



Wilmington, NC Spring 2019 Disaster Assistance Team:

Steve Brittain and Frank Sell (FPC Gastonia); Tim Grigg, Lewis Brooks, and James Holman (Union PC, Gastonia); Chuck Shelton (Morrison PC, Franklin); Bobbi and Phil Trick (FPC Hickory); Derwin Nelson, Frank Hamm, and Ernest Danforth (Corning , NY.); Robert and Amanda and friend.

After going by the Baptists On Missions headquarters in Burgaw and getting supplies and instructions, we arrived at Robert and Amanda's house Monday morning ready to work. We learned that their house was one of about 1,700 homes that were affected by the 30+ inches of rain from hurricane Florence. I can't imagine what that was like. This house had NEVER flooded before, as is the case with many homes in this area. With 5-6 feet of water in their home, they lost practically everything. Robert stated that water was as high as the windows on the back of the house and was coming in the windows. We marveled at their resilience and courage as they lived through this and rebuild their lives. They managed to get a FEMA trailer to live in the back yard, so at least they can stay on their property as it goes through reconstruction.

On Thursday, Robert and Amanda treated us to a lunch they prepared..... fried chicken, smoked chicken, baked beans, cole slaw, and Mtn. Dew!! OMG, it was soooooo good!! Their way of saying "Thanks" for our hard work. We started the week as individuals with a common goal, and finished the week as a team and made friends along the way. God is indeed good!

We found a house with studs and rafters.....and when we left it was again looking like a home with walls and a bathroom.

For pictures: <https://www.facebook.com/CorningFirstPresby/photos/>



Lumberton, NC Spring D.A. Team, Left-to-right: Joan Parks (Bryson City), Bill Heck (Montreat), Betsy Keith (FPC Gastonia), Russ Spiller (Black Mountain), Terry Hanna (Bryson City), Roger Rizk (FPC Gastonia), Sarah Shumate (FPC Hickory), Melvin Meares (FPC Hickory), Susannah Whitener (Draper, VA), Brian Schroeder (FPC Gastonia).

Two major weather events took their toll on the Lumberton area, Hurricane Matthew in 2016 and Hurricane Florence in 2018. A PDA mission team of ten volunteers from Presbyterian Churches across North Carolina and Virginia met in Lumberton on May 5 to assist with disaster recovery. We were hosted by the Chestnut Street United Methodist Church in Lumberton which had been remodeled to house mission work teams. It had space for teams of at least 30 people with a kitchen and common eating area where we prepared and shared meals, played Rummikub and conducted our nightly devotions. It was also the base for the Disaster Response Operation of the North Carolina Conference of the United Methodist Church. During the week we worked on two houses that had been damaged by the hurricanes. Rainwater had damaged ceilings, walls, and floors which had to be removed before repair and replacement could take place. The first house was approximately 20 miles away in Fairmont and owned by a single mother with three teenaged children. One room was so badly damaged it could not be occupied so the mother had to sleep on the living room couch. By the end of the week in this room, we had replaced and insulated the ceiling, replaced sheetrock on the walls that had mold spots, painted the entire room and prepared the floor for new subflooring and vinyl planks. Another team was scheduled to arrive on Saturday to complete the work in this room so it could be occupied. In addition to the one room, we repaired and painted the ceilings in the kitchen, bathroom, living room, and another bedroom. The second house was in Lumberton, which also had water damage to the walls and ceilings. We were only there one day but accomplished the removal of moldy ceiling panels and degraded insulation in the living area and laundry room. We also scraped paint that was peeling due to dampness. Both of these houses were occupied by their appreciative owners during our work. Through teamwork and great leadership, we were able to help the thankful homeowners get back to normal.

By the end of the week through working together as a team we were on a first name basis and made friendships that will last long after the end of our work week. I am sure that for many of us this will not be our last mission trip.