

Prepare to Care

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## *Guide to Disaster Ministry in Your Congregation*



A Resource from:

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**CHURCH WORLD SERVICE  
EMERGENCY RESPONSE PROGRAM**

## **Prepare to Care: Guide to Disaster Ministry In Your Congregation**

We hope that this manual will inspire specific ways of working together before and after disasters to effectively respond to people in need. The many contributors to this manual are gratefully acknowledged: Church World Service (CWS) denominational Disaster Response Committee members, former CWS disaster volunteers, U.S. and state ecumenical/interfaith leaders, CWS writers and editors, Emergency Response Program staff—Bob Arnold, Linda Reed-Brown, Disaster Response and Recovery Liaisons, (DRRLs) and others who provided support as required.

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Visit the CWS Emergency Response web site: [www.cwserp.org](http://www.cwserp.org) (Email contacts for CWS Emergency Response Office listed here). This manual and other resources for disaster ministries can be downloaded at this web site.

Call the Church World Service HOTLINE—(800) 456-1310—for disaster information and visit the CWS web site: [www.churchworldservice.org](http://www.churchworldservice.org). Find out about the latest response to disasters by CWS and its constituent denominations via Disaster News Network ([www.disasternews.net](http://www.disasternews.net)), a web site sponsored by Church World Service.

Cover photo courtesy, FEMA.  
Volunteers fill sandbags for fighting floods in Midwest.

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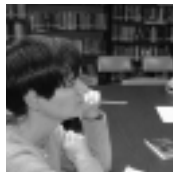
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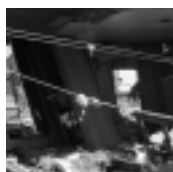


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# I. Introduction

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Churches have a long history of working together to respond to emergency needs. They have helped build, rebuild, and renew communities after disasters. God's people know the saving grace and power of God and God's love for all creation.

Your church—in cooperation with the wider religious community—plays a unique role among disaster agencies because people of faith recognize the sanctity of all human life. While churches have a unique role responding to the spiritual and pastoral needs of survivors, churches are also called to advocate for the equitable allocation of material resources according to need following disasters. After a disaster strikes, people of God:

- Stand on the side of the oppressed to offer advocacy with and for those most in need
- Seek out unmet needs of people who were vulnerable and marginalized before the disaster
- Provide a larger vision of life that includes emotional and spiritual care as well as physical rebuilding
- Assist in long-term recovery of those in need, regardless of the type of disaster which occurred
- Restore and rebuild community relationships

After World War II, U.S denominations and communions decided to work together in disaster response to promote good stewardship of resources and prevent duplication of services. In 1946, member denominations formed Church World Service (CWS) as the coordinating organization to respond to disasters and the needs of refugees. The American Red Cross and the federal government, look to your denomination and CWS to coordinate faith community efforts in the response. You and your congregation, in cooperation with Church World Service, are vital links in a huge network of responders to disasters in the U.S. and more than 80 other countries.

## About this Manual

This manual focuses on how to:

- Prepare yourself, your family, and your church for a disaster inside and outside your community
- Prepare your church to work cooperatively with other churches, faith groups, and community-based groups where you live to respond to those affected by disaster

Photo courtesy, Disaster News Network—<http://www.disasternews.net>



You and your congregation can make an important contribution in helping people recover from disaster. This manual shows you how.

## II. Overview: Emergency Management & Disaster Response

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In responding to God's call to reduce the vulnerability of people to disasters and meet humanitarian and spiritual needs of disaster survivors, caregivers, and first-responders, the faith community participates in an emergency management system that encompasses government, the private sector—including business and industry, and other voluntary organizations.

Local congregations are the fundamental disaster response units of the faith community, providing the venue for ministry and effective utilization of volunteer/financial/material resources. Their effectiveness starts with a basic understanding of how they fit into the emergency management system.

### Comprehensive Emergency Management

Emergency management is comprehensive, encompassing:

- All hazards – both natural and human-caused (including technological, terrorist, and public violence)
- Shared responsibility among partners ranging from the individual and family to national government
- Mitigation (vulnerability or loss reduction) and preparedness as well as response (including rescue, relief, and recovery)

Photo courtesy, FEMA



Churches are part of a domestic emergency management system encompassing individual families, local/state/federal government emergency agencies, business and industry, and other voluntary organizations.

### The Scope of Emergency Management

An emergency is any event that threatens or actually causes damage to property and people. Emergency management seeks to limit or ameliorate the effects of disasters and hazards.

Hazards include human or natural events or forces that cause disasters: hurricanes, tornadoes, storms, floods, tidal waves, earthquakes, fires, explosions, contamination, civil strife, war, disease. They may or may not be recognized or acknowledged. They may have existed for a long time or represent a new threat.

Some hazards such as earthquakes, tornadoes, flash floods, transportation accidents, or volcanoes strike with little or no warning. Other hazards such as hurricanes, river flooding, and windstorms may strike with advance warning.

Disasters occur when people are directly affected by a hazard in such a way as to cause human suffering or create human needs that survivors cannot alleviate without spiritual, monetary, material, or physical assistance. There may be loss of life. People may be injured or missing. The economy may be disrupted. Buildings and their contents may be damaged or destroyed. There may be an impact on electricity, telephone, water, other public utilities, and transportation routes. Some of the people in a disaster-affected area may be more vulnerable than others because of their economic status, gender, age, education, ethnicity and language, and religion.

### Emergency Management as Shared Responsibility

When disaster strikes, effective emergency management involves cooperative activity of individuals, businesses, government at all levels, and community-based and faith-based organizations in distinct response tasks.

## Response

### The Rescue Task

Response is initiated as soon as an incident has occurred, or prior to onset of an event such as approaching hurricane or storms. There are two phases to response: rescue and relief.

In addition to fire and law enforcement, first responders following a disaster include family, friends, and neighbors who provide first-aid, shelter, and call for needed help. The focus is on saving lives and protecting property with local government assuming primary responsibility under guidelines of an Emergency Operations Plan (EOP). In many localities in the U.S., Community Emergency Response Teams (CERTs) with civilian residents specially-trained in first-aid, light search and rescue, and crisis intervention may assist fire and police in disaster-affected neighborhoods to reduce their work load. When disaster needs outstrip local government's resources and capacities, the state responds under guidelines of its own EOP.

Photo courtesy, Disaster News Network—  
<http://www.disasternews.net>



In the relief phase following a disaster, the faith community along with other care-givers helps create safe, sanitary, and secure conditions for disaster survivors.

### The Relief Task

The American Red Cross, The Salvation Army, and other care-giving agencies, create safe, sanitary, and secure conditions for disaster survivors by providing food, shelter, medical assistance, and bulk distribution of personal care items.

## Recovery

Recovery starts soon after impact and extends for some time following the disaster—even up to several years. Typical activities: infrastructure and vital life support systems are restored, routines of daily life are resumed, plans are initiated for permanent housing, repairing, rebuilding, or relocating homes.

### The Short-Term Recovery Task

Gradually, people start returning to normal living patterns. The American Red Cross, The Salvation Army, and community and government organizations provide food, clothing, rental assistance, bedding, furnishings, transportation, medical aid, temporary housing, home repair assistance, occupational supplies.

As time goes on, voluntary agencies—including faith organizations—address disaster needs ranging from warehousing and distribution of relief supplies to case work, advocacy, resource development, cleanup, home repair and rebuilding, and spiritual/emotional care.

Communication, collaboration, cooperation, and coordination among responding agencies enhances the recovery process. National Voluntary Organization Actives in Disaster (NVOAD) and its state and local chapter play a primary role in fostering this approach to the work.

In a major disaster, the Governor of a state may ask the President of the United States to issue a declaration designating affected areas eligible for federal aid. When the President issues a disaster

Photo courtesy, FEMA



The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) coordinates relief and recovery efforts at the direction of state emergency management following a disaster declaration by the President of the United States.

declaration, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) establishes a Disaster Field Office (DFO) from which it coordinates disaster relief and recovery efforts in cooperation with state emergency management.

Other federal government agencies may participate in disaster response with or without the President's declaration: The Department of Transportation, the National Communications System, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. Forest Service, General Services Administration, Department of Health and Human Services, Department of Defense, Environmental Protection Agency, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Department of Energy, Department of Commerce/National Weather Service, Department of Education, Department of Housing and Urban Development, Department of Justice, Civil Air Patrol, National Aeronautics and Space Administration, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Tennessee Valley Authority.

## **NATIONAL VOLUNTARY ORGANIZATIONS ACTIVE IN DISASTER (NVOAD)**

NVOAD is a partnership of organizations in disaster response. The organization's members are committed to partnership through communication, coordination, cooperation, and collaboration. The member organizations are also committed to the concept that the first step in response is preparedness and that the time to prepare for the next disaster is now.

After Hurricane Camille in 1969, organizations providing resources and services to victims and communities affected by the hurricane shared their mutual concern about frequent duplication of services. In 1970, representatives from these voluntary organizations started meeting on a regular basis to share their respective activities and concerns towards managing disaster activities more efficiently and effectively.

NVOAD has 34 national member organizations. In addition, 52 state and territorial VOADs and a growing number of community VOADs (or COADS) are actively working for the same principles.

### **National Member Organizations**

American Baptist Men, USA	Mennonite Disaster Services
Adventist Community Services	National Emergency Response Team
American Radio Relay League	National Organization for Victim Assistance
American Red Cross	Nazarene Disaster Response
American's Second Harvest	Northwest Medical Teams International
Ananda Marga Universal Relief Team	The Phoenix Society For Burn Survivors
Catholic Charities USA	The Points of Light Foundation
Christian Reformed World Relief Committee	Presbyterian Disaster Assistance
Christian Disaster Response	REACT International
Church Of The Brethren	The Salvation Army
Church World Service	Society of St. Vincent De Paul
Episcopal Relief and Development	Southern Baptist Disaster Relief
Friends Disaster Service	United Jewish Communities
Humane Society of the United States	United Methodist Committee On Relief
International Relief Friendship Foundation	United State Service Command
International Aid	Volunteers of America
Lutheran Disaster Response	World Vision

## Long-Term Recovery Task

Rebuilding lives of people and communities materially, emotionally, and spiritually occurs over an extended time-frame. The task may last weeks or years depending on the nature of the disaster. During the long-term recovery period:

- Many or all of the emergency and relief program will be completed
- The presence of outside organizational representatives, staffs, and resource persons will be gradually reduced
- Most of the casework and recovery initiatives often will be administered by the local community
- Government recovery and/or mitigation programs may be initiated

## Beyond Response to Planning & Preparing

The disaster response tasks of rescue and relief are the most visible components of comprehensive emergency management. Television and newspapers show people evacuating flooded homes, moving into temporary shelters, lining up for food and water. Preparedness and mitigation as well as response and recovery, however, are equally important components of the work of emergency management, which can be understood as a cycle.

### Preparedness

Survival and quick recovery from disaster depend on providing information and educating people about personal and community planning. Preparedness seeks to prevent casualties, expedite response activities, and minimize property damage in the event of a disaster.

### Mitigation

One of the most important elements of long term recovery is the day-in, day-out efforts to reduce people's vulnerability to the disaster. It includes changes to infrastructure, protection measures for homes, and retro-fitting during rebuilding that considers hazards. Mitigation also encompasses preparedness and prevention activities that lessen the impact of disasters and reduce vulnerability of people. It also includes education about hazards and how to prepare to deal with them, networking with community organizations, making plans for family, friends, and your neighborhood.



Photo courtesy, FEMA

Mitigation includes protection measures for homes such as elevations that reduce flood damage in vulnerable areas.



### III. The Faith Community and Disaster Ministry

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The religious community plays a vital and unique role in long-term recovery, coordinating and focusing energy and resources on people with disaster-related unmet needs who often fall through the cracks of government and other social service systems.

People may not be able to stabilize their living situation for a number of reasons. Although the Federal Individuals and Households Program (IHP) may provide much needed assistance, some people—for one reason or another—will not receive enough aid through insurance or other assistance programs for required repairs or rebuilding. When personal resources or insurance are not adequate, recovery is impaired. Disaster survivors also vary considerably in their ability to cope with a major emergency. Most people who led normal, healthy lives before the disaster can recover with temporary assistance. Others may not be able to recover as quickly.

The religious community also has a special role to fulfill as people rebuild their lives emotionally and spiritually after a disaster. People of faith can offer spiritual support to survivors and caregivers in the rescue task following a disaster at staging and evacuation areas. When other responders are providing relief assistance—medical services, food, and temporary shelter—the faith community can offer support to survivors, professional caregivers, and volunteers. At the same time the faith community continues its established traditions of spiritual care and religious observances.

As disaster recovery continues, still other needs will emerge. As some assisting agencies complete their mission and transition to “normal” operations, local faith-based organizations are likely to assume more responsibility and encourage broad participation and ownership among other institutions and people in the community in the ongoing recovery.

The religious community assists in cleanup, repair, and rebuilding, coordinating volunteers, and advocating for those who need such help. In the long-term recovery following a disaster, people of faith also continue to offer the spiritual and pastoral care that maintains high levels of hope and effective work among survivors and caregivers who are tired and may be burning out or becoming discouraged.

#### Biblical themes

Jesus as the compassionate servant, comforter, and advocate and his focus on helping “the least of these” provide a framework for understanding the religious community’s work in disaster. It is an incarnational role —being the bodily presence of God, as in Jesus Christ—in the midst of the “hell” a disaster produces—particularly for those who are most vulnerable to the effects of the disaster. Bringing hope and order to the chaos.

As a **compassionate servant**, the religious community can help meet relief needs, stepping in to assist when other public and private responders leave people out of the process.

As a **comforter**, the religious community renews people and their communities after a disaster—providing opportunities and places for disaster survivors to find fellowship and friendship and share their stories. Counseling/caring—listening to survivors, walking through grief and guilt with them so they can move toward acceptance of their present condition, and providing hope so they can set goals for the future and transcend the experience—is an important part of the religious community’s role as comforter.



