

# Florida hurricane relief: ‘You guys are such a blessing’

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On a warm Florida day, Eunice eats lunch with her neighbor, Jackie. They laugh and smile as they tell jokes and stories, some going back 38 years to when Eunice first moved onto the block. The scene oozes joy.

It’s hard to believe Eunice had difficulty speaking a couple of weeks earlier because of shock in the aftermath of Hurricane Helene. The storm flooded the neighborhood, and she and Jackie escaped neck-deep water by climbing atop a rescue truck.

“You just don’t know what to do,” Eunice said. “You sit in shock for a couple of days with your mouth open, not knowing what to do. What do I do? Who do I call?”

“Then you guys show up, with the goodness in your hearts and your service to God. And you get the process started. It’s a blessing. We’re so grateful you are here. Words cannot express.”

Volunteers from a St. Petersburg disaster relief site Texans on Mission is helping coordinate were in the middle of “mudding out” Eunice’s home—removing wet sheetrock, flooring and cabinets. When they finished, they went to work on Jackie’s house.

## Cooperative efforts



Volunteers worked to clear debris and “mud-out” homes after Hurricane Helene. (Texans on Mission Photo)

The On Mission Network site has brought Christians from across the country together to deliver help, hope and healing in Christ’s name. Teams from Ohio, Florida, Texas, Virginia, California, Maryland and Alaska are slated to minister in communities that have been overlooked since the storm. Charis Fellowship, Texans on Mission and Virginia Baptist Disaster Relief are working together on the site.

Piles upon piles of sheetrock and flooring line the streets where the teams are ministering. Working a home or two at a time, teams are catapulting people forward in their recovery since the hurricane.

“This is the body of Christ in action,” said Rupert Robbins, Texans on Mission disaster relief associate director who is coordinating the site.

“Our connection to Christ connects us to fellow believers and God’s call to minister to the hurting. The Bible tells us to love our neighbor, and that’s exactly what we are doing. We’re meeting needs. We’re sharing the gospel. We’re seeking to glorify God in all we do.”

Surveying damage and visiting with residents, it's clear where the teams are working. Where they go, recovery goes with them. People's spirits are high. They're helping each other out. The community is pulling together.

Two disaster relief volunteers sit down to join Eunice and Jackie for lunch. Hugs go around a small patio table. Friends—new and old—come together.

"This has never happened before," Jackie said. "When they say this storm is historic, it is historic. Our parents, our grandparents never experienced anything like this."