Lend A Hand, a volunteer disaster recovery group which is a mission of the Presbytery of Carlisle based in Camp Hill, Pa., made our first trip to aid the people of Princeville in January of 2018. Since that initial trip, we have made 10 additional work trips to the town, each time staying in the Tarboro Center to eat, shower and sleep. Over the course of these 11 visits, we have worked on 38 homes in the area while sending a total of 183 volunteers. In addition to those from Central Pa., we have had volunteers join our group from Ohio, New York, Maryland, Florida, North Carolina as well as students from Wilson College.

Many people have asked us why we keep going back to the same area while there are many other ”disaster sites” throughout that state and in many nearby states. We keep returning because we have developed a strong connection to the people of Princeville, as well as, the men and women operating the Tarboro Center. Princeville has a long, proud history which the citizens of that town hold dear to their hearts. We found that to be true on our first visit and find on every return trip. The town of Princeville suffered a tremendous amount of damage as a result of the flooding that took place in 2016. Three years later, the majority of the citizens are still trying to return their homes to livable conditions, so their lives can once again have some normalcy. These people depend on (and GREATLY appreciate) volunteer labor to get much of the work on their homes completed. Even though people are aware of each new disaster and want to help out, we can’t forget about those that are still recovering from past ones.