

Coming to Heritage UMC...

2/7/2010

We are looking forward to welcoming you to Heritage United Methodist Church!! We are very excited your team is coming and look forward to working with you as we help people return to their homes and restore hope to the Gulf Coast.

We'd like to share some important information before you arrive. Please take a moment to read the following information and PLEASE share it with your team!

Day of Arrival

Please plan to call the church (228) 392-4288 (leave a message if no one answers) with your approximate time of arrival. We will always try and have someone here to greet you.

Accommodations

Sleeping

We have been very fortunate to have a dorm with bunks built for teams coming down to work. It sleeps about 45 and works on a first-come, first-serve basis. There are also about 25 beds in a few of our Sunday School classrooms in the church. We ask that you fill the dormitory first before using the Sunday School rooms. Again, these are on a first-come, first-serve basis. During our busy weeks, it is often the case that your team may need to sleep on the floor. We ask that your group come prepared to sleep on the floor (sleeping bags, air mattresses) and be pleasantly surprised to have a bed in the dorm or Sunday School Room. Also, sometimes we will need to combine like-gender members of separate groups to make the most of our space.

Lights Out (*in the Dorms and the Church*) is 10:30pm when other teams are present. If you need a place for your team to meet later at night for some reason, let us know and we will try to find a place to do that.

Please be cognizant that the church runs an active daycare (called Noah's Ark) during the week, Monday - Friday, 6:30am - 5:45pm spanning from infants through preschool. There are approximately 40 children in the daycare. This is a state "regulated" center and our actions need to support their mission

Eating

The dorm kitchen and refrigerator is for all teams to use and arrangements should be worked out between teams for cooking times/sharing food, etc (*see below). Often large teams will bring a team member to help with the cooking. Also, teams will often share cooking duties/expenses to cut down on congestion in the kitchen during peak times. There is a second kitchen in the Fellowship Hall of the church that can be used if necessary (although we prefer you use the dorm kitchen). If using the Fellowship Hall Kitchen, arrangements will need to be made through the Church Office.

*Please remember that multiple teams will be using these kitchen facilities every day. It will be best to communicate with them and have cooks work together to prepare joint meals. We strongly recommend "Multi-team group" meals with one breakfast and one dinner for all the volunteer teams. It is truly essential that you line up with the other teams on site and help determine menus, who is going to buy the food, work details, and of course \$\$\$\$. Logically, the larger church teams should be very involved in this process. At this time, the church is not able to provide central co-ordination of the kitchen. **You are responsible to keep all areas clean during your stay.**

There are grocery stores, a Sam's club, and a Super Wal-Mart near the church and directions can be given to you upon your arrival. Please check the fridge and pantry when you arrive as many past teams leave leftovers or extra supplies for incoming teams. Please date and label all leftovers when you leave.

Bathrooms

There are bathrooms located in the dorms with 4 showers in each. There are also bathrooms located upstairs only in the church building with one shower in each. Please remember you are sharing these bathrooms with many people. Please refrain from leaving towels and clothing on the floor and clean throughout the week as necessary. You will also be responsible for cleaning the bathrooms upon departure.

Environment

"Civilized!" - you are not going into a "live fire-disaster zone". There are many types of stores and restaurants are all around D'Iberville and the surrounding area. There is electricity and running water at the church! In fact, the Church has wireless Internet and your laptop will work in most of the building. And, yes, the church is air-conditioned.

Cleaning

Multiple teams will be using the facilities every week. **Everyone** must pitch in to **keep the bathrooms and halls clean during the week**. Most teams have found it necessary to clean the facilities each day while here, especially when there are many volunteers. Cleaning supplies are often already available, having been left by previous teams. They are under the cabinets in the dorm bathrooms. (We suggest using Lysol Bathroom Tub & Tile Cleaner on the toilets, showers, and sinks. We suggest using Clorox Clean-up on the floors and counters.) There is also list of daily cleaning in the dorm.

Upon departure, we ask that you would **do a thorough cleaning of dorm rooms, kitchen, common areas, and bathrooms**. A vacuum is available in the church for the Sunday School classrooms.

Costs

If your team would like to help offset the facilities costs, we will gladly accept donations. We also ask teams to help us replenish paper products, cleaning supplies, and anything they feel would be helpful to this ministry.

Another way teams can help is with work site supplies. Through generous donations of tools and materials we have a warehouse here on site with much of what you will need to work. As they are rebuilding, many homeowners can afford materials but not labor. However, several families are unable to afford the high cost of materials. The church has a Katrina fund to help where there is financial need, but teams often help where they can with building materials and supplies when they are able.

