Disaster Preparation, Mitigation, and Response

A Resource Manual for Congregations and Mid-Councils

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Introduction

The ministry of disaster preparation, mitigation and response is an active and on-going program of the Presbyterian Church (USA). Under the guidance of Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, we unite with sister faiths to form Church World Service. This umbrella organization for ministries of compassion has been serving domestically and internationally since the end of the Second World War. More recently, our response partners have come to include many denominations, governmental organizations, non-profit organizations, as well as local, regional and national entities such as the American Red Cross, the Salvation Army, The American Humane Society, and a host of others. Together, these agencies comprise the National Volunteer Organizations Active in Disaster (VOAD)

In this manual you will learn to prepare your household for disasters of various types. Additionally, you will become familiar with the roles and responses of the Congregational Disaster Response Coordinator (CDRC), the Presbytery Disaster Response Coordinator (PDRC) and the local congregation in preparation for long-term recovery, especially in partnership with state and local VOADs. You will become familiar with model presbytery disaster preparedness and responses plans and gain an awareness of other partners in response. The final section includes some considerations for Pandemic Influenza that differ from other disaster preparations. The Church World Service publication, "Prepare to Share" is highly recommended as an additional resource for the local congregation and is available electronically or in printed form.

A General Workshop Outline
(This will be adapted for specific scenarios and locations.)

Introductions: Who are We and Why are We Here?

Unit I

I. What is a Disaster?
   a. Any event which overwhelms the resources of a family, community, region or nation.
   b. What are the Types of Disaster and how are They Different?
      i. Natural Disaster: Act of God. (Hurricane, earthquake, flood, etc.)
      ii. Technological Disaster: Act of Humanity. (Terrorism, war, power outage, etc.)
      iii. What is the Disaster Potential of This Area?

Unit II

II. Take Care of Yourself so that You can Take Care of Others
   a. Portable or "Go" Kits
   b. First Aid Kits
   c. Water and Food Kits
   d. Special Needs Kits
   e. Clean Air Kits

Unit III

III. The Disaster Cycle
   a. Operating Values
   b. The PAIIR Model

IV. Role and Responsibility of the Local Church in Response to Disasters

Unit IV

V. Congregational Disaster Response Coordinator: Roles and Responsibilities

VI. CDRC Field Manual

VII. Presbytery Disaster Response Coordinator: Role and Responsibilities

VIII. PDRC Field Manual

Unit V

IX. Model Presbytery Disaster Preparedness and Response Plans

Unit VI

X. Other Responders
   a. Sequence of Delivery

Unit VII

XI. Specific to Pandemic Influenza

UNIT I

What is a Disaster?

A disaster is any catastrophic event, which overwhelms the resources of a family, community, region or nation. They usually involve extensive damage to property and may or may not result in injury and/or loss of life. Annually, disasters account for billions of dollars lost and innumerable lives impacted. While we cannot prevent disasters, we can prepare ourselves in such a way that their impact is mitigated and life can begin to embrace a new sense of normality.

Disasters are broadly classified into two types:

Natural Disasters

Natural disasters are sometimes called, "acts of God." These include hurricanes, wildfires, tornadoes, earthquakes, floods, etc. Those who live in natural disaster-prone areas, such as coastal communities, know that they must be prepared for hurricanes. Those who live along the West Coast battle wildfires annually. People who live along waterways know that flooding is always a possibility and prepare accordingly.

In preparing for natural disasters, it is important to be mindful of those who are particularly vulnerable: the poor, the elderly, the chronically ill, etc. Since, with the exception of earthquakes and tornadoes, most natural disasters afford time for warning and response, advance communication, preparation, and evacuation can often be effected.

Technological Disasters

Unlike natural disasters, technological or man-made disasters often strike with little or no warning. These include massive power failures for extended times, acts of terrorism, nuclear accidents, hazardous materials incidents, etc. Each community has plans in place for addressing these events and the disaster responder must be knowledgeable and prepared to respond in ways that are both helpful and restorative. To increase your awareness of and preparation for these situations you may call upon your local Emergency Management Agency (EMA). They will be only too happy to confer knowledge and may even be willing to make a presentation to a congregation or group of interested citizens.

Effects of Disaster on the Local Community

Every disaster will have different effects due to the variety of communities, infrastructure and individuals. A small, rural community will suffer differently from a large metropolis. Regardless of size or situation, though, damage to infrastructure, power grids, homes and business have many common denominators. From mere inconvenience for a short amount of time to the massive efforts of Long-Term Recovery (LTR), each community will be different in its response to the disaster event. Let's take a moment to consider the disaster potential for your hometown or community. You might want to consult with your EMA Director or city/county engineer to ascertain the different scenarios, which you may face.

