

Billy Graham Chaplains Prepare to Respond to Hurricane Laura

Early Thursday morning, Hurricane Laura made landfall in Louisiana as a Category 4 storm with 150 mph winds. While the hurricane has since weakened to a Category 2 storm, the National Hurricane Center is warning coastline residents of an “unsurvivable” storm surge that won’t fully recede for several days.

As Hurricane Laura moves inland, the Billy Graham Rapid Response Team (RRT) is monitoring the storm and preparing to respond. Crisis-trained chaplains arrived in the Dallas, Texas, area ahead of the storm Wednesday. Now they’re readying their equipment and preparing two Mobile Ministry Centers—vehicles that will be driven to recovering areas and serve as a safe haven for conversations.

“In this already very tumultuous year, our chaplains are praying that these storms dissipate, but we are also actively preparing to respond if needed,” RRT’s Assistant Director Josh Holland said. “As we always try to do, we will share the simple message of God’s love and compassion with those who are going through the storms in life.”

Hundreds more chaplains are on standby and ready to offer emotional and spiritual care in the hurricane’s aftermath. They’ll offer a listening ear, comfort and prayers to locals while serving alongside Samaritan’s Purse, which repairs damaged homes in Jesus’ name.

Earlier this week, Tropical Storm Marco hit the edge of the Mississippi River, bringing heavy rain and high winds to parts of Louisiana that are forecast to be inundated by Hurricane Laura. It was a notably rare event where two storms swarmed

the Gulf simultaneously—a phenomenon that hasn't occurred since 1959.

The Houston area was hit by Hurricane Harvey in 2017 and parts of the city are still recovering.

Rapid Response Team chaplains are also deployed to wildfires in Napa Valley, California, and to minister in Kenosha, Wisconsin, following Sunday's police shooting of Jacob Blake and ensuing protests. {eoa}

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