

IMMOKALEE, FLORIDA

DISASTER ASSISTANCE RELIEF TRIP

Saturday Jan. 8 to Sunday, Jan. 16, 2011

The town of Immokalee was hit by several hurricanes in recent years and many homes still need reconstruction. The town of about 20,000 is 69% Hispanic (Mexican and Cuban), 24 % Black (African Americans and Haitians), 1 % Native American (Seminole) and 6 % Caucasian. It is very remote and few groups have responded to their need for help. The average income is only \$15,000 annually. The principal employers are local produce farms where tomatoes, cucumbers, and citrus are grown. The town is located at the headwaters of the Everglades swamp and has an elevation of only 33 feet above sea level. The only attraction is the local lake, which “has the greatest concentration of alligators in the United States.”

We would stay at a retreat center operated by the Bethel Assembly of God Church. This is an old mansion that can accommodate 70 people in bunk-bed dorm spaces, sleeping bags or bedding required. There are hot water showers on site. The cost for lodging is \$6.00 a day per person. Meals can be prepared on site: we would provide our own food and cooks.

The work in the community would be ‘build-out’carpentry, dry walling, painting, flooring, electrical and plumbing.

We would stay overnight in a motel in Richmond, SC, on the way to Immokalee and in Florence, SC, on the return trip. Most of the trip will be on Interstate highways.

Immokalee is 1126 miles from Camp Hill, Pa., or an 18 1/2 hour trip, 10 hours the first day and 8 ½ hours the second.

It is anticipated that Elizabethtown College will enroll 20 to 25 students. Shippensburg State University will enroll 15-20 students. Approximately 12-15 faculty and LAH volunteers will also enroll: a total of 47-55 are expected. We will transport 46 in the bus and 8 in the LAH van.

Cost will be \$250 per volunteer.

Websites which may provide background information are:

www.lhopeinc.org

www.wikipedia.com/immokalee