CWS staff photo

The faith community plays a special role in long-term recovery following disasters, focusing energy and resources on helping survivors rebuild their lives spiritually and physically. Church people offer hope through spiritual care and hammer the nails in rebuilding and repairing homes.

In being the presence of God, the religious community reaffirms values and beliefs and offers redemption, renewal, new life and most importantly, hope—the one thing no other disaster responder can bring to people.

As an advocate, the religious community focuses on justice in responding to disasters. It engages in family and household advocacy (helping people access the systems that offer aid to which they are entitled) and public policy advocacy (working for laws and regulations that protect men, women, and children).

### Church World Service Can Help

Church World Service (CWS) helps the faith community play its unique role in disaster preparedness, mitigation, and response as a coordinating organization for more than 36 national denominations.

The Emergency Response Program of CWS, a witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ, assists disaster-affected persons through spiritual and physical support that empower local/regional/state religious leadership who want to work together toward building or restoring community. Although the CWS disaster response commitment comes from the imperative of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, its program invites and welcomes all faith groups in the wider religious community to work together in meeting humanitarian needs.

CWS is a registered non-governmental organization (NGO) with the U.S. Government and a member of National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (NVOAD) and INTERACTION— an international coordinating agency. In addition to worldwide disaster response, CWS carries on development programs with partner organizations in more than 80 countries, an Immigration and Refugee Program, and an education and fund raising program which organizes CROP Walks for Hunger. Your denomination/ communion and affiliated agencies support and look to CWS to provide leadership in the ecumenical or interfaith communities on their behalf.

### Church World Service Emergency Response Committee

The Church World Service Emergency Response Committee includes representatives from national denominations and church-related agencies that agree to work together for the greater benefit of disaster survivors. (See Appendix.) The Committee includes a small Executive Council comprised of CWS member communions which sets the agenda for the full Committee and addresses policy

concerns related to the CWS Emergency Response Program. Larger Domestic and International Disaster Roundtables, which include non-CWS communions and faith-based agencies, look at disaster response field issues related to CWS emergency response, in particular, and religious community cooperation in disaster ministry, in general.

### Church World Service Emergency Response Office

The Church World Service Emergency Response staff monitors disasters throughout the U.S. and the world, sends material resources to disaster sites, and works with local partners who respond. CWS responds to disasters in partnership with new or existing faith-based organizations at the site. CWS seeks to empower the stricken community to be stronger—not only to recover from the disaster, but to



Photo by Chris Heifinger

Church World Service Disaster Response and Recovery Liaisons (DRRLs) encourage members of the faith community.



CWS staff photo

The religious community assists in cleanup, repair, and rebuilding. It coordinates volunteers and advocates for those who cannot speak or act for themselves.

work to prevent, prepare for, and mitigate the effects of the next disaster.

### **CWS Disaster Response & Recovery Liaisons (DRRLs)**

Professional Disaster Response and Recovery Liaisons (DRRLs) are the critical central operational component of the CWS Domestic Disaster Response program. They encourage and facilitate cooperative work by people of faith in comprehensive response, recovery preparedness, and mitigation by providing assistance in organizing, training, and operating a disaster recovery ministry.

DRRLs monitor, assess, and report on disasters and respond as required. They support and strengthen state and community inter-religious organizations, facilitate cooperative activity of faith groups in disaster preparedness/mitigation/response/recovery, and build relationships with faith groups, FEMA, the American Red Cross, VOADs, and other response agencies. They provide a pastoral presence at disaster sites and work with faith-based responders to coordinate immediate response and relief and implement cooperative long-term recovery efforts. They are also sources of public information on the role of the faith community in disaster response and recovery. Beyond their work in disasters, DRRLs facilitate faith community disaster mitigation and preparedness as consultants and educators.

## IV. Mitigation: Working to Reduce Your Community's Vulnerability

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Emergency managers, increasingly, understand mitigation as the foundation of disaster response and recovery—for without mitigation (which reduces vulnerability of communities to hazards) people continue to be in harm's way.

Mitigation starts with **hazard analysis** to identify natural or technological threats to a community and **vulnerability analysis** to define the human and economic losses that can occur and special populations likely to be affected by disasters.

Mitigation tools include:

- Laws and ordinances related to zoning, building, public health, fire safety, hazardous material handling, inspections, traffic control
- Community and economic development, including jobs and housing projects
- Structural measures such as levees, elevations for homes, etc.
- Financial incentives and disincentives to discourage the creation of hazardous conditions
- Public information and education efforts that motivate citizen action
- Land use planning
- Monitoring and inspecting potentially hazardous facilities
- Insurance coverage

### What You & Your Church Can Do

In working to reduce vulnerability of communities to disasters, local congregations:

- Make sure their buildings are safe by adhering to construction codes, installing smoke detectors and fire alarms, and taking other appropriate measures
- Educate families about how they can make their homes safe
- Obtain adequate insurance for their church buildings and encourage families to do the same for their homes
- Foster understanding among community and service organizations about the “human-caused” component in disasters and what people can do to lessen the impact of a potential disaster or prevent a disaster altogether
- Encourage members and people in their communities to seek training from American Red Cross, local and state emergency management, and other agencies in first-aid, fire suppression, light search and rescue, disaster management, crisis intervention, spiritual/emotional care, etc.
- Map existing and potential hazards—possible sources of explosion, contamination, and radiation—and identify possible exposure during natural disasters
- Learn the history of natural disasters in their area
- Network towards developing allies among community groups, public officials and civil servants, government agencies, and business concerned about environmental, technological, and public violence
- Participate with others in identifying and advocating for the needs of the most vulnerable and working for a just, disaster-resilient sustainable community
- Visit local agencies and corporations, express concerns, ask questions about public safety, and plans to respond to emergencies
- Study laws related to land use, building regulations, and public safety: identify mitigation



Photo courtesy: FEMA

Mitigation tools include building codes that require structures to be engineered to resist hurricane winds and earthquakes.

opportunities in legislative changes

- Work to implement and enforce land-use planning, controls, and sound flood plain/seismic zone/beach front management practices
- Advocate for adoption and enforcement of structural measures that assure soundly constructed residential housing schools, hospitals, churches and other critical facilities to withstand the effects of hurricanes, earthquakes, and tornadoes
- Capitalize on enhanced awareness in the post-disaster period to advance hazard reduction policies and practices
- Support programs aimed at eliminating hunger and poverty and advancing human rights
- Advocate for the environment-recycling programs, water and energy conservation, etc.



Photo courtesy, FEMA

Does your community have a grain elevator—like this one that exploded? Learn about the hazards around you as a first step in reducing vulnerability to disasters.



Photo courtesy, FEMA

Reducing vulnerability to disasters starts with planning by people who know their community.

## How Safe Is Your Community? Disaster Risk Assessment

How would you rate the probability of the following events occurring in your community within the next ten years? Rate them in terms of the following six-point scale by circling the appropriate number:

1 - not probable 2 - low probability 3 - moderate probability 4 - high probability 5 - nearly certain

Avalanche	1	2	3	4	5
Blizzard or Massive Snowstorm	1	2	3	4	5
Chemical Contamination or Spill	1	2	3	4	5
Dam Break	1	2	3	4	5
Drought	1	2	3	4	5
Earthquake	1	2	3	4	5
Electric Power Blackout	1	2	3	4	5
Epidemic	1	2	3	4	5
Extreme Cold	1	2	3	4	5
Flash Flood	1	2	3	4	5
Forest/Brush/Wild Fire	1	2	3	4	5
Hurricane	1	2	3	4	5
Ice Storm	1	2	3	4	5
Major Frost and Freeze	1	2	3	4	5
Major Gas Main Break	1	2	3	4	5
Meteorite Fall	1	2	3	4	5
Mine Disaster	1	2	3	4	5
Mudslide or Landslide	1	2	3	4	5
Oil Spill	1	2	3	4	5
Pipeline Explosion	1	2	3	4	5
Plane Crash	1	2	3	4	5
Radiation Fallout	1	2	3	4	5
River Flood	1	2	3	4	5
Sand/Dust Storm	1	2	3	4	5
Severe Fog Episode	1	2	3	4	5
Ship Disaster in Harbor or Nearby Coast	1	2	3	4	5
Smog Episode	1	2	3	4	5
Sudden Waste Disposal Problem	1	2	3	4	5
Tornado	1	2	3	4	5
Toxic Landfill	1	2	3	4	5
Train Derailment	1	2	3	4	5
Tsunami or Tidal Wave	1	2	3	4	5
Volcanic Eruption or Fallout	1	2	3	4	5
Water Pollution	1	2	3	4	5
Water Shortage	1	2	3	4	5

# How People Are Vulnerable to Disasters

## General Types of Vulnerability

Gender                      Race/Ethnicity Age  
Education                  Economics                  Language                  Spiritual/religious  
Physical, psychological, and emotional capabilities

## Pre-Disaster

Living in dangerous areas  
Limited resources to prepare  
Unemployment and underemployment  
Lack of information

## Disaster Impact

No way to evacuate	No way to increase safety
Loss of community social services	Loss of livelihood
Loss of personal and real property	Fear, hopelessness, frustration, anger

## Relief

Limited access to aid  
Limited protection for life and property  
Loss of neighborhood and community support systems  
Few personal and community resources of all kinds

## Recovery

Fewer resources such as adequate insurance	Renter or low income homeowner
Dishonest contractors	Discrimination in services
Increased rent and housing costs	Limited community resources
Inadequate housing stock in the community	
Embarrassment, pride, and reluctance to request help	

## Development

No input to planning and decision-making	Loss of livelihood
Loss of place to live	Loss of community support system

## Mitigation

No input to planning and decision-making  
Lack of political power  
Abuse of legal rights  
No funding for family or livelihood mitigation  
Lack of sophistication within community leadership in order to access available programs

## Preparedness and Education

Preparedness programs may not reach vulnerable people  
Language and cultural differences that prohibit participation in planning  
No input into the implementation of planning and educational efforts

## V. Preparedness: Planning to Serve

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Effective response to disasters depends on planning before something happens—by individuals, families, businesses, religious organizations, other voluntary agencies, and all levels of government.

Disaster plans match emergency response resources to potential disaster needs. Formal plans usually include (1) a statement of purpose (2) likely emergency situations and assumptions (3) assignment of responsibilities (4) a concept of operations (5) details on resource support and administration (6) a process for modifying the plan (7) authorities and references (8) definition of terms.

A community's Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) details procedures around:

- Communication & warning
- Public information
- Evacuation
- Public welfare
- Emergency medical care
- Security
- Fire & rescue
- Radiological toxicological defense
- Public works/utility repairs
- Logistics
- Direction & control

A community's EOP also includes a recovery section that addresses:

- Impact and needs assessments
- Information-gathering & dissemination
- Organizing to provide necessary aid
- Resource mobilization to restore services, provide for welfare, and implement assistance
- Regulatory analysis towards identifying new laws that could mitigate future disasters
- Planning to return a community to pre-disaster or better conditions
- Coordinating the response-to-recovery transition
- Evaluation & debriefing

### What Your Church Can Do

Your congregation can develop its own disaster preparedness plan around these considerations:

- The kind of natural and human-caused hazards faced by the community and the community's vulnerability to disaster
- Adequate insurance on buildings and contents
- Protection of vital records from fire and water damage
- Making church facilities available for shelter or other uses through the American Red Cross and/or other care-giving agencies
- Nature of the congregation's people resources—how can members serve in an emergency (who are nurses, mental health workers, machine operators, builders?)
- A telephone tree or system to check on member needs
- Community disaster plans and the congregation's role in that plan
- The wider religious community's disaster plans encompassing activities of individual



Photo courtesy, FEMA

Gender, age, race, class, education, ethnicity/language, violation of human/legal rights, psychological and spiritual capacity, physical capabilities, economic condition are factors in disaster vulnerability.



congregations/ regional judicatories/conferences/synods in cooperative, collaborative, and coordinated programs

- Telephone numbers/addresses or need-to-know contacts such as out-of-town family members, judicatory staff, other support people and agencies

Based on these considerations, your congregation can define its mission, role, and response in disasters.

### Promoting Family Preparedness

Congregations also have a vital role in educating families about preparing for disasters. The four key steps to family safety:

1. Find out what could happen. Ask local emergency management and the American Red Cross chapter about:
  - Types of disasters that are likely to affect the community and how to prepare for them
  - The community's warning systems and evacuation plans
  - Animal care during and after a disaster
  - Taking responsibility for elderly and disabled persons
  - Disaster plans at the work place, schools and day care centers, and other places where the family spends time
2. Create a disaster plan. At a family meeting discuss types of disasters most likely to happen and explain what to do in each case:
  - Identify "safe rooms" or shelter areas for earthquakes and violent weather
  - Determine the best escape routes—i.e., two ways out of each room
  - Pick two places to meet—outside your home after a sudden emergency and outside your neighborhood if you can't return home
  - Identify a family contact to call and report where you are
  - Discuss what to do in an evacuation and how to care for your pets
3. Take action:
  - Post emergency telephone numbers near phones (fire, police, ambulance, etc.)
  - Teach children how and when to call 911 or your local Emergency Medical Services number
  - Show each family member how and when to turn off water, gas, and electricity at main switches
  - Secure adequate insurance coverage
  - Teach each family member how to use the fire extinguisher (ABC type) and show them where it's kept
  - Install smoke detectors on each level of your home, especially near bedrooms
  - Acquire a cellular telephone with extra battery



Photo by Chris Herflinger

Educational programs geared to preparedness only make a difference in reducing disaster vulnerability if they reach the right people in the right way with appropriate content.



Photo courtesy, FEMA

Evacuation procedures are an important component of a community's Emergency Operations Plan.

