

SHORT TAKES

HURRICANE IMPACT IN THE SOUTHERN US AND CARIBBEAN

Deadly hurricanes passed through the Caribbean Sea and the Gulf of Mexico in August and September 2017, threatening many of our churches in these areas. The first was Hurricane Harvey, which caused record rainfall and severe flooding in Houston, Texas, USA. Two of our church families there were displaced and others suffered property damage, but none of their lives were lost.

Hurricane Irma passed through the Caribbean region in early September. Its course came near the Dominican Republic and Haiti but did not severely damage our churches or injure any of our saints there. The island of St.



The destroyed church building on St. Maarten.

Maarten, where Reverend Rolland Deler (District Superintendent of Haiti) is pastor, was hit worse; some of our saints there lost homes, and the church building they were renting was destroyed. However, for the past few years they have been in the process of building a new church, and that

structure withstood the storm. Reverend Deler was finally able to return to St. Maarten at the end of October, and he is working as fast as possible to finish the new building. In the meantime, the congregation is meeting for worship in a portion of the incomplete structure. A church dedication is scheduled there in February 2018.

The Eastern Caribbean was hit the hardest, sustaining major damage on September 4. For several days, all communication systems and electrical power were unavailable, but Eastern Caribbean District Superintendent Michael Anthony was eventually able to send a message that the brethren on the island of Tortola were safe. The Road Town church lost its roof and suffered heavy interior and structural damage; our saints there plan to combine meetings with our East End congregation (whose building was unharmed) until normalcy returns to the island and they can rebuild. In the US Virgin Islands, our Smith Bay church on St. Thomas experienced major destruction, and flooding on the island was extensive. Many of our other churches throughout the Caribbean also suffered severe damage.

After passing through the Caribbean, Hurricane Irma appeared to be heading toward some of our churches in Florida. However, its path changed, and none of our churches suffered damage. Another dangerous storm, Hurricane Jose, threatened to pass through the Caribbean, but it diverted. Then, in mid-September, Hurricane Maria did hit the Caribbean region again. Though it caused severe damage in some areas, it had less of an impact on our churches than was expected based on hurricane projections.

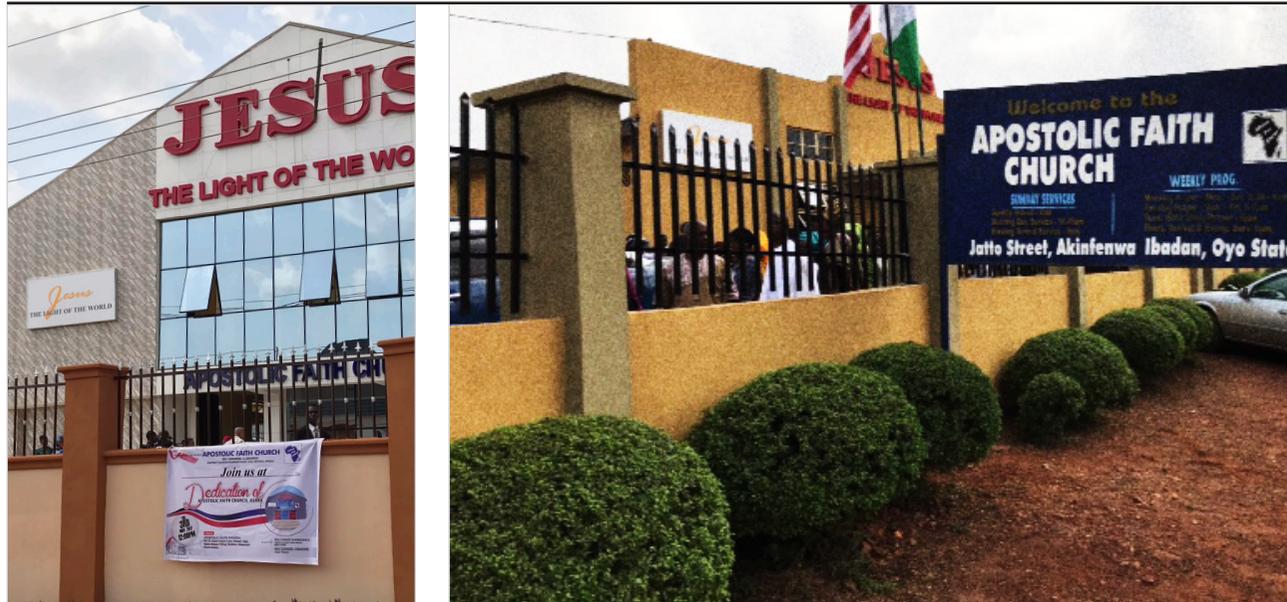


Left to right: Reverends Edwin Gilfillary, Darrel Lee, Gledwin Mills, and Tim Debusk.

