NAD Student Missionaries Safe after Category 4 Typhoon Hits Palau

The eye of a category 4 typhoon named "Bopha" came within 30 miles of the island nation of Palau this past Sunday and Monday (Palau time). Some of the southern most islands of Palau were evacuated. Palau is part of the Guam-Micronesia Mission in the South Pacific which recently became part of the North American Division territory.

"For two long days, since Friday night we have been praying for our student missionaries," said NAD Processing and Communications Coordinator Ernest Hernandez. "We have 14 NAD student missionaries plus two school principals and their wives, and Senior Pastor Carlos Turcios and his wife on the island of Koror in the Republic of Palau." A request was posted on Facebook to pray for the people there. "Minor damage was sustained when a tree fell on a corner of the chapel at Palau Mission Academy," said Hernandez.

"Turcios and his wife have had years of experience preparing for destructive hurricanes in south Florida and brought a measure of expertise with them to Palau," said Jose Rojas, director of the Office of Volunteer Ministries. "Our church and school in Koror are at least 120 feet above sea level and the storm surge. We thank God for the knowledgeable and dedicated leadership on the island who were able to utilize our facilities to provide shelter and support to many people affected by this terrible storm. This is the essence of mission. Whether the sun is shining or the winds are howling, the work of God moves on and the blessing is experienced at all times."

Throughout this crisis, there was continuous coordination occurring between the leadership on the ground, President of Guam-Micronesia Mission Louis Torres and his leadership, NAD's Office of Volunteer Ministries and NAD Secretariat leaders G. Alexander Bryant, executive secretary of NAD, and Carolyn Forrest, associate secretary.

A report from Oceana TV News stated this morning, "In what seems a miracle of mercy, Palau has been spared the full wrath of Typhoon Bopha. While it wailed and howled and sent piercing noises through the trees and outside of our windows, at the very last minute the Typhoon turned west and its path jogged south of Palau."

Another report stated that there were still maximum sustained 155 mph winds this morning and Palau was still under a typhoon warning. You can review the aftermath of the storm at www.oceaniatv.net.

Many locals are without homes and entire villages without power, water and communication. Belongings from these homes litter the landscape. Entire houses were completely destroyed and literally washed into the trees and neighborhood yards. One house sits in the middle of the road blocking access to the village in Babeldoab (the largest island in Palau).
Our NAD missionaries will be very busy these next few weeks and months doing what they do best: helping others, in the love of Christ, through the process of rebuilding their lives.