



Evacuate to Gilmont

As Hurricane Laura tracked inland, Evergreen Life Services Group Homes needed a temporary home. They found it at Camp Gilmont, but this is an expense no one anticipated.

Dear Churches,

As people of Texas and Louisiana prepared for Hurricane Laura, we prayed. When we awakened the morning after and looked at the newscasters broadcasting under clearing skies, we were relieved. But we soon learned that where it hit it hit, and where it hurt it hurt. One such place was Lake Charles, Louisiana. Evergreen Life Services, www.evergreenls.org. Its group homes and community gathering housing in Lake Charles were hit and were hurt. The residents of the homes are adults with developmental disabilities. They are housed in group homes, each with six residents and their care-givers. They were evacuated from their homes because of Hurricane Laura. They were first sent to a hotel in Natchitoches

which soon lost power. They then settled in at Camp Gilmont on Friday, the 28th. There are eighty evacuees. Gilmont is grateful that we can welcome them, feed them, house them, and provide the peace of the East Texas woods.



Presbyterian Camps at Gilmont, Inc. and Evergreen Presbyterian Ministries, Inc., though not directly supported by any Presbytery or Synod funding, are sometimes the recipients of grants and contributions from Grace Presbytery, The Synod of the Sun, their member churches, and individual Presbyterian church members.

To be clear, neither Evergreen, nor Gilmont, has a contingency fund budgeted for the impact of this sudden “camp experience.” We are “figuring it out as we go.” We know that there is considerable cost involved. Even at a modest \$50 per guest per day to cover meal service and operational costs for facilities, the cost is about \$4000 per day. Evergreen leaders have told us that FEMA is not an option. They learned this in the aftermath of Katrina.



On Monday, the 31st, Gilmont learned that the group from Evergreen would not be able to leave on September 4th, as originally planned. They simply don't have a place to go yet. Gilmont has offered to host them for a longer period, date uncertain. In extending Evergreen's stay, Gilmont was forced to reschedule the annual Circle of Friends Labor Day Camp.

As you can imagine, Gilmont needs help in funding for this surprise visit! The cost to Gilmont is fairly immediate as we are billed bi-weekly or monthly by our suppliers and providers. We have been told we can invoice Evergreen Life Services, but

they are not certain of funding for this as of yet. Your help would help reduce the invoice to them.

Please, help as you can. You may contact Gilmont at 903-797-6400 or go to our website at www.gilmont.org.