

Remembering the Flood

Isaiah 43:1-4

*"But now thus says the Lord, he who created you, O Jacob, he who formed you,
O Israel: Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are mine."*

We remembered that we are yours, O Lord, as we saw the waters rising, as we became cut off from one another, as we faced destruction around us. And in that remembering, we found your strength and love.

*"When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers,
they shall not overwhelm you; when you walk through fire you shall not be burned,
and the flame shall not consume you."*

Almighty God, we thank you for your powerful presence in our lives as we remember the days following the flood...

Reader 1: For times of uncertainty; for destruction and darkness; for sirens and silence; and for trucks with debris.

Reader 2: For mold and mud; for wet dogs and wet clothes; for tetanus shots and breathing masks; for the lack of communication and information; and for an overwhelming concern for others.

We give you thanks, loving God, for the power of your love as found through our members, neighbors, friends, and strangers. We remember the days following the flood...

Reader 2: For the gift of tears and a hug; for miles of carpet pulled; for helping hands and self-sacrifice; for hammers and volunteers; for hospitality and bridge building; for peanut butter and jelly sandwiches; and for a sense of humor.

Reader 1: For new relationships and new friends; for cots and shelter; for clothes and furniture; for UMCOR, the Red Cross, and FEMA; for having the exact thing that someone else needed, for flood buckets and health kits; for flowers growing up through hardened mud, for pictures saved and hands that scrubbed; for boats and police; for home-cooked meals and hundreds of bottles of cool, cleansing water; and for miracles and abundance.

We continue to live out what it means to be a part of a connectional church, as we offer hospitality and shelter to UMCOR teams serving in our community. We commit to continuing to serve our neighbors. We pray for those who have not yet returned to their homes and for those who are struggling to make their house a home again.

"For I am the Lord your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior...Because you are precious in my sight, and honored, and I love you."

**We will continue to heal, hope, and serve others because God's Spirit of love is in this place.
Alleluia! Alleluia! ALLELUIA!**