



Kinston, NC Fall, 2017 Disaster Assistance Team: *(Front Row, L to R)* Gail Lehman First, Franklin; Bobbi Trick, First Hickory; Joanne Mitchell and Wanda Murchison, Southminster, Gastonia; Russ Rankin, Hayesville Pres.; Betsy Keith, First Gastonia; *(Back row, L to R):* Bob Abel, Hayesville Pres; Phil Trick, First Hickory; John Ellis, First Hickory; Sandy Geary, First Franklin; Melvin Meares, First Hickory; Brian Schroeder, First Gastonia.

PWNC Disaster Assistance Trip To Kinston, NC

A group of 12 volunteers from five PWNC churches arrived at First Presbyterian Church of Kinston, NC on Sunday, October 8, to live and work together the following week to restore a house that had been damaged by rising water from Hurricane Matthew in September of 2016. Over 18 inches of rain fell in two days, plus water was released on October 7 from the reservoir up steam in Raleigh, which made the flooding even worse. Our disaster assistance team worked on the house of Ms. Helen Gray and Michael, whose house had 18" of water in it, plus ceilings had fallen in. Just about every piece of drywall in the walls and ceilings have had to be replaced due to water damage or problems with mold and mildew. PDA groups had begun the restoration work before us, we put up a lot of drywall, and other groups are scheduled to continue the work in the coming weeks until Helen and Michael will be able to move back into their house again. Then, another house, or houses, will be chosen by PDA and the Kinston Area Recovery Effort (K.A.R.E.) as the next project. Some members of our group were "veterans" of previous disaster assistance trips and knew quite a bit about putting up, mudding, and taping drywall (and other types of construction). Others were just learning. One of the beauties of these mission trips is that a lot of teaching and learning goes on, and by the end of the week, everyone was much more confident in their construction skills. Plus, we got to know each other better on the job site and through our life together at FPC Kinston.

Sunday school rooms have been turned into rooms with bunk beds that can sleep 22 (pillows, sheets and towels are provided); a gathering room for meetings, devotions and relaxing; a room for group meals; a shower room with two nice shower stalls; and use of the church kitchen for meal preparation. On Wednesday afternoon, we quit early and took a tour of the CSS Civil War Interpretive Center and a replica of the confederate iron clad ship, the CSS Neuse. In the evenings, we took time out to debrief our day, and different members of our group led devotions. One of our groups members said that, for him, these trips are a “thin place”, by which he meant that he feels God very close to us when we serving others and each other with the love of the Lord. The members of our disaster assistance team were: Melvin Meares, Phil and Bobbi Trick, and John Ellis from First Hickory; Joanne Mitchell and Wanda Murchison from Southminster, Gastonia; Brian Schroeder and Betsy Keith from First, Gastonia; Sandy Geary and Gail Lehman from First, Franklin; and Russ Rankin and Bob Abel from Hayesville Pres. Plans are already being considered for our next disaster assistance trip in the Spring. Keep your eyes open for information in the presbytery newsletter.

Bob Abel, Mission Committee member