A NEW DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENT FOR THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

An announcement was made on October 8, 2017, that Reverend Gledwin Mills would succeed Reverend Alberto Smith as District Superintendent of the Dominican Republic. Reverend Smith held the position for fifteen years, and at age eighty, chose to retire for health reasons. A letter from Superintendent General Darrel Lee stated that Reverend Smith's evangelistic zeal has been greatly appreciated, and we give God the glory for the growth of the work during his service.

Reverend Mills is the longest serving pastor in the Dominican Republic work. The statement from Reverend Lee said, "We are confident that the stability and growth of this great work will continue with him at the helm. Please assure him of your prayerful support." A formal installation service will be held as soon as the Director of Caribbean Work and Superintendent General are able to travel to the Dominican Republic for the occasion. Our prayers are with both the new and retired District Superintendents, their loved ones, and the work in the Dominican Republic.



The new church buildings in Asaba (left) and Akinfenwa (right), Delta State, Nigeria.

FOUR CHURCHES AND A HEADQUARTERS DEDICATED IN NIGERIA

On November 3, 2017, dedication services were held for churches in Asaba and Issele-Uku, Delta State, Nigeria. The work in Asaba began in 1991 when several Apostolic Faith families were transferred from Benin City to Asaba for work. They formed a Bible study and prayer group, which officially became a church in 1992. Five years later, the congregation acquired a parcel of land, and in 2002 the foundation was laid for the current church building. In the intervening years, the original structure was expanded and improved upon. In November 2016, Reverend Ezekiel Osakwe became the pastor, and he oversaw the many final details necessary to prepare the building for this dedication.

Later in the day, the church in Issele-Uku was dedicated. This church began in 2002 with open-air meetings, which eventually led to weekly Bible studies being held in a rented store. In 2005, Reverend Roseline Uwandi was appointed as pastor and a Sunday school program was added. Two years

later land was purchased, and in 2008 a foundation was laid. Reverend Augustine Ologbo is now the pastor, with Reverend Uwandi assisting.

The following Tuesday, November 7, a mission house was dedicated in Enugu City, Enugu. The facility includes two buildings which will provide housing for regional leaders and their families, as well as for full-time church workers. The congregation there had been praying about such a facility since 2011, and it will be a great asset to the work there. Four churches have been dedicated in that area in recent years and another five will be ready in the near future, most of them seating between five hundred and one thousand people. Church members are preparing to dedicate a tabernacle with a capacity of three thousand, and they are building another with a capacity of four thousand. In all, they presently have twenty church projects under construction as the work continues to thrive in the Enugu region.

Two more churches were dedicated in Akinfenwa and Olorunsogo, Ibadan State, on

November 13. Over one thousand people attended the Akinfenwa dedication, exceeding the capacity of the building. This work began in 1995 with a small group meeting for Bible studies. In 2000, a piece of land was donated and an adjacent lot purchased, and in the same year the foundation of the church was laid. A third piece of land was purchased in 2011, and in 2016 the foundation was laid there for a children's hall. Reverend Isaac Ojo Faniyi has been pastor there since 2013, and today both buildings are complete.

Following that service, the church in Olorunsogo was dedicated, where Reverend Emmanuel Akande is pastor. The history of this congregation goes back to 1986, when a group began holding Bible study sessions in the home of Marian Adedeji. In 1990, outreach efforts by the youth led to an increase in Sunday school attendance, and a weekly evangelistic service was added. Later, land was donated for a church, and in September 1996, the foundation was laid. Once again, the crowd at the dedication was too large to be contained, with about six hundred present.