m.

WESLEYAN CHURCH, 320 W. Pine - 462-8391, Sunday School 9:30 a.m., Sunday Worship 10:40 a.m., Sunday Evening Cell groups at 6:00 p.m., Wednesday Youth Ministries, Kids Clubhouse 7 p.m.

CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS, 1145 S. Franklin - 460-6605, President Dave Geldmacher, 846-7740; Calvin Haverfield, 1st counselor, 672-4165; Matt Christensen, 2nd counselor, 460-0146. Sacrament meeting 10 a.m., Sunday School and Primary 11:20 a.m., Priesthood, Relief Society, YM/YW, 12:10 p.m.; Family History Center open to public, 7-9 p.m. Thursdays or by appointment. Call 462-3571.

COLBY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH, Rev. James Mardock, pastor, 950 S. Franklin, 462-6521, Sunday Worship Services at 8:30 and 11:00 a.m., 6:30 p.m., Fellowship coffee 9:30 a.m., Sunday School, 9:45 a.m., KXXX broadcasts 11:00 worship. <http://www.gbmg-umc.org/colby-umc/>

REDEEMING LOVE MINISTRIES, INC., 345 N. Franklin, Apostle W.G. and Rev. Orvella Romine, Equipping Class, Sunday, 10 a.m., Sunday worship, 11 a.m., Wednesday, R.L.M Training Center (Bible School), 7 p.m.

CHURCH OF CHRIST, 510 E. 4th, Jay Kelley, minister, Sunday Bible Study 9:30 a.m., Sunday Worship 10:30 a.m., Sunday Eve. Worship 6:00 p.m., Wednesday, Bible Study 7:00 p.m.

COLBY EVANGELISM CENTER, Rev. Robert Cooper, 815 West 3rd - 462-2062, Sunday School 9:45; Sunday service 10:00 and 6:30 p.m.; Wednesday Bible Study 6:30 p.m.; Friday Youth Power Hour at 7:00 p.m.

FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH, (Disciples of Christ), Pastor Bradley L. Herndon, 385 W. 3rd - 460-2718, Sunday Morning Worship at 9:00 a.m.; Sunday School at 10:30 a.m. E-mail: fccolby@st-tel.net

TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH, Rev. John L. Schmidt, East 5th & Country Club, 462-3497, Services, Sat., 5:30 p.m., Sunday; Sunday School and Adult Bible Class 9:15 a.m.; Services, 10:30 a.m.

OUR SAVIORS LUTHERAN CHURCH, Brewster, Sunday worship 9:00 a.m.; 2nd Sunday of the month at 8:00 a.m.

PLEASANT HOME CHURCH, Pastor, Charlie Busch, 694-2242, 3190 Road 70, Edson, Worship, 9:00 a.m., Sunday School 10:00 a.m., Evening service, 6:00 p.m.

LEVANT COMMUNITY CHURCH, 205 1st St., Pastor Jerry Vincent, 586-2376, Sunday School (classes for 3 years & up and 3 adult classes) 9:30 a.m., Morning worship 10:30 a.m., Sunday Evening Worship 7:00 p.m.

WINONA METHODIST CHURCH, Rev. Michael Eurit, Sunday School, 10:30 a.m., Morning Worship 9:30 a.m. (CDT)

BREWSTER UNITED METHODIST CHURCH, PO Box 250, Brewster. Pastor Dorine Chambers, 785-462-6044, Sunday School, 9:45 a.m., Morning Worship, 10:45 a.m.

THE SHEPHERD'S STAFF, REXFORD, Mr. Bob Leach, Director, 687-2565

REXFORD COMMUNITY CHURCH, Rexford, Pastor Lane Purcell, 687-3305, Sunday School 9:30 a.m., Worship Service 10:30 a.m.

BREWSTER COMMUNITY CHURCH, Mike Pinkelman, Pastor, Brewster - 694-2720, Sunday School (all ages) 9:30 a.m., Worship Service 10:30 a.m., Bible Study 7:00 p.m., Wed. mornings 6:30 a.m. - Men's Bible Study, Wed. 7:00 p.m. - Children's Ministries (Royal Rangers/Missionettes), Wed. 7:15 p.m. - Intercessory & Prayer, Thurs. 4:00 p.m. - Women's Bible Study

Two Weekends Only!!

Dreams Do Come True

Factory Direct Sale
All New
Wedding Gowns & Prom Dresses

Location: Southwind Plaza
1135 Taylor Ave.
Colby, KS

When: March 3-5 & 10-12
Fri.-Sat. 10:00a.m.- 6:00p.m.
Sun. 1:00p.m.-5:00p.m.

All Wedding Gowns \$200
All Prom Dresses \$89

Cash & Carry. No Alterations

New Price

1285 W. 2nd - \$195,000

460-SOLD (7653)

STOCK REALTY & AUCTION CO.

390 N. Franklin Colby, KS

State farm ad

This feature is sponsored by these business firms and individuals as a contribution to the religious life of the community.

To become a sponsor, call Crystal Rucker, or Jasmine Crotinger at 462-3963.

We appreciate the businesses and individuals who have been faithful contributors to this space.

COLBY LUMBER
Bud Van Horn and Staff
1760 W. 4th 462-2181

COMMERCIAL SIGNS OF COLBY & HAYS
YOUR SIGN / Our Reputation
1185 Zelfer Ave. • Colby, KS

nwkansas.com
Call 462-3963 or stop by
155 W. 5th St., Colby

COLBY PHOTO
Wednesday is double print day.
Mark & Aradath Beringer
420 N. Franklin, 462-8169

COLBY FREE PRESS
155 W. 5th • Colby
462-3963