- Conduct a home hazard hunt—identify anything that can move, fall, break or cause a fire
- Stock emergency supplies and assemble a disaster supplies kit including
  - three-day supply of water and unspoilable food
  - one change of clothing and footwear per person
  - one blanket or sleeping bag per person
  - first aid kit with family medications
  - battery-powered radio and flashlight (with extra batteries)
  - extra car key
  - credit card/cash or traveler’s checks
  - sanitation supplies
  - special items for infants/elderly/disabled
  - extra pair of eyeglasses
- Take a Red Cross first-aid and CPR class

4. Practice and maintain the disaster plan:

- Quiz your children every six months
- Conduct fire and emergency evacuation drills
- Replace stored water every three months and stored food every six months
- Test and recharge your fire extinguisher(s) according to manufacturer instructions
- Test smoke detectors monthly and change batteries at least once a year



Photo by Jay Mancom

Congregations have a vital role in educating families about disaster preparedness.

## VI. Response: Your Call to Service

Disaster response encompasses rescue and relief operations. During the rescue stage of the disaster, the emphasis is on public safety—getting people out of harm’s way. Relief operations—public welfare (care for the injured and displaced) and initial restoration of services—seek to create safe, secure, and sanitary conditions.

When an emergency or disaster is imminent, local government agencies issue warnings to the public and may evacuate people to temporary shelters. If the disaster is severe enough, local officials will establish an Emergency Operations Center (EOC) to coordinate work of responding agencies. As needed the EOC dispatches police, fire, and health/medical personnel, equipment, and supplies according to the Emergency Operations Plan.

### Responding to Disasters in Your Community

In the rescue stage of the disaster, members of the congregation should focus on themselves and their property—and stay out of the way of professional disaster responders. They should secure themselves and their families, evacuating if there is time or taking protective measures as best as possible. If there are injuries, they should be prepared to administer first-aid after checking the situation and calling for assistance.

If the congregation and its members are not directly affected by a disaster, find constructive ways to assist. Don’t get in the way of police, fire, search and rescue, and medical personnel. Check first to see if you can help. If congregational resources include people with knowledge and skills to assist in emergencies, call authorities to volunteer and receive site assignments.

In the relief stage of the disaster, the congregation begins helping its members and people in the community in much the same way it would under normal circumstances. A healthy every-day service ministry—including spiritual care that renews hope of distressed people, case work that provides tangible assistance to people with special needs, volunteer coordination that mobilizes members and others for work required—is the essence of a local congregation’s role in disasters.

Begin by assessing the situation. Check on welfare and location of members of the congregation and the needs of people in the neighborhood. Determine what role the congregation can play and implement the church’s disaster plan.

Notify appropriate local, state, and national religious leadership so they can activate their disaster plans to meet needs. Alert denominational disaster volunteers in your area. Among other things, the congregation may want to draw on its know-how and resources to:

- Provide special child care services



Photo courtesy, Mel Lehman, Church World Service

First aid and CPR training are an important part of family preparedness.



Photo courtesy, FEMA

Call disaster management authorities in your community to see what needs exist and mobilize volunteers accordingly.

- Encourage survivors. Your prayers and personal caring are important, but leave serious emotional and stress problems to trained clergy and mental health workers. Form survivor support groups.
- Support appropriate chaplaincy at the scene, the morgue, and with rescue workers
- Offer temporary shelter (in homes and church buildings), food and personal care items
- Assist survivors in salvaging personal property
- Organize volunteer work groups to help survivors clean up debris—and later to assist in repair and rebuilding
- Offer housing options and food for out of town recovery volunteers
- Direct survivors to relief resources—American Red Cross, The Salvation Army, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, and other local caregiving agencies
- Encourage members and people in the community affected by the disaster to apply for the assistance to which they are entitled from government and other caregiving agencies. This may include helping them through the application process, completing forms for them, and advocating on their behalf.
- Contribute money and material goods as requested
- Communicate and cooperate with other disaster organizations
- Encourage local religious leaders to explore the need for a cooperative disaster recovery program to address long-term disaster-caused unmet needs

Photo courtesy, FEMA



Local congregations can bring their background and skills to meet disaster needs.

## Understanding Four Response Ministries

The faith community has a unique role in four areas of disaster response:

- Spiritual care
- Managing volunteers and donations
- Case work geared to the need of the most vulnerable persons
- Human-caused and technological disasters

# 1. Providing Spiritual Care When Disaster Strikes & Assumptions of Basic Trust are Disturbed.

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The time the survivor had to prepare physically and emotionally for the disaster and the predictability of the losses affect the nature of the spiritual care required.

A flood survivor, who knew the river was rising and had only loss of carpeting, will often be able to say, "That's life." A widely destructive human-caused disaster, on the other hand, may severely threaten a person's basic trust. A disaster at a school yard, an office complex or a residential neighborhood in which family or friends die cannot be reconciled with an attitude of "that's the way things go." They are not predictable events.

Beyond the personal pain of loss, there is a feeling in the human spirit that these things should not happen. Neither should they be allowed. And if something that shouldn't happen did happen, what does that say about the other assumptions the victim has made about life? We assume the earth will keep spinning; the laws of gravity will remain in force; nothing out of the ordinary should threaten us; things are as they should be. Imagine what life would be like if our basic trust were not operative, if we could not rely on day-to-day continuity. How would you function?



Photo courtesy, FEMA

Spiritual care offers disaster survivors safety and security, an opportunity to ventilate feelings, and receive reassurance.

When basic trust is threatened, there is confusion. Added to a wide range of possible feelings, including anger, bereavement, and pain, is an uncertainty about what might happen next. Where basic trust is severely weakened the most significant thing a church can do is help the survivor start re-establishing the building blocks of basic trust by offering:

- **Safety and Security.** A survivor must feel secure before anything else can be done. Let the victim know, "You are out of harm's way."
- **Opportunity to Ventilate and be Validated.** When a survivor is ready to talk, a listening ear is the most valuable gift you can offer to allow expression of feelings, thoughts and experiences over and over again. This moment cannot be forced before it's time, but you can invite survivors to share.
- **Reassurance and Direction through Prediction and Preparation.** A disaster survivor will experience unusual behavior, thoughts and feelings for a period of time. They will appear unusual even to the survivor. In helping survivors anticipate them, you can promote their recovery. Let survivors know from the beginning, "you can expect unusual feelings during this time." Let them know those feelings are okay. (Research indicates, however, that you should avoid describing these feelings as "normal." This can cause a negative reaction on the part of the victim.)

## Nine Spiritual Care Guidelines:

**A. Offer Security.** Disaster survivors need assurance about their safety, above all. They need to know they are out of harm's way and that you are a person with whom they can safely ventilate their feelings. First, simply say: "You are out of harm's way now." Reinforce what you say with a relaxed posture, a welcoming smile, eye contact, acceptable touch (unless they shy away). Offer hospitality. ("Do you need anything? A drink of water, food, a blanket?")

**B. Listen.** Listen with an attentive ear. Guide the conversation when survivors don't seem to know what to talk about by asking: "What did you see?" and "How did you feel?" Relax and let them wander verbally.

**C. Be Quiet.** Allow survivors to take the lead in conversations. Do not interrupt. Ask questions only when they seem to want to talk. Their feelings are so intense they may not know where to begin. Reflect what you are hearing in natural pauses. Keep a quiet, composed attitude. When they grow silent, ask a few open-ended questions or make supportive statements. (Do not tell them you know how they feel. You do not.) If they do not respond much, sit with them quietly until they are ready to speak again. Sometimes simply knowing someone is there is enough.

**D. Support.** You may hear things that shock you. Survivors may have feelings that cause them to say things that are violent in nature. They may curse or describe a desire to hurt someone. Do not confront, judge, or correct at this time. Say: "You sound really angry/upset/hurt. I think I would be too." Let survivors know you are on their side.

**E. Stay Theologically Neutral.** Survivors may try to explain things in ways that contradict your theology. Although you may be used to discussing theology with people and attempting to teach them your doctrine, do not preach at this time. Rather, let survivors preach to you. Affirm them: "That's a comforting thought." Avoid trying to answer questions like "how could God let something like this happen?" Attempts to explain God's will or the human condition could anger or confuse them rather than help. Say: "I don't know. But what I do know is that God is with us now." Use prayer and scripture guardedly. Unless you are sure of a disaster survivor's religious positions on certain issues, stay neutral. For instance, "Father" is a Judeo-Christian image of God. And in this day, even many Christians find it a troubling image. However meaningful it may be to you, unless you know it is meaningful to them as well, avoid using it. Wait for survivors to ask for a scripture reading. Ask if they have a particular passage in mind. If they do not have a preference, offer one which is affirming.

**F. Serve.** Practice hospitality. Attend not only to survivors' words, but to their needs. Offer to get them a drink. Ask if they've eaten recently and if they would care to go get some food with you if they have not. Ask if they are comfortable. Avoid offering what you cannot deliver.



Photo courtesy, Mel Lehman, Church World Service

Use prayer and scripture guardedly. Stay neutral unless you are sure of a disaster survivor's religious positions.

**G. Avoid "Fixing" Things.** While you can serve disaster survivors, you cannot fix things for them. You can only assist them. You may not be able to assess damage and clean their house, but you can offer to go to the house with them. You cannot make funeral arrangements, but you can help them find the phone book and sit with them while they make the call. You cannot promise their child will be found alive, but you can stay with them while they wait for news.

**H. Pray.** Depending on the situation, this may be only a silent prayer which you offer internally as you sit with the affected persons, as you leave them, or even sometime later in the day. Prayer should never be forced. When the survivor is calm, you may say something like, "I'll keep you in my prayers." If they respond positively in some way, such as thanking you, ask if they would like you to pray with them now. Having spoken with them and listened to their concerns, you will know what is on their heart and mind. As you pray with them, pray only for those needs and things which will increase their comfort

and healing. For example, if they have spoken of anxiety, pray for God's presence and comfort for them in these anxious moments. On the other hand, if they have expressed anger at emergency workers, however valid you may feel their anger is, avoid praying for the emergency workers.

I. **Focus on the survivor's needs, not your needs.** In a sense, you will be a disaster survivor, as well. You will find that you have your own needs. You should have an opportunity to deal with them at a later time. Continually gauge your ministry by asking yourself the question, "Whose needs am I dealing with?" This is the best way to assure you are staying focused on the survivor and not yourself.

## 2. Managing Volunteers & Donations

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### Volunteers

The nature and quality of the disaster work taken on by faith groups, in the final analysis, will depend on volunteers. You can draw on volunteers for all kinds of tasks: family advocacy, heavy lifting, washing dishes, filling out forms, telephoning, listening, cooking, typing, keeping lists, sitting and talking, writing to people, leading work groups, legal assistance, plumbing, roofing, electrical repairs, carpentry, driving, warehousing, bookkeeping, computer work, babysitting, advertising, and public relations, child care. . . .the list is endless.

Coordination and management of volunteers present challenges. Five management keys:

- **Job descriptions.** They do not need to be highly detailed, but should provide a brief description of tasks along with the optimum and minimum amounts of time needed to accomplish them.
- **Match volunteer qualifications and background to job needs and the people with whom they will work.** For example, develop a list of volunteer needs of service providers involved in the interfaith community, including job descriptions, skills and tools needed, and location. Keep this needs list current.
- **Clearly state policies for volunteers, work groups, and service providers who will use the volunteers.** Volunteers need information, protection, a sense of order, and a clear sense of purpose if they are to be effective in disaster recovery. They must clearly understand who has responsibilities for housing, meals, transportation, and insurance coverage.
- **Training and orientation.** Volunteer builders, family advocates, and spiritual caregivers will need special training. Orient them to (1) the history of the area and its population and (2) the disaster and its effects on survivors.
- **Work commitments.** Remind volunteers they have to do jobs that need to be done, not necessarily the jobs they want to do. Ask volunteers to make a covenant to work and live effectively with you and the community. Let volunteers know that the most important thing they do may be bringing hope and energy through their presence—even if they never lay a brick!



Photo courtesy, Reuters via Religious News Service

Spiritual care involves listening to disaster survivors and affirming their feelings towards restoring their hope and capacity to live their lives anew.

An effective volunteer re-building program requires knowledgeable and skilled coordination of work sites, hospitality, and accommodations:

**Work site management.** If building and repair is part of the response, a coordinator/manager must oversee work sites, assuming multiple roles as a construction supervisor, building/repair teacher, and sometimes referee between homeowners and volunteers. Tasks of worksite and construction management may include:

- Arranging for equipment and tools
- Providing on-site building supplies
- Transportation required to haul equipment and supplies
- Communication equipment (cellular phones, pagers)
- Scheduling houses for repair and rebuilding within the context of the survivor's recovery plan and case management recommendations
- Securing liability waivers from homeowners and volunteers
- Assessing skill needs and planning daily work schedules
- Inspecting work and assuring repairs and construction conform to local building codes

**Hospitality.** Both the disaster-affected community and volunteers benefit from well-organized arrival and departure of work groups. Hospitality functions include:

- Assistance in resolving attitudinal problems-withdrawal, snubbing, hostility
- Orientation and debriefing
- Special events involving work teams in community life
- Providing ready information on emergency medical care and other services
- Connecting work teams with community groups that want to interact with them
- Proper appreciation and recognition



Photo courtesy, FEMA

Too often, unusable donations flood into a community following a disaster. Be specific about needs and seek cash as your first choice in assisting disaster survivors.

**Accommodations.** Productive volunteers who stay overnight require decent housing, kitchen facilities, bathrooms/showers, laundry facilities. In coordinating accommodations, you need to develop in-depth knowledge of volunteer housing available in your community.

## Donations

Disaster survivors need essential items to reclaim their homes and lives. You and your church can help assure this assistance by seeking donations that are truly needed. Too often, disaster-affected communities receive a flood of unusable donations such as used clothing. The result is a second disaster!

**Cash** is always preferred over material donations. Cash can purchase goods and services for survivors in their own community or country, often boosting a local economy that has been hurt by the disaster. Response organizations at the disaster site can acquire exactly what they need right away based on assessments. Finally, cash can purchase items difficult to obtain or ship.

**Be specific when requesting donations.** Spread the word about appropriate donations by publishing a list in your church bulletin or newsletter, posting it on bulletin boards; or displaying a visual



sample of needed items on a table, through a slide show, or in photos.

