

# Features



## Church of God Serves In McLoud Oklahoma

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**A Passion To Serve Others With the Love of Christ**

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*Article Submitted to  
ShowMe Times  
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**McLoud, Oklahoma** - There is nothing that brings forth the greatness of the human spirit more than when others are facing devastation and hurt. The natural reaction is the desire to find a way to help. Some talk about helping, others offer donations while others discover ways to climb directly into the action.

The Church of God in Dudley, Missouri found no hesitation among their congregation as a group of ten members loaded up campers and left their homes bound for Moore, Oklahoma to actively help with the tornado recovery efforts. The primary objective was to feed the victims of the tornadoes and volunteers in the area.

Three days before the group's departure, they were notified that volunteers from the Moore region were moving 20 miles east to the more sparsely populated area of McCloud, Oklahoma. Located in Pottawatomie County, McLoud is one of the poorest counties in the area.

"Countless phone calls and emails of questions about what we would be facing could not equip us with what was ahead (when we arrived)," said Jeff Jarrell.

As expected, the region was filled with the destruction from the EF5 tornado that occurred on May 20, 2013, but little attention had been given to the community of McLoud which was hit with tornado damage the day prior to the Moore event.

"The devastation in Moore is by far greater but they have plenty of volunteers assisting with recovery efforts," noted Taylor Jarrell. "However, the outlying areas got far less attention but have the same damage."

"A lot of the smaller towns in the area didn't get hardly any media attention so they didn't get much help," added Taylor.


"Seeing the damage first hand almost seems as if the tornado hit last week in those places."

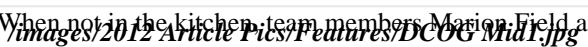
The group was confident their skills would be a blessing to the people of Moore, Oklahoma. A talented collection of workers in construction and general clean up, members of the group brought a gift of service that was perfect – their ability to cook and feed the workers and volunteers.

You may be well aware of the cooking talent of this group, as the Dudley Church of God is one of the favorite community vendors every year at the Stoddard County Fairgrounds. Their blooming onion receives raved reviews and is a crowd pleaser at any event.

Or you may be of the era when Mrs. Barbara Jarrell was busy in the kitchens of the Dexter Public Schools serving up their famous hot cinnamon rolls and no-bake cookies.

"We are pretty used to feeding people," commented group member, Jeff Jarrell. "We thought it was a good idea to put our words into action to help these people."

 was quickly directed to the kitchen of a local Baptist Church. Their talent kicked into high gear each day as the team fed over 300 individuals for lunch and dinner each day this past week. Their efforts was like the equivalent of feeding the entire population of Dudley at 317 people twice a day.

 When not in the kitchen, team members Marion Field and Jeff Jarrell were quick to get involved in the clean up efforts in the community. Pastor Josh Hester rolled up his sleeves as well and joined in to lend a hand removing trees and brush from creeks to help prevent flooding, constructing storage sheds to store personal items, installing tarp to damaged roofs of homes and cutting up mobile home frames for scrap metal.

"I can honestly say that this has been the best and worst week of my life," recounted Jeff Jarrell. "The experience of being blessed enough to come and help others in need has been most gratifying. But seeing the devastation and countenance of despair on the faces of those affected was heart wrenching."

In a world that volunteerism is challenging to find, Pastor Josh Hester has to be very proud that over 25% of his congregation is willing to sacrifice their vacations and personal time to help others.

"Our group did a lot of good while we were here, but we need to get the message out 'that our neighbors in Oklahoma are still in great need,'" added Jeff. "Our desire is that our local community will see how this trip has not only brought positive effects to the people we served, but the same effects to our lives through this mission work."

Team members included; Pastor Josh Hester, Marion Fields, Scott Townsend, Stephanie Townsend, Barbara Jarrell, Dean Jarrell, Nancy Jarrell, Jeff Jarrell, Jonathan Guite, and Taylor Jarrell.




**"Where in the world is Dudley, Missouri?"** was something the group heard far too often. After all, such a small town church bringing a large impact to the lives of those that are working to put their lives back in order.

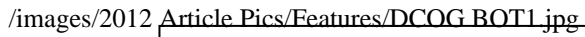
With a long satisfying week behind them, the group completed serving their last dinner Friday night to those that have continued to assist the people of Moore. They will begin packing in the morning and take the long trek home with a lot of satisfaction in their hearts.

"The most impressive part to me was that people came from all over the country to help others," noted team member Taylor Jarrell. "I've been able to meet volunteers from West Virginia, Canada and even the Virgin Islands."

"It sure has been quite the experience," add Taylor. Taylor is a 2010 graduate of Dexter High School. "I'm sure all of us wish we could stay longer as there's so much still to do."

"The relationships that I have acquired through this experience will never be forgotten and will last a lifetime," added Nancy Jarrell. "I will be forever touched by the devastation seen, and all the people with so much lost and yet so much resilience."

 from Moore to McLoud nearly cancelled the entire trip. Weeks of preparation and planning would have all been lost had it not been for the diligent efforts of Gale Jordan of Hope International in Bernie, Missouri. His relentless efforts to search for needs in McLoud kept the trip alive and made the 2013 Oklahoma Mission possible for the 10 members of the Dudley Church of God.

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