What is the Disaster Potential for This Area?

Consider the different types of disaster, natural and technological that could occur in this area. Write them down in discussion with the larger group.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

8.

9.

10.

Unit II

Personal and Family Preparation

Assuming that you know have a general idea of your exposure to a wide variety of disaster scenarios, you are now ready to make your preparations. These need to be carefully considered and revised regularly in the light of changing circumstance or in the event you move to a new community.

One of the great difficulties in the wake of Hurricane Katrina in 2005 was the lack of information as to where people had gone. The following Family Disaster Preparedness Checklist should be completed and kept on file in the home, with neighbors and the church office. This will help others who care for you to find you in the event of an emergency or disaster. When kept in the church office, it should be part of your family file, if the church keeps such records. Failing that, it should be kept along with the other similar forms in a locked, confidential filing cabinet. Electronic back-ups are highly recommended and should be kept in secure locations beyond your community.

Taking care of yourself and your loved ones is a top priority. If you are injured or otherwise incapacitated, you will not be able to help others in the wider circles of your acquaintance. The following section provides several examples of lists that can be used to help you prepare for a wide range of events before they occur. The lists contain suggestions and should be adapted to your specific needs. Be sure to give copies of the lists to members of the congregation and friends.

FAMILY DISASTER PREPAREDNESS CHECKLIST

WHO WE ARE

Full Name **Address** **Phone (Home, Work, Cell)**

_____
_____
_____
_____

WHERE WE ARE

Our Shelter in Place location in the house will be the _____

Our Rally Point if we must leave the house will be the _____

Our closest shelter facility is the _____

Our secondary shelter facility is the _____

WHAT WE HAVE

☐ Non-perishable food for three days ☐ Potable water for three days

☐ First Aid Kit ☐ Sanitation Supplies ☐ Prescription Medications

☐ Battery Operated Radio ☐ Flashlight ☐ Important Papers

All of the above are located in the _____

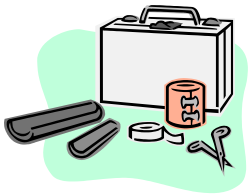
WHO TO CALL IN CASE OF AN EMERGENCY

Name **Relationship** **Address** **Phone**

Distribution: Each household of the congregation

GET A KIT

PORTABLE KIT



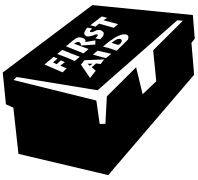
Emergency Supplies

Water, food, and clean air are the essential items for survival. Each family or individual's kit should be customized to meet specific needs, such as medications and infant formula. It should also be customized to include important family documents.

Recommended Supplies to Include in a Portable Kit:

- **Water**, amounts for portable kits will vary. Individuals should determine what amount they are able to both store comfortably outside the home and be able to transport to other locations.
- **Food**, at least a three-day supply of non-perishable food
- **Battery-powered radio** and a **NOAA Weather Radio** with tone alert and **extra batteries** for both or crank powered radios, flashlights, etc. Available through Red Cross or retail stores.
- **Flashlight** and **extra batteries**
- **First Aid Kit**
- **Whistle** to signal for help
- **Dust mask** or cotton t-shirt to help filter the air
- **Hard hat and eye protection**
- **Moist towelettes** for sanitation.
- **Wrench** or **pliers** to turn off utilities
- **Can opener** for food (if kit contains canned food)
- **Plastic sheeting** and **duct tape** to shelter-in-place.
- **Unique family needs,** such as daily prescription medications, infant formula and diapers, and important family documents.
- **Garbage bags** and **plastic ties** for personal sanitation.
- **Birth Certificates** and other important documents in a weatherproof container.
- **Two Sharpie pens – for written communication and self-identification.**

GET A KIT



FIRST AID KIT

In any emergency a family member or you yourself may be cut, burned or suffer other injuries. If you have these basic supplies you are better prepared to help your loved ones when they are hurt. Remember, many injuries are not life threatening and do not require immediate medical attention. Knowing how to treat minor injuries can make a difference in an emergency. Consider taking a first aid class, but simply having the following things can help you stop bleeding, prevent infection and assist in decontamination.

