

They Were Not Alone

She was one of the volunteers who responded during our recent flooding. She worked in the makeshift office at the church, the coordination center, the hub of activity. Here the phone calls were received from people seeking assistance and direction. This is where the volunteers would come, asking to be sent where they might accomplish the most good. Decisions needed to be made quickly...so much confusion...so much emotion.

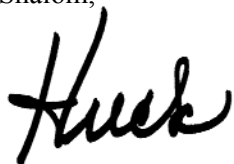
This woman shared a myriad of feelings. She spoke with admiration of the volunteers, especially those who seemed to seek out the worst, even the foulest settings to offer relief. And there was astonishment as business people stepped forward, offering their services and equipment with little or no compensation. She rejoiced as Christians came together from across the church community, joined by the Jewish Disaster Relief organization.

There were also the faces of the victims. For some it was all gone. Where could they and their children go? For others it was a basement destroyed, and all the family history stored there. How does one dare express grief when to others it seems to be only "stuff"? Or what of the future...should the business be rebuilt...will the fields still bring harvest? Here was the shock and the despair and the fear. The atmosphere was full of it.

On Sunday, because much of the activity was taking place near the worship space, they moved their efforts into the basement. And so the phone calls continued, and people arrived seeking help...it had been a long week. And then she noticed him standing there in his robes. He had moved from his congregation upstairs to come into the basement...to bring Holy Communion to all gathered there.

She said she couldn't help it...she began to cry. In the midst of water and worry, there was the wine and the bread. Into a setting of frustration and fear, Jesus had become present. They were not alone. They had not been forgotten. After a week that could test one's faith...then came Holy Communion.

Shalom,



Harold Usgaard
Bishop