Encourage congregations to assemble Church World Service Gifts of the Heart Kits or contribute to the CWS Tools of Hope and Blankets Program. Both respond to the kinds of material donations often requested following a disaster.

#### **TOOLS OF HOPE & BLANKET PROGRAM**

From blankets to weaving projects, water pumps to tents, trees to veterinary training, sewing machines to seeds, the CWS TOOLS OF HOPE & BLANKETS program provides the right tools at the right time. Your congregation can organize to support the program. Contact your CWS regional office (1-888-297-2767) for more information about holding a TOOLS OF HOPE & BLANKET celebration in your congregation or group. CWS will send you a free Resource Kit—a video and other materials you'll need for an engaging event.

## **Your Church Can Prepare CWS Gifts of the Heart Kits**

### **Baby Kit**

- Six cloth diapers
- Two shirts
- Two washcloths
- Two gowns or sleepers
- Two diaper pins
- One sweater or sweatshirt
- Two receiving blankets (one can be a knitted blanket)

Wrap items inside one of the receiving blankets and secure with diaper pins. Or you may choose to give a donation of \$35, which will allow Church World Service to provide a new Baby Kit for an infant in a mother and child care program. Please add \$1.00 for shipping and processing each kit.

### **Health Kit**

- One hand towel
- One washcloth
- One comb
- One metal nail file or nail clipper
- One bar of soap (bath size)
- One toothbrush
- One tube of toothpaste (4-7 ounces)
- Six Band-Aids

Seal all items in a one-gallon plastic bag with a zipper closure. Or, if you prefer, a donation of \$12 will allow Church World Service to provide a Health Kit. Please add \$1.00 for shipping and processing each kit.

### **School Kit**

- One pair of blunt scissors
- Pads or notebooks of ruled paper 8-1/2" X 11" containing 150-200 sheets of paper
- One 30-centimeter ruler (12")
- One pencil sharpener
- Six new pencils with erasers
- One large eraser
- Twelve sheets colored construction paper
- One box of 24 crayons
- One 12" X 14" cloth bag with cloth handles and a closure (Velcro, snap, or button)

Pack these items in the cloth bag and secure contents with the closure. Or, if you prefer, a donation of \$11 per kit will allow Church World Service to buy school supplies for use in classroom settings. Please add \$1.00 for shipping and processing each kit.

Complete Kits should be packed in boxes with only one type of Kit in each box. However, if you are shipping a small number of different kinds of Kits, they can be combined in one box. Clearly mark the outside of the box with the contents. Include the name and address of the church, group, or individual sending the Kits at the top before sealing the box. Do not include money in the box. Secure the boxes with packing tape. Ship all Kits prepaid to: Church World Service, Brethren Service Center Annex 601 Main Street, P.O. Box 188, New Windsor, MD 21776-0188

### 3. Case Work Geared to the Needs of the Most Vulnerable

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Case management is specialized pastoral care that empowers disaster survivors to move beyond their current condition towards realizing the best possible recovery. Effective case management encompasses:

- Assessments collecting information about a person's situation to determine service needs
- A recovery plan listing and prioritizing disaster-related needs, identifying all available resources for addressing the needs, and pinpointing any unmet needs due to insufficient or non-existent resources. Survivors and case managers collaborate in developing recovery plans
- Arranging for services—contacting service providers and negotiating delivery of needed services to the survivor
- Follow-up—contacting service providers and survivors to assure service delivery has begun
- Reassessments—re-examination of situations to identify changes since initial assessment and measuring progress towards achieving goals of recovery plans
- Record Keeping—maintaining detailed files on contacts with survivors and service providers and progress in delivery of services. The records start on initial contact with the survivor. Anything pertaining to needs of the survivor and service delivery goes into the files

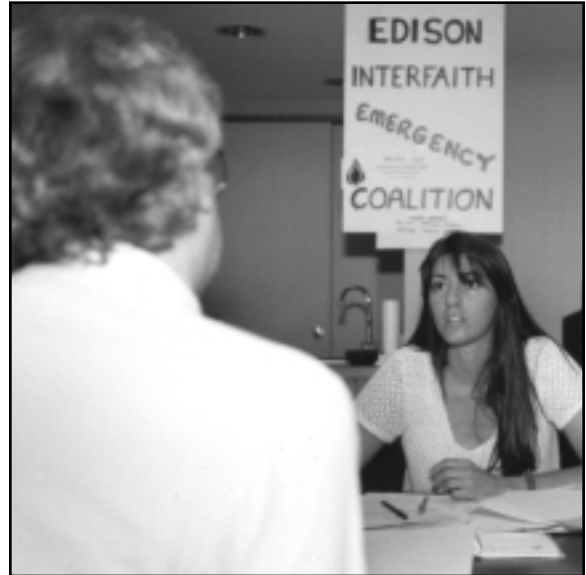


Photo courtesy, Church World Service

A healthy everyday service ministry—including spiritual care that renews hope of distressed people, case work that provides tangible assistance to people with special needs, volunteer coordination that mobilizes members and others for work required—is the essence of a local congregation's role in disasters.

Religious community disaster case managers are sometimes called “family advocates” because their work proceeds from the premise that the ability to recover from a disaster depends on family solidarity, resources, and kinship bonds. Often religious community case workers play an important role in helping both disaster-affected people and other caregivers understand what “family” is—namely, the most basic of people relationships, the basic social structure in which an individual recovers from disaster. Their work is similar to case managers in secular agencies, but often includes an added “helping” dimension. Training is essential.

A major concern of faith community case work is vulnerable population groups. The faith community not only is especially equipped to be aware and sensitive to special needs of those persons who are particularly vulnerable to the impact of the disaster, but also has a particular calling to seek out, assist, and advocate on their behalf.

#### Who Are the Vulnerable in Your Community?

Members of certain population groups may be particularly vulnerable to the impact of a disaster. Of course, not all persons in these population groups will be vulnerable. There is a danger of stereotyping people. However, identifying these groups may provide a basis for planning and preparing for case work and program assistance that will give everyone affected by a disaster an equal chance for their own personal best recovery. Minority and elderly families, for example, may require more aid. Elderly persons

may have a longer psychological and financial recovery time. Low-income persons, the elderly, and young, in general, have the least resilience in bringing personal resources to bear on disaster losses. Minority families may be more dependent on kinship networks.

### Factors indicating exceptional vulnerability:

**Economic**—income level (which affects where people are able to live)

**Gender**—women especially

**Age**—children and elderly

**Cultural**—ethnic, rural, historic, religion

**Social**—isolated, cultic, or inordinately suspicious

**Education and Literacy**—illiterate, low educational levels, non-English speaking

**Disabilities.** Chronic disabilities include hearing, sight, physical, speech, psychiatric, emotional, and cognitive limitations as well as chemical hypersensitivity. Many of these and other medical situations (such as surgery) may render a person temporarily or permanently disabled or restricted. A disability is defined as a condition or health problem that prevents or limits participation in work, school, or other daily activities (including temporary and chronic conditions, mental illness, and retardation).

### Preparing to Care

A community of faith can begin preparing to address disaster case work and program issues related to vulnerable persons by:

- Forming a disaster preparedness committee that includes persons with disabilities
- Developing a disaster plan that includes care for the larger community or neighborhood—especially those who are most vulnerable
- Determining the most likely disasters in its neighborhood—and learning how to help prepare people who live there
- Networking to locate, inform, and learn from those who are the most vulnerable in its neighborhood

A community of faith can form partnerships and work with personal support networks of the vulnerable families in its neighborhood in:

- Advocating that TV news not only post important phone numbers but also announce them slowly and repeat them frequently for people who cannot read the screen
- Installing both audible alarms and visual alarms
- Advocating that all news and emergency information is broadcast in open caption format
- Advocating that television stations have a plan to secure emergency interpreters for on camera emergency duty; help recruit interpreters before the emergency
- Educating first responders re: speech, hearing, medication, and equipment sensitivity
- Planning for care of service animals

The Church World Service web site ([www.cwserp.org](http://www.cwserp.org)) is a source of good information about special populations, including a new resource, "Disaster and Disability in a Land of Faithfulness."



Photo by Jay Marcom

Children, who need special attention and care when things are normal, are particularly vulnerable when disaster strikes.

## 4. Technological Disasters: A Special Case

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Disasters caused by application or misapplication of human technology require special response by the religious community in bringing necessities of life to those affected through pastoral care and advocacy on their behalf. Even “natural” disasters such as hurricanes, tornadoes, or earthquakes frequently have technological aspects as they impact a community’s infrastructure. When a disaster is predominantly technological in origin, however, it has unique characteristics.

### Defining Technological Disaster

Most technological disasters can be classified as acute or chronic. Acute disasters usually have a well-defined and relatively short period of time from beginning to end, often without warning—an explosion or toxic spill. A chronic technological disaster may not even be readily identifiable—for example chemicals poisoning soil and ground water over a period of years. In all cases, technological disasters have a protracted recovery period. Psychological, spiritual, and health implications are serious and long lasting. Medical and legal issues may continue for years, even generations. In spite of all of these impacts, a presidential declaration with significant governmental assistance is unlikely.

### Impact on the Faith Community

Because of its special sensitivity to human need, the religious community may be among the first to point out that a technological disaster has occurred. Because economics and politics are involved, it may find itself embroiled in controversy. Experts may disagree about the kind of response required; businesses and governmental partners in a natural disaster may not welcome faith community involvement in response to a technological disaster. In responding to technological disasters, the religious community may well find itself at the center of trying to meet the housing needs of affected people—providing temporary shelter to evacuees or working to develop permanent housing if relocation is necessary.

### Preparing for a Disaster with Technological Aspects

A faith community can build its capacity to deal with technological disasters through:

- Education—learning more about the nature of technological disasters
- Community Assessment—getting to know its geographic area and the possible hazards present; federal and state superfund sites, nuclear power plants, clean-up sites, clusters of illness, citizen complaints, manufacturing and storage facilities. Knowing about emergency plans for identified hazards
- Building alliances and local networks—getting to know the agencies and persons who will be its allies; building community action networks; coordinating closely with other organizations or groups

Photo courtesy, Disaster News Network—<http://www.disasternews.net>



Medical and legal issues stemming from technological disasters may continue for years—even generations.

## **Responding to a Technological Disaster Or Technological Aspects of Another Disaster**

During the emergency stage, listen and follow the directions of local emergency responders, leave the area immediately, and let the experts handle the most dangerous work. Religious organizations close by, but not in the affected area, may offer their buildings as emergency shelters.

During the relief stage, many organizations (including faith organizations) may provide for basic needs such as food, shelter, medical care, and spiritual care. Long term recovery in a purely technological disaster, may last indefinitely. Housing, medical, legal, and spiritual needs may continue a decade or more.

Trained personnel should monitor the hazards identified in your neighborhood for damage resulting from natural disasters and report through appropriate channels.

### **The faith community in response**

An organized faith community response is critical. Working together, churches and religious organizations can insure that affected persons are assisted and that the disenfranchised have an advocate. The church often has the community trust to call for the facts and to act as a go-between to assure all parties are brought to the table and that clear, accurate communication is possible.

Pastoral and spiritual care in technological disaster will often deal with: (1) an intensified feeling of helplessness among people confronted by the unknown and (2) high levels of anger and frustration among people looking for someone to blame or hold responsible.

For more information, *The Silent Disaster: People of Faith Respond To Technological Disasters*—a manual on response to technological disasters published by Church World Service and the United Church of Christ—is available through CWS.

## VII. Recovery: Moving from Agency-Based Assistance To Community-Based Cooperation

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In disaster recovery, communities begin the long process of getting back to normal. The focus shifts from protecting life and property and creating safe, sanitary, and secure conditions to addressing the growing unmet needs that may surface over the long-term.

- Damage assessments are conducted for press reports, insurance claims, and requesting a Presidential disaster declaration
- Vital services and facilities are gradually restored first to minimum operational standards and then to pre-disaster or better conditions
- Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) (in a disaster declared by the President) coordinates U.S. government resources, providing grants, loans, and technical assistance. FEMA usually receives disaster registrations through a national 800 number and usually provides information and other support services through Disaster Resource Centers (DRCs)
- American Red Cross and other agencies working in the immediate relief effort wind down their operations

Recovery sees the beginning of a shift from outside agencies to community-based programs. This is because a wide range of people and organizations in a community must own the disaster that has struck them and participate in the recovery process to address needs as fully as possible. For recovery to be most successful for the most people, representatives from all segments of community life need to have input and investment in decisions and activities.

At the same time, the limited resources available to meet continuing needs mean cooperative, collaborative, coordinated work among the people and organizations in the community is required. No one agency has the resources to respond alone. Information-sharing is vital. Dollars must be stretched and used efficiently.

### Faith-Based Recovery Models for Long Term Recovery

People of faith cooperate, collaborate, and coordinate activities around spiritual care, case work, volunteer coordination, and donations management. This can take different forms. Members of the faith community can simply come to a common table to share information, avoid duplication of services, and work together as they see fit. They may also work as a consortium, dividing up tasks according to their strengths. Some common models of religious community cooperation, collaboration, coordination:

- A strong, independent local faith-based disaster recovery organization in which congregations work cooperatively.
- An umbrella response organization, including local judicatories to oversee activities of local responders from the religious community and raise and disburse funds for them.
- Faith-based organizations or congregations partnered with local government and not-for-profit secular human services agencies.



Photo by Chris Herlinger

In disaster recovery, local people representing a wide spectrum of community life begin assuming responsibility for the work required.

- One or more denominational agencies leading the response on behalf of the faith community.

