

GRACE FOR NEW ORLEANS

A Rationale

Hurricane Katrina is a major disruption to all organizations and businesses that operate in New Orleans. The same is true for Grace Baptist Church. As of right now, Charlie does not know the location of Grace's treasurer. Tithes and offerings are not being collected from members. Grace for New Orleans would allow Charlie to continue ministry to the New Orleans area as an employee of Northport Baptist Church and a representative of Grace Baptist Church.

This is a critical time in the life of a city that has often resisted evangelical Christianity. With a gospel presence represented by a local church during such a difficult time, the community would have to take notice.

1. The strength that Grace for New Orleans would provide would encourage Christians of the neighborhood to not give up on its local church but to see the church's recovery as vital to the rebuilding of the community.
2. The loving gospel witness during a time of tragedy would encourage those without hope to trust in the only Source for true hope, Jesus Christ.
3. The early presence of local Christians ministering during the rebuilding phase could have a tremendous impact upon the future of the city that has historically favored superstition and lasciviousness instead of Scripture truths.

Grace Baptist Church is in a unique position to influence the people of our area.

1. Being in the same location for over a hundred years, Grace Baptist Church has stood by its neighborhood during many socioeconomic changes. As an institution of the community, Grace represents continuity to a people who are desperate for stability.
2. Grace Baptist Church is an interracial and international church located in an interracial neighborhood. About half of the Sunday worship attendance is black and the other half is white. This is a barrier that Grace broke decades ago. Furthermore, Grace has a sizable representation of Central American immigrants. Grace is already known in our community as a loving church with few barriers.
3. Grace Baptist Church is located in the Bywater neighborhood. A National Historic District, this neighborhood has been in a "rebuilding" over the last ten years. Professionals and artists/writers/musicians have been moving into the community and remodeling the houses. The neighborhood contains both the poor and the influential.
4. Homosexuals have been moving into the community over the last ten years. Despite many attempts to offer a warm gospel witness to this group, they often resist because Grace Baptist Church teaches that homosexual acts are sinful. It is the hope of Grace for New Orleans that this very hard to reach group will see the love of Christ in His people and be drawn into a saving relationship with Christ.