

White's Ferry Road Church of Christ Relief Ministry  
Tuscaloosa Survey Trip Report April 30, 2011  
Royce and Carol Ogle

We made the 300 mile trip to Tuscaloosa on Saturday, April 30. We took the generator to the University Church where they were just beginning to receive goods to be distributed to the tornado victims, specifically the members of the Central Church. The University church had no damage.



Vernita at University church with generator donated by WFR Relief

We then went drove through what had to be a major path of the tornado to go over to the Central church of Christ. There we found Mike Baumgarder (Disaster Assistance) completely functioning with his mobile kitchen, assisted by Don and Rosemary Hudson (preacher in Tennessee) and a host of volunteers from the Central church and several other places.



"Visitors Always Welcome"



Central Church of Christ – Tuscaloosa



It is very evident that the folks at Central love their church and love their neighbors. We talked to them just a little bit about the wonderful things that are going to happen as a result of this tragedy. We have seen it in virtually every disaster that we have been involved in.



Don Hudson and Mike Baumgardner

I can't say enough about the wonderful service that Mike Baumgardner provides. By the time we left late in the afternoon, his team had provided over 3000 meals that day! He had bought food at Sam's the previous day, then had been the recipient of many donations from schools that had no power and also from a couple of catering companies. Don Hudson had delivered over 200 lunches out in the damaged neighborhoods. We have been with him several times before and he is such a sweet and loving man. He always takes a moment to pray for the people he comes in contact with and offers to set up a Bible study with them.



Disaster Assistance Mobile Kitchen



Central church volunteers

Mike pretty much raises all his own funds. His service of providing hot, fresh, meals and sandwiches is one of immediate comfort to people who are hurt and hungry. This is the 4th storm we have worked with him, and he really has his act together.



This is Central member "Billy". He told me he had lived in Tuscaloosa 'quite a while—ever since the end of World War II"! Billy must be at least 80, but right out there helping deliver meals and supplies to people in need.



Royce and Burrell

We talked with elder Burrell Thorne. It was evident that he was still in 'shock' and said so himself. He had been without power at his house since the storm, and really hadn't seen any of the news coverage of the damage. He stated that they wanted to be able to reach out to their community and minister to them at this time.



Dustin's Tree

This is the only surviving tree on the Central church property. It is "Dustin's tree", planted in memory of a little boy who drowned at the age of 6 three years ago. The members see it as a sign of hope for the future.



Central Church college minister, Trey Durden, was one of many who expressed their appreciation for our visit and his admiration for the many good works of the WFR church. (He is a huge Duck Commander fan!)