Houston Pastor Receives Surprise Gift during Ford Expedition Celebration at Kentucky Truck Plant

- A Houston pastor whose vehicle was destroyed and his church badly damaged during Hurricane Harvey receives a surprise gift of an all-new Ford Expedition
- The surprise came during a celebration at Ford's Kentucky Truck Plant, marking production of the all-new bigger, lighter and stronger full-size Ford Expedition
- A $900 million company investment upgraded Kentucky Truck Plant to build the all-new Expedition and Lincoln Navigator and secured 1,000 full-time hourly jobs there

Editor’s note: We will post additional pictures and videos from this event later today.

LOUISVILLE, Ky., Oct. 27, 2017 – Houston Pastor Develron Walker seemingly does it all. As the leader of Towers of Hope Church of God in Christ, he shuttles churchgoers to services, drives neighborhood children to school and distributes food and necessities to people in need.

But it's been extremely difficult for Walker to keep up this community service ever since Hurricane Harvey devastated the city in August. His church was badly damaged and is still unusable. His full-size SUV was also destroyed.

Compounding these setbacks, Walker said the church was denied both government assistance and a small business loan – though that hasn't stopped him and his congregation from helping 200 families following the storm.

To help Walker and his community recover from Hurricane Harvey, Ford today surprised him with an all-new Ford Expedition to help with his recovery efforts.

Ford was celebrating the production of the all-new bigger, lighter and more capable full-size Ford Expedition at Kentucky Truck Plant and asked Pastor Walker to participate. The pastor thought he was there to share his story with plant employees about how he and his community were affected by the hurricane, so people would know how they could help.

“Even while facing extremely tough circumstances, Pastor Walker has shown his relentless commitment to helping those in his community, and we hope the Expedition will help him go further with his ministry as they rebuild,” said Joe Hinrichs, Ford president, Global Operations, who presented the pastor with his new vehicle.

Pastor Walker toured Kentucky Truck Plant as part of the day’s celebration. Ford recently invested $900 million in the plant for upgrades to build the all-new Expedition and Lincoln Navigator, securing 1,000 hourly U.S. jobs.

Ford chose the Expedition for Walker because it will allow him to get back to helping his community. The SUV has seating for up to eight or, with the press of two buttons to fold the second and third rows, enough cargo room to hold 4x8-foot sheets of plywood – ideal for the church’s rebuilding effort.
Expedition's aluminum body and other advanced materials help save up to 300 pounds compared to today's model. The weight savings allows for more space, technology and convenience, helping Expedition redefine what a full-size SUV can bring to customers.

“The all-new Expedition is more than a shuttle bus or cargo carrier,” Hinrichs said. “It’s bigger on the inside, offers the latest driver-assist technologies and can keep everyone connected with an available Wi-Fi hotspot, plus USB chargers or power outlets for all three rows.”

A stronger 3.5-liter EcoBoost engine, an all-new 10-speed transmission and standard Auto Start-Stop combine for impressive power and expected best-in-class gas mileage. Expedition also has available best-in-class towing of up to 9,300 pounds.

Arriving at dealerships this fall, other available options include wireless electronic charging, rear-seat entertainment system, 12-speaker B&O PLAY premium audio system and SYNC® 3 with Apple CarPlay™ and Android Auto™ capability. A new Terrain Management System™ lets customers choose between drive modes for optimal vehicle handling in different conditions, from mud to loose terrain, and more spirited or eco-friendly driving.

Discover more about the 2018 Ford Expedition here.