

To my Brothers and Sisters struggling to recover from Hurricane Katrina.  
You are not alone.

### Nineteen Months Out

*By Rev. Bill McAlilly, Seashore District Superintendent  
Mississippi Conference of the United Methodist Church*

Creating a new way of thinking  
Of being  
Of serving  
In the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina  
Boggles the mind.  
Nineteen months out  
Over a year and a half  
Since Katrina blew  
We still struggle to rebuild  
Our houses  
Our churches  
Our businesses  
Mostly our lives.  
Our people are weary  
And usually we don't have good answers and  
Sometimes the answers are like dust and  
Other times we grope for words  
And still other times we sit and wait for something  
Or someone to do something.

She said, "every day is a new day."  
What she means is that she's made it through another day  
And that she hasn't given up.  
And somewhere inside her, she hopes that it's true, that maybe  
today  
A corner will be turned, her house will be finished, that  
She will find some support, or some money will miraculously  
materialize. And the plumber will come, the painter will finish, the flowers  
will be planted, and she  
Will live in peace.

So this morning, she sits.

Knowing that somehow, in the midst of the old becoming new, in the midst of a place that looks familiar yet doesn't, feels familiar but isn't, she is not alone.

So this morning she waits.

She waits knowing that even in the waiting there is yet a seed, a grain, a nugget that is waiting to be birthed, to be born, to spring to life.

She waits, and she is not alone.

And this morning she listens.

She listens for the sounds of a new day.

She hears a truck slowly meandering down her street bringing signs of a new beginning for her neighbor.

She listens for the first bird's song of the day, knowing as did Noah, that a bird's song is a beautiful thing, a sign of life after.

She listens for the voices of children playing, laughing, running.

She listens...

Hoping that this day, God will speak a word over her life and she will know.

She will know that in this moment, in this time, 19 months out...

God provides.

Even when the signs are difficult to see.

Even when the bank account grows thin.

Even when the rain falls.

Nineteen months out, she knows.