

## Puerto Rico relief – Christmas Eve Miracle Offering

For several years, we have made a tradition of receiving a Christmas Eve Miracle Offering to support ministries that are changing the lives of God's people in need. This year we will be reaching out to the people of Puerto Rico, supporting recovery efforts underway through UMCOR (United Methodist Committee on Relief.) This fall, Hurricane Maria tore through this beautiful island and destroyed virtually everything in its path. Homes, businesses and the electrical and communications grids were destroyed, leaving most of the island without power or safe water. The Methodist Church of Puerto Rico (MCPR) soon reached out to UMCOR to assist in recovery and relief efforts. I recently conversed with Mr. Ted Warnock who led the UMCOR advance team to PR and continues to lead the efforts there. Ted said this: *“Our initial support for Puerto Rico has been significant and the funds have been sent in Emergency financial support, emergency communications (Satellite phones) relief supplies, ERT Training, at the request of the Bishop to enable Puerto Rican volunteers to serve within their own country (and side-by-side U.S. continental volunteers), and long-term financial support. Each dollar you provide supports a coordinated response led by the Methodist Church of Puerto Rico, and our collective support on so many other levels...The damage is significant in Puerto Rico. As I noted, much like Hurricane Katrina in 2005 along the Gulf Coast it will take a very long-time to recover. This said, a significant grant has just been approved that will allow for the employment of Puerto Rican staff to work in concert with UMCOR. This grant (from funds such as yours) will also provide building materials, and direct assistance. As we progress, I will do my best to post pictures, or submit them to those who request them.*

I visited PR in the late 1980's on a cross-cultural experience. I spent part of my visit in the mountainous interior of the island, staying with a pastor and his family in Memeyes. While there I visited Bishop Corson Camp, named after a past Bishop of the Eastern PA Conference. This camp will be the site of the new UMCOR training center for Emergency Response Teams (ERT.) The island is beautiful place where I was welcomed with grace and a cup of strong coffee everywhere I went. The people of Puerto Rico face significant challenges in both the short and long term. Working in partnership with the MCPR, teams from UMCOR are committed to staying for the long haul. We hope that you will prayerfully consider how you might be a part of this special effort to help God's people rise up from this disaster. As an Advance Special, 100% of your gift will go to the efforts of people

like Ted Warnock as they work to share the love of Christ in caring for God's people in need.