



**Volume 9, Number 10  
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*God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.*

*Therefore we will not fear though the earth gives way, though the mountains be moved into the heart of the sea, though its waters roar and foam, though the mountains tremble at its swelling. Selah Psalm 46:1-3*

## **A Summer Like No Other**

**H**ow can we fully describe Summer like the one we've just experienced? The summer was good. Yes, it was good.

The summer for OPC Short Term Missions and Disaster Response was different for sure! It brought with it a pandemic with many restrictions; floodwaters which swelled Sanford Lake in Michigan causing flooding in two OPC members' homes; OPC Short-Term Missions having to make the excruciatingly hard decision to cancel all but one summer team (Boardwalk Chapel); Tropical Storm Isaias traveling up the eastern seaboard flooding the home of one OPC member; wildfires tearing up the west coast destroying two OPC families' homes—so far; Hurricane Laura and Tropical Storm Marco hitting the south back-to-back; Tropical Storm Sally arrived, beating up Florida and Alabama last week and oh yes, a few earthquakes that hit Puerto Rico were intermingled.

So why the enthusiasm? The answer is obvious, but not always initial. God is in control, knows our needs, is our Strength, and walks with us through it all. Throughout this disaster-ridden summer we, as a Church and as a Body of Christ, have been strengthened and encouraged by these challenges. That sounds counter-intuitive, but God, using his children as volunteers, prayer warriors, and generous donors, strengthened us. God not only got us through this Summer's challenges but far-surpassed our sinfully-limited expectations.

The Moots' home has passed rough-in inspections and are well on their way to drywall installation. The

Kennedys are just "paint-on-the-walls" away from finishing their basement walkout, destroyed by floodwater just four months ago. David Bowles and his mother have a dedicated committee oversight, elders, and a site coordinator who are fully committed to seeing his flood-damaged home restored.

God has raised up amazing people right here in the OPC (along with brothers and sisters in Christ outside the denomination). They don't serve just to "check a box", but are committed to seeing a job well done. They empathize with the ones who hurt and walk with them along a difficult road.

The families for whom they are ministering are blessed, humbled and lifted in a way that can not be fully measured. Tom Kennedy recently wrote to us about the teams that served at his flooded home a few weeks ago. "It is with sincere pleasure and thanks that I tell you how appreciative Linda and I are for the professional and personal help we received from our new OPC New Jersey and Maryland friends. The five volunteers who came to our home were incredible. Linda and I were exhausted!! At 83 years young, we can only accomplish a limited amount of work each day. It was ninety days after the flood when the men arrived. They all just seemed to understand what needed to be done. Every day we marveled at their accomplishments.

Perhaps, more important than the physical accomplishments, was their Christian companionship and reassurance that our ordeal with the flood could, and would, be resolved.

*Continue reading on our website: [opcdisasterresponse.org](http://opcdisasterresponse.org)*

**Let us know you are ready to help!** Register at our website: [OPCDisasterResponse.org/volunteer-registry](http://OPCDisasterResponse.org/volunteer-registry).

Donate: [GIVE.OPC.org/diaconal-ministries-summary](http://GIVE.OPC.org/diaconal-ministries-summary)

- **Presbytery of the Northwest:** As wildfires continue to smolder in the western half of the state of Oregon, we have learned that, praise the Lord, there has been no loss of life to OPC members, though several families have lost their homes entirely, but are covered by insurance. A deacon at Trinity OPC in Medford, Oregon, reports, "our community has been severely impacted by the wildfires in Oregon. We lost almost 1,000 homes in our valley, and it seems that most of the families are low income or elderly." Please pray for local deacons as they begin to formulate plans to minister to their community.
- **Presbytery of the South:** Pastor John Schortmann, Covenant OPC, Pensacola, FL reports they were able to worship on Sunday, without power, preaching in the light of a battery-powered lantern after Hurricane Sally passed through the region last week. One member was flooded, but seems to be covered by insurance, thank the Lord. Many came out to clean up on Saturday. The Lord provides! What a wonderful time of worship on Sunday!
- **Presbytery of the Mid-Atlantic:** Volunteers and donations are needed for the Tropical Storm Isaias effort. So far, a handful of volunteers have participated in emptying and drying out of the home of David Bowles, member of Grace & Peace OPC in California, Maryland, and his elderly mother after their home and garage flooded as a result of Tropical Storm Isaias early last month. Work continues at a steady pace as site coordinator, Curt Sproul leads volunteers with aid from Callaway Baptist Church (the church home of Mrs. Bowles).
- **Presbytery of Michigan and Ontario:** Volunteers are needed for the months of October and November in order for progress to continue in the rebuilding efforts of the Moots' home in Midland, Michigan. Volunteers are working steadily and the home has passed rough-in inspections, praise the Lord! Volunteers also participated in ministering to another family in the same church, the Kennedys, whose first floor was engulfed by the flooding.

Please help with these efforts! Go to our website to register to find out more, volunteer or donate: [opcdisasterresponse.org](http://opcdisasterresponse.org).

Praise the Lord for a summer full of nightly services and concerts as the Boardwalk Chapel celebrated their 75th Anniversary! Catch up with volunteers Elanor, Sam and Lucie as they share their experiences.

- **Elanor** from the Harvest PCA Team at the Boardwalk Chapel writes, "This was my 6th year coming to the Chapel with my youth group! I absolutely love the true sense of fellowship that I've only ever felt at the chapel.
- **Sam** is a Boardwalk Chapel alumni who was on staff in 2018 and served on the evangelism team. Prior to him coming on staff, Sam came to the BWC for the first time in 2017 with his youth group. That year at the Chapel was the year that Sam became a Christian, praise God!
- **Lucie**, from one of our youth groups, has been serving at the Chapel for four years. Each summer she comes back with an excitement to be able to serve alongside her youth group and the Boardwalk Chapel staff. Each summer, Lucie's faith is deeply encouraged by the staff and the things that she is able to learn.

Read more about these volunteers at our website: [opcstm.org](http://opcstm.org).

## Confessions of a Disaster Response Volunteer

by Rich Duggan, OPC Disaster Response Volunteer & Member, New Hope OPC, Bridgeton, NJ

On August 31st, a group of five men from New Jersey, including myself, departed on our planned trip to Midland, Michigan.

...I wanted to focus on the work, on the measurable progress we made while we were there. I rejoice that God did give us success in the work, but I am also pleased that as Ephesians 3:20 reminds us, "Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us..." Spending time with Tom and Linda, as well as talking to Michelle and Glenn Moots at the church, opened my eyes to my own pride.

Continue reading on our website: [opcdisasterresponse.org](http://opcdisasterresponse.org)

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