As the transition from agency-based to community based recovery unfolds, Church World Service Disaster Recovery and Response Liaisons can offer local groups important guidance. A faith-based recovery organization model usually represents the best stewardship of resources following major disasters. In contrast to its individual organizers, a faith-based recovery group has important advantages in meeting disaster recovery needs:

- Understanding the big picture. Because of its diverse make-up, a long term recovery group has fuller understanding of the needs than individual religious organizations with their own distinct constituencies.
- Fuller participation through broad ownership. No one sits it out. Because all religious organizations “own” the recovery program, everyone contributes to getting the job done. A faith-based recovery organization generates the highest degree of community support and cooperation in disaster recovery.
- Greater visibility for the role of the faith community, in general, and individual religious organizations in particular. The religious community working together achieves greater recognition and gains better appreciation for its work. At the same time, special contributions by individual members of the religious community as part of the larger effort are likely to be spotlighted.
- Expanded service and benefits to disaster survivors. Sharing the disaster work load and limited resources, individual religious organizations extend recovery work over the long term. At the same time, duplication of services is avoided.
- Better fundraising potential. All of these advantages help attract support of donors who appreciate efficient use of limited resources.

## Organizing to Work Together

In times of major disasters in your community, immediately contact your regional church executives, ministerial association, or council of churches, and your Church World Service Disaster Response and Recovery Liaison. Encourage them to initiate an emergency meeting of religious leaders in a ministerial association or already-established interfaith group. All leaders in the wider religious community, even if they have not previously worked together, should be invited. At this meeting, members of the religious community claim their unique shared concern, history, and roles in the suffering and helping community. They:

- Recognize the importance of working together in a shared ministry to those affected by disaster
- Estimate the human needs—immediate relief and long-term recovery—and determine the desire for common and cooperative response to community human needs
- Explore the available resources (local, regional, state or territory) of the religious community including those to provide spiritual care
- Obtain and review information about human needs and available resources from other helping organizations



Photo courtesy, Andrea Wolf, Church World Service

During the recovery phase following a disaster, people of faith start working together to coordinate activities in spiritual care, case management, volunteer coordination, and donations management.



- Begin to match resources to needs without duplication or waste (if needs are greater than local resources, the Church World Service DRRL can share information about resources available through CWS and other national sources)

Among key decisions meeting participants will make:

- Is a cooperative program necessary? If there will be substantial unmet needs particularly among vulnerable people, a cooperative, coordinated faith community response makes sense.
- How should a program be organized? Is there an existing interfaith group which can take on the work? Is a new group required? Or a subgroup of an existing group?

## Information Needs

These decisions require information: Geographic area affected? Primary homes? Vacation homes? Percentage of persons with adequate or partial insurance coverage? Who are the most vulnerable people (marginalized before the disaster)? Where are they located? Is the disaster over? Or ongoing? What is the human-caused technological/environmental component to the disaster? Kind of hazard(s)? A damage assessment report from the American Red Cross (ARC) will provide some quick answers. The initial report will be only a “windshield” survey with preliminary statistics, but it will give you the information that assists in decision-making.

If the faith community decides to work together to meet disaster needs, the organizing group must:

- Write and publicize a short mission or purpose statement for the shared disaster response
- Fundraise immediately and save resources for longer-term recovery
- Project the needed program
- Establish criteria for assistance
- Project needed staffing (seek experienced volunteers first)
- Quickly project a budget (it can be revised up or down as more information comes available)
- Plan a volunteer management program which includes recruitment, training, placement, supervision, nurturing, and evaluation
- Liaison with the American Red Cross, Federal Emergency Management Agency (in a Presidentially-declared disaster), and other immediate responders to assure a fully coordinated response



Photo courtesy, Church World Service

Call an emergency meeting of the religious community immediately after the disaster to explore the value of a cooperative recovery program and how to organize it.

## You and Your Church Are Not Alone

You and your church are not alone in disaster recovery. Collaboration and communication will facilitate a coordinated and cooperative atmosphere that benefits the disaster victim. There may be many groups and organizations involved which can complicate the response. You, your church, and your interfaith counterparts live and work in your community and should claim your right to be in charge. You know your community, its needs, and its available resources. When you, your church, and other religious leaders work together, you can claim the unique role of the religious community in

disaster response for more effective recovery of the whole person and the community.

### Church World Service Can Help

Trained Church World Service Disaster Response and Recovery Liaisons (DRRLs) and the Church World Service Emergency Response Program Office in New York can advise about the steps to help you bring order to disaster chaos. DRRLs can advise on such things as organization of the response, interfaith worship, fundraising, working with ARC, FEMA, and other disaster responders, program planning, and budget-building.

The CWS manual—*Managing and Operating a Faith-Based Recovery Organization*—is a handy reference for directors and management staff of recovery groups. The CWS training program—*Hope Help Heal*—equips people of faith to work knowledgeably in disaster management in their communities.

CWS may also help locate available resources and send blankets and “Gifts of the Heart” kits to churches or a faith-based recovery group.

Photo courtesy, Church World Service



Working together, the religious community expands service and benefits to survivors and gains visibility for its role in disasters.

## Action Check List When Disaster Strikes

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To begin your disaster planning, fill in names and telephone numbers for as much of this checklist as you can now. When disaster strikes, this can help you mount an immediate, safe, and effective response.

- Call 911 or "0" for operator and give required first aid to yourself, family members, and neighbors in need.
- Locate close family members to assure their safety and whereabouts.
- Contact church pastor or other church leaders:  
 Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 Telephone \_\_\_\_\_  
 Non-office hours telephone \_\_\_\_\_  
 Fax \_\_\_\_\_  
 E-mail \_\_\_\_\_
- In major disaster, contact your church's regional, conference, or diocese disaster contact:  
 Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 Telephone \_\_\_\_\_  
 Non-office hours telephone \_\_\_\_\_  
 Fax \_\_\_\_\_  
 E-mail \_\_\_\_\_
- Contact local or regional ministerial association:  
 Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Position \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 Telephone \_\_\_\_\_  
 Fax \_\_\_\_\_  
 E-mail \_\_\_\_\_  
**and/or**  
 Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Position \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 Telephone \_\_\_\_\_  
 Fax \_\_\_\_\_  
 E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

- In times of major disaster, contact regional or state council of churches, ecumenical or interfaith organization:

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Position \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 Telephone \_\_\_\_\_  
 Fax \_\_\_\_\_  
 E-mail \_\_\_\_\_  
**and/or**  
 Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Position \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 Telephone \_\_\_\_\_  
 Fax \_\_\_\_\_  
 E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

- Contact Church World Service Disaster Response and Recovery Liason for your state or territory:

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Position \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 Telephone \_\_\_\_\_  
 Fax \_\_\_\_\_  
 E-mail \_\_\_\_\_  
**and/or**  
 CWS Disaster Response Program  
 Office:  
 Telephone: (212) 870-3151  
 Fax: (212) 870-2236  
 Internet: <http://www.cwserp.org>

When disaster strikes and organizing for recovery begins, collect event and contact information:

- An emergency meeting has been called for (time, date, place): \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_
- Contact person and telephone: \_\_\_\_\_
- The CWS staff person on site is:  
 Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Cell Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
 Home \_\_\_\_\_  
 Telephone \_\_\_\_\_  
 Office \_\_\_\_\_  
 Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Lodging Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Telephone \_\_\_\_\_  
Fax \_\_\_\_\_  
E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

- American Red Cross (ARC) Shelter addresses: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Federal Declaration For Individual Assistance (IA):  
\_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No
- Counties declared:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- FEMA Voluntary Agency Liaison (VAL):  
Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Cell Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
Telephone \_\_\_\_\_  
Fax \_\_\_\_\_  
E-mail \_\_\_\_\_
- American Red Cross Liason to Voluntary Agencies (LVA):  
Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Cell Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
Telephone \_\_\_\_\_  
Fax \_\_\_\_\_  
E-mail \_\_\_\_\_
- State VOAD Chairperson:  
Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Cell Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
Telephone \_\_\_\_\_  
Fax \_\_\_\_\_  
E-mail \_\_\_\_\_
- Interagency, and VOAD Meetings:  
Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Time \_\_\_\_\_  
Place \_\_\_\_\_
- If formal response is planned, representative and alternate from interagency meetings:  
Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_  
Fax \_\_\_\_\_  
E-mail \_\_\_\_\_  
and/or  
Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Telephone \_\_\_\_\_  
Fax \_\_\_\_\_  
E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

- Location of ARC Service Centers  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Location of FEMA Disaster Recovery Centers (DRCs): \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Mental Health contact persons:  
Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Telephone \_\_\_\_\_  
Fax \_\_\_\_\_  
E-mail \_\_\_\_\_  
and/or  
Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Telephone \_\_\_\_\_  
Fax \_\_\_\_\_  
E-mail \_\_\_\_\_
- Name, address, contact, and telephone of Mental Health Centers:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- State Emergency Management Office contact:  
Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Telephone \_\_\_\_\_  
Fax \_\_\_\_\_  
E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

## VIII. Responding to Disasters Outside Your Community

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When disaster strikes outside your community—in another city, state, or country—churches and people of faith also want to help. In the U.S., people and organizations respond in much the same way from community to community following disasters. Outside the U.S., emergency management systems vary from country to country.

### Faith Community Response in Other Countries

Worldwide, the CWS Emergency Response Program and its member denominations respond to disasters through:

- Action by Churches Together (ACT) International—an emergency response consortium of churches and church-related agencies coordinated by Lutheran World Federation (LWF) and the World Council of Churches (WCC)
- Key partners and denomination-related agencies in Africa, East Asia, Europe, Latin America & Caribbean, Middle East, and Southern Asia

In general, response occurs (1) where there are existing partners, related staff, or member denominations in an area (2) the affected disaster area has limited resources and (3) response activities give priority to vulnerable groups—including children, mothers, older persons, disabled persons. In its response, CWS:

- Functions as communication center for receiving and analyzing information on disasters and managing a response
- Provides technical resources and training for building capacity of its partners to respond to disasters
- Represents interests, resources, and opinions of its member denominations in development of disaster response activities through ACT and its partners
- Provides financial support to ACT along with direct financial and material resources assistance to a local partner or denominational project not under the auspices of ACT
- Seconds denominational staff or provides personnel for an ACT Rapid Response Team
- Supports partner capacity-building via financial grants, material resources, and/or technical assistance

### How You & Your Church Can Help

You and your church can participate in response to disasters outside your community by:

- Checking with the people and organizations that know about the disaster. Your denomination's national disaster response program and/or the CWS Emergency Response Program office will know how the faith community is responding to the disaster. You can find out what survivors need now—and what they'll need at the time you make a contribution. Survivor needs vary greatly depending on the type of disaster, how much time has passed, and in what region the disaster struck.



Photo courtesy, Disaster News Network—<http://www.disasternews.net>

Match your capacity to assist with the need. What can you give?

- Matching your capacity to assist with the need. After you know what's needed, there may be many ways to help. Collecting cash. Soliciting material aid. Sending a volunteer team to rebuild homes. Base your decision on what's most needed, what your church or organization is ready and able to give, and whether your gift represents a timely response.
- Supporting agencies that seek to keep costs low. Administrative and overhead costs are necessary, but you want to support agencies that seek to provide as much direct assistance to survivors as possible. You will find the Church World Service Emergency Response Program and your denomination's disaster response organization usually among the most cost-conscious.
- Thinking twice about shipments. Shortly after a disaster, roads may be inaccessible or open to emergency vehicles only. Donations of perishable items like food may go to waste due to delays. High shipping costs may dictate what you can send.
- Determing volunteer needs. Following disasters, volunteers may be needed to clean up debris, rebuild homes, provide office support services, staff recovery and assistance centers, and simply listen to survivors' stories. Disaster volunteers often cite their experiences as the most rewarding of their lives. But check first. Well-intentioned volunteers can cause havoc if a disaster-affected community isn't ready to accommodate them. Denominations or inter-religious organizations responding to the disaster can tell you about needs. Sometimes particular skills or tools are in demand at a disaster site. Volunteer coordinators working for response organizations can help you schedule your visit, arrange housing and meals, and plan meaningful projects.
- Thinking long-term. After media coverage of a disaster subsides, survivors continue to struggle with unmet needs. In fact, most faith-based disaster response organizations work for more than a year while the community rebuilds and recovers. If you've been involved with a disaster just after it happened, you may want to mark your calendar and check back periodically. It's very likely there will still be vital needs you can help to meet.



Photo courtesy, FEMA

Shipping material goods may not make sense if roads are inaccessible or only open to emergency vehicles.

## Appendix

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I. Informational Materials Offered by Church World Service

II. Emergency Response Committee

III. Acronyms & Terms

IV. Web Site Addresses

## Appendix I

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### INFORMATIONAL MATERIALS OFFERED BY CHURCH WORLD SERVICE

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#### CONGREGATIONAL DISASTER PLANNING

*Planning, Prevention, & Mitigation.* A booklet about how the faith organizations can work to reduce of vulnerability of people and communities to disasters through mitigation and preparedness activities.

*The Silent Disaster: People of Faith Respond to Technological Disasters.* A manual for local clergy and lay leaders that explores the special nature of technological disasters and how the faith community can respond to them.

*Disaster and Disabilities in a Land of Faithfulness.* A brochure that points to resources for disaster planning around assisting persons with disabilities in your community.

*Hope Help Heal.* A training program on preparing for disaster ministry.

#### DISASTER RESPONSE

*Disaster Response: Donations That Make a Difference.* A public education brochure providing guidance on donations following disasters.

*Bringing God's Presence To Trauma Victims.* A booklet for clergy and lay leaders on spiritual/emotional care of persons traumatized by a disaster.

#### DISASTER RECOVERY ORGANIZING

*Managing & Operating The Faith-Based Disaster Recovery Organization.* A manual for directors and management staff of disaster recovery organizations that provides guidance on policies, practices, procedures, and program.

*Why, What & How: Cooperative Faith-Based Disaster Recovery In Your Community.* A brochure for local faith community leaders that provides an overview of the disaster recovery process.

#### GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE ERP & CHURCH WORLD SERVICE

*Alert.* A quarterly newsletter covering the Church World Service Emergency Response Program.

*Service.* A quarterly magazine covering the broad spectrum of Church World Service work in emergency response, development, and refugee resettlement.

*[www.cwserp.org](http://www.cwserp.org).* The Church World Service Emergency Response Program website which provides disaster reports and program information.

*[www.churchworldservice.org](http://www.churchworldservice.org).* The Church World Service web site covering CWS's comprehensive ministry.

