

A Time of Service to others.....December, 2013

(The following will be taken from an e-mail put out by Pastor Cheryl Murphy of the Valley View United Methodist Church to fellow members. It was my decision to preserve and share as a matter of our history.)
Norman L. Newton

Thought you might want to see what has been happening in your church! One sheriff reported 200 18-wheelers parked on I35 between Valley View and south of Sanger - 17 were jack-knifed! We served as a light in the midst of darkness! They would miss us if we were not here!
Thank you for the prayers!

Ministry in unique situations....

VALLEY VIEW UNITED METHODIST CHURCH



As the weather became colder and the conditions in north Texas become icy and treacherous the Valley View UMC was asked to open by the Red Cross and Emergency Response teams as a warming Station. This is the second time our church has been called on to reach out to travelers. The last time was in 1989. We opened our doors to the National Guard, Law Enforcement, response team members, and over 100 travelers heading south on a closed I 35. We served hot soup provided by our members and neighbors in Valley View. We made over 150 sandwiches for the National Guard and fire fighters to deliver to the truck drivers that were

unable to leave their vehicles. Some of them had been parked on I35 for 7 to 10 hours. All Saturday we welcomed people for a cup of coffee, a bowl of soup, a place to charge their phones and to rest. In the evening I35 opened up off and on with travelers hoping to pass through the Sanger area. Over 50 of our visitors went to our neighboring First Baptist Church with the Red Cross to sleep. By 9:00 am when we would be gathering for church morning activities we sent them off – praying they would arrive safely at their destination.



We were called on to serve those in need – such holy work this time of year. We had a chance to witness, to be present, and to be the hands and feet of Christ on an icy, cold day in December. May you be blessed with the opportunity this season to do the holy work of God as well!

Rev. Cheryl Murphy
Valley View United Methodist Church

December 9, 2013

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Valley View United Methodist Church serving as a Red Cross Station. Photo by: Denise Pearse



Valley View Police Chief Greg Adcock laying down sand around the city. Photo by: Denise Pearse

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(Article in the Gainesville Daily Register) NLN

December 10, 2013

Valley View residents help stranded motorists

Gainesville — By CATHY MOUNCE,
Gainesville Daily Register Staff Writer

Some of the worst weather to hit the North Texas area recently brought out the best in Cooke County residents who opened their doors, churches and kitchens to help neighbors and strangers who needed assistance and refuge from the icy road conditions.

Early on, Cooke County fire marshal and emergency manager Ray Fletcher contacted the American Red Cross to set up an emergency facility in Valley View at the United Methodist Church as a warm shelter where drivers could get off the road and rest.

“The church is a designated Red Cross shelter facility for emergencies,” Fletcher said. “Over 100 stranded motorists were able to get to the facility for a warm meal, drink and facility use. Some of them had been stuck for 12-18 hours on the road.”

Fletcher said that besides the Valley View Fire Department, units from Lindsay, Oakridge and North Shore were on hand to assist motorists in locating the facility and even carried food and water to other motorists, some which had not eaten in over 24 hours. The Texas National Guard and the local police departments also assisted in food and water distribution.

“No one came back with leftovers so it appears that everyone appreciated getting something to eat,” Fletcher continued. “I can’t say enough about the first responders who came out and also the citizens that pulled together to take care of others.”

Fletcher said that besides the meals at the United Methodist facility, the First Baptist Recreation Outreach Center (ROC) offered cots and overnight accommodations Saturday night to 49 travelers who were not able to continue on their journey.

Fletcher said that the state activated some game wardens and they were on hand to assist and deliver sandwiches and water where needed. The wardens also patrolled the isolated areas and upon finding six or seven tractor trailer rigs and other cars stuck on highway 51, closed the highway on Saturday. They were able to assist the drivers back to shelters.

“I can’t say enough about the great work our first responders did. They did an awesome job.”

Valley View police chief Greg Adcock and policeman Cory Smith were on hand assisting in rescue operations as well as helping maintain street conditions around the church and ROC center.

“We must have put in over 50 hours this past weekend and chief Adcock ran a front loader to deliver sand to the sidewalks and entrances to the shelter facilities,” Smith said.

“I know of one Cooke County deputy who bought bologna and bread with his own money to make sandwiches for people still out on the road,” Adcock added.

Local Valley View residents as well as others across the county also made sure that neighbors who were holed up and couldn’t leave home were taken care of.

Valley View resident Laura McMullen said that after 48 hours by herself, she was so grateful to neighbors who were able to bring her a gallon of milk.

“My friends Bob and Sue Carr who live on the other side of town brought me a gallon of milk,” McMullen said. “I was so glad to be able to have a conversation with people.”

Many other residents brought crock pots of chili, casseroles, soups and desserts to help feed those in need at the shelter facilities.

Valley View residents Susan and Greg White, drivers for WalMart, thought of the truck drivers that were held up at the Sanger distribution center without access to a cafeteria or restaurant.

“They couldn’t go any where and we thought it would be fun to make a big pot of chili and take it to them,” Susan White said. “Besides the chili, we made macaroni and cheese and cornbread muffins.”

There were about 17 drivers there with a few DC managers and we had a lot of fun,” she continued. “It was touch and go getting there but we made it. In fact we might do it again tonight or tomorrow. It was such an awesome experience.”

County judge John Roane who lives in Valley View said that it was great to see the community pull together to help people that they didn’t even know.

“I didn’t do much but I showed up at the Methodist Church and was able to pour coffee and talk to some of the stranded drivers,” Roane said. “There were people from all over the United States that wound up in Valley View this past weekend. I think they were glad to be here and to find people that truly cared about their well being.”

Local resident Denise Pearse told of the gratitude many of the unexpected visitors to the city expressed.

“There was a mother and daughter who managed to make it to downtown Valley View and had a flat tire,” she explained. “Two local men helped her change the tire.”

“She wanted to pay them but they refused,” she continued. “They told her that they didn’t do it for pay.”

“Another truck driver was on his way from Wyoming to Austin,” she said. “ He wanted to get home to his family and newborn son. He was just so lonely and showed baby pictures to everyone.”

Family in many instances this past weekend was far away for many people whose journey was curtailed by the icy conditions. However, citizens of Cooke County and emergency personnel from across the area came together as one extended family to be good neighbors to those in need.

Perhaps the Valley View United Methodist pastor Cheryl Murphy said it best, “It was a gift for us to be able to open our doors and be in the right place to help people who we will probably never see again. We all came together and we are so blessed to be part of God’s family.”

It is good to know that the power of the good Samaritan is alive and well in Cooke County.

Note: There was also very good coverage of this event in “The Lindsay Letter” Friday, December 13, 2013.