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Media Contacts: Deidre Malone and
Alayna Adams, The Carter Malone
Group, (901) 278-0881 or
aadams@thecartermalonegroup.com

COGIC Offers Assistance to Hurricane Katrina Victims *The Charity Projects to Contribute Cash and In-kind Donations Worth \$17 Million to Relief Effort*

(September 15, 2005 – MEMPHIS, TENN) The Church Of God In Christ Inc. (COGIC) Charities foundation has formed a special fund to help victims of Hurricane Katrina. The General Board of one of the world's largest African-American religious denominations has formed a committee led by Bishop Roy L. H. Winbush, of Lafayette, Louisiana, to coordinate an immediate and long-term relief effort strategy. The church will contribute in cash more than \$1 million to the relief effort and through in-kind donations, services and collaborative efforts, the church will facilitate additionally up to \$16 million to benefit hurricane victims.

COGIC Presiding Bishop G. E. Patterson says the General Board is serious about doing what it can to assist Katrina evacuees. "We have members of the denomination who have lost their homes, churches and family members, and they are in crisis," Patterson explained. "Our church through COGIC Charities is reaching out to those members and anyone else affected by this natural disaster." From his personal resources and local congregation, Temple of Deliverance COGIC, Bishop Patterson has initiated the relief effort with funds exceeding \$100,000. He has also challenged bishops, pastors and churches to follow with similar expressions of generosity and compassion. The churches in the Memphis region, as well as churches throughout the nation, are responding to this national tragedy by providing hundreds of meals daily to evacuees.

Last Tuesday, Bishop Winbush and leadership in other religious denominations, met with President George W. Bush in Washington, D. C. for a briefing on the relief effort and to discuss ways the religious community can assist. COGIC is offering their former Saints Junior College campus in Lexington, Miss., as a site to relocate between 500 and 1000 evacuees. The 275 acre site will accommodate transitional housing and an emergency education program.

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Many COGIC churches have coordinated shelters, clothes, cash and food donations for evacuees. "Through the denominations efforts, our congregations and members of the community have been reaching out to victims involved in Hurricane Katrina," said First Assistant Presiding Bishop Charles Blake, pastor of the West Angeles Church Of God In Christ in Los Angeles. More than 2,000 people contributed to the West Angeles clothing drive and donated more than \$100,000 to the relief effort. Blake added, "I ask that people contribute to the COGIC Charities foundation so we are better equipped financially to help the hurricane victims."

This past Sunday, The Church Of God In Christ in Michigan gave more than \$100,000 toward the relief effort. Through COGIC Charities, these churches are facilitating the availability of 372 units of multi-family and senior housing through section 8. This is in coordination with federal and state agencies.

The charity is also sending trucks from across the country with relief supplies to the devastated areas across the south.

If you are interested in contributing to COGIC Charities Hurricane Relief Fund, you can make a donation online at www.cogiccharities.org or send a contribution to: COGIC Charities Hurricane Relief Fund, P. O. Box 37, Memphis, TN 38101. For additional information or to make a donation, please call 1-800-947-9350.

About COGIC Charities, Inc.

COGIC Charities, Inc. is the benevolent arm of the Church Of God In Christ Inc. religious denomination. The charity was founded in April 2002 by Presiding Bishop G. E. Patterson. COGIC Charities has donated to various relief agencies including the Salvation Army, the Horn of Africa Relief and Development Organization, the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization and the American Heart Association.

About the Church Of God In Christ, Inc.

The Church Of God In Christ is the fourth largest Protestant religious denomination in the United States of America with an estimated membership of more than six million. COGIC headquarters is located at Mason Temple in Memphis, Tenn.

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