

*Message from Michael W. Newman (President, Texas District LCMS)*

Last night I received the first communication about Hurricane Ian's impact from Florida-Georgia District President James Rockey. Please read his message below regarding ways you can help our friends in Florida, and please keep all impacted by the hurricane in your prayers:

*Message from James Rockney (President, Florida-Georgia District LCMS)*

*I thank you all for the prayers for the Florida-Georgia District, our State and all those who have been impacted by Hurricane Ian. As I shared with our District today, life is often filled with storms. They come in various forms but can indeed impact our lives and the lives of those around us in many ways. Yet experience reminds us that the impact of such storms often continues well past the initial event itself.*

*So, it will be for many now that Hurricane Ian has passed. It is with that in mind that I reminded them of these powerful and true words of our Lord: When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and when you pass through the rivers, they will not sweep over you. When you walk through fire, you will not be burned; the flames will not set you ablaze (Isaiah 43:2). Our Lord's promises remain! He will be with those impacted. We will not be overtaken, and He will carry us through!*

*Tomorrow, I am being joined by Jay Wendland (the FL-GA District Disaster Response Coordinator), and Ross Johnson (LCMS Disaster Response) as we begin to visit those impacted and assess the damage, but more importantly, walk beside many who have been impacted. In addition, plans are quickly being developed to deploy LERT (Lutheran Early Response Teams) from around the Synod. Please watch for further information for how your LERT teams and Districts may help in the response.*

*Our initial contacts with Pastors around the District are nothing but amazing! As of this time, no church facility has been damaged beyond use (although some reports are still tentative). We know of 3 called workers with water damage from the tidal surge and two with roof and other damage making their homes uninhabitable at this time. We have no reports of serious injuries or death from our congregations, but contact is still very difficult with limited power and cellular service. It does appear that there may be as many as 200 deaths on Fort Myers Beach from the tidal surge...so we pray for God's comfort upon those families.*

*Also, if you or others are wondering how they can donate to Hurricane Ian Relief, they can do so here: <https://flgadistrict.org/give/> or through the [Synod's Disaster Response Office](#).*

*Finally, I ask that you pray for the Lord to use this hurricane and our response to turn many toward the One who is the only true Hope and Refuge for this life and eternity! May they see Christ in our response and be drawn to Him.*

*Again, your prayers, support and partnership are invaluable. May the One who is the Prince of Peace be with you,*

*James Rockey*

*P.S. Please keep our brother, Bill Harmon, and the SE District in your prayers as Ian has again strengthened to hurricane-force winds and approaches South & North Carolina and may impact much of the eastern seaboard.*