Things you should have:

- **Two pairs** of Latex, or other **sterile gloves** (if you are allergic to Latex).
- **Sterile dressings** to stop bleeding.
- **Cleansing agent**/soap and antibiotic towelettes to disinfect.
- **Antibiotic ointment** to prevent infection.
- **Burn ointment** to prevent infection.
- **Adhesive bandages** in a variety of sizes.
- **Eye wash solution** to flush the eyes or as general decontaminant.
- **Thermometer**, digital, battery operated.
- **Prescription medications** you take every day such as insulin, heart medicine and asthma inhalers. You should periodically rotate medicines to account for expiration dates.
- **Prescribed medical supplies** such as glucose and blood pressure monitoring equipment and supplies.

Things it may be good to have:

- Cell phone
- Scissors
- Tweezers
- Tube of petroleum jelly or other lubricant

Non-prescription drugs:

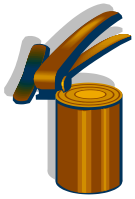
- Aspirin or non-aspirin pain reliever
- Anti-diarrhea medication
- Antacid (for upset stomach)
- Laxative

GET A KIT

WATER & FOOD

Water

- One gallon of water per person per day, for drinking and sanitation.
- Children, nursing mothers, and sick people may need more water.
- If you live in a warm climate more water may be necessary.
- Store water tightly in clean plastic containers such as soft drink bottles.
- Keep *at least* a three-day supply of water per person.



Food

- Store at least a three-day supply of non-perishable food.
- Select foods that require no refrigeration, preparation or cooking and little or no water.
- Pack a manual can opener and eating utensils.
- Choose foods your family will eat:
  - Ready-to-eat canned meats, fruits and vegetables
  - Protein or fruit bars
  - Dry cereal or granola
  - Peanut butter
  - Dried fruit
  - Nuts
  - Crackers
  - Canned juices
  - Non-perishable pasteurized milk
  - High energy foods
  - Vitamins
  - Food for infants
  - Comfort/stress foods

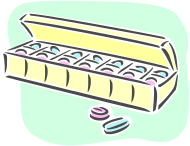
GET A KIT

SPECIAL NEEDS ITEMS

Remember the special needs of your family members. **Infants**, the **elderly** and **persons with disabilities** need the same planning as everyone else, and sometimes a little more, to be prepared for a terrorist attack.

For Baby:

- Formula
- Diapers
- Bottles
- Powdered Milk
- Medications
- Moist towelettes
- Diaper rash ointment



For Adults:

- Ask your doctor about storing prescription medications such as heart and high blood pressure medication, insulin, epi-pens and other prescription drugs.
- Denture needs
- Contact lenses and supplies
- Extra eye glasses

For more information on supplies, see "Your Family Disaster Supply Kit" from American Red Cross and Federal Emergency Management Agency.

For Seniors:

- Plan how you will evacuate or signal for help.
- Plan emergency procedures with home health care agencies or workers.
- Tell others where you keep your emergency supplies.

- Teach others how to operate necessary equipment.
- Label equipment like wheelchairs, canes or walkers.

- Additional supplies for seniors:
  - List of prescription medications including dosage in your supply kits. Include any allergies.
  - Extra eyeglasses and hearing-aid batteries
  - Extra wheelchair batteries or other special equipment in your supply kit.
  - A list of the style and serial numbers of medical devices such as pacemakers in your emergency supply kits.
  - Copies of medical insurance and Medicare cards.
  - List of doctors and emergency contacts.

For people with Disabilities:

- Create a support network to help in an emergency.
- Tell these people where you keep your emergency supplies.
- Give one member of your support network a key to your house or apartment.
- Contact your city or county government's emergency information management office. Many local offices keep lists of people with disabilities so they can be located quickly in a sudden emergency.
- Wear medical alert tags or bracelets to help identify your disability.
- If you are dependent on dialysis or other life sustaining treatment, know the location and availability of more than one facility.
- Show others how to operate your wheelchair.
- Know the size and weight of your wheelchair, in addition to whether or not it is collapsible, in case it has to be transported.
- Additional supplies for People with Disabilities:
  - Prescription medicines, list of medications including dosage, list of any allergies
  - Extra eyeglasses and hearing-aid batteries
  - Extra wheelchair batteries, oxygen
  - Keep a list of the style and serial number of medical devices.
  - Medical insurance and Medicare cards
  - List of doctors, relatives or friends who should be notified if you are hurt.

For more information on supplies, see "Your Family Disaster Supply Kit" from American Red Cross and Federal Emergency Management Agency.

