

# Mission Volunteer Program

## Disaster Response Volunteer Opportunity Bolivar Peninsula Galveston, Texas

When Hurricane Ike struck the gulf coast of Texas in the fall of 2008, the impact was devastating. The damage, destruction, and dislocation were almost equal to that of Hurricane Katrina. However, since it came in the midst of the presidential election and the economic crisis in the United States, Hurricane Ike and the havoc it wreaked went almost unnoticed. Galveston, Texas, bore the brunt of the storm; Bolivar Peninsula, just east of Galveston, has been doubly crippled due to its limited accessibility. As always, the poorest of the residents find themselves with few resources and few options to rebuild their homes and their lives.

**The RCA will partner with Bolivar Peninsula Community Outreach** and work collaboratively with Presbyterian Disaster Assistance. Gene and Jean Straatmeyer, who live on the peninsula, will assist us in connecting with local families and resources.

**Bruce and Laurie Hawley**, mutual mission facilitators for the RCA, will be on site to assist with all arrangements including getting work supplies, supervising the work, and facilitating experiences with the community. They will also help groups reflect on the experience from a Christian perspective.

**Dates:** Six weeks have been blocked out and will be scheduled on a first come, first served basis:

January 16-22  
January 23-29  
January 30–February 5  
February 6-12  
February 13-19  
February 20-26

Weekly groups may not exceed 20; smaller groups may share a week.

**Project:** RCA teams will work on the renovation of existing homes in various stages of completion. Teams are encouraged to bring tools, especially teams that are driving to the peninsula.

**Lodging:** Volunteers will stay at High Island Retreat Center. The facility provides adequate beds and shower facilities, with separate areas for men and women. Volunteers will provide their own bedding, towels, etc. The center is air conditioned. The cost will be \$5 per person per day.

**Cooking:** Groups will provide their own food. The center offers a well equipped commercial kitchen.

**Travel:** If flying, groups should fly into Hobby Airport in Houston and rent cars or vans for the one and a half hour trip to High Island.

**Materials Fee:** There is no materials fee, but groups that are able are encouraged to bring a check with them to support the project.

**Contact** Nancy Ellens at (800) 968-3943 or nellens@rca.org with questions or to reserve a week for your group.

