



Harvey Update

February 2018



For more info, please contact Alice King: 713-402-5067 or aking@stlukesmethodist.org
3471 Westheimer Houston, TX 77027 | StLukesMethodist.org



Where are we today?

We weren't the first in, but we will be the last out. - Dr. Tom Pace

These words from Dr. Pace inspire us to live out our faith by serving our Houston friends impacted by Hurricane Harvey. After 6 months, this commitment to walk alongside our neighbors and to support our community speaks hope and love into the hearts of those who continue to suffer as they discern a way forward.

Mayor Turner spoke to the reality of Houston's dire situation recently, reporting that 3,422 households are still living in hotels as they await housing repairs.

St. Luke's has an opportunity to continue to surround our neighbors with support,

encouragement and love, sending the message that we are in this together and we will not grow weary or forget.

In Mark 5:21-43, Jesus stops to heal a woman who had been sick for 12 years. Doctors and the community had at one time tried to help the woman, but after awhile with little progress of healing, she was cast aside and forgotten. On his way to save a dying child, Jesus stops to heal this woman who reaches out to him. Jesus shows us that while we all have important demands on our time and lives, we can't simply move on and forget the suffering.

Leslie Beasley, representing Young Men's Service League at Westlake High School in Austin, TX, led a team of moms and young men to help Houston families in January. The moms and sons worked together to install insulation and sheetrock. She shared this passage from Mark and her reflection of how God worked in the lives of their team members while serving in Houston.

Mark

5:21-43

We won't forget.

In her words, “God worked on so many levels in the lives of our moms and high school young men during that mission weekend. I was so struck by hearing Dr. Pace say that while St. Luke’s wasn’t the first church to respond, they would be among the last out. And that is really what Houston needs. A lot of people are energized right after a disaster. But we understand this recovery may take up to 10 years. And to know St. Luke’s is committed to long-term recovery is inspiring.”

Through a collaborative effort known as The Restoration Team, St. Luke's along with Chapelwood UMC, Westbury UMC and St. Paul's UMC, received grant funding from Houston Harvey Relief Fund, managed by Greater Houston Community Foundation, to help with rebuild efforts. We are staying the course, showing our community that we are in this together, for as long as it takes.

St. Luke’s is listening to the changing needs of hurricane survivors and is responding on multiple levels. In future months, our work areas will change to accommodate the need.

For now, we continue to receive calls requesting help with rebuilding. This month, volunteer leader, Jon Norman, visited a home that has been sitting idle since the storm. The homeowners initially gutted the home and sprayed twice for mold. Overwhelmed and nearly paralyzed by their loss, they stayed away from the home as they tried to navigate financing and a way forward. When they returned a few months later, they found the studs, moisture barrier and ceiling covered in mold.

Impact of your service

- In the early days after Hurricane Harvey, St. Luke’s deployed 23 teams to muck out over 28 homes.
- Also, St. Luke's reached out to **4500** members to check on their safety and to offer assistance.
- St. Luke's has received **\$465,921.64** to date from generous members and persons around the world.
- St. Luke’s has provided \$199,603.37 to date in direct aid.
- The Restoration Team has received **\$504,000** in grant funds to muck 100 homes and install drywall and insulation in 24 homes.
- St. Luke's has a second grant under consideration for an additional **\$1,450,000** that would allow the Restoration Team to rebuild **75** homes in East Houston and **35** homes in West Houston. Decision notification should be received March 7th.

This is not uncommon. Drive through neighborhoods across Houston today - 6 months later - and you will see similar sights. Entire neighborhoods are standing idle with very little activity, and continue to be uninhabitable.

We recently hosted a mission team from Evergreen Church in Michigan. They worked on the home of a sweet family in the Bear Creek area. The young family of 4 has been living in a travel trailer in the driveway since the storm.

Throughout their week, the mission team members grew to know and love this family.

After the walls were installed, a couple of the team members got together and repaired the kids’ play set in the backyard and re-wired one of the boy’s motorized ride-on toys. As one of the mission team members said, “This is what it is all about. Giving families back their home, their place to make memories.”

Why you? Why now?

We are giving people back their home, their place to make memories.

So what is God calling us to be at St. Luke's in the months and years to come? We are called to continue to be the light and love of Jesus to those who are feeling left behind, stuck, forgotten and overwhelmed.

We need you. Your love. Your time. Your hands. Your feet. Join us as we give ourselves away in service for Harvey Restoration.



Be the Broadmoor!

You may remember the church from Baton Rouge who pulled up the Friday after Hurricane Harvey flooded our city. We are still in awe of the response and love we witnessed from our friends at Broadmoor UMC. They have inspired us to "Be the Broadmoor!"

We want to pay this gift forward and have formed a team whose work includes:

- Identifying and recording best practices for hurricane recovery
- Discerning lessons learned
- Crafting How-To's to share with other congregations.

Our goal is to prepare now so that we can come alongside another church facing disaster in the future.

Ways to Serve

We have identified impactful ways for everyone to serve!

Saturday Work Team Volunteers Needed:

March 24	August 25
April 7	September 22
May 19	October 20
June 30	November 10
July 21	December 15

Hours: 9 am - 4 pm

No experience necessary

Work is usually drywall and insulation - all supplies provided

Hospitality Volunteer - Help set up and prepare living space at the Blanton Building and / or prepare and deliver a meal to visiting mission teams.

[register here](#)

Silver Linings

We have heard many stories of how God has worked something new and beautiful in people's lives in the midst of hurricane Harvey recovery. An example of this is a job skills program taking place on the east side of town.

As the majority of these homes had mold situations too far gone for volunteers to provide labor, The Restoration Team implemented an innovative plan to provide a solution. A leader from the Eastside community, who is skilled in home repair, was hired to train 12 neighborhood men to safely and professionally muck and remediate mold. The men are being paid a fair wage for their work.

After this phase of work has been completed, these men will be trained to install sheetrock and insulation and then put in flooring, cabinetry, etc. This program will provide these men with skills, opening up employment opportunities far in to the future.