

... Loving Our Neighbors As Ourselves

Once again, DCPC Disaster Relief Team devotes a week to helping our Western NC neighbors.

Following up on a successful work trip to Spruce Pines, NC in October, Pastor Robert Alexander and a team of five DCPC members and a guest traveled to Canton, NC, this November to assist with continuing recovery efforts there. The community is only a 2-hour drive west of here (approximately 17 miles west of Asheville).



Hurricane Helene was the third “disaster” to hit Canton in the past five years. The other two were Tropical Storm Fred in 2021, and the 2023 closure of its paper mill.

As Tropical Storm Helene battered Canton, the Pigeon River reached 25.89 feet setting a new flood record. Six people were killed and more than 450 structures were damaged.

The city of only about 4,400 people was still reeling from the closure of its paper and packaging mill. The 115-year-old institution had employed more than a thousand people and was a source of pride for workers and their families.

Damage to the town along the river and throughout the surrounding area was similar to most Western NC communities. Too many homes were completely or partially destroyed by high water and/or tree damage, with further complications from mountainside mud slides. Also - lots of long term mold damage has required gutting and replacing drywall, etc. Many people in the area are still not in their “forever homes” but are living in temporary shelter (trailers and RVs) which needed to be winterized for colder months.

Our team worked with United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR) who manages the projects in the area. Presbyterian Disaster Assistance set up our host site at Canton Presbyterian Church where the much older, smaller congregation was fortunate to not sustain damage in the hurricane.

Throughout the week our team tackled everything from finishing drywall, painting, replacing bathroom and lighting fixtures, repairing leaky ceilings and flooring in an RV and winterized with Foam Board and tarps. They also replaced a traditional tub/shower unit with a walk-in shower for an older man with mobility challenges.

More service opportunities in Western NC are being planned for the Spring of next year. If you are at all interested in learning more, please contact [Pastor Robert Alexander](#) or the church office at 704.892.5641.

~written by Lyn Dodillet on behalf of DCPC's Communications Committee

Early snowfall in Canton, NC area - November 2025.

(To see more photos, check out our Facebook and Instagram posts from November 12th!)

