

heroically to save lives. One doctor did surgery in an operating room lit only by a flashlight. Nurses comforted the injured. But many feared that the building could collapse. The building had to be evacuated.

Fortunately, Joplin's other major hospital, Freeman, was only one mile away. And it had come through the tornado untouched. A small army of volunteers with pickup trucks transported the wounded and nurses from St. John's to Freeman. School buses arrived to drive others.

At Freeman, doctors and nurses quickly mobilized. On a typical night, there are four doctors working in Freeman's emergency room. Within hours, 135 doctors were at the hospital. They stopped patients' bleeding, stitched up wounds, and set broken bones.

Emergency workers from neighboring cities and towns rushed to Joplin and helped pull people from rubble and care for the injured.

All across the city, ordinary people turned themselves into emergency workers. Neighbors helped neighbors, tearing through piles of wreckage with their bare hands to reach those who were trapped. The Satterlees prayed that Ethan, Wyatt, Frank, and Sana were unhurt. But they were soon out in their neighborhood, helping free people who were trapped. The Piotrowskis helped, too.

"I knew we had witnessed one of the deadliest tornadoes in modern times," Jeff says.

And it was. The Joplin Tornado, America's deadliest in sixty years, killed 161 people.