To learn more about these materials order information, contact:

Church World Service  
Emergency Response Office  
475 Riverside Drive (Suite 700)  
New York, NY 10115

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## Appendix II

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### The CWS Emergency Response Committee

The Church World Service Emergency Response Committee includes representatives from national denominations and church-related agencies that agree to work together for the greater benefit of disaster survivors to the glory of God. A small Executive Council comprised of CWS member denominations sets agenda for the full committee. The committee's larger Domestic and International Roundtables also including representatives of non-member denominations look at disaster response field issues and how to cooperate in their work.

### Executive Council

- American Baptist Churches
- Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)
- Church of the Brethren
- International Orthodox Christian Charities
- Lutheran Disaster Response
- Presbyterian Disaster Assistance
- Reformed Church in America
- The Episcopal Church
- United Church of Christ/Wider Church Ministries
- United Methodist Church/United Methodist Committee on Relief

### Domestic Roundtable

- Adventist Community Service
- African Methodist Episcopal Zion
- American Baptist Churches USA
- Catholic Charities USA
- Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)
- Christian Disaster Response
- Christian Reformed World Relief Committee
- Church of the Brethren
- International Orthodox Christian Charities
- Friends Disaster Service
- Lutheran Disaster Response
- Mennonite Disaster Service
- Moravian Church
- National Catholic Relief Committee
- Nazarene Compassionate Ministry
- Presbyterian Disaster Assistance
- Reformed Church in America
- Southern Baptist Convention
- The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints
- The Episcopal Church
- The Salvation Army
- United Church of Christ/Wider Church Ministries
- United Methodist Church/United Methodist Committee on Relief

## International Roundtable

Adventist Community Service  
American Baptist Churches USA  
Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)  
Christian Disaster Response  
Christian Reformed World Relief Committee  
Church of the Brethren  
Cumberland Presbyterian Church  
Interchurch Medical Assistance  
International Orthodox Christian Charities  
Mennonite Central Committee  
Moravian Church  
National Catholic Relief Committee  
Nazarene Compassionate Ministry  
Presbyterian Disaster Assistance  
Reformed Church in America  
Southern Baptist Convention  
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints  
The Episcopal Church  
United Church of Christ/Wider Church Ministries  
United Methodist Church/United Methodist Committee on Relief

## Full Committee Contact List

**Adventist Community Service:** 12501 Old Columbia Pike, Silver Spring, MD 20904. Contacts: Sung Kwon—(301) 680-6438/6464 (FAX); Larry Buckner (1575 Hillside Drive, Grayson, GA 30017)—(770) 277-2525/2524 (FAX), lbuckner@earthlink.net; Website: [www.adventistcommunityservices.org](http://www.adventistcommunityservices.org)

**African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church:** 475 Riverside Drive (#1935), New York, NY 10115. Contact-Kermit DeGraffenreid—(212) 870-2952 / 2808 (FAX)

**American Baptist Churches USA:** Box 851, Valley Forge, PA 19482. Contacts: Kenneth George—(610) 768-2034/2453 (FAX), ken.george@abc-usa.org; Bucky Sydnor—(610) 768-2202; (800) 222-3872, X2426 (8:00 AM-4:15 PM); Website: [www.abc-usa.org](http://www.abc-usa.org)

**Catholic Charities USA:** 1731 King Street, Alexandria, VA 22314. Contact: Gerald Collins—(703) 549-1390 (X 18) / 1656 (FAX), gcollins@catholiccharitiesusa.org; Website: [www.catholiccharitiesusa.org/disaster](http://www.catholiccharitiesusa.org/disaster)

**Christian Church (Disciples of Christ):** Week of Compassion, Box 1986, Indianapolis, IN 46206. Contact: Johnny Wray—(317) 635-3100/3700 (FAX); (601) 492-3988 (Mississippi), johnnywray@ecunet.org; Website: [www.weekofcompassion.org](http://www.weekofcompassion.org)

**Christian Disaster Response:** Box 3339, Winter Haven, FL 33885. Contacts: Ron Patterson, Executive Director—(941) 956-5224/8133 (FAX), ronpatterson@aol.com; Website: [www.cdresponse.org](http://www.cdresponse.org)

**Christian Reformed World Relief Committee:** 2850 Kalamazoo Avenue, Grand Rapids, MI 49650. (616) 224-0738 (X 161)/0806 (FAX); Website: [www.crwrc.org](http://www.crwrc.org)

**Church of the Brethren:** 601 Main Street, Box 188, New Windsor, MD 21776. Contact: Stan Noffsinger—(410) 635-8731/8739 (FAX), snoffsinger\_gb@brethren.org; Website: [www.brethren.org/genbd/ersm/disaster.htm](http://www.brethren.org/genbd/ersm/disaster.htm)

**The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints:** 50 East North Temple Street, Salt Lake City, UT 84150. Contacts: Patrick Reese—(801) 240-3022/1417 (FAX); Lloyd Pendleton (801) 240-3022; Website: [www.lds.org](http://www.lds.org)

**Cumberland Presbyterian Church:** 1075 Union Avenue, Memphis, TN. Contact: Bob Watkins. (901) 276-4572, [rbw@cumberland.org](mailto:rbw@cumberland.org)

**Episcopal Relief & Development:** 815 Second Avenue, New York, NY 10017. Contacts: Sandra Swan—(212) 716-6020 / 983-6377 (FAX), [sswan@dfms.org](mailto:sswan@dfms.org); Mary Becchi—(800) 334-7626, [mbecchi@dfms.org](mailto:mbecchi@dfms.org); Website: [www.er-d.org](http://www.er-d.org)

**Friends Disaster Service:** 241 Keenan Road, Penninsula, OH 44264. Contact: Dean Johnson—(202) 650-4975

**Interchurch Medical Assistance, Inc.:** Box 429, New Windsor, MD 21776. Contact: Paul Derstine—(410) 635-8720/8726 (FAX), [ima@brethren.org](mailto:ima@brethren.org); Website: [www.interchurch.org](http://www.interchurch.org)

**International Orthodox Christian Charities:** 711 West 40 Street, Suite 306, Baltimore, MD 21211. Contact—Dean Triantafilou, (401) 243-9820

**Lutheran Disaster Response:** 8765 W. Higgins Road, Chicago, IL 60631-4190. Contacts: Gilbert Furst—(773) 380-2719/2493 (FAX), [gil.furst@ecunet.org](mailto:gil.furst@ecunet.org); Johanna Olson—(773) 380-2822 / 2493, (FAX), [JOlsen@elca.org](mailto:JOlsen@elca.org); Belletech Deressa—(773) 380-2620/2410 (FAX), Karl Reko (1020 N. Harlem, River Forest, IL 60305)—(773) 380-2630, [kreko@elca.org](mailto:kreko@elca.org); Website: [www.ldr.org](http://www.ldr.org)

**Mennonite Disaster Service:** 21 South 12th Street, Akron, PA 17501. Contacts: Tom Smucker & Carla Hunt—(717) 859-2210 / 3875 (FAX), [tes@mdsbinat.org](mailto:tes@mdsbinat.org), [cjh@mdsbinat.org](mailto:cjh@mdsbinat.org); Kevin King—(717) 859-3389; Hershey Lehman—(717) 859-1151; Website: [www.mds.mennonite.net](http://www.mds.mennonite.net)

**Moravian Church:** Box 1245, Bethlehem, PA 18018. Contact: Hampton Morgan—(215) 867-7566; Website: [www.moravian.org](http://www.moravian.org)

**Nazarene Compassionate Ministry:** 1027 Featherstone Circle, Ocoee, FL 34761. Contact: Tom Nees—(800) 846-2269/(407) 294-2275 (FAX)

**Presbyterian Church (USA):** 100 Witherspoon Street, Louisville, KY 40202, Contacts: Stan Hankins—(502) 569-5797/(502) 569-8039 (FAX), [Shankins@ctr.pcusa.org](mailto:Shankins@ctr.pcusa.org); Susan Ryan—(502) 569-5840/8039 (FAX), [Sryan@ctr.pcusa.org](mailto:Sryan@ctr.pcusa.org); Luke Asikoye—[Asikoye@aol.com](mailto:Asikoye@aol.com); Website: [www.pcusa.org/pcusa/wmd/pda/index.html](http://www.pcusa.org/pcusa/wmd/pda/index.html)

**Progressive National Baptist Convention, Inc.:** 601 50th Street, NE, Washington, DC 20019. Telephone: (202) 396-0558

**Reformed Church in America:** 4500 60th Street, SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49512. Contact: Betty Voskuil—(616) 698-7071/6606 (FAX), [bvoskuil@rca.org](mailto:bvoskuil@rca.org); Website: [www.rca.org/mission/rcws](http://www.rca.org/mission/rcws)

**The Salvation Army:** 615 Slaters Lane, Alexandria, VA 22313. Contact: Major David Dalberg—(703) 519-5886/5880 (FAX), [david.dalberg@usn.salvationarmy.org](mailto:david.dalberg@usn.salvationarmy.org); Website: [www.salvationarmy.org](http://www.salvationarmy.org)

**Southern Baptist Convention:** 1548 Poplar, Memphis, TN 38104. Contact: Mickey Caison—(901) 272-2461, mcaison@namb.net; Website: www.namb.net

**United Church of Christ/Wider Church Ministries:** 700 Prospect Avenue, Cleveland, OH 44115-1100. Contacts: Florence Coppola—(216) 736-3211, coppolaf@ucc.org; Susan Sanders—(216) 736-3210, sanderss@ucc.org; Website: www.ucc.org/global/disaster

**United Methodist Church/United Methodist Committee on Relief:** 475 Riverside Drive, (3rd Floor), New York, NY 10115. Contacts: Thomas Hazelwood —100 Maryland Avenue, NE (#330), Washington, DC 20002, (202) 548-4002/4116 (FAX), tomhaze@earthlink.net; Kristen Sachen—(212) 870-3909, ksachen@gbgm-umc.org; Website: http://gbgm-umc.org/umcor/

## **Program Descriptions**

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### **American Baptist Churches USA**

**Organization:** The National Disaster Response Office of National Ministries maintains a crisis-intervention network for the American Baptist Churches in the United States and Puerto Rico in conjunction with Church World Service. Executive Ministers of the denominations 34 Regions serve as disaster response officers.

**Operations:** When crises occur, the NDR Disaster Response Office contacts the Executive Minister in the region affected within 36 hours to assess needs. The Office also contacts ABC National Ministries and Volunteers In Mission and American Baptist Men Disaster Relief to coordinate clean-up and recovery efforts in communities stricken by disaster. It contributes funds to Cooperative Disaster Child Care and the Church World Service Disaster Response and Recovery Liaison Program.

Funds for the survival and recovery needs of disaster victims and their communities are made available to the National Disaster Response Office by the World Relief Committee of the American Baptist Churches from One Great Hour of Sharing offerings and designated contributions.

### **Adventist Community Services**

**Accreditation:** Adventist Community Services (ACS) operates under a written agreement (Memorandum of Understanding or MOU) with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the American Red Cross. It is also a member of the inter-agency compact, National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (NVOAD) and the affiliated state VOADs.

**Services Provided:** The following services are provided to the victims of disaster and their families in cooperation with the other government and voluntary disaster response agencies. Services are provided without regard to any person's race, color, language or religion.

- **Emergency Distribution Centers.** Supplies such as groceries, drinking water, blankets, personal comfort kits, disposable diapers, cleaning supplies, hand tools, plastic sheeting, tar paper and clothing are provided to meet immediate needs of families. Donations of groceries, blankets, clothing and other supplies are accepted from the general public and processed for distribution by ACS volunteers and through cooperating agencies. The centers are often based in community facilities such as a high school gym or church hall or in mobile units.
- **Listening Posts and Door to Door Visitation.** The emotional and spiritual needs of disaster victims, their relatives and neighbors are addressed by providing opportunities for them to ask

questions, chat informally, or request personal prayer. Door to door visits are for the purpose of providing useful information about the full range of disaster services and agencies. Listening Posts are established with inter-faith groups of pastors and trained lay pastoral workers.

- **Mass Feeding.** At the request of government and other voluntary agencies, ACS volunteers are available to staff hot meal or sack lunch service as needed to feed disaster victims or emergency workers. Often mass feeding is operated in conjunction with an emergency shelter operated by the American Red Cross.

Photo courtesy, FEMA



Adventist Community Services operates emergency distribution centers following disasters.

- **Disaster Child Care.** ACS provides trained volunteers who participate in the Cooperative Disaster Child Care (CDCC) program, an interagency collaborative project that provides temporary day care centers for victims of disasters as they deal with reorganizing their personal affairs. To maintain the security of the children in the program, all volunteers are supervised from one central registration office.
- **Loaned Personnel.** ACS volunteers are routinely loaned to other disaster agencies to assist in needs assessment, family services, health care and other areas of need.

**Base of Operations:** The disaster response of ACS is based in a network of state disaster coordinators, each of which lead a team of trained volunteers. It makes use of all the resources of the 200 social services centers and inner city programs operated in the U.S. and Canada by ACS. All of these are coordinated by the North American Headquarters of ACS.

## Church of the Brethren

**Organizational Structure:** Emergency Response/Service Ministries (ER/SM) is a program of the Church of the Brethren General Board. The Church of the Brethren is organized in 23 districts within the United States. Each district has a disaster response coordinator who is a volunteer recruitment officer for the disaster response projects. Local congregations are encouraged to appoint coordinators to assist with this task. The disaster child care program is organized with regional coordinators in 10 regions across the United States.

**Disaster Programs:** Motivated by the biblical mandate to “bear one another’s burdens,” ER/SM serves domestic disaster-stricken communities with two distinct ministries:

- **The Brethren Disaster Response** program which mobilizes teams of skilled volunteers to clean up debris and repair or rebuild homes for disaster survivors who are not in a position to help themselves.
- **The Disaster Child Care** program which is a national network of specially trained volunteers to help families and care for young children in traumatic disaster situations, including aviation incidents. This ministry is provided on behalf of children in cooperation with the American Red Cross and the ecumenical disaster response community.

