

A Cup of Warm Tea in Jesus' Name

在主裡與你分享一杯暖茶

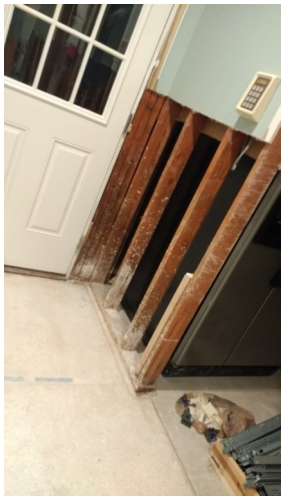
By any measure, Hurricane Harvey was one gigantic category 4 storm that broke many records of sorts when it made



landfall along the south Texas coast on August 25, 2017. According to

sources, two feet of rain fell in the first twenty four hours and dumped a total of 52 inches of rain in the Houston area creating a 1 in 1,000 years flooding event. At its peak, a third of Houston (population, 6.6 million) was flooded, 203,000 homes damaged and 12,700 destroyed. 738,000 people registered for assistance with the Federal Emergency Management Agency

(FEMA) and flooding caused 39,000 people out of their homes and into shelters. At the height of the storm, almost 15,000 were in temporary housing. Dallas created a mega shelter for 5,000 evacuees out of its main convention center. It is estimated that Harvey would have racked up \$180 billion and more in damage, outpacing Katrina. Needless to say human suffering was great and the needs overwhelming.



In the face of such calamity and dire needs, our thoughts and prayers turned to those affected, especially to our brothers and sisters and seekers there in our churches, and particularly in the Chinese Baptist churches. We know that whatever we do would simply be just a drop in the bucket but help we must.

We praise God that Christians in the affected areas took the opportunity to share the love and care of Christ to the general public by opening their homes and churches. This has caused many who had not been to church for a while or ever, to give the church another look. In fact, one of the very first responders to the relief efforts when Harvey hit was SEND Relief, an agency of the North American Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention, our partner in ministry.

We at the Chinese Baptist Fellowship began looking at ways about how we might be of help and the kind of help that we could render that would be most meaningful within the context of the biblical injunction to care for those in need. Pastor Amos, our Executive Director, made a trip to Houston the end of September to see the situation first hand to meet with pastors of the Chinese Baptist Fellowship in Texas.



Our thoughts were drawn to a collection that was encouraged by the apostle Paul in the early church when news got to the Gentile believers that there was a famine in Judea and brothers and sisters there were in need. Although it took a couple of years before the collection was finally made and the funds brought there, nevertheless,

Paul made a big deal out of it and devoted a portion of his letter to the church at Corinth preserved for posterity, God's teaching on the matter of giving and the stewardship of what God has entrusted His people. It was also a great gesture to show solidarity with Jewish believers by the Gentile believers.

So, by mid October, we began our appeal to Chinese Baptist churches in the US and Canada to raise \$30,000 for disaster relief with the intention of giving all the affected families in our Chinese Baptist churches a gift that would help them celebrate Christmas. This was because we knew that these families would still not be able to go back to their homes in six months to a year. We praise God that He impressed upon the pastors, leaders and believers in the churches to not only open their hearts but their wallets as well. One sister told me, "Our church had already given to another agency at the beginning of the disaster, and so I just put that appeal from the CBF in our bulletin



for a week or two. It was so astonishing, the people came around this second time and gave a sizeable amount of money to this!" Praise God! Together with



what churches had given before we began the formal appeal for funds, we received a total of \$28,117.00.

The leadership of the Chinese Baptist Fellowship in Texas identified

39 families in all that were affected and who could not spend Christmas in their own homes, one of which was a pastor. The funds needed were channeled through the Chinese Baptist Church in Houston and were distributed through the respective pastors and deacons of those affected, in time for Christmas. A pastor shared with me: "Our funds for disaster relief was almost depleted. We thank God for CBF in coming up with the means to help our families in time for Christmas." A cup of warm tea in the name of Jesus, indeed!

We praise God for the members of the churches who gave sacrificially.

We praise God for the Chinese Baptist Church Houston and for their Senior Pastor, Pastor Dan Ho, for his leadership and that of his church in making this ministry of grace possible.



We praise God for the pastors and the leadership of those in the Chinese Baptist Fellowship in Texas and the partnership we have in this ministry of grace.

May God receive all the praise and glory!



Our Reflection After Hurricane Harvey

Hurricane Harvey showed my family and I how unprepared we were for this terrible disaster. After the hurricane hit, we did not think to leave our house and away from the storm. We had food, water, and power. It was only when the flood waters were released from the reservoirs did I realize how much danger my wife and two young sons were in. The flood waters blocked the streets, flooded our cars, and quickly rose 4 feet trapping us in our house. Ultimately, some brave neighbors were able to get a small boat and canoe to rescue us.

Once the waters receded, we were faced with the difficult task of salvaging our belongings, rebuilding our lives, and the uncertainty of how to move on. However, God never allowed us a chance to be discouraged. Nearly 40 members of our church (Chinese Baptist Church - Houston) quickly arrived to remediate the damage, clean up trash, and shared belongings to help us move to a temporary place to live. Even now, months after the hurricane, they continue to provide for me and my family.

We have felt God's provision in so many ways through this disaster. He met our immediate physical needs when our neighbors saved us from being trapped. He continues to sustain us, even months later, through the outpouring of gifts and help. And, He continues to fulfill us through the community of Christian brothers and sisters. While it is clear we were unprepared for the hurricane, God was completely prepared to show His love for us through the fellowship of our church and friends. We are so grateful for the help from CBF, our church CBC of Houston, and our friends. We have peace and confidence to move on knowing that all things happen with His purposes and are under His control.

