

Brian Scroggins, disaster manager, cares for Las Vegas survivors

Since the day after the mass shooting, Scroggins has organized donations, kept track of the 500 wounded, and organized the services of ministers.

by [Kimberly Winston](#) in the [November 8, 2017](#) issue



Brian Scroggins (right). RNS photo by Kimberly Winston.

The morning after 58 people died in the deadliest mass shooting in U.S. history, the Las Vegas Office of Emergency Management called Brian Scroggins with two questions: Would he help establish a family crisis response center? And would he be responsible for the spiritual and religious needs of the victims and their families?

A lifelong member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Scroggins is a welfare specialist for dozens of southern Nevada churches. He is in charge of ensuring that Mormons are ready for hardship—whether a natural disaster or the loss of a job—by putting aside money and at least a three-month supply of food and water.

He headed to the Las Vegas Convention Center on October 2 and prayed with the distressed and cried with the mourning, such as a man whose fiancée died in his arms.

“I shed many tears on Monday, and I am OK with that,” Scroggins said.

Scroggins, who has a master’s degree in emergency management, then spent upward of 12 hours a day walking the Las Vegas Convention Center. He coordinated donations of food and clothing, kept track of where the nearly 500 wounded people were hospitalized, and organized the services of grief counselors, chaplains, and ministers from multiple faiths.

He said no one asked why the disaster happened or where God was.

“Where else would he be than with his children who are suffering?” he said. “It says in scripture that the Lord is the still, small voice. When you hold someone’s hand and you cry with them, that’s where he is.” —Religion News Service