## Program Guidelines:

- To develop an organization capable of responding to human need that results from natural and/or man-made disasters, with initiative first from the local congregations and districts but with General Board support when a specific disaster is beyond local and/or district capability.
- To serve the needs of people regardless of race, creed, or economic status, but to concentrate on assistance to the poor, the elderly, and the handicapped for longer-term relief and reconstruction.
- To recruit and train volunteers, as needed, from its constituency to meet the physical and spiritual needs of persons in disaster situations.
- To provide funds for food and lodging for volunteers on the project.
- To develop the capacity to operate its own projects in areas of Brethren population concentration, but always to be open to cooperation with Interfaith agencies and other organizations engaged in disaster response throughout the U.S. and U.S. Territories.
- To develop and maintain a working relationship with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), ARC, and other government and humanitarian agencies involved in disaster operations.
- To plan reconstruction operations on the basis that all building materials will be supplied by the person(s) being assisted, but to be open to providing grants, not to exceed \$1,000, in cases of special need.
- To enable those persons who might be unfavorably affected by legislation or policy to explore sources of funds for clean-up and/or restoration of damaged or lost property.
- To train, certify and maintain a network of disaster child care volunteers from various denominations who will be recruited to establish child-care centers serving the needs of young children of families who
  - have been affected by a disaster.
  - To inform and educate parents, teachers, community workers and the general public about the effects of disasters on children.

Photo courtesy, FEMA



Child care is an important part of the disaster ministry of several denominations.

## Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)

Through Week of Compassion-its refugee and development ministry fund, the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) across North America provides financial assistance for relief and long-term recovery after disasters. Week of Compassion funds the Volunteers in Mission program of the Division of Homeland Ministries which recruits and coordinates individuals and groups to assist in cleanup, rebuilding, and rehabilitation efforts under the auspices of interfaith and congregational projects. Week of Compassion, a partner in the Church World Service Emergency Response Program, supports CWS the CWS Disaster Response and Recovery Liaison Program.

## Catholic Charities USA Disaster Response

**Organizational Structure:** Catholic Charities USA is the organization that unites the social service agencies operated by most of the 175 Catholic dioceses in the United States. The network of more than 1,200 Catholic Charities agencies and institutions and over 200,000 volunteers and staff carries out the Catholic Church's commitment to accomplishing the goals of charity and justice by assisting people of all religious, ethnic, economic, and social backgrounds.

The mission of Catholic Charities USA is to provide service to people in need, to advocate for justice in social structures, and to call others of good will to do the same.

**Disaster Program:** The disaster response services of Catholic Charities USA complement the already established emergency assistance disaster organizations by providing assistance to communities in addressing the crisis and recovery needs of local families. In addition to offering a diversity of services for emergency assistance whenever possible, Catholic Charities agencies emphasize on-going and long-term recovery services such as: housing assistance for low-income families, counseling programs for children and the elderly and special counseling for disaster care givers. Catholic Charities USA was commissioned by the United States Catholic Conference (USCC) in 1968 to monitor disaster response of Catholic communities around the country. In 1990, Disaster Response became a full-time department of Catholic Charities USA.

Currently there are 110 bishop-appointed diocesan coordinators representing 46 states, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. These coordinators serve as the official liaison between their diocese and Catholic Charities USA for pre-disaster planning and post-disaster response.

### Christian Disaster Response

Christian Disaster Response is an interdenominational program of the American Evangelical Christian Church General Conference. The program provides disaster relief in cooperation with The Salvation Army and other National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disasters (NVOAD) members. The main points of the program:

- Local church development, training and activation to provide disaster relief to the local community with a special emphasis on minorities, in cooperation with other disaster relief organizations.
- Development of regional disaster response centers in which food, new clothing, medical supplies and building materials are stockpiled, sorted, boxed and prepared for shipment to disaster sites throughout the U.S., Canada and the world.
- Development of training programs in Spanish as well as English for pastors, staff, congregations and communities to meet the spiritual and physical needs of people affected by disasters. Development of transportation and distribution programs for disaster relief supplies through churches, communities, pastors, missionaries and other Christian organizations in affected areas. Coordination of disaster relief efforts to ensure non-duplication, while ensuring that all disaster caused needs are met.



Photo courtesy, FEMA

Building and repairing homes is an important part of faith community disaster ministry.

### Christian Reformed World Relief Committee

**Organizational Structure:** The Christian Reformed World Relief Committee (CRWRC) is a service agency of the Christian Reformed Church. Its principal mandates lie in the areas of community development and disaster response.

In North America, CRWRC's disaster response occurs primarily through trained volunteers who are available for a variety of recovery-related tasks. These volunteers are located in many of the 46 classes,

or regional divisions, of the Christian Reformed Church in North America. In smaller disasters and local emergencies, these volunteers are organized through Disaster Response Services (DRS) Area Managers. In case of major disasters, the volunteers are coordinated, as needed, through the Grand Rapids Office.

**Disaster Program:** CRWRC's Disaster Response Services (DRS) has the overall aim of assisting churches in the disaster-affected community to respond to the needs of persons within that community. Its specific emphasis is on helping those churches to provide people information about resources, practical assistance, the listening ear, and concern and support—particularly during long-term (six to twenty-four months) recovery. The DRS is essentially a volunteer force, prepared to offer several different types of service.

- **Advocacy:** This is a primary resource available through CRWRC-DRS. Volunteers are trained in active listening and problem solving to assist disaster victims to find permanent, long-term solutions to their disaster-related problems.
- **Management Consultation:** Trained and experienced volunteer disaster response managers oversee CRWRC long-term disaster recovery operations and consult with long-term local church response programs. CRWRC-DRS has published a series of management booklets to complement this service.
- **Assistance to Red Cross:** All DRS volunteers are encouraged to be active members of their local Red Cross chapter, especially casework associated with Emergency Assistance to Families.
- **Trainers:** DRS volunteers are available to train and assist CRWRC volunteers to increase their competency in disaster response and prepare church-related volunteers within a disaster-stricken community to work with disaster-related persons over a long period of time.
- **Needs Assessment:** Trained volunteers are available to assist a local church disaster-response group to identify which victims are in need of long-term recovery assistance.
- **Construction-Repair and Cleanup:** Volunteers with building trade expertise ensure quality control while assisting with the total rebuild or major repair of homes affected by a disaster. Other volunteers are available to assist with clean-up and minor repair work.
- **Child Care:** CRWRC-DRS volunteers are encouraged to be trained and serve as trainers with the Cooperative Disaster Child Care Program, managed by the Church of the Brethren.

## Episcopal Relief & Development

Episcopal Relief and Development provides emergency assistance and rehabilitative support to people affected by natural disasters, war, and civil strife. Episcopal Relief and Development is the collective response of Episcopalians to help people in need in the United States and around the world. It is the organized, tangible response to Christ's call to minister to the hungry and thirsty, the sick and those in prison, to clothe the naked, and welcome the stranger. We work with churches in the Anglican Communion as well as with other denominations, local organizations, and partner agencies.

### Our mission:

To serve Christ in all persons, to love our neighbors, and to respect the dignity of every human being. Episcopal Relief and Development raises, receives, and disburses moneys and other resources for the relief of human suffering. Episcopal Relief and Development provides emergency relief in times of disaster; it assists in the rehabilitation of lives, property, and organizations; it initiates and joins in partnership with those who identify and address root causes of suffering; and it supports and extends

Photo courtesy, FEMA



Volunteers from churches clean up homes after floods.



the social ministry of the church.

Under the guidance of General Convention and the Executive Council of the Episcopal Church, Episcopal Relief and Development's Board of Directors raises and receives funds and distributes them for the following general areas of need.

- **Relief:** Immediate crisis response to areas affected by natural disaster, civil strife, war or famine. Emergency grants may be awarded up to \$25,000
- **Rehabilitation:** Follow-up response to crisis situations to help people recover. Rehabilitation includes rebuilding communities, replanting crops, finding jobs, and providing post-trauma services that are often overlooked.
- **Development:** Longer-term support for projects that address the root causes of drought famine, disease, and lack of education

### Friends Disaster Services

**Organizational Structure:** Friends Disaster Service (FDS) was organized in 1974 and is incorporated as a non-profit organization in the State of Ohio as a nonprofit organization. FDS is an outreach and service arm the Friends Church. FDS has organized units of volunteers in several, but not all States. In preparedness planning, as well as in disaster recovery efforts, FDS seeks to network with, and cooperate with other volunteer disaster service organizations. FDS endeavors to have representatives on state VOADs where it has organized units.

**Disaster Program:** As personnel and resources are available, FDS provides cleanup and rebuilding assistance to disaster victims. This free service is provided without regard to race, creed, gender, or religious affiliation. However, articular attention is paid to elderly, handicapped, low income, and uninsured persons. In most cases FDS is unable to provide building materials, and therefore looks to network with other NVOAD organizations, interfaith groups, and unmet needs committee which may provide these materials. FDS has a Statement or Understanding with the American Red Cross.

### Interchurch Medical Assistance, Inc.

Interchurch Medical Assistance is a non-profit association of relief and development agencies representing a vast constituency of churches in the U.S. and throughout the world. Through the generosity of churches and product donations from U.S. pharmaceutical companies, IMA provides medicines and hospital supplies for overseas health care programs serving people in need. IMA annually distributes more than \$18 million in lifesaving medicines and related materials critically needed for refugee and disaster relief overseas. Working with U.S. pharmaceutical companies, IMA obtains medicines through donations and purchases for its member organizations, associate groups and approved medical missions. IMA maintains its inventory of medicines and medical supplies at the Brethren Service Center's pharmaceutical warehouse at New Windsor, MD, which ships resources to more than 90 countries for 22 non-profit organizations.



CWS staff photo

Denominations offer spiritual nurture to local care-givers following disasters. Presbyterian Church (USA) staff led a spiritual retreat at a church camp near New York City.

### International Orthodox Christian Charities

In seeking to provide assistance to the poor, either in response to emergencies or long term socio-economic development needs, IOCC's fundamental policy is to develop a sustainable indigenous capacity to carry

out such programs. Overseas offices are established by IOCC when, and if, the Orthodox hierarchy of the country in question have made a request; if there is a need to use IOCC skills to enhance the capacity of the Church and other institutions to reach the poor more effectively; and if the scale of the program requires an on-site presence to monitor targeting of beneficiaries, program implementation and reporting.

IOCC's mandate is to undertake purely humanitarian activities. Thus, IOCC does not support programs of Church mission (Church reconstruction, religious education, seminary support, etc.).

In an effort to mobilize all Orthodox Christians to its efforts to bring assistance to the poor throughout the world, IOCC has adopted a grassroots approach. Metropolitan Committees are, or will be, established in cities throughout the United States and Canada. Through these committees, parishioners are offered the chance to assist those in need and to engage their fellow parishioners and local communities in support of humanitarian assistance programs.

IOCC maintains relationships with other institutions so that Orthodox Christian humanitarian concerns and initiatives are appropriately represented. IOCC is registered with the U.S. Agency for International Development and is eligible to receive funds for foreign assistance from the U.S. Government. It is a member of InterAction, a coalition of U.S. based non-governmental organizations that carry out humanitarian assistance programs overseas. As a member, IOCC is bound by the InterAction code of professional ethics. IOCC is active in ecumenical initiatives both with the National Council of the Churches of Christ and with the World Council of Churches and Action by Churches Together.

## **Lutheran Disaster Response**

**Organizational Structure:** Lutheran Disaster Response (LDR) is a cooperative domestic ministry of two Lutheran denominations, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) and the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod (LCMS). LDR's mission is to demonstrate Christ's compassion for people by promoting health, healing and wholeness for disaster survivors. LDR strives to serve persons impacted by disaster in a timely, compassionate and competent manner through a coordinated, community-based system involving all Lutheran entities.

Formal agreement and active memberships are maintained with Church World Service, the American Red Cross and National Organizations Active in Disaster (NVOAD).

**Disaster Program:** LDR responds locally through its network of Lutheran social ministry organizations (Lutheran Social Services, Lutheran Family Services, etc.), judicatories and congregations to deliver services.

LDR provides funding, resources and consulting to its local Lutheran partners (the coordinating Lutheran social ministry organization, judicatory offices, and congregations) to work in cooperation and coordination with other faith-based and secular voluntary agencies in response to the disaster. LDR generally provides funds for the following services: clean up, construction management, counseling services, case management, volunteer coordination, care for caregiver programs, pastoral/spiritual care and promoting local interfaith development.

LDR leads a coalition of Lutheran organizations to facilitate distribution of resources and services in order to build the capacity of the Lutheran community to respond to those impacted by disaster (LDR Coalition: ELCA Domestic Disaster Response, LCMS World Relief, Thrivent Financial for Lutherans, Laborers for Christ, Mission Builders, Lutheran Services in America, Orphan Grain Train and Lutheran Hour Ministries are the partners).

LDR also develops preparedness networks among its social ministry organizations and LDR Coalition partners.

## Mennonite Disaster Service

**Organizational Structure:** Mennonite Disaster Service (MDS) has four regions in the United States and one in Canada, and 49 local units. The local unit has the primary responsibility to represent MDS in a disaster response within its geographic boundaries, calling for and accepting help from the regional director, other units, and the bi-national office as needed. Each unit has a network of congregational contact persons throughout the Mennonite, Brethren of Christ, and related churches who communicate the need for volunteers throughout the 325,000-member constituency in North America. The MDS regional and bi-national offices are organized to assist and support the units in programs. Names, addresses, and phone numbers of regional, state or local unit leaders can be obtained by calling the national office in Akron.

**Disaster Program:** The Mennonite, Brethren of Christ, and related Anabaptist constituent churches, in keeping with their Biblical and Christian service theology, respond through MDS to help meet the needs of disaster victims. Special emphasis will be placed on helping those least able to help themselves, such as the elderly, handicapped, widowed, etc. Although the major thrust of our traditional disaster assistance is in the areas of post-disaster cleanup and building repair, MDS personnel are willing to expand their areas of involvement where there is a need and when a sufficient number of volunteers are available. Mennonite Disaster Service workers are volunteers who serve without pay. They carry out their disaster assistance activities, supported by the larger regional and bi-national network, in a spirit of cooperation with the various agencies of the government and the other volunteer disaster service organizations.

