

Bethel Church, Redding, Responds to Western Wildfires

Staff members at Bethel Church, Redding, California, are tracking the progress of the Zogg Fire, which is about seven miles west of Redding, California. Active for three days, the wildfire has burned more than 55,046 acres in Shasta County, with little containment as yet. Four people have died and 147 structures have been destroyed, according to the latest update by Cal Fire.

“Our hearts and prayers go out to those who are grieving the loss of loved ones and property because of the Zogg Fire,” said Eric Johnson, senior pastor of Bethel Church in Redding, California. “We know firsthand how challenging this situation can be, as our Redding community experienced something similar with the Carr Fire in 2018. We are praying for the fire to stop and for the safety of first responders. We are actively engaged in conversations to see how Bethel can help during this time.”

Even though the fire is currently moving away from Redding, the glowing, smoke-filled sky and round-the-clock updates are reminiscent of the Carr Fire. Some of Bethel’s land around the main campus was scorched. Bethel’s College View campus served as a Salvation Army distribution center for two weeks as that fire burned nearly 230,000 acres, killing eight people.

The Zogg Fire is burning just south of the scar left behind by Carr, according to *The Mercury News*. A state of emergency has been declared by Gov. Gavin Newsom and evacuations are taking place in Shasta and Tehama counties.

There have been 1,337 emergency responders assigned to fight the wildfire with the assistance of seven helicopters, 117 fire engines, 36 dozers and 35 water tenders.

“There are a lot of people reliving that fire and experiencing the PTSD that comes with it,” said Aaron Tesauro, Bethel Redding’s communications director.

Locally, the charismatic church is activating Bethel Global Response. Volunteers with the disaster response ministry just returned from Talent and Phoenix, Oregon, where they helped burned-out residents sift through the ashes of their homes in hopes of recovering precious items.

While there, they also trained volunteers from local churches on how to help their communities during these types of emergencies.

“Having responded in our own hometown of Redding during the 2018 Carr Fire, we are familiar with the loss of homes and property due to fire, and are blessed to be able to assist and share what we have learned with communities in their time of need,” said Carl Ladd, director of Bethel Global Response.

The response ministry maintains a Facebook page to help residents stay informed on where the teams are being deployed and the work they’re doing.

“Let’s pray for quick containment and for protection for the citizens, properties and first responders in the affected area,” a recent post states.

Check back with Charisma News at 1 p.m. ET today for a story detailing the purpose and most recent efforts of Bethel Global Response. {eoa}