

First United Methodist Church

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The images are startling. Pictures of flood waters as high as the road signs over the interstate highway or the traffic control lights at intersections. There are homes that you can just see the peak of the roof sticking out of the water. Or, you simply see pictures of water where water isn't supposed to be, such as the picture of the nursing home residents that are sitting in two feet of water. These are the images we've seen after Hurricane Harvey hit Texas.

The loss of life is tragic and the property damage is staggering! This is an event that will truly take years, and likely even a decade or more for Houston to fully recover from. The impact of this disaster and the toll on people's lives will be felt long into the future!

The pictures remind me of a flood I experienced when the Mouse River flooded Minot in 2011. I was the DS in that region at the time and we had 15 feet of floodwater in one of our UM Churches. Six years later Minot is still dealing with the aftermath of the flood.

The good news in the midst of it all is two-fold for me. The stories, and pictures, of neighbor helping neighbor, stranger helping stranger, people simply helping other people is such a beautiful sight to see. For this moment in time our nation isn't focusing on what is dividing us, it's focusing on what pulls us together to help one another at a point of need. This is what our nation needs to experience more of, I believe. This is our nation (and humanity) at its best, when we don't see other as "them" or "different from," we simply see others as "us" and "human beings."

The second piece of good news that speaks to me is the fact that UMCOR (United Methodist Committee on Relief) is already present in the area of the flood and is already beginning the process of helping people deal with this devastating disaster. I know from personal experience in Minot how helpful UMCOR, and the United Methodist presence was. UMCOR will be present in Houston for a long, long time.

Our church is starting a fund for those who wish to contribute to the UMCOR Hurricane Harvey Disaster Response. If you wish to make a contribution to this fund, simply make your check out to our church and write "Harvey Response" in the memo line. Or if you have a cash contribution, just write "Harvey Response" on the envelope. All funds received to this fund will go UMCOR.

As United Methodists, we too can show the world that our focus isn't on division and strife, our focus is on being a positive influence in the world. Thanks for caring. Thanks for praying for those affected by this disaster. Thanks for doing what we can to touch our world with Jesus Love!

Serving Together,
Pastor Keith

This coming Sunday is the last Sunday of our Summer Schedule. Worship is at 9:30 am. Pastor Jerry will be leading worship. Nancy and I will not be with you this Sunday. We'll be in Omaha celebrating our son's wedding. Communion will be served this Sunday. We're located at 310 N. Rowley in Downtown Mitchell.