

November 10 2022

***HURRICANE NICOLE*** made landfall in Florida overnight as a category 1 hurricane. As tropical storm and surge warnings continue throughout the Atlantic coast states and into the northeast U.S., Week of Compassion is monitoring weather and news reports, and will remain in touch with Regional leadership for support and response as needed.

Those interested in virtual volunteer opportunities - staffing a call center to connect survivors to clean-up assistance - please [email Week of Compassion](#) for more information.

## "They brought us hope."

### Week of Compassion Board of Stewards meets in Puerto Rico

Last week, at the first in-person meeting since fall 2019, the Board of Stewards and staff of Week of Compassion gathered in Bayamón, Puerto Rico, tending to the business of Week of Compassion while bearing witness to the fruitful partnership with Iglesia Cristiana (Discipulos de Cristo) de Puerto Rico, especially in the years since Hurricane Maria, and more recently Hurricane Fiona.



photo: Week of Compassion

Week of Compassion staff gathered for meetings before the Board arrived, generously welcomed with hugs, prayer, song, and food by the staff team at the Centro Cristiano. It was an added joy for the Week of Compassion staff to join our ICDCPR colleagues for a surprise celebration for Pastora General Hilda Robles Floran, on her first anniversary in that historic role.

A very full business agenda included a report from the Executive Director; updates on a wide variety of partnerships; discernment regarding sustainable development (including approval of grants for work in Haiti and Yemen); and consideration of a domestic disaster response policy informed by Week of Compassion's commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice.

Alongside the important work of their meeting, the Board of Stewards spent most of one day visiting Cayey and Villa Las Lomas, honored by the opportunity to meet families impacted by Hurricanes Maria and Fiona and the pastors and congregations who have served them faithfully.



photo: Week of Compassion

Week of Compassion and ICDCPR have worked closely since the 2017 Hurricanes Irma and Maria, in support of long-term recovery. These lasting relationships made for a quick response to the local community in the immediate aftermath of September's Hurricane Fiona. As the Board was welcomed with joy into homes and communities impacted by such devastation, gifts of genuine solidarity and mutual hospitality were front and center.

When the storms came with such force, families had to evacuate quickly, and even as they tried to return and begin again, were left without electricity or clean water for several days or even weeks. Pastora Shirley Torres Falero, of ICDC Cayey, said **the church was “all hands on deck” in response, and as much as it meant to receive resources, in reality, families said, “They brought us hope.”** Churches with no more than 75 people became great centers for relief: delivering meals, creating a food pantry and bottled water distribution, cleaning out and finding safe housing options, helping neighbors and friends whether or not they were part of the church. Those in areas less hard-hit continued their ministries of worship and community service, providing [water filters](#), health care, and tutoring.

Throughout these visits, the Board and staff prayed with families and pastors, giving thanks for the immense generosity and collaboration that places the needs of the community at the center of every action. The stories of hope and transformation are powerful, and the shared inspiration and gratitude were abundant and overflowing.



[Stories](#) will continue to emerge over the next few months, and we will continue to share [Updates](#) on the ways Disciples are responding through Week of Compassion. As incoming Board Chair Cindy Kim-Hengst shared, “It was such a great meeting and even more meaningful for the chance to share it with our extended ICDC family and congregational brothers and sisters. **I am so grateful for the chance to witness how local churches are serving and meeting needs, supported by Week of Compassion.** The members of the board will be thinking

about this gathering for weeks to come.”





Use this [interactive map](#) to see where Week of Compassion is responding.



**Cuba**

- hurricane relief



**Ohio**

- refugee support



**Republic of the Congo**

- flood & emergency response



**Mexico**

- earthquake response



**Philippines**

- typhoon response



**Nicaragua**

- hurricane response



**Yemen**

- health relief for internally displaced persons



**Kentucky**

- tornado long-term recovery



**North Carolina**

- resettlement support

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