

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort those who are in any trouble, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God. 2 CORINTHIANS 1:3-4



A Steadfast Hope

Story by Tom Price
Photos by Greg Randon unless otherwise noted

10 Years After Katrina

For those who experienced firsthand the sorrow of Hurricane Katrina, the approaching 10-year anniversary was not eagerly anticipated. However, believers recounted God's amazing grace and the miracles He wrought in the storm's aftermath.



Kevin Cox, senior pastor of Calvary Chapel New Orleans since 1998, recently took a car ride to his former home in St. Bernard Parish. It was three days before the 10-year anniversary of Hurricane Katrina's deadly onslaught. Harsh memories resurfaced. Just before evacuating for the storm, Kevin and his wife Christi had hurriedly put valuables onto tables and other high places. Kevin remembers thinking, "Even if water came in, it would only be a few inches. We left in our small car with our three little children (they had another child after Katrina). Gas stations were filling up with cars. You could tell everyone was nervous."

Hurricane Katrina hit the Gulf Coast early Monday morning, August 29, 2005. Kevin and his family had evacuated to Pastor Mitch Lovett's home in Baton Rouge, LA, which was out of the danger zone. The storm was much worse than anyone had imagined and submerged large segments of New Orleans when the levees broke. Kevin's voice cracked as he remembered seeing a newscast of a boat floating past the roofline of his home.

"Our house was covered with water. We knew that the city had been devastated," Kevin recalled. "The water was up to the street signs." Water remained in the town for weeks before subsiding. Residents were not allowed to return until authorities entered each residence to determine if bodies were present. There were 986 confirmed Katrina-related deaths in Louisiana, though other reports speculate the number to be much higher (*U.S. News and World Report*). Kevin recalled sadly, "One family in our neighborhood with four children chose to stay and ride out the storm. They all perished."

Pastors Sandy Adams, CC Stone Mountain, GA, and Jerry Paradise, CC Philadelphia, PA, accompanied Kevin when he first returned home. "It looked like a bomb had hit our town. I went into our house," Kevin recalled. "The



Above top: In 2005, Pastor Kevin Cox, CC New Orleans, returned to his St. Bernard Parish home, destroyed by floodwaters.
Photo by Geraldine Wilkins

Right: Kevin and his wife, Christi (white blouse), welcome congregants.

Above: Kevin shares with Richard Sprayberry. The service reflected on all that God had done in the 10 years since Hurricane Katrina.