



Benefit for the Bayou 2

Theology on Tap

Skateboarding for Jesus

Whatever Can I Do?

Benefit for the Bayou 2

When Is a Quilt more than a Quilt?

Family Promise: Grants at Work



By the Rev. Barry Mitchell, Emmanuel, Emanuelsville

Our congregation was hosting an outdoor festival on Saturday, September 6, to raise money to build a house in a Katrina-ravaged section of Mississippi.

Planned by the Northern Lehigh Valley Mission District, *Benefit for the Bayou 2* was an outgrowth of a similar event held two years ago, where we filled a truck with supplies and raised money for hurricane relief.

The festival was to be held from noon until 8 p.m. Bands were scheduled and food was ordered.

Then we began to notice the weather reports. Rain was forecast – lots of rain.

Right on schedule, in the most wonderfully ironic way, the remains of Hurricane Hanna showed up from noon until 8 p.m.

Armed with a small city of tents and tarps, we donned our raingear and welcomed all of the volunteers and guests who were willing to brave the storm. The food was wonderful and plentiful. There were games for children and a huge tent for the entertainment. And we also had our pavilion and school house for added shelter.

More than 200 people came out in the rain to support the cause. We were delighted by a visit from our bishop, Samuel Zeiser, and his wife, Linda. We were overwhelmed by the core of volunteers from churches from the Northern Lehigh Valley who came prepared with tents and supplies and even generators to power their part of the food stands.



Dozens of volunteers from Emmanuel's did their parts, serving food, hosting children at the Kid's place and putting up all of the tents and tarps we could muster and working to keep them in place once the winds came. We got soaked, but our spirits didn't fail.

The entertainers played to modest crowds, but gave their all. The guys from SWiM, who played the last of the concerts, also took care of all of the sound and lighting, putting in many, many hours of hard work.

The results aren't complete, but we managed to raise a fair amount toward the cause, with some promising to add to the total in the near future. Many who came out to help had been to Mississippi, and look forward to going back to help again.

So, thanks to all who attended and to all who helped. Thanks especially to primary coordinator Stephanie Druckenmiller, a member of Emmanuel's, and Dean Mary Gade and a committee from the mission district.

Whatever the weather, God was gracious in moving so many to help and to join in the fun and the rain. And somehow, it seemed appropriate to weather a little bit of a hurricane while reaching out to some of the thousands who are still hurting following their experience with the full force of Hurricane Katrina.