

Hampshire Terrace Apartments, Joplin, Missouri

Royal Heights UMC developed and constructed the Hampshire Terrace apartments in 1971 to serve low-income families in the Joplin area. The 100 apartments housed approximately 300 people on May 22, 2011, when the tornado struck, completely leveling the property. Amazingly, there was only one fatality.

The people living at Hampshire Terrace fall into two broad categories:

1. Health care assistants and aides, cashiers, and entry level trade people, generally drawing minimum wages. At least 30 of these people have lost their jobs due to the tornado, and at least 50 automobiles with only liability coverage were totally destroyed.
2. Elderly couples and singles that are retired.

Of our residents, we have only identified 6 who had rental insurance to cover their possessions. While FEMA will help with some reimbursement for furnishings and cars that only had liability, the resulting payments, so far, have been as low as \$1000. Additionally, as Hampshire Terrace rent included all utilities, many residents trying to resettle will be seriously strapped in making utility deposits (most all utilities in this area required significant deposits when renters do not have a credit history with another utility).

We are working with churches in Kansas, Michigan, Louisiana, Oklahoma, Tennessee, Virginia, the Kansas-East Conference of the UMC, the Wesleyan Denomination, and others to gather the resources necessary to address critical needs for these people. We intend to raise \$100,000 to help these residents move in to a new place and restart their lives. Thus far, we have received \$8,000 in Target gift cards (translates into \$80 per family) to help them with urgent needs that aren't being satisfied through the first-line relief efforts of agencies here in Joplin. We will also use these cash funds to purchase "first night kits," which provide each family a small kit of food, pans, and plastic ware so that they can move in immediately without having to go shopping on the first night.

We have also received promises for over 400 twin beds.

Our focus now turns to raising the additional funds and to encourage other churches to commit to providing household kits. These kits are described in detail on our web site (www.HampshireTerrace.org) and include a specific set of items for a family of four moving in to a new place, including a bed and bath kit, a pantry kit, a cleaning kit, etc. All items in a kit should be new items and be packed in a single moving carton, packed tightly so that the cartons can be stacked. All cartons should be labeled on all four sides and top with the kit type and, if possible, include a typed inventory list, covered with clear tape, on the upper right corner of one side of the carton. Bath towels, paper towels, and other stuffable items can be added to fill out a packed carton so that it will not collapse when stacked. For churches with some storage capability, we would like the churches to keep the kits until they are needed. While some residents are moving in now, most will not move in to a new place until late June or July.

ALL FUNDS RAISED THROUGH THIS EFFORT WILL BE USED FOR THE DIRECT ASSISTANCE OF RESIDENTS OF HAMPSHIRE TERRACE. NO FUNDS ARE BEING SOLICITED FOR CLEARING PROPERTY OR FOR RECONSTRUCTION.

We would like churches to commit to a specific number and type of kit, letting us know so that we can coordinate with other churches and make sure we have enough of each type. We will keep a running total of kit commitments and assembled/distributed kits on our web site.

Donors may use the web for paypal at www.HampshireTerrace.org, or mail checks, made payable to Royal Heights UMC, marked for Hampshire Terrace. Details for direct fund transfers are on the web site.