For more information on special needs, see Disaster Preparedness for People With Disabilities from FEMA, and Disaster Preparedness for Seniors by Seniors from the Red Cross.

GET A KIT

CLEAN AIR

Many potential terrorist attacks could send tiny microscopic "junk" into the air. For example, an explosion may release very fine debris that can cause lung damage. A biological attack may release germs that can make you sick if inhaled or absorbed through open cuts. Many of these agents can only hurt you if they get into your body, so think about **creating a barrier** between yourself and any contamination.

Nose and Mouth Protection

Face masks or dense-weave cotton material that snugly covers your nose and mouth and is specifically fit for each member of the family. Do whatever you can to make the best fit possible for children.

Be prepared to improvise with what you have on hand to protect your nose, mouth, eyes and cuts in your skin. Anything that fits snugly over your nose and mouth, including any dense-weave cotton material, can help filter contaminants in an emergency. It is very important that most of the air you breathe comes through the mask or cloth, not around it. Do whatever you can to make the best fit possible for children. There are also a variety of facemasks readily available in hardware stores that are rated based on how small a particle they can filter in an industrial setting.

Given the different types of attacks that could occur, there is not one solution for masking. For instance, simple cloth facemasks can filter some of the airborne "junk" or germs you might breathe into your body, but will probably not protect you from chemical gases. Still, something over your nose and mouth in an emergency is better than nothing. Limiting how much "junk" gets into your body may impact whether or not you get sick or develop disease.

Other Barriers

- Heavyweight plastic garbage bags or plastic sheeting
- Duct tape
- Scissors

There are circumstances when staying put and creating a barrier between yourself and potentially contaminated air outside, a process known as "**shelter-in-place**", is a matter of survival. You can use these things to tape up windows, doors and air vents if you need to seal off a room from outside contamination. Consider pre-cutting and labeling these materials. Anything you can do in advance will save time when it counts.

Use available information to **assess the situation**. If you see large amounts of debris in the air, or if local authorities say the air is badly contaminated, you can use these things to tape up windows, doors and air vents if you need to seal off a room. Read more: Deciding to Stay or Go.

HEPA (High Efficiency Particulate Air Filtration) Filter Fans

Once you have sealed a room with plastic sheeting and duct tape you may have created a better barrier between you and any contaminants that may be outside. However, no seal is perfect and some leakage is likely. In addition to which, you may find yourself in a space that is already contaminated to some degree.

Consider a **portable air purifier**, with a **HEPA filter**, to help remove contaminants from the room where you are sheltering. These highly efficient filters have small sieves that can capture very tiny particles, including some biological agents. Once trapped within a HEPA filter, contaminants cannot get into your body and make you sick. While these filters are excellent at filtering dander, dust, molds, smoke, biological agents and other contaminants, they will not stop chemical gases.

Some people, particularly those with severe allergies and asthma, use HEPA filters in masks, portable air purifiers as well as in larger home or industrial models to continuously filter the air.

UNIT III

Disaster Preparation, Mitigation, and Response

Disaster preparation, mitigation and response seeks to reduce, or avoid, the potential losses from hazards, assure prompt and appropriate assistance to victims of disaster and achieve rapid and effective recovery. The Disaster Cycle illustrates the ongoing process by which governments, faith-based organizations, businesses, and the public at large plan for and reduce the impact of disasters, react during and immediately following a disaster and take steps to recover after a disaster has occurred. When appropriate actions are taken at each point of the cycle, the result is greater preparedness, better warnings, reduced vulnerability, and perhaps the prevention of a disaster during the next iteration of the cycle.