Jerome, Catherine Yen



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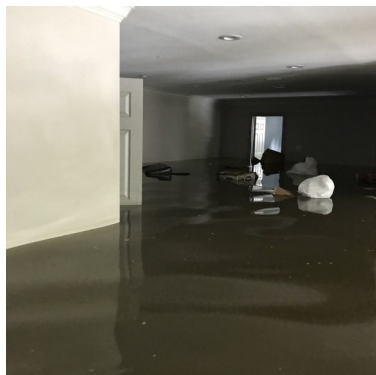
2017年8月25日，哈維颶風登陸德州南部海岸。哈維颶風是一個非常巨大的暴風，風暴級別達4級。無論從任何一方面作統計，它都打破記錄，造成的傷害，遠超過幾年前的卡特里娜(Katrina)颶風。據消息人士透露，在哈維颶風登陸首24小時



內，已有兩英尺的降雨。隨後在整個休士頓地區，共傾倒了五十二英寸雨水，造成一千年一遇的洪水災難。在這災難的高峰期，有六百六十萬人口的休士頓，其中三分之一的地方被淹浸。二十萬三千間房屋受損，一萬二千七百間房屋被摧毀，七十三萬八千人在「聯邦緊急事故管理局」(FEMA)登記求助。一瞬間，洪水使三萬九千人失去家園而需要入住臨時避難所。在達拉斯市(Dallas)，拯救當局創建了一個大型帳篷，安置了5000名的災民。根據估計，哈維颶風所帶來的損失高達一千八百億美元。它給災民造成的傷害更是苦不堪言。災民需要的救援實在刻不容緩。

我們感謝神，讓當地受災地區的基督徒藉此機會，開放自己的家庭和教會，向民眾分享基督的愛和關懷。許多從未到過教會或那些曾經去過卻停止去教會的人，再一次踏入教會，體會認識神對他們的愛與關顧。事實上，當哈維颶風侵襲時，「美南浸信會聯會北美傳道部」(NAMB)之災難救援組(SEND Relief)已經在第一時間起來響應，協助救災。他們也是我們在事工上的合作夥伴。

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面對這樣巨大的災難和迫切的需要，我們心裡實在掛念那些受到這災難影響的人，特別是教會內的弟兄姊妹和慕道朋友，更是我們華人浸信會的信眾及慕道者。我們切切為他們禱告。我們可以做什麼呢？我們知道，無論做什麼，都只是杯水車薪，但我們必須付諸行動，盡所能加以援手。



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「美加華人浸信會聯會」的總幹事李英柏牧師9月底前赴休士頓，親自目睹當地巨大的災情。他與德州華人浸信會的牧者們見面，並開始研究「美加華人浸信會聯會」能如何參與救災行動，並尋求在聖經的原則背景旨令下，提供災民最有意義的幫助，以照顧有需要的人。



我們想到使徒保羅在早期教會，鼓勵外邦信徒為猶太地的信徒籌募捐款。因為當時有消息傳到外邦信徒說，猶太地有飢荒，弟兄姐妹在困乏中。之後的幾年間，外邦信徒把款項收集完畢，送到猶太地那裡去。保羅在這募

捐的事情上做了大量的功夫，並在他寫給哥林多教會的書信內記錄此事，給我們後世的教會作榜樣，叫屬神的人學習施予，並在錢財上作神恩賜的好管家。這也表明一個非常重要的真理，就是外邦信徒與猶太信徒是團結一致，連為一體，不能分割的。

李英柏牧師在 2017 年 9 月初上任為「美加華人浸信會聯會」的總幹事。他 9 月底前赴休士頓探視災情，10 月中隨即展開救災籌款的事工。他呼籲美國和加拿大的華人浸信會會友踴躍捐助。籌募的



目標為 3 萬美元，目的是為當地受災的華人浸信會家庭送上一份聖誕禮物。這些家庭在未來的半年，甚至一年內都不能回家。感謝讚美主！祂感動各教會的牧者、領袖和信徒們不單只關心災民為他們祈禱，更願意盡己所能，慷慨解囊。

一位姊妹告訴他說：「我們已經在災難發生的初期，收集了一次捐款送到另一間機構。因此，我只能把「美加華人浸信會聯會」這個呼籲放在報告欄上一或兩個星期。但之後的結果，實在令人讚嘆神奇妙的預備。在這第二次的捐款，人們竟然擺上的更多！」感謝讚美主！連同我們在正式呼籲之前所收到的款項，我們共籌得 \$28,117.00。



「德州華人浸信會區聯會」的同工在所有受影響的家庭中識別出 39 戶，其中一戶是牧師之家庭。他們不能返回自己的家中過聖誕。賑災款項透過「休士頓華人浸信會」分發到各個教會的牧者和執事，然後由他們趕及在聖誕節前，轉贈給那 39 戶受災的家庭。一位牧者與他分享說：「我們教會的救災基金已差不多用光了。感謝神，藉著「美加華人浸信會聯會」，及時在這聖誕節期間為我們的家庭帶來幫助！」願榮耀歸給神！

我們感謝神，很多教會的弟兄姊妹樂意捐助完成了這善工。

我們為「休士頓華人浸信會」和他們的主任牧師何國明牧師感謝神。他領導自己的教會給我們很多的方便，使這善工能夠順利完成。

我們感謝神，在「德州華人浸信會區聯會」的牧者和領袖們，並所有在這個恩典事工中與我們合作的伙伴。

願一切讚美和榮耀都歸與神！