

Bahamas Rebuild

South Carolina Baptist Disaster Relief and the York Baptist Association are partnering, along with volunteer teams from churches across the state, to repair a church, the pastor's home, and other homes in the surrounding community that were damaged by Hurricane Dorian. Caravel Zion Baptist Church is on the west (less-damaged) end of Grand Bahamas Island.



Caravel Zion Baptist Church, Freeport, Bahamas



SC Mud-out Team member with Pastor Mack Duncanson

Current Status

Update as of 1/27/2020

A team from California served Feb. 15-21 as a part of our partnership with Caravel Zion church. They continued the work of repairing homes, mostly doing roofing.



Scheduled Work

Feb. 22-29 – a 19-member team from Rock Hill First Baptist and NewKirk Baptist, Rock Hill

March 22-28 – Riverbluff Church, Charleston

March 28-April 4 – a group of 5 from Clover First Baptist

April 5-11 – a 7-member team from Northside Baptist, Greenwood

April 17-25 – a team of 7 from South Main Baptist, Greenwood

June 6-12 – Gateway Baptist, Columbia

July 18-25 – Lakewood Baptist Youth and Clover First Baptist Youth: construction & VBS

July 25-Aug. 1 – Elim Baptist, Effingham: will most likely work with a Louisiana group at their adopted site in Pelican's Point, Bahamas

How You Can Help

Pray for the teams, for the Carvel Zion Baptist Church, for the community's residents. Pray for safety as the teams work and travel, for timely delivery of materials, for guidance as decisions are made.

Give – donations will provide the building materials, tools, & supplies needed to make repairs on the church and homes in the community. Volunteers travel at their own expense, sleep on bunks at a nearby undamaged church, and take a cook to prepare meals for their team.

Update as of 1/27/2020

A team of four is working this week to do roofing repairs on homes in the community surrounding the church (see photo at right). The trip of the team from Bethel Baptist in Prosperity last week had to be cancelled because high winds prevented the ferry from running.



Update as of 1/6/2020

A mission team from Anothan Church in Rock Hill, SC served in the Bahamas Dec. 27-Jan. 3, continuing the sheetrock work and other repairs on Caravel Zion Baptist Church. They posted this video of their trip, showing the team, the church, and the other areas of the island that suffered the full impact of Hurricane Dorian's category 5 wind and storm surge:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o5Y_-xVcMI8

12/17/19 Update

After being rescheduled twice due to delays in shipment of materials, a 4-member team arrived Dec. 15 to hang and finish sheetrock.

Praise: Mike Wallace has arranged for most materials to be purchased from a building supply store on the island! This greatly reduces the logistical issues of having materials shipped over from Florida, and supports the local economy, which is a huge help to the Bahamas as they recover.

To date, SC has assisted the church with a sound system and kitchen appliances in addition to doing the tear-out, mold remediation, and sheetrock work. Doors will be hung next. This will get the building to a state of being functional. Although there are other things that need attention in the church (kitchen cabinets, the pastor's desk, and other furniture have been cleaned, but are discolored and will eventually need replacing), the pastor wants to turn the focus to repairing homes in the community.

Bahamas Rebuild - Background

Immediate Response

When Hurricane Dorian finally moved away from the Bahamas in late August, Southern Baptists were there immediately. Led by Baptist Global Response (BGR), the entity responsible for international Disaster Relief by Southern Baptists, needs were assessed in cooperation with the Baptist convention of the Bahamas, and plans were made for helping to meet immediate needs. The response was to distribute blankets, food, hygiene kits, and tarps.

South Carolina Baptist Disaster Relief volunteers participated in the immediate response. Eddie Fulmer of Bethel Baptist Church, Prosperity was one of the four BGR volunteers to make the initial assessment on the ground. Dwight Herring of Temple Baptist Church, Ninety Six arranged for and helped to transport 14,000 ready-to-eat meals for immediate distribution.

By Sept. 15 it was determined that immediate needs had been met.

Long-Term Recovery Plans

Baptist leaders from the Bahamas, BGR, and Southern Baptist Disaster Relief determined that the most effective way to assist in long-term recovery was to rebuild damaged churches, assist the pastors with damaged homes, and then move to assisting the communities around the churches. It was suggested that state conventions "adopt" a church, and 13 churches were identified.

Because Mike Wallace, Associate Director of Missions in the York (SC) Baptist Association, had prior relationships with pastors in the Bahamas from previous mission trips, he agreed to coordinate South Carolina's work in the Bahamas.

SC was assigned to assist the Carvel Zion Baptist Church in Freeport. This church had four feet of water inside from the storm surge, but the walls and roof were basically left intact.

Other states have adopted churches with greater damage, and in many cases several states have joined together to adopt a severely-damaged church.



One of the more severely-damaged churches

Rebuild Begins

Mike Wallace made an initial trip to meet with pastor Mack Duncanson and assess the needs of Caravel Zion Baptist Church. They decided on a plan of action, and Mike returned to begin putting teams together, order materials, and work out logistics.

The York Baptist Association shipped their mud-out unit to Freeport. It will be used throughout the rebuild efforts as a “tool trailer.” All tools, building materials, and supplies must be ordered and shipped, with mission team deployments coordinated to match delivery dates of materials.



Mold growth shows the 4-ft water line inside Caravel Zion

The initial South Carolina team was in the Bahamas Oct. 26-Nov. 1. They did the mud-out and mold remediation on the church to prepare it for rebuild. The next team’s dates had to be pushed back due to waiting for materials to be delivered.

Although it seems that the work has been slow to begin, please be assured that many factors cause this rebuild project to be very different than rebuilding in the states. For perspective, other states are still trying to get equipment shipped, and many have their first teams tentatively scheduled for after the first of the year.



Team 1 removed moldy sheetrock & did a lot of cleaning up