



He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor and the day of vengeance of our God, to comfort all who mourn, and provide for those who grieve in Zion – to bestow on them a crown of beauty instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning and a garment of praise instead of a spirit of despair. They will be called oaks of righteousness, a planting of the Lord for the display of his splendor. They will rebuild the ancient ruins and restore the places long devastated; they will renew the ruined cities that have been devastated for generations. Isaiah 61: 1-4

PICO LIFT Covenant to Rebuild Louisiana

On Tuesday, October 4, 2005 PICO LIFT, an organization of one hundred churches from New Orleans, Baton Rouge and across Louisiana will kick off a campaign to win support for a Covenant to Rebuild Louisiana. The Covenant is a way for families that have lost their homes and jobs to move forward together to rebuild their lives and communities. Out of anger and confusion families from New Orleans and the Louisiana Coast are joining with those providing shelter to rebuild Louisiana on a strong foundation. The Covenant to Rebuild Louisiana is a concrete plan for overcoming the obstacles facing families seeking relief, recovery and rebuilding. It is based on five moral principles:

- The **Right to Self-Sufficiency** that guarantees displaced families the jobs and economic benefits from recovery, along with job training, quality education and full access to Medicaid and other health services so they can rebuild their lives.
- The **Right to Return** that clearly states to both renters and home owners that they can return home to their communities, allows groups of families to obtain temporary housing in or near their neighborhoods while their homes are being rebuilt and assures that homeowners and small business people are fairly compensated by insurance companies and the federal government for their losses.
- The **Right to participate in decisions** about how New Orleans and other flooded communities of Southern Louisiana will be rebuilt; so that families and congregations project a vision for how their homes, neighborhoods and schools are rebuilt.
- The **Right of Host Communities to Long-Term Federal Investment** to help them bear the burden of safely caring for, housing, educating and providing transportation and other infrastructure for displaced families.
- The **Right to Hometown Security** that includes adequate levee systems and hurricane protection, community policing so temporary trailer parks are safe places, protections against price gouging, and an independent investigation of the response to Katrina.

*Write the vision and make it plain on tablets that he may run who reads it.
For the vision is yet for an appointed time; but at the end it will speak, and it will not lie. Habakkuk 2:2*

Religious congregations from New Orleans and across Louisiana are gathering on Tuesday, October 4, 2005 from 7-8:30pm at the Louisiana Leadership Institute, 5763 Hooper Road in Baton Rouge. PICO LIFT has invited federal, state and local officials to attend and to join as partners in the Covenant to Rebuild Louisiana.

PICO LIFT is a statewide organization of more than 100 churches through six federations: Working Interfaith Network-Baton Rouge; All Congregations Together-New Orleans; Bayou Interfaith Shared Community Organizing-Houma Thibodaux; Congregations Organizing People for Equality-Lafayette; Delta Interfaith Network-Lake Providence; Hope Ministries-Pointe Coupee Parish. PICO LIFT (Louisiana Interfaiths Together) is a member of the PICO National Network, a faith-based organizing network in 150 cities and 18 states in the United States

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