

take up just a tiny amount of memory on a web site. Video clips can be edited and optimized to say much in a very few minutes. All these materials can reside on a central web site or a quarterly CD.

There will be a system of syndication that allows Christian radio, TV and print media to pick up these feeds. Also any church or individual with a web site can get the syndicated summary updates.

There will be an Internet radio station that broadcasts 24 hours as well as podcast download options.

Then news objective of the Behind the Lines Team is to 1) interface with others who can use our materials to get the word out to others using the Four Bridges web site, quarterly CDs and syndication, 2) package and promote the materials so that they can best serve the family and friends of the evacuees and rebuilders and 3) tactfully use the short term interest and gracefully leverage it into long term assistance for the evacuees and rebuilders.

?  
?  
?

Most of the Front Lines Team will likely come from the Dallas area. But in the coming months and years we might meet others at hurricane aftermath settings that will join us too. The Dallas people meet at a designated location and time. We travel as a caravan. We keep up with the weather reports. Our initial objective is to go to where the evacuees have fled. At no time do we intentionally put at risk our people or the equipment. We are in no rush to get to the site. We wait until the winds die down and floodwaters recede. We do not enter areas where there is looting or rampant criminal activity.

Due to the previous adventures in serving evacuees and those rebuilding, Four Bridges has developed healthy relationships with the leaders of various organizations that will be at the disaster zone. While the caravan is rolling toward the region where the hurricane will make landfall, we are in phone contact with the key people that are going there too.

The Four Bridges Behind the Lines Team is involved in email and phone contact with key people throughout the region and the leaders of the major agencies like Red Cross, Salvation Army, World Vision, Samaritans Purse, Texas Baptist Men and others who have been doing this for years. FEMA and the National Guard have all kinds of detailed data and contingency plans. Before hurricane season 2006 and between hurricanes Four Bridges has made these contacts and nurtured these relationships.

The Front Lines Team goes to one of the shelters where the evacuees are staying. They take photos and conduct interviews. They get signed permission from these people to publish this on the Internet. This initial data along with later items is sent to the Behind the Lines Team who edits it and publishes it on the Internet.

The Front Lines Team writes articles based on first hand observations. The Behind the Lines Team writes articles based on the inputs of the Front Lines Team as well as researching many other sources online and off line. Both Teams write press releases. These articles and press releases go on the Four Bridges web site along with links to the best other news articles.

The news related objective of the Front Lines Team is to gather first hand information from 1) the evacuees, 2) those who are rebuilding (rebuilders) as well as 3) those who are serving them. Like a secular news reporter they will be gathering photos, interviews and articles. Unlike a secular reporter their reporting of the events and analysis of the news will have a distinctively Christian worldview. That means that the name of God and Jesus will be used appropriately. And Bible verses will be used in context.

The secular media can only afford to include a few short reports because this is just one of many other news stories. They cannot stay long nor report in depth because the TV, radio, magazines and newspapers must satisfy a very broad audience. And there are huge costs to get the news out through the conventional channels.

Four Bridges will be leveraging the awesome power and affordable costs of the Internet as well as the Compact Disk (CD). Dozens of photos can be published on the World Wide Web for a small cost. Interviews can be made available on demand as MP3 download files. Text articles

Currently Four Bridges Ministry is on the drawing table. I am in the process of enrolling the Launch Team of intercessors, advisors and donors. The hurricane season begins June 1, 2006. That is when the Gulf of Mexico gets warm enough to produce a hurricane. This narrative vision with the other documents can guide us in getting ready for the first hurricane.

Obviously as a start up ministry we cannot be expected to come out and immediately have all the pieces in place and working well. We will do the best we can and learn as we go. Understandably many donors are reluctant to contribute to an unproven ministry. However after we have gained a track record of serving the evacuees, rebuilders as well as the family and friends of them for a few times then their reluctance will decrease.

Along the way as the executive director I will be making fund raising presentations to business owners and wealthy people. Therefore at anytime there could come a huge influx of funds to propel us toward the vision that follows.

Today it feels like the quickest this could happen is 3 months and that slowest is 3 years. Either way I do not care. My objective is to faithfully follow Jesus daily while imitating Paul who said in Acts 26:19 "I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision."

#### NARRATIVE

During the hurricane season we are paying close attention to the developments of the weather. We especially use the National Hurricane Center reports <http://www.nhc.noaa.gov/> and other online hurricane warning services like it.

There comes a time when a hurricane is about to make landfall in the USA.

