



The Happy Church – Special “Flood” Edition 2.0

2.5 Weeks Post Flood

So much has happened in the last 18 days, it’s really hard to communicate in a newsletter. Pictures can’t capture the scenes and smells of the devastation in Eastern Kentucky! The waters have receded, but the destruction left behind is heartbreaking!

The Good News!

Many partner churches have mobilized with work teams, supplies, volunteer labor, monetary donations, and prayers. I think I can speak for the Happy Church staff in saying that they have been overwhelmed with the amount of support received.

For example, look at their gym that has the inner walls removed, the floor mucked out and cleaned, and is now serving as a disaster relief supply depot for the entire community!



Many of you have been SO GENEROUS with financial gifts! Thank you so much! As the needs are going to continue for weeks and months ahead, we don’t want the enthusiasm for helping to wane as the flood becomes an event of the past.

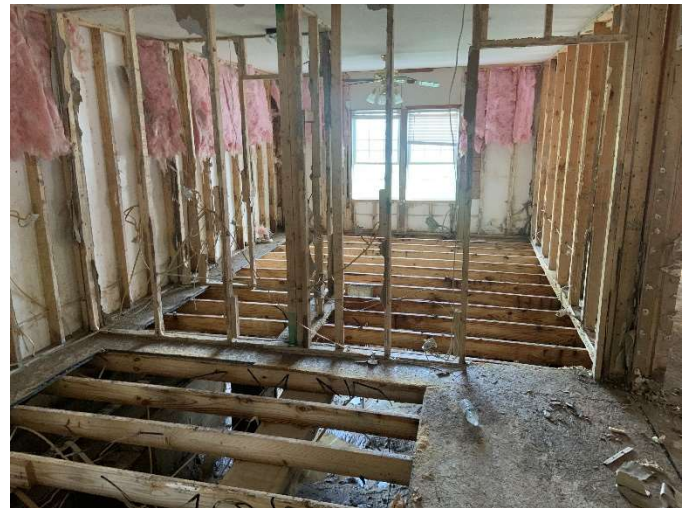
Volunteer laborers have done a great job mucking out all the structures on campus. Pressure washing, ripping out insulation, drywall, floors, and in some cases, even outside walls, as the structure has been soaked beyond just drying out.

For instance, here is the white house where some of the Happy Church volunteers live:



Flood waters carry all kinds of toxins, and if the existing building materials can’t be pressure washed and dried out, they need to be removed. Therefore, this house has been ripped to the studs. It’s going to need completely rebuilt, including kitchen, bathroom, etc., as are the other structures on campus.

Here is the double-wide trailer where John and Chris lived:



As you can see, it’s in the process of having all the interior walls removed so we can remove the subfloor. Then, the floor joists can be pressure washed. Again, a complete rebuild will have to be done.



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Most Common Question

Why don't you move to higher ground?

In the last newsletter, I attempted to answer this question...

<https://thehappychurch.org/aug-flood-newsletter/>

Here is something Pastor Mike's daughter, Vanessa, wrote that explains it so much better:

Flood update: Why do we stay?

I have been asked versions of the same questions several times: “Why is the church rebuilding in a flood plain? Why don't you guys move somewhere else? What if this happens again? Shouldn't y'all move while you have the resources?”

I would be lying if I said we hadn't been asking ourselves these same questions.

In truth, we have asked them several times.

We asked them when the flood waters came, again.

- *When we realized the devastation the waters brought.*
- *When we anticipated the work and money that would be required to rebuild.*
- *When we heard of the lives that had been lost.*

Honestly, we asked God if this was a sign. A sign that our ministry has fulfilled its purpose? A sign that we should move on?

And then the calls came!

The calls from people nationwide who were rallying to support The Happy Church and the community we love and serve.

The calls from people of our community who trust us to be there for them during this devastating time.

The calls from the man in the article below, whose feet were so blistered from the only shoes he owned that he came to us because he knew God would provide for him through us. The man who walked home from our church with all of the supplies he asked for, boots that fit, and the knowledge that God loves him.

The call from the neighbor of the mother who lost her son two streets down the road.

The call requesting that we come and pray. The need that we were able to meet immediately because of our location.

So why do we stay?

We stay because this is where God placed us:

- *This is where our ministry is.*
- *This is where our community is.*
- *This is where our family is.*

And if it is God's will that we stay, He will carry us through. He will provide the resources to rebuild. He will give us the strength to move forward.

If you have any questions about our ministry or how you can help, please call Vanessa at 765-661-8987.

Link to the story of the man that Vanessa referenced:

<https://www.wymt.com/2022/08/12/breathitt-county-flood-victim-was-overwhelmed-with-loss-friends-say/>

A huge thank you to Vanessa and her husband Evan who have been functioning as project managers for the clean-up!

The Clayhole Campus

Upon inspection of the three buildings at the Clayhole campus, it is my understanding that the church building and the parsonage are beyond repair. The gym can possibly be saved and utilized. Here are a couple of pics of what the flood left behind at Clayhole:





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Again, How Can We Help?

- 1) **Financial donations:** Think of repairing nine structures, along with the appliances, furniture, heating/cooling, and sound systems (not to mention possessions, clothing, etc.). The tab will surely be well over \$100,000 (my estimate). This wouldn't include helping the many families in the community that are devastated as well.

Simply go to:

<https://thehappychurch.org/donate>

for options on giving. If you have any financial questions, feel free to direct them to me:

Ned@CentervilleGrace.org, as we manage all the finances for The Happy Church.

One Happy Church supporter has a goal of raising \$1 million dollars for this region of Eastern Kentucky. This is in reference to the Happy Church:

<https://local12.com/news/local/local-non-profits-make-big-plans-to-rebuild-eky-communities-after-floods>

2) Volunteer teams:

There is an ongoing need for volunteers. Now that buildings have been cleaned out and stripped down, **it's time to rebuild!**

While there is going to be a lot of skilled labor needed, skilled laborers can supervise those that maybe aren't. What a great time to learn! We can use anybody!

3) Pray for:

- a) The HC staff members and volunteers
- b) God's provision to rebuild
- c) The community, as the Happy Church is already having an impact
- d) Families whose homes are gone and loved ones lost

Who do we contact?

If you are considering volunteering or sending a team, call/text Vanessa Blinn at (765) 661-8987. Vanessa is Pastor Mike's daughter, and she is functioning as project manager. She can match your skills/desire with what needs to be done, as well as timing and potential lodging on-site.

If you have financial questions, as mentioned before, feel free to drop me an email.



The Happy Church kitchen that feeds many people every week!

How do we stay updated?

Right now, the best source for updates is The Happy Church Facebook page. Go to:

<https://facebook.com/thehappychurch>