

Hello everyone, my name is **Jenn Floyd, and my husband Darin** and I were drawn into St. Luke's several years ago through some dear friends of ours. Since we've been coming here we not only loved the greater worshipping community, but we also fell in love with our Three Strands Sunday School class. While we cannot claim to have the most consistent Sunday presence, when our class started putting together support for the hurricane recovery it only felt right to jump right in with our friends and our community to help. Given both of our backgrounds in project management and construction, mucking homes was a fitting place to devote our energies. So we came in on Saturday and joined a mucking crew organized here and then came back the next day to lead our own crew. After a weekend of mucking with our St. Luke's family, Darin and I then turned our help inside out working at friends' homes and I helped lead coordination of my company's disaster relief efforts of mucking for my fellow coworkers.

To give you a small snap shot of our mucking journey... *One of the homes we mucked with our Sunday school family was in an area on the west side of town where the streets were still flooded when we arrived. We parked as close as we could, loaded up our wheel barrow and arms with the tools for job, and made our way to the address. As we got to our address the tragedy of what was still happening was right before our eyes with houses still filled with water just yards away. In the flurry of activity going on around us we found the home owner and St. Luke's member, Joe, who dropped what he was doing to gratefully and warmly welcome our help. Seeking our names and shaking our hands, he reached out to each of us. And then once he oriented us and we had our bearings we dived into the flurry and got to work. It was tough work and there was a lot of it. Thankfully there were many people helping out. And despite the chaos again at the end of the day Joe took the time to connect with us and wanted to thank each of us personally for our work. While he must have been weary from his work and heavy with the challenge of his losses, his warmth and intention were true moments of connection.*

Through this experience and many others we captured a few reflections:

- It may seem obvious when I say it, but it caught us by surprise that water adds weight to everything it touches...books, stacks of bills, clothes, carpets, furniture, sheetrock, the list goes on. And if water got to something, it is hard to save.
- Mucking is tough and laborious physical work. It is also a battle against a ticking clock, trying to get everything wet out of a flooded home; to stay ahead of the mold and prepare for renovations.
- But many people do not always realize that while it can be tough and physically laborious, it is also **heart wrenching** work. Helping people carry memories to their curbs in soggy, dirty pieces is not easy. People still in shock often need more **care and presence** than their house and belongings.
- Through this experience the resilience of community has been so inspiring to us. Despite their bleak circumstances, everyone we met was truly doing the best they could to help not only themselves but others as well.
- I imagine that Darin and I are not the only people out there that really do not like to ask for help. But having been on the giving side, wow, what an experience it is to be able to help someone who has asked for it. In a time where there is so much need, I think many of us **want** to go out and help. And we have been blessed by people willing to let us into their homes and hearts to help them anyway we can. I truly hope that we can continue to remember the work of our hands and hearts and as things get back to quote "normal" for many, and that we not forget to muck around a little bit now and again. To connect with others. To help others. To live our faith with our presence outside these sanctuary walls.