

Monday, February 27, 2006

TO: Presidents of affiliate organizations of Gamaliel Foundation
CC: Gamaliel organizers

FROM: Rev. Kevin Turman, Chair, Council of Presidents
Rev. Joe Games, Chair, Gamaliel National Clergy Caucus
Rev. Michael Harrison, Chair, African American Leadership Council
Mr. Pablo Tapia, Chair, Civil Rights of Immigrants Taskforce
Dr. Ron Trimmer, Co-Chair, National Leadership Assembly
Rev. Ralph Newell, Co-Chair, National Leadership Assembly

RE: National Season of Prayer, Reflection and Action for Justice after Katrina the weekend of March 3-5 through April 15

The disastrous effects of Hurricane Katrina have created an unprecedented challenge to the American community. Our national response has not yet met the challenge.

As chairs of leadership bodies within Gamaliel, we come to you with a two-fold request to help Katrina's victims, namely:

1. that you consider asking all the clergy leaders of your member congregations to offer prayer and reflection in their services beginning the weekend of March 3-5 through April 15 for the victims of Hurricane Katrina (a suggested prayer is attached for your consideration); and
2. that you consider asking members of your board to visit your federal representatives and ask them to support legislation that adheres to the following principles: that the federal government help meet the needs of displaced people; and that the people impacted by Hurricane Katrina must participate in the decisions being made about their lives. (A suggested format for your visit to federal representatives is also attached.)

Our request is just that – a request. This is not a Gamaliel “national issue.”

Background: on February 16, Gamaliel was approached by one of Gamaliel's National Strategic Partners, Prof. John Powell (Kirwan Institute of Ohio State University), asking us to participate as faith communities in a time of prayer and fasting to commemorate the 6-month anniversary of the hurricane. He is working with a national coalition of groups working to get the federal government to respond more appropriately to the victims. We feel that you and your board might wish to participate in an action during this season of prayer by conducting visits to your federal representatives. (Resources for the National Season of Prayer, Reflection and Action are found at www.gamaliel.org/katrina. [John Powell's letter](#) and [Bill Quigley's account](#) also provide further background information.)

First steps: please indicate your response to this request by going to www.gamaliel.org and fill out the on-line endorsement form. Ask any participating congregations (and your own organization's board) to do the same.