

LIVING RIVER: A RETREAT ON THE CAHABA
REPORT TO PRESBYTERY OF SHEPPARDS AND LAPSLEY
NOVEMBER 2021

LIVING RIVER HOSTS HURRICANE IDA EVACUEES

Hurricane Ida was the 2nd most intense and damaging hurricane on record to make landfall in Louisiana behind 2005's Hurricane Katrina. It made landfall on August 29 and Living River was notified on September 1 of an extended family of 17 individuals, ages 1 to 69, who needed housing. The Living River Board of Directors quickly approved housing the family in our small group lodge (8 bedrooms, 4 bathrooms with its own kitchen, den and deck). They moved-in beginning September 4 and remained with us until September 17. God used the connectional nature of the PC(USA) to provide for the needs of this family. The first connection was with Ellen Potts, Elder at First Tuscaloosa, former member of LR Board of Directors and Executive Director of Habitat for Humanity in Tuscaloosa. Ellen received a call from one of the Habitat home owners who moved to Tuscaloosa from New Orleans. It was the homeowner's family who needed shelter and she couldn't house all of them.

The second connection came from Rush Watson, an Elder from Grace Presbyterian. After calling PDA (Presbyterian Disaster Assistance) for advice and assistance, I was informed that Rush was the head of VOAD(Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster) for the State of Alabama. After a short text with Rev.Cathy Hoop to get Rush's number, I had Rush on the phone and later that afternoon, he connected us with a wonderful nonprofit organization in Uniontown, CHOICE (Choosing to Help Others In our Community Excel). Bibb County is part of their service area, and they immediately went to work assessing the immediate needs of the family. CHOICE had access to the Selma Area Foodbank and arrived later that day with a pickup truck loaded with food, school supplies, and hygiene products. The congregations and individuals of the Presbytery took it from there, providing the family with gift cards for them to purchase gasoline, food and supplies, and donations to Living River to purchase gift cards and supplies. I received the following text from the leader of the family, "I speak multiple blessings to you, your family and all who blessed us with donations!! We are truly grateful! Living River was a wonderful experience for us during these unfortunate times!" When Living River was conceived and built, nowhere in our mission statement or purpose did disaster assistance appear. But God knew, and God used Living River to answer a prayer for help.

LIVING RIVER HOSTS DEDICATION/CELEBRATION FOR NAMING OF OFFICE/WELCOME CENTER, OFFICE/WELCOME CENTER PORCH, LODGE, AND PAVILION

Sunday, October 3, Living River hosted the dedication of several gifts to Living River. Pictures from these dedications can be found at livingriver.org.

McQueen Office and Welcome Center was dedicated to the Glory of God and the memory of John and Lillian McQueen. John was the long-time associate pastor at South Highland Presbyterian and Lillian was his partner in ministry for many years. Dana Waters provided remarks and many of the friends of the McQueens who made this gift possible were in attendance.

Talbot Porch at the McQueen Office and Welcome Center was dedicated to the Glory of God and in the memory of Grace Harris Talbot, Donna Klinner Talbot and Virginia Talbot Markle. The family has connections with Shades Valley and Independent Presbyterian Churches. Rev. Leanne Reed provided remarks and a prayer for this dedication.

Rev. Terry Newland Lodge was dedicated to the Glory of God in honor of the ministry of Rev. Terry Newland at Shades Valley Presbyterian as well as at the Presbytery and Synod level. The funding for this

naming opportunity was provided by Shades Valley Presbyterian, and Terry has requested that the name of the lodge be changed to the Shades Valley Presbyterian Lodge. Terry and his wife, Diane, were present with family members and friends from Shades Valley. Rev. Leanne Reed provided remarks and a prayer for this dedication.

Parks' Pavilion located on the large field next to the fire ring was dedicated to the Glory of God in honor of the Parks Family of First Presbyterian Church, Tuscaloosa. Virginia, Sam, Marla and Shelley Parks were present along with family and friends from First Presbyterian, Tuscaloosa. Several of the folks who helped build the pavilion were present including Rev. Charlie Durham who offered the prayer at the dedication.

The Living River Board is scheduling more dedications in the near future. There are several places/structures that have not been named at Living River, including the field, the lake, fossil ridge, the GaGa pit, 7 more bedrooms in the lodge, and the back deck of the McQueen Office/Welcome Center. Contact Jenny Thagard at office@livingriver.org to set up a meeting to discuss the possibility of you, your family, or your congregation being honored with a naming opportunity..

LIVING RIVER FINANCES

For the September Board meeting, the August 31 financial report was presented. August 31 represents 67% of the year. Charitable contributions received by Living River were 20% of what is needed for the 2021 year. The Development Committee is working on increasing sustained monthly or quarterly giving so that Living River can fund operations. A full financial report is available to anyone by emailing office@livingriver.org.

SUMMER CAMP 2022 DATES VOTED ON BY PROGRAM COMMITTEE

The Program Committee of the Living River Board is proposing the following dates for summer camp to be approved by the Living River Board.

Dates	Camp	Grade-Rising	2022 Rates
Sun, June 12, 3pm-Fri, June 17, noon	Sr. High Work & Mission Middle School Night Owl & Mission	9-College Freshman 6-8	\$500
Sun, June 19, 5 pm-Thurs, June 23, 3 pm	Elementary	2-6	\$400
Fri, June 24, 3 pm-Sun, June 26, noon	You & Me	Pre-K-6	Adult \$150, Kid \$100
Mon, June 27, 3 pm-Sat, July 2, noon	Creative Elem Creative Middle	K-5	\$500

LIVING RIVER SUMMER CAMP is the camping program for the Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley, Presbyterian Church (USA). Scholarship information is available at livingriver.org.

LIVING RIVER BOARD RECRUITING MEMBERS FOR LIVING RIVER COMMITTEES

The work of Living River takes place in committees. You do not have to be on the Living River Board to serve on a committee. If you are interested in any of the following committees, contact Jenny at office@livingriver.org: PROGRAM (Camps and Retreats), PERSONNEL, FINANCE, FACILITIES, ENVIRONMENTAL, DEVELOPMENT AND GOVERNANCE.