A special squad of intercessors is alerted. Each member has volunteered to pray often for the ministry of Four Bridges as we are serving in the early stages of relief and recovery. They already have detailed prayer guidelines that let them know generally what each phase of the operations will be like. Therefore they can pray much without needing to get additional instructions or updates. They know about the various ways that information will be made available as events unfold. There will be simple summary prayer guidelines on the public web site for anyone. There will also be daily and weekly confidential requests online behind a pass code they were issued.

The core Front Lines Team is alerted. They are told where and when to meet. They go over their checklist to make sure that they have packed all the things that will be needed. This includes the audio and video recording equipment. Previously they had gotten all the needed shots, signed the waiver, completed the Red Cross (and other) disaster training, practiced as a team, made arrangement with their family plus employer and otherwise gotten ready to move out on short notice. Some had obtained press passes and gotten security clearance. There are volunteers who serve with the Red Cross at disaster scenes. And the Red Cross has learned how to prepare and train such people. We will adapt their system.

?  
?  
?

## INTRODUCTION

Join me in imagining what it will be like when Four Bridges Ministry has been successful at connecting the Body of Christ in the wake of many hurricanes.

Let us assume for this exercise that we have

1. interviewed the leaders and front line workers in other organizations that have worked in disaster relief and applied their recommendations to our preparations and policies
2. experienced a wide range of challenges in various kinds of communities
3. kept good records during each incident (facts, feelings, insights, answered prayers, problems, solutions, set backs, break throughs, etc.)
4. prayerfully debriefed after each major phase to notice the lessons God is teaching us and how we can improve next time
5. diligently enrolled more intercessors along the way and developed effective ways to involve them in the short term and long term prayer strategy
6. gracefully nurtured the relationships that began immediately after the hurricane hit while developing it for weeks and months later (Those who have been through that kind of a valley can best empathize with and serve the ones that will be affected later.)
7. adapted the online collaborative methods that businesses use to enroll all kinds of advisors from all over the world to help us solve the complex problems we will encounter
8. used Convio [www.convio.com](http://www.convio.com) and other services to tactfully convert the visitors to the web site into donors
9. created many and various ways to make the web site and quarterly CDs appealing to advertisers
10. developed a wide range of very attractive digital products to sold to those who come to the web site
11. grew a subscription base for the quarterly CDs
12. included an income stream from carefully chosen affiliates

## TIMING

The narrative that follows is presented in the present tense like this is how reality is unfolding. That is the recommended way to think about, talk about and imagine a desirable future vision for a ministry.

This is like a story of me as the founder and executive director walking through a best-case scenario. I am inviting you to join me along this journey. What we encounter along the way will become fuel for prayers, preparations and funding. In other documents those parts will be presented from the highest level of summary to the lowest level of details.

# Vision for Four Bridges

Begun 2/8/06 and revised 2/10/06

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Every year hurricanes hit the USA. Each hurricane brings major property damage, injuries and some deaths. Immediately after any hurricane, a large number of people in small region are facing many major challenges. The residents that have been there for decades may have experienced one or two such events. Yet there are those who work with the disaster relief agencies and move from one disaster to another all year long. Over the years the agency has discovered predictable patterns of what is generally needed and how to meet those needs. They have developed training manuals for their staff and volunteers. They have various kinds of literature and other media. Every situation is unique and each person is special. But guidelines based on previous situations that were similar can guide the plans and actions along the predictable path of Relief to Recovery to Rebuilding.

Americans are generally good at quickly replying to those in need. However they are not well known for consistently responding with the support needed for the long term. The Recovery and Rebuilding phases can take months or years. There external repairs to be made as well as internal healing to happen.

Four Bridges is not competing with the relief agencies like the Red Cross and Salvation Army that excel at bringing short-term aid. We respect and admire the good works they do. But after a while their job will be done and they will go on down the road.

?  
?  
?

## BACKGROUND

Last year the whole world watched Hurricane Katrina devastate the Gulf Coast. That was the largest natural disaster in the history of the USA. More than 1,000,000 people evacuated. There was more the \$75 billion in insured property damage. More than 1,300 confirmed dead.

During September there were amazing news stories as the thousands fled to temporary shelters and many moved into FEMA apartments or back to rebuild.

When the distressed people were no longer exposed to the TV cameras then the media outlets went back to what they had been doing. The public may have assumed that everything was okay for everyone, but that is not the truth. Many were able to return to their normal routines in a matter of weeks. Some took a few months. While others are still hard at the rebuilding process in the worst hit areas. In some communities they are still rebuilding from hurricanes that hit a few years ago.