



PRESS RELEASE

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Dedication of Faith House marks Milestone for Volunteers, ongoing Disaster Recovery

DICKINSON, Texas: Faith Lutheran Church and its adjoining property sustained damage from floodwaters during last August's Hurricane Harvey. The water rendered the sanctuary unusable at a time when the community needed a place of solace the most.

Despite the bleak outlook for Faith Lutheran worshipers, Pastor Deb Grant had a vision.

Looking to the adjoining property, a 4-bedroom/2-bathroom rental property, she saw the potential to recover with purpose.

That adjoining property has transformed into Faith House.

Officially dedicated on 8 November, Faith House is now equipped to house 16-20 volunteers.

In the true sense of servant leadership, the mantra for this project became "let's do this together."

Volunteers were the lifeblood of disaster recovery in the aftermath of the storm. In Galveston County, thousands of volunteers have combed the communities and neighborhoods lending a helping hand.

"We couldn't be here without volunteers -- and without the churches who have helped us by housing volunteers," said Jimmy Elmore, Operations Director, Fuller Center Disaster Rebuilders.

As Grant explains, "When Harvey hit our property, it was inundated with 4 feet of water. The members of our church had homes affected -- their hands were needed at their homes. (Yet) volunteers poured in saying, *'let's do this together.'* Faith Lutheran had no place to worship, our sanctuary and everything was badly damaged. Holy Trinity Episcopal Church reached out to us."

Turning their focus to community restoration and healing, the Faith Lutheran congregation worshipped with the congregation of Holy Trinity for five months as the church regrouped and mapped out their recovery.

"Hurricane recovery is a long process. We want to be here for the long haul," said Grant.

"After surveying the badly damaged property, an idea was born to transform the (prior rental) property into a house that housed volunteers," she said.



Well known for their volunteer efforts, 4Bs Disaster Response Network and Eight Days of Hope sent in waves of volunteers. Initiating the cleanup process with a handshake and a promise, the transformation began.

Faith and other Lutheran worshippers performed the initial muck and gut, 4Bs Disaster Response Network and Eight Days of Hope tore out the walls, installed the HVAC, and completed electrical work. Fuller repaired and rebuilt most of the walls, ceilings, bathrooms and installed flooring.

Following 14 months of renovations, in collaboration with Fuller Center Disaster Rebuilders, Faith House is now ready to take on its new role as an extension of Faith Lutheran's ministry.

In lieu of generating income from the sale or rental of Faith House, it will instead support recovery efforts for the next two years at no cost to Fuller Center Disaster Rebuilders.

The initial group of volunteers from AmeriCorps National Civilian Community Corps will begin their service this month in Galveston County, and depart Faith House mid-December. They will place the final touches on Faith House while also working on five additional homes in Dickinson, La Marque, Texas City and League City.

For volunteers, on-site Volunteer Coordinator/Supply and Logistics Coordinator Makayla Meyers will be there every step of the way as she settles into her role at Faith House, where it's more like home. "I coordinate the volunteers prior to their arrival. While here, I make sure they have a good time, want to come back and tell their friends about us," said Meyers.

A part of the Fuller Center Disaster Rebuilders team, Meyers will live among rotating volunteer groups through 2019.

Faith House represents another blessing during this ongoing recovery.

"Having this house is wonderful. We have a lot more people in the area to help, and we're looking forward to doing it," said Elmore.

As the home was officially blessed, a gathering of church members, volunteers and well-wishers joined Grant as she thanked God for His people and Faith House.

"We ask You to bless it in a mighty way. Thank You for every fingerprint, every mark, every smiley face that's on every stud in this building.

"This moment is because of the best of the church, and the best of who the body of Christ is."

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To learn more about Faith Lutheran, visit: <http://www.faithdickinson.org/>

For more about the AmeriCorps National Civilian Community Corps, visit: <https://goo.gl/QyMB5L>



Collaboration and a network of partnerships made Faith House possible:

*Faith Lutheran Church
Fuller Center Disaster Rebuilders
Episcopal Diocese of Texas
First Christian Church/Disciples of Christ, Texas City
High Socks for Hope
Eight Days of Hope/4Bs Disaster Response Network
Gulf Coast Synod of Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
Catholic Charities
Gloria Dei Lutheran Church
Clear Lake Presbyterian Church
Webster Presbyterian Church
Peace Lutheran Church
Galveston County Long Term Recovery Group*

Galveston County Long Term Recovery Group (GCLTRG) is a collaborative network that addresses the long-term needs of Galveston County following a disaster. We are made up of representatives from non-profit, faith-based, and civic organizations and government and business partners working in our county.

www.galvestoncountyrecover.org/