

Update from the Junior Warden, Eb LeMaster, May 10, 2010

Arriving at St. George's yesterday for church services, I had to remind myself that just seven days earlier Harding Pike was a rushing river from the Highway 100/70 split to Belle Meade Boulevard and beyond. It was a river that knocked down stone walls, caused major damage, and ultimately ended in the loss of two lives. And just seven days later, on a beautiful, sunny day, we were worshiping God in a sanctuary that seemed relatively unharmed. But we shouldn't be fooled. Our worship area has been touched by thousands of man hours provided by St. George's volunteers, by the crews of one of our general contractors and by ServPro, a national remediation company. And just beyond the temporary barrier that separates our worship area from the rest of the church, things are much, much different. Virtually all walls have been stripped to the studs from two feet high or more down to the floor. Carpet and flooring are gone from virtually every room. The building has been gutted. In a nutshell, we are just getting started.

I want to thank the many, many people who helped over the past week. It was incredible, and it was clear that God's presence was hard at work at St. George's! I personally got to know a number of folks whom I had never met or had just known in passing. It was a real gift amidst the craziness. People of all ages—and even non-members—put an amazing effort into the process. The tasks ranged from hauling drywall and wet rugs to the trash, to storing kindergarten toys, to sweeping several inches of dust out of the sanctuary, to a myriad of other tasks. I cannot thank everyone enough for their help! I would also say that all of our staff went way beyond the call of duty, starting very earlier each morning and often not stopping until 10:00pm each night. Although I could list many, many people, I want to especially thank Laura Zabaski, Thomas Lynch and Rick Backhouse. We would have been in serious trouble without their tremendous efforts!

A number of people asked me at church yesterday, "What can I do now to help?" As I said before, we are just getting started in this process. We are still making real-time decisions on clean-up and plans for re-building. We have a race to get ready for future church services and events and for kindergarten in the fall. For those we want to help, it is very simple. Go to www.stgeorgesnashville.org and click the link under "Volunteer Signup" on the home page. You can fill out your information and specifically types of things you would like to help with. We used these lists daily last week, and these will continue to be our critical link to volunteer helpers going forward.

Again, thanks to the entire congregation for your amazing support! And as Leigh said yesterday during his sermon, "Peace be with you!" And with your families, friends, neighbors and our entire community.

Eb