

## SCHOOL NEWS

# Hurricane Wilma Wallops Florida

(continued from page 1)

Redmann's parishioners were spared major damage as Wilma unleashed her fury further south. Despite repairs to the parsonage following last year's Hurricane Charley, some water

windows and the air conditioners had nearly been blown off the roof. He and associate pastor, Rev. George Earhart, took turns guarding the building through the night to prevent looting.

extensive repairs. Windows blew out in the second-story church offices and there were many trees down on the church property.

Rev. Dennis Glick of St. Paul Lutheran Church & School-Boca Raton reported that the steeple was blown away during the storm, as were several large awnings. Walkways were damaged, one of the school classrooms sustained some exterior damage and there were significant leaks in the Family Life Center.

At Our Savior-Lake Worth, the church building collapsed during the hurricane and was completely destroyed. The church had experienced damage from last year's hurricanes that had left the structure with weakened structural beams that could not withstand the force of 125 mph winds. According to a published report, a pulpit and a cross were among the few objects left in the demolished church, built in 1962.

Our Savior Pastor Rev. Steve Wiperman was interviewed by NBC in the aftermath of the storm and shared that God had a purpose in this and that would be revealed as they moved

LCMS World Relief, joined David Weidner in a tour of the affected communities. Together they assessed the needs of the congregations and workers in an attempt to determine how the District and LCMS World Relief will partner in assisting with recovery and rebuilding. Lutheran Services Florida will also partner in the response effort with the support of Lutheran Disaster Response.

A key component of that response will be pastoral care

the support of faithful LCMS members across the country. Although six storm-related deaths were reported in Florida, no LCMS members were killed or seriously injured.

"We are thankful for the prayers, support and encouragement of our brothers and sisters in Christ who have come to our aid time and time again," said Weidner. "We know that in spite of these natural disasters, our God remains faithful to us and He will provide



Our Savior - Lake Worth, FL

did manage to find its way into Redmann's home.

Reports from the central part of the state and north to Orlando noted that Wilma brought wind and rain, but no major damage. Rev. Dr. Gerhard Michael, President of the Florida-Georgia District, found himself blocked in his home as a large tree fell across his driveway. Friends and neighbors came to his rescue with chainsaws and strong backs. President Michael headed to Southeast Florida to assess damages on Tuesday morning.

## Southeast Florida

Perhaps the worst damage was experienced on the southeastern coast of the state as Wilma made her swift, but violent exit. High-rise buildings in Miami were stripped of their gleaming windows, beach erosion took millions of dollars worth of sand that had been dumped on coastal areas to repair beaches from last year's storms. Roofs blew off buildings, power lines were down and flooding was rampant in most areas along the coast.

Rev. Dan Czaplowski of Shepherd of the Coast Lutheran Church-Fort Lauderdale shared that the large stained glass window in the front of the church blew out during the storm bringing water into the sanctuary. Several classrooms lost

Rev. George Poulos of St. Mark Lutheran Church & School-Hollywood reported that large trees around the church building fell victim to the strong winds of Wilma.

At Gloria Dei Lutheran Church & School-Davie, Rev. Darrell Stuenrenberg said that



Grace - Naples, FL

there was roof damage on the church building, the gymnasium and the infant care center. Water invaded the foyer and chapel area. Some Gloria Dei members lost their mobile homes to the storm.

Rev. Scott Gress of Trinity Lutheran Church & School-Delray Beach is Circuit Counselor for the South Palm Beach Circuit. He shared that their school building had lost most of its roof shingles and would need

forward. Members of the congregation wept on camera as they attempted to salvage hymnals and other items from the pile of rubble that had once been their church.

Almost six weeks after Wilma's destructive visit, Our Savior congregation "is making headway" in recovery, according to Sharon Melancon, church administrator for Pastor Wiperman. Phone service was restored within the past week, the gymnasium is being readied for worship and volunteers have been recruited to assist with the time-consuming process of assessment and recovery.

Ms. Melancon reported the congregation is using the gym and the three-story school building, which was damaged "but didn't blow down" during Wilma. "We actually are getting back to normal," she summarized.

## Ongoing Relief Efforts

Rev. Carlos Hernandez, Director of District Services for



Our Savior - Lake Worth, FL

and counseling provided by Lutheran Counseling Services of Orlando. Rev. Dr. Rick Armstrong, Associate Director, has been providing ongoing counseling to storm victims over the last year. With this latest storm more victims will need the services of LCS.

The rash of storms over the last year has challenged the congregations, workers, members and District staff of Florida-Georgia to respond with the love of Christ and

all that we need to recover and rebuild our churches, homes and communities.

"Over and over again, we are the recipients of His grace and mercy in Jesus Christ as manifested through the loving response and help of his people across the country."

For an update on Hurricane Wilma damage and recovery efforts in Florida-Georgia, visit the District web site at [www.flga-lcms.com](http://www.flga-lcms.com). □



Shepherd of the Coast - Fort Lauderdale, FL

## Wilma Delays Lutheran LIFE

Production offices for *Lutheran LIFE* are located in Boca Raton, FL, one of the cities in the path of Hurricane Wilma's eye as the storm exited the state. Her visit delayed the distribution of the October/November issue of *Lutheran LIFE* as our offices were closed for more than a week in the no-electricity aftermath.

Our printer is based in Miami, and their facility sustained damage from the storm as well. While the plant is back up and running now, schedules had to be adjusted to compensate for lost time. The December issue of *Lutheran LIFE* went on press more than a week later than originally scheduled, which delayed distribution by that same timeframe.

Our apologies for these delays. □

