

FLORIDA BAPTIST FINANCIAL SERVICES · CHURCH PARTNERSHIP SPOTLIGHT

# When the *Storm Hits*

The Story of Mission Hill Church & Pastor Paul Purvis

Tampa Bay, Florida · Hurricane Milton, 2024

FLORIDA BAPTIST FINANCIAL SERVICES · STEWARDSHIP. SIMPLIFIED.



*We were able to focus on the mission  
because we know that partners like  
Florida Baptist Financial Services were  
holding up our arms.*

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PASTOR PAUL PURVIS · MISSION HILL CHURCH

# I | THE STORM

● HURRICANE MILTON · OCTOBER 2024

## They Were Already in the Middle of *Something Big*

Mission Hill Church knew what was coming. A major facility renovation was already underway — critical work the congregation had prayed over, planned for, and finally begun. Then Hurricane Milton arrived.

The storm didn't ask for good timing. It tore through the Tampa Bay community with indiscriminate force, leaving neighbors without homes, families without food, and an entire region in need of exactly the kind of presence a church is built to provide.

For Pastor Paul Purvis, the question wasn't whether to respond. The question was whether Mission Hill could respond fully — without losing everything they had already set in motion.

*"We had a major facility need in our church. But after the storm, we recognized that had to be put on hold — because there were people all around our immediate community that had needs of their own."*

The renovation could wait. The people couldn't.



THE MISSION

● IN THE WRECKAGE

## She Just Wanted Food. She Left with *Something More.*

Mission Hill mobilized. They set up distribution lines, showed up in driveways and parking lots, and met people in the raw, unguarded moments that only disaster creates.

In one of those car lines, a church leader noticed a woman named Sandra. Her house was destroyed. Her posture said everything — head down, just here to get food and leave. But the moment became something no one planned.

A simple conversation. An acknowledgment of pain. An offer of something beyond a meal. *"Above any material possession you can have in this life — if you don't have Jesus, that's the greatest loss ever."*

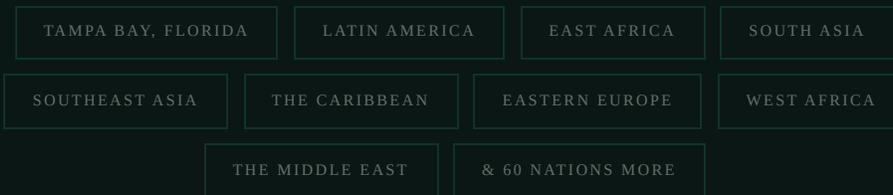
Right there, in a car line in the aftermath of a hurricane, Sandra prayed to receive Jesus.

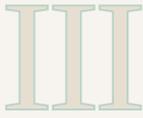
*"She broke into tears and right there prayed to receive Jesus."*

That's the mission. Not the facility. Not the renovation. Not even the relief work, as vital as it was. The mission is the moment a life turns toward eternity — and Mission Hill was free to be present for it.

A CHURCH WITHOUT WALLS

# People from *70 Nations* Celebrating Jesus





THE PARTNER

● THE PARTNERSHIP THAT MADE IT POSSIBLE

## Someone Had to *Hold Up Their Arms*

In the book of Exodus, when Moses grew weary holding his staff over the battlefield, Aaron and Hur came alongside him — one on each side — and held his arms up until the victory was won. Mission Hill needed that kind of partnership.

While the church poured every ounce of energy into disaster relief — into Sandra and hundreds like her — someone had to hold the facility side steady. Florida Baptist Financial Services stepped into that role.

*"They were coming along beside us to help with the facilities that would facilitate our mission — so that we could focus on the mission of Jesus."*

The FBFS partnership provided the financial stability that kept Mission Hill's infrastructure moving forward even as the congregation turned outward. It wasn't just a transaction. It was a theology made practical — the belief that the local church is the hope of the world, and that she deserves partners who will support her with the same faithfulness she brings to her community.

# IV

THE FRUIT

● EVERY SUNDAY NOW

## A Room That *Almost Fills* Every Week

Stand in Mission Hill's worship space on a Sunday morning and you will hear something remarkable: the sound of Jesus being celebrated in dozens of languages, by people from more than 70 nations, in a room that — most weeks — nearly fills to capacity.

That room almost didn't exist. The renovation that was interrupted by Milton, the facility needs that threatened to derail the mission — they were resolved. The work was completed. The doors stayed open.

And now every Sunday is proof of what happens when a church is free to say yes. Free to meet needs. Free to heal hurts. Free to speak the word of Jesus wherever they are, every day — because their partners are carrying what they couldn't carry alone.

*"When you think there's no way — trust the One who called you. And then pick up the phone. Partners like Florida Baptist Financial Services exist for that very purpose."*

THE IMPACT, MEASURED

# Numbers That Point to Something Immeasurable

70+

NATIONS REPRESENTED  
IN SUNDAY WORSHIP

1

WOMAN NAMED SANDRA  
WHO SAID YES TO JESUS

∞

LIVES STILL BEING  
CHANGED EVERY  
SUNDAY



*Mission Hill's story is not unusual in the obstacles they faced. It is extraordinary in who came alongside them — and what became possible because of it.*

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# What Could Your Church *Say Yes To?*

Pastor Purvis didn't wait for perfect conditions. He trusted God's calling — and then picked up the phone. Whether you're facing a facility challenge, navigating a crisis, or simply trying to sustain the mission you've been given, you don't have to carry it alone.

Florida Baptist Financial Services exists to hold up your arms — through estate planning, charitable giving, church loans, and cash management — so you can focus on the work God has called you to do, right where you are.

BEGIN THE CONVERSATION

[\*floridabaptist.org/contact-us\*](https://floridabaptist.org/contact-us)

CHURCH LOANS

[\*floridabaptist.org/loans\*](https://floridabaptist.org/loans)

*"And whatever you do, in word or deed, do  
everything in the name of the Lord Jesus."*

COLOSSIANS 3:17 · A CALL TO MISSION



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