

July 2019 News from First United Methodist Church – Shenandoah, IA

DID YOU KNOW?

- It has been almost four months since SW Iowa was ravaged by flood waters from the Missouri river.
- From the church Facebook site, people learned of the Flood Buckets that were being put together by members of the congregation of First UMC. People from our community would stop members or call the church and ask how they could help, they gave money, sent checks, bought supplies, came and helped fill flood buckets and were genuinely concerned for our neighbors. There were checks that arrived from other states, saying this was “a small way they could help.”
- From the money received, and generosity of our members and community, **89 flood/cleaning buckets** were filled and distributed to Hamburg along with **40 first aid kits and 16 hygiene kits**. Fareway, Miller Lumber Company and Orschelan were also very generous in giving a discount on items that were purchased.
- To date (July 8, 2019) there have been a total of 107(close to 3000 nights spent in Wesley Hall) workers from Minnesota, Iowa, California, Texas, Colorado, Washington and 2 different groups from Utah. Several AmeriCorps administrators stayed a couple of nights. These workers were led by Conservation Corp leaders from the above states who were volunteering their time to respond to disasters– they were paid a stipend and were joined by workers from AmeriCorps. In these groups there were people from all over the United States.
- They worked six days a week (10-hour days) and had Monday’s off.
 - The crews were very appreciative of the facilities in Wesley Hall and expressed it many times to the members of the church. There were enough beds and air mattress to accommodate them in the “dorms”. There are two showers in our “dorms” and they also had access to the showers in the Old Armory. This was great cooperation with the city.

- The first crews here said they would be willing to help with anything that needs to be done in the church - following is a list of things they helped with:
 - Moved furniture from a classroom on second floor to the lounge area on the first floor.
 - Carried furniture and “junk” to a trailer to be disposed of during clean-up days in Shenandoah.
 - Cleaning of Wesley Hall was part of their agreement and responsibility of staying there.
 - Washed 100 buckets that needed to be filled with cleaning supplies.
 - Removed rock from behind Fillmore’s garage and tilled an area for a garden.
 - Carried pews from the front of the sanctuary.
 - Carried backdrops up and then carried them down for the Living Last Supper.
 - Carried boxes to the SS store room on 2nd floor.
 - Carried costumes (Living Last Supper) to the costume room on 3rd floor.
 - Always helped with clean-up after our potluck suppers in Fellowship Hall.
 - When the Fellowship Hall carpet was scheduled to be cleaned, the crews folded all the chairs and tables and placed them in the storage room off Fellowship Hall. Before church on Sunday, they had placed them back in Fellowship Hall.
 - Someone mentioned they saw some crew members on their day off, cleaning in front of the Shenandoah Public Library – a wonderful public service. There are probably other ways they have helped in our community that we are not aware of.
- The crew members were made aware of and took advantage of the swimming pool, public library, our parks, joined in festivities on the 4th, attended a concert featuring the Everly Brothers songs, the Wabash Trace, and many other’s we are not aware of.
- To help the members of our church get acquainted with the workers there were:
 - 12 potlucks served at 1st UMC on Wednesday nights

- 1 church family served ribs one evening
- A group of 6 took the Minnesota, Iowa and California group to the Depot for a buffet
- Luke and Sarah hosted the group for 2 meals at their home
- The Shenandoah High School staff prepared 4 different meals and brought them to Wesley Hall
- The Presbyterian Church prepared 2 meals at their church
- The Baptist Church prepared 1 meal at their church
- Lance Cornelius brought pizzas to the crew one evening
- Church of the Latter-Day Saint's prepared 2 meals and brought to Wesley Hall
- Bill Hillman fed them at the Depot
- Cornerstone Church prepared 1 meal at their church
- 6 women from our church prepared a meal and took it to the Fremont County Emergency Management headquarters when they were working 24 hours a day at the beginning of the flooding
- Kelsey Heinz's Life Skills class at the high school did laundry for the workers for six weeks
- The members of the church started doing laundry for people from Hamburg who had to leave their homes. After several weeks, Nishna Productions, a sheltered workshop who has a laundry facility took over and did the laundry for free for these people. They continued this for about six weeks. This was a great way they could help the community of Hamburg.
- Everyone has expressed their appreciation to our church for the rooms and the dinners that were planned for them. Their nickname for Fellowship Hall was "potluck room" and they loved all the meals served there. They also enjoyed interacting with those who attended the dinners. We all gained new friends and acquaintances.
- Thank you to all who participated, helped serve meals and made our guests feel at home.

Proverbs 11:25 (NCV) Whoever gives to others will get richer; those who help others will themselves be helped.

We can never out give our Father.

Attn: Iowa Conference of United Methodist Church

Our church has been more than happy to house and feed the workers that are helping with the flood situation in SW Iowa. They in turn have helped us with some moving projects, as explained in this letter. Our concern right now is the mounting costs of our utilities:

The water and gas/electric bills are listed below:

- Water April 220.51
 May 551.28
 June bill not available at this date
 Total **771.79**

- Electricity/Gas May 360.17
 April 375.41
 June bill not available at this date
 Total **735.58**

We have received a check from the city of Hamburg for \$1,000.00

And a gift from the Crookston, MN UMW for \$200.00

(this was from a grandmother of one of the first crew leaders, she appreciated the meals, lodging and friendliness that was shown to her son and his crew)

This money will be applied to the expenses that have been incurred so far.

As you can see, this amount will not cover the total expenses and we are wondering if there are funds available, either in the form of grants or outright gifts for churches helping with the flooding in Iowa? Please advise of anything that is available. As like many churches, we are operating on a tight budget and would appreciate any help.