

Greetings to the Saints of Mission Presbytery!

Y'all know me well enough by now to know that I'm never one to pass up a good crisis. In this case, the arrival of Hurricane Harvey in our midst helped me become painfully aware that we in the Presbytery did not exactly have a fully-developed disaster response plan in place. With the help of folks like Alan Ford and Joyce Batty along with your wonderful and hard-working staff, we did the best we knew how. But there are so many things that we could do better, and so many ways that we can be more prepared for "if and when" the next situation arises.

Today, we were fortunate to get to spend the day with Liz Branch, a ruling elder from Arkansas Presbytery. Arkansas has one of the finest, and actually one of the few, disaster response plans that I've seen. I've been wanting that for us since I arrived. And so, now we've got a plan underway!

Late last year, the Mission Outreach and Justice committee agreed to take "disaster response" under its umbrella of projects. Today, with Liz's help, we sat down and hammered out a path forward.

This is where you come in. We need your recommendations for a couple of things. One is for people willing to serve on the Task Force. Liz says the three most essential people are "the leader, the scribe and the nag" - to make sure things get done! If you are one of those three kinds of people or know someone who is, please let me hear from you soon.

We also need recommendations for folks who could help us with specialized skills on an as-needed basis. Is there a **police officer** in your congregation, for example, who could help if necessary in another area of the presbytery? Are there folks who are handy with **tool boxes**? Are there teams who could stand ready to make those **cleanup buckets** or **hygiene kits**? Is there a **ham radio operator** out there who could help us with communications as necessary?

We're also going to be developing a communication plan for the presbytery, a protocol for us to be able to contact each other in a disaster, and we're even going to be working on a plan for prepping the office staff for what we need to do in order to protect the Presbytery's belongings as well as to protect each other.

If you're feeling called to serve in this way - please be in touch! You'll be hearing much more about this over the coming months. But for now, be thinking about who you know, or maybe even you yourself, that could be an asset to Mission Presbytery in times of disaster. This is definitely one way that we are "better together!"

PRESBYTER SIGHTINGS

January 18 - Lunch with Rio Grande Valley region members

January 19 - Meet with Personnel Committee

January 21-22 - Meet with Synod Executive Forum about Presbytery Leader Formation

January 23 - a date with my male child; let's just say "Go Spurs Go!"

January 24 - Meet with Mission Outreach and Justice committee

January 25 - Meet with Education and Congregational Nurture committee

January 29-31 - On study leave to attend Midwinter Lectures at Austin Seminary

February 3 - Meet with General Council

February 4 - Worship with Boerne St. Mark

February 5 - Meet with Committee on Ministry

February 7 - Meet with Pastoral Care committee

February 9 - Meet with Committee on Preparation for Ministry