The major contribution of Mennonite Disaster Service to most disaster situations will be supplying volunteer personnel for cleanup, repair, and rebuild operations. In most cases, the MDS organization will not provide resources for housing materials, anticipating that these will come from other sources. MDS will require no fees for services provided, although support via Red Cross, local interfaith groups, etc., for food and housing for volunteer personnel is usually welcomed and appreciated.

## Nazarene Disaster Response

NDR is a part of Nazarene Compassionate Ministries, Inc., a charitable organization chartered and sponsored by the Church of the Nazarene to support a variety of worldwide development and relief projects. It aims to bring about social transformation for suffering and marginalized peoples by promoting indigenous leadership and local organizational development through training, technical expertise and fund-raising assistance. While NDR and NCM are new organizational structures, members and friends of the Church of the Nazarene have been active in responding to disasters in the U.S. and abroad for many years. The church recently organized itself into NCM and NDR in part to affiliate and cooperate with other agencies. It has recently appointed national and regional project directors and begun development of volunteer training programs.



CWS staff photo

Denominations conduct regular training to equip their volunteers. United Church of Christ, in training around technological disasters, included a bus tour of the Love Canal area at Niagara Falls, NY, site of a major environmental disaster.

## **Presbyterian Church (USA)**

The Presbyterian Church (USA) responds to disasters through Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (PDA “Out of chaos, hope” summarizes its mission which is to witness to the healing love of Christ at home and abroad through emergency response, refugee ministries, and reclaiming lives and communities disrupted by natural and human-centered disasters. PDA is part of the Worldwide Ministries Division of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). The program receives its primary funding from the One Great Hour of Sharing offering; additional support is generated by special gifts for specific crises throughout the world.

**Disaster Program:** In addition to providing support toward the core budget of Church World Service and Witness and the CWS Emergency Response Office, PDA supports the CWS Disaster Response and Recovery Liaison program. The PCUSA seeks to work cooperatively with other voluntary organizations through NVOAD. When a major disaster occurs, response by PDA may include the following:

- **Human Resources.** Advisors from the Presbyterian Disaster Assistance Team (PDAT) may be provided who have been trained to assist congregations, middle governing bodies, or interfaith response organizations.
- **Volunteer clean-up and/or rebuilding teams** can be provided if needed.
- **Financial Resources.** A portion of the church’s One Great Hour of Sharing offering is set aside to respond to situations where the needs of disaster survivors exceed the capability of the local or regional faith community. Ordinarily, a request for funding should be made to the cognizant presbytery office. Requests by interfaith disaster response organizations should be consistent with the budgets sent to CWS.
- **Material Resources.** Emergency supplies and building materials may be provided. PDA encourages Presbyterians to support the CWS “Gifts of the Heart” kit program.
- **Food and shelter** may be provided by Presbyterian congregations, colleges, and camps.
- **Pastoral care** is available through Presbyterian congregations, institutions, and PDAT members.

To learn more about the work of Presbyterian Disaster Assistance: Visit our web site at <http://pda.pcusa.org>. Contact us by email at [pda@pcusa.org](mailto:pda@pcusa.org). Call 888-728-7228, ext. 5839. Mail Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, 100 Witherspoon Street, Louisville, KY 40202-1396

## **Progressive National Baptist Convention, Inc.**

The Progressive National Baptist Convention responds to disasters through the Church World Service Emergency Response Program, channeling funds through it to areas affected by disasters. PNBC maintains a general fund into which constituent members contribute for rapid response. It issues varied appeals for specific events

## **Reformed Church in America**

The Reformed Church in America (RCA) responds to disasters through the office of Reformed Church World Service, a program of the Mission Services Unit of the General Synod Council. Grants are provided both for the core budget of Church World Service (CWS) and the Emergency Response Office. Local congregations are encouraged to join in planning and implementing a coordinated interfaith response to disasters. Volunteers are invited to participate in needs assessment, clean-up, repair and rebuilding, contributing money, and preparing and sending material aid. The RCA channels funds received through partner organizations such as CWS, RCA mission personnel, local interfaith groups, or its churches in an affected community. The RCA maintains an emergency disaster contingency line item

in its annual budget to respond worldwide to disasters when little or no designated money is received.

### **United Church of Christ National Disaster Ministries Program**

**Organizational Structure:** National Disaster Ministries is a program of United Church of Christ Wider Church Ministries and is coordinated through the Office for Global Sharing of Resources staff team. The UCC National Disaster Ministries Program is supported by the One Great Hour of Sharing offering and designated gifts from individuals and congregations.

**Program:** The UCC conducts its program of national disaster response in cooperation with Church World Service and Witness by membership on its Executive Committee; through funding of its Emergency Response Office and disaster appeals; and by supporting the Disaster Response and Recovery Liaison program. Additionally, the UCC-CWS Resource Unit on Technological Disasters has been a joint program initiative undertaken since 1997. An interactive web site, network of consultants and training materials are made available on behalf of the wider church-based and inter-faith community.

At the local level, the church's National Disaster Ministries are conducted in cooperation with and through the 39 Conferences of the UCC. Each Conference, drawing upon the gifts of its local congregations, determines how best to serve as ecumenical partners and witnesses of hope when disasters occur in their geographic area by developing preparedness measures before crises occur; helping organize volunteers for clean-up and rebuilding efforts; and coordinating their activities with both community-based and church-based emergency response organizations. When disasters occur, financial assistance is channeled through Conference Offices and Church World Service appeals. Any direct appeal for assistance from interfaith groups must be endorsed by the Conference Minister in that geographic area.

### **United Methodist Committee on Relief**

**Organizational Structure:** The United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR) responds to disaster within the United States according to in the Book of Discipline. UMCOR exists as a resource through which our connectional church empowers local ministries to respond to disasters.

A disaster-impacted Annual Conference "owns" the way it responds to the disaster. UMCOR does not manage or perform the work of recovery. The following priorities define our United Methodist disaster response ministry:

- Assistance is given regardless of a person's color, economic status, or religious affiliation
- Emergencies in marginalized and minority communities within a majority culture are given special consideration

Our ministry to disaster survivors is multifaceted, with theological, physical, mental health, advocacy, and social service components. The goal of disaster response ministry is to strengthen and re-establish relationships between persons and God, persons and families, and persons and communities. Because of this wide focus, UMCOR supports Annual Conferences as they seek out and give priority to those persons who can often be overlooked in a disaster. To determine need and reach those who are at risk of falling through the cracks, UMCOR considers income levels and other "quality of life" factors such as infant mortality rates, life expectancy, and literacy rates.

UMCOR Can . . .

- Provide pre-disaster training to annual conference and district disaster response committees
- Provide cash grants
- Provide consulting services

- Lend generators, power washers, and other necessary equipment
- Use its depots for receiving, processing, and shipping donated items from across the church sent in response to a disaster
- Assist with the formation of a community-based interfaith recovery agency
- Assist with recruiting, organizing, and managing Volunteers in Mission teams
- Provide the services of UMCOR mentors and advisors

UMCOR Cannot . . .

- Come into a disaster site without an invitation from the bishop
- Send funds without a request from the bishop
- Administer or perform the work of a disaster recovery operation. This responsibility rests with the Annual Conference
- Allow its funds to be used for repair of damaged church property-unless there is a churchwide appeal which clearly states that the money is to be used for property repair along with relief of human need

## Appendix III

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### Acronyms and Terms

**ARRL**—The American Radio Relay League, Inc.

**ABC**—American Baptist Churches

**AECC**—American Evangelical Christian Church

**AME**—African Methodist Episcopal Church

**AMEZ**—African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church

**ARC**—American Red Cross

**CDCC**—Cooperative Disaster Child Care Program

**COAD**—Community Organizations Active in Disaster

**COB**—Church of the Brethren

**CRWRC**—Christian Reformed World Relief Committee

**CWS**—Church World Service, Inc.

**DRC**—Disaster Recovery Center/One Stop Center

**DRRL**—Disaster Resource and Recovery Liaison, a Church World Service field staff person responsible for assisting the local faith community in cooperative efforts around disaster mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery.

**DFO**—Disaster Field Office established and managed by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) when a disaster is Presidentially-declared

**DNN**—Disaster News Network—a web site ([www.disasternews.net](http://www.disasternews.net))—reports on faith community activities in disaster mitigation/preparedness/response, provides an online mechanism for donors to give money to faith-based disaster programs, and details volunteer needs in disaster ministries.

**DWI**—Disaster Welfare Inquiry, an American Red Cross service that provides information about people affected by disasters to inquiring family members.

**EOC**—Emergency Operations Center

**EOP**—Emergency Operations Plan

**ELCA**—Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

**FEMA**—Federal Emergency Management Agency

**IHP**—Individuals & Households Program—a Federal program that provides financial assistance to disaster survivors for housing repairs, personal property losses, and other expenses related to disaster-caused needs.

**IOCC**—International Orthodox Christian Charities

**MDS**—Mennonite Disaster Service

**MASS CARE AND FEEDING**—The Red Cross uses local volunteers to set up shelters and feeding stations for evacuees and volunteers working immediately after the impact

**NVOAD**—National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster, a national consortium of agencies that seek to work cooperatively and collaboratively and coordinate their activities in disaster education, mitigation, response

**PDA**—Presbyterian Disaster Assistance

**PNBC**—Progressive National Baptist Convention, Inc.

**RCA**—Reformed Church in America

**REACT**—Radio Emergency Associated Communications Teams

**RED CROSS ASSISTANCE OR SERVICE CENTER**—Facility operated by the Red Cross to provide immediate emergency provisions for survivors. Disbursement orders are written for the merchant of the survivor's choice for food, clothing, furniture, tools, and medicine. The amount is determined by the number of members within a family.

**RED CROSS SHELTER**—Temporary housing established by Red Cross usually in schools, community buildings, churches, or other large buildings near the disaster site.

**SBA**—Small Business Administration, a federal agency that provides disaster recovery loans to qualifying businesses and individuals at lower than market rates.

**SBC**—Southern Baptist Convention

**SDA**—Seventh Day Adventist

**TSA**—The Salvation Army

**UMCOR**—United Methodist Committee on Relief

**UCC**—United Church of Christ

**VOAD**—Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster; State, territory or regional groups of NVOAD



## Appendix IV

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### WEBSITE ADDRESSES

The following web sites link you to important information about disaster response agencies and how to plan and implement disaster ministries.

American Radio Relay League .....	<a href="http://www.arrl.org">www.arrl.org</a>
American Red Cross .....	<a href="http://www.redcross.org">www.redcross.org</a>
America's Second Harvest .....	<a href="http://www.secondharvest.org">www.secondharvest.org</a>
Catholic Charities .....	<a href="http://www.catholiccharities.org">www.catholiccharities.org</a>
Census and Demographic Info .....	<a href="http://factfinder.census.gov">http://factfinder.census.gov</a>
Poverty .....	<a href="http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/poverty.html">www.census.gov/hhes/www/poverty.html</a>
Christian Church (Disciples Of Christ) .....	<a href="http://www.weekofcompassion.org">www.weekofcompassion.org</a>
Christian Reformed World Relief Committee .....	<a href="http://www.crwrc.org">www.crwrc.org</a>
Church World Service Emergency Response Program..	<a href="http://www.cwserp.org">www.cwserp.org</a>
Civil Air Patrol .....	<a href="http://www.capnhq.gov">www.capnhq.gov</a>
Commission on Safety and Health .....	<a href="http://www.nycosh.org">www.nycosh.org</a>
Disaster News Network .....	<a href="http://www.disasternews.net">www.disasternews.net</a>
Environmental Protection Agency .....	<a href="http://www.epa.gov">www.epa.gov</a>
Federal Emergency Management Agency .....	<a href="http://www.fema.gov">www.fema.gov</a>
Federal government disaster news, regional office contact information, declarations, disaster resources, links to state emergency management sites, FEMA training courses, etc.	
Humane Society of the U.S. ....	<a href="http://www.hsus.org">www.hsus.org</a>
Livable Communities— Info and Resources .....	<a href="http://www.livablecommunities.gov">www.livablecommunities.gov</a>
Lutheran Disaster Response .....	<a href="http://www.elca.org/dcs/disaster">www.elca.org/dcs/disaster</a>
Mennonite Disaster Services .....	<a href="http://www.mds.mennonite.net">www.mds.mennonite.net</a>
National Flood Insurance Program .....	<a href="http://www.fema.gov/nfip">www.fema.gov/nfip</a>
National Organization for Victim Assistance .....	<a href="http://www.try-nova.org">www.try-nova.org</a>
National VOAD .....	<a href="http://www.nvoad.org">www.nvoad.org</a>
NVOAD members, links to other resources, Long Term Recovery Manual online	

Natural Hazards Center ..... [www.colorado.edu/hazards](http://www.colorado.edu/hazards)  
Online copies of the Natural Hazards Observer (magazine) and Disaster Research (newsletter)

Points of Light Foundation ..... [www.pointsoflight.org](http://www.pointsoflight.org)

REACT ..... [www.reactintl.org](http://www.reactintl.org)

Telephone Pioneers of America ..... [www.telephone-pioneers.org](http://www.telephone-pioneers.org)

United Church of Christ Disaster Ministries ..... [www.ucc.org/disaster](http://www.ucc.org/disaster)

United Methodist Committee On Relief ..... [www.umcor.org](http://www.umcor.org)

Volunteers In Technical Assistance ..... [www.vita.org](http://www.vita.org)

Permission to copy freely is granted by Church World Service. Please give generously to help disaster survivors begin new lives. Send your contribution through your church or mail directly to:

Church World Service

P.O. Box 968

Elkhart, IN 46515

Call the Church World Service Disaster Hotline for updates: 800-456-1310

For credit card contributions, call 800-762-0968