Work Sites

In order for us to begin to place your team at worksites, it is helpful for us to know the level of skills your team members have. Please email back to us the *Info sheet needed from the teams* – the "Team Data Sheet"(with confirming dates, size of teams, skills of teams, etc) as soon as possible to us at heritageumc2@cablone.net attention "construction co-coordinator". This really helps in our planning and preparation for your visit!

Forms - Liability Forms, Medical Forms, and Daily Time Sheets

There are two forms that must be filled out before any team member can begin working. The liability form and medical form must be completed for each member of your team upon your arrival. Please turn in your signed team member liability forms (one from each team member) to your greeter or to the church secretary. The team leader at each work site will need to have the medical forms for each site.

Work Assignments

Depending on your arrival plans, often we can meet on your arrival day to coordinate your work plans for the following day. If however you arrive later in the evening, plan to meet with the construction coordinator volunteers early on your first work morning. Presently, there is a trailer at the front right of the church that is handling the work orders.

Please be ready to be flexible! At times, finding the perfect "fit" for your team takes some time – please be patient – sometimes you may arrive at a work site and it is missing some materials, a permit, etc. We are trying to prescreen by phone, but we are not able to pre-visit every site.

Types of Construction

There are a variety of clean-up/construction needs and we continuously receive new requests from families. With time, however, the work is progressing to *rebuilding* versus disposal.

We will do our best to match you with a family that needs your team's skills. Foremost as we do God's work we need to be flexible. Work opportunities include: Clean-up, roofing (metal and shingled), sheet rock hanging and finishing, painting, door and trim work, plumbing, flooring, etc. Keep the coordinator updated if you will need additional work during the week and please give a report on the progress of your work before departing (including returning the job sheet). The families are very appreciative of your assistance and that you cared enough to come. Most of the worksites are in the Biloxi area and within 30 minutes of HUMC. The need is great all along the Gulf Coast.

Tools

You should bring most of the tools that you will need at the jobsite. Additional tools are available at the HUMC Warehouse but there are not enough for all teams. For real large bulky items like ladders, wheelbarrows, shovels, and rakes, the warehouse is well stocked. It is helpful if you bring work gloves and hand and electrical tools, like hammers, drills, saws, etc. Home Depot and Lowe's are both just around the corner, for any extra tools you may need. Presently, sheet rock and mudding tools are very necessary and of course the tools for any specialized skill.

You will be working in homes of families in dire needs, especially those of lower income. This will likely be your focal area. Many houses still have their insides gutted. Certain neighborhoods are in truly bad shape – the job sites can still be fairly primitive in regards to inside electricity and air condition.

Depending on your group's size, you may be asked to split into smaller groups to go to worksites. In general, group sizes range from about 6-12, but will vary based on job sites.

If you have youth in your group (under the age of 18), please remember there must be at least one adult per 4 youth. Keep this in mind if it is necessary for your group to split up.

Water and Rest

We cannot emphasize enough the importance of drinking water and taking rest breaks while you are here. Mississippi is HOT and HUMID for a good portion of the year-weather you are not likely used to. Please plan to have water at your work sites each day. Take rest breaks regularly throughout the day. It is easy to get over-heated and dehydrated without realizing it!

Day of Departure

Work Orders

Please return all work orders to construction coordinator before you leave. If possible, please verbally update the coordinator with the current status of the house.

Cleaning

There is a Departure Cleaning Checklist on the bulletin board that outlines all that needs to be done before a team leaves Heritage UMC. It is also helpful to clean up as you go, especially during weeks where a large number of people are here. This may be something else teams can coordinate along with cooking duties.

Other Information

Mississippi Conference Information

To assist your team readiness, further mission team information and forms are available on the Mississippi Conference website at <http://mississippi-umc.org/>. Then go to Hurricane Katrina Recovery.

Church Services

You are invited to our church services which are Sundays at 8:30 a.m. and 11:00 a.m.

Directions

** Easiest directions to the church: from I-10, take exit 44-Cedar Lake Road South (a right turn if going east on I-10; a left turn if going west on I-10). Pass the Home Depot and McDonalds on the left and a Sonic on the right. Immediately following Sonic turn left at the next light (on this corner on the right is a "Welcome to Biloxi" sign) on to Popps Ferry (there is no road sign). The church is about two miles on the left.

Please share this information with your team. Hopefully it will help those who have not "camped" at Heritage before!

We also like to touch base the week before your arrival to talk about final details. The church phone number is (228) 392-4288.

This is an evolving ministry and we need help to make sure we do not stand in the way of the work that God is doing through and with you in this church and this community. In summary, we know you will assure your team provides Christian love and good deeds, and in return we are hopeful the team receives a fulfilling and rewarding experience. Thanks so much in advance to helping our community!!