

Letter from Pastor Brian:

To all who are concerned about us in light of Hurricane Harvey:

Thank you for your prayers. God is faithful and the light of Christ is burning brightly even in the midst of this terrible disaster. To be truthful, I am shocked at the level of destruction in our area. Every day I receive dozens of messages or phone calls from friends and brothers and sisters from our church that go something like this. "Well, we lost the fight. Water is in our living room. We are getting on a boat now. We love you."

I am grateful that I have not heard of any fatality in my network as of yet. Also, I am overwhelmed by the efforts of good people to rescue others and provide shelter.

We the people of Bay Area Church are currently in rescue mode and sheltering many whose homes have been flooded in League City and Dickinson. Many of our own people are flooded and in need. We realize that we have difficult days ahead that will present unique opportunities to demonstrate the love of Christ and serve our neighbors with the hope of the gospel.

We are receiving donations to fund a three tiered effort that is initiated now and will continue for months. You can give now at www.bayarea.church/harvey to help people affected by Harvey.

Rescue - currently we are spending money rescuing people from their flooded neighborhoods and running a shelter on our campus at Bay Area Church to provide basic needs for people who have no where to go.

Relief - when the storm ends, hopefully in the next day or so, we will mobilize to begin relief efforts. These efforts will include continuing to help people with basic needs, clean up efforts, and the process of mudding out homes in our community. I don't have real numbers but the number of homes flooded in region is astronomical. We need to mobilize to help. Our strategic coordinator for this is John Eckeberger. You can email him at john.eckeberger@bayarea.church for information on how to help or if you want to bring teams to help with relief.

Rebuild - Finally we will help people rebuild to the extent our resources allow. Many people who are flooded do not have flood insurance. Flood insurance is an additional policy beyond the normal homeowners insurance policy that covers a home from rising water. Normal homeowners insurance policies will not cover "rising water." That may seem strange to you if you don't live in Houston but it's reality. In our area, many people who live outside of marked flood zones don't carry the necessary additional flood insurance policy, well, because their areas of the City have never flooded. There are no flood zones any more. We are all flooded.

If you know me you know I like to ask this question. "What do we (the people of Jesus) have that they (our neighbors) need?" A week ago, I lived among a people who were very self sufficient and had no apparent physical need for God. Today, everyone realizes the fragility of humanity and are in need of hope. As we meet physical needs now and in the days ahead we will also offer our neighbors what we have that they need; the gospel of Jesus Christ evidenced in our own stories of life change. When the water source is contaminated, we will offer living water.

Of course our region will need more than one church. We look forward to partnering with other churches, disaster relief organizations, and our local government to help as many people as possible. If you can, give. Later, come help us. Right now, Pray for us.

Christ have mercy,

Brian Haynes

Lead Pastor - Bay Area Church (League City, Texas)