

Devotion, Week of July 06, 2025

Rev. Jeanne Simpson

I didn't realize when the Texas floods occurred that Mo-Ranch, the Presbyterian conference center and camp in Hunt, Texas, is near Kerrville on the Guadeloupe River. Outlook, the PCUSA magazine, issued an update that all guests, campers, and staff made it out of the camp to safety. The Guadalupe River rose 26 feet in just 45 minutes before dawn Friday, so trying to evacuate at the last minute would have been impossible. The staff had been monitoring the weather all night and evacuated in plenty of time. However, Jane Ragsdale, a ruling elder at First Presbyterian Church of Kerrville, died in the flooding. She was camp director and owner of Heart O' the Hills Camp for Girls in Hunt, Texas, nearby.

Although Mo-Ranch is closed, the 83 staff have pitched in to help other camps and residences nearby with recovery and clean-up. The Synod of the Sun has also sent disaster response staff. Schreiner University, a private Presbyterian university in Kerrville, Texas, is also housing displaced campers and providing emotional support to some very traumatized young girls, as well as housing first responders.

We respond quickly in the PCUSA to disasters. The Presbyterian Disaster Assistance program is well-prepared to travel to disaster areas and provide needed clean-up assistance, rebuilding support, and emotional and religious care to people devastated by these types of events. The staff at PDA stepped in quickly when Hurricane Helene hit, and as you can see, local PCUSA organizations immediately came to the rescue in the flood in Texas. If you're looking for a cause to support financially, contributions to PDA are always welcome. And in the meantime, we can all pray for our sisters and brothers in Christ who have suffered loss and damage to lives and property.

Jeanne