

Wind severely damages church building in Greenville

June 24, 2019

GREENVILLE (BP)—Straight-line winds seriously damaged a church building about 50 miles northeast of Dallas.

Just before Highland Terrace Baptist Church in Greenville received a direct hit from wind gusts in excess of 80 mph June 19, Pastor Chet Haney and his staff sent an alert to the congregation that church activities were canceled for the evening.

“We were just about to go in there for our Wednesday night service,” Haney said. “The front quarter of the sanctuary was peeled off by the high wind. The whole altar area is basically exposed to the sunshine.

“Part of the roof that blew off landed on another part of our building and demolished some of our Sunday school space like a missile hit it.”

Extensive damage but no injuries

Haney estimated that the area would have been filled with students just 15 minutes later had they not closed the church.

Several individuals had arrived early for choir practice but were in another part of the building when wind ripped the roof off part of the sanctuary.

“We specifically prayed for God to take authority over this storm and prevent loss of life, people getting hurt, and minimize the damage,” Haney said.

He reported the storm missed an apartment complex and did not touch

another residential area even though some hundred-year-old oak trees were “uprooted like weeds.”

“Now, we’re kind of in chaos, but God’s been moving and we’ve been seeing a lot of blessings in the midst of this,” Haney said.

In a video posted on [social media](#), Haney delivered a message of assurance to the community.

“By the way, if you hear that our church was damaged, don’t you believe it, because the church is not a building. It’s the people, and our people are just fine,” he said.

The church gathered for worship June 23 in the Greenville High School auditorium.

TBM: ‘Up to our eyeballs in chainsaw work’

Texas Baptist Men has been helping residents throughout North Texas deal with damage since the first of several severe storms swept through the region June 9.

Immediately after the winds hit Greenville, TBM personnel delivered a pallet of tarps for Highland Terrace Baptist to use and distribute in the community. The church also made available food, bottled water, garbage bags and cleaning supplies to neighbors in need.

“We are up to our eyeballs in chainsaw work right now,” said Dwain Carter, TBM disaster relief director. “We had, the last two Sundays in a row (June 9 and 16), pretty bad wind storms go through the city of Dallas. We’ve had about seven chainsaw teams working pretty much nonstop for the last two weeks.”

Through June 23, TBM workers had donated more than 4,300 volunteer hours, completing about 100 chainsaw jobs, logging 250 heavy equipment hours and preparing more than 700 meals.

To contribute financially, send a check designated “disaster relief” to Texas Baptist Men, 5351 Catron, Dallas, TX 75227, call (214) 275-1116 or click [here](#).

With additional reporting by Managing Editor Ken Camp.