The Disaster Cycle

1. Warning/Anticipation: Preparing to respond. Steps include review of preparedness plans, emergency exercises/training, gathering and organizing necessary information, creation and testing of communication/warning systems. Listen to your all-hazards radio for information and instructions.
2. Impact/Emergency/Rescue: Shelter in place or move quickly to an assigned facility before the actual impact. Stay safe and calm until the event has passed. Be aware of the presence of First Responders and help to the extent that it is safe to do so and as you are trained and credentialed. If you are no longer credentialed, assist only as asked.
3. Aftermath/Assessment: When you have been informed that it is safe to do so and after you have made sure that you and your family are secure, you may assist in the assessment process as necessary. If you have sheltered in place, this will include an assessment of your home and property. Then you may help your neighbors and friends make their own assessments as needed. Contact your out-of-town contacts and advise them of your situation. Don't forget to call the church office if you have a Family Disaster Checklist on file.
4. Relief/Remedy: Take care of things, which need to be done immediately. This may include shutting off gas, electricity, and checking for downed power lines, water leaks, etc.
5. Short Term Recovery: This will consist of initial clean up of debris, clearing of roadways, re-establishment of emergency/medical/law enforcement services. During this time determinations will be made as to state/federal declarations of disaster that will determine the amount and variety of resources, which will be made available in the future.
6. Long-Term Recovery: This is exactly what the name implies. Long-Term Recovery may last months or years, depending upon the nature and extent of the disaster. Recovery from Hurricane Katrina is on-going ten years after the event. During this time, various community organizations will form a Long-Term Recovery Group (LTRG) which will, in consultation with state and/or federal authorities, begin making lists of immediate and Long-Term needs. VOAD organizations will quickly appear and take on such tasks as chainsaw work (Southern Baptists), warehousing of supplies (Seventh Day Adventists), case management (UMCOR-United Methodists and Catholic Charities), and LTRG/Community organization (Presbyterian Disaster Assistance. Assessment of property will, in all likelihood, be done by World Renew if they are deployed. A very important function of the LTRG will be the Unmet Needs Committee, which will help assure that no individual or family "falls through the cracks" as funds and repairs are scheduled

IT SHOULD BE NOTED THAT THE DIFFERENT PHASES OF THE DISASTER CYCLE DO NOT ALWAYS, OR EVEN GENERALLY, OCCUR IN ISOLATION OR IN THIS PRECISE ORDER. OFTEN PHASES OF THE CYCLE OVERLAP AND THE LENGTH OF EACH PHASE DEPENDS GREATLY ON THE SEVERITY OF THE DISASTER.

Operating Values in Disaster Response

- God is the Lord of all Creation and is intimately involved in the lives of all people.
- Because of God's Presence, all human life is precious
- God has called us to live in community with each other, regardless of how we frame our religious affiliations, if any.
- We are called to bear each other's burdens, being mutual servants of each other and of Jesus Christ.
- We bear witness to the love and work of Christ when we engage in the tasks of disaster preparation, mitigation and response.
- We recognize our own brokenness and sinfulness; our incapacity to involve ourselves totally and without agendas in this or any work of the Kingdom.
- We call upon our God, as revealed in Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit to claim, perfect and renew the work of our hands and hearts so that God's Name may be praised and the Kingdom expanded.

THE P.A.I.I.R. MODEL

The following is offered as an easy-to-remember tool in organizing a program of disaster preparation, mitigation and response.

Preparation: Use the time available to organize committees, calling trees, develop current information databases and evaluate the physical plant of the church for disaster survival. Identify and train CDRCs, PDRCs, and other individuals with skills and credentials essential to mitigation for and recovery from disasters.

Alert: When news of a possible disaster is received, have the CDRC alert the staff and membership of the church through calling trees or other means. Back up all computer records and store in a safe location. Ideally, e-mail them to a secure location at least 50 miles away. (Presbytery Office, perhaps.) Secure all storm doors, windows, etc.

Inform: Following the event, and when personal and family safety is determined, determine the nature and scope of the disaster. Communicate with church staff and membership to begin assessing needs.
Communicate with other CDRCs and the PDRC for your area.

Instruct: Distribute information as to the location and status of shelters, Points of Distribution, etc. Inform congregation as to the status of the church and when a service of worship will be held. Coordinate with Emergency Responders as to areas of danger that should be avoided. Instruct people to listen to their radios for official information.

Recover: As Emergency Responders finish their work; help with the formation of a VOAD if there is not one already at work. Pay special attention to special needs individuals and families. (i.e. the elderly, poor, chronically ill, those with small children, etc.)

Role and Responsibility of the Local Church in Response to Disaster in the Community.

When disaster strikes:

The Congregational Disaster Response Coordinator (CDRC-see Unit IV) will notify the appropriate persons that a disaster has occurred and what responses are planned or underway. The Presbytery will be informed as to what has happened in your community and the possibility of involvement. Middle governing bodies need to know as soon as possible who is available to help and how the disaster has affected the congregation, the church building and the ability of the church to minister to the disaster survivors.

Use buildings as shelter, when appropriate:

There are two meanings in English of the word ***sanctuary;*** a holy place of worship, and a safe place in the midst of danger. Church buildings can be both a place of worship and a vital place of safety and shelter in a disaster.

If your church is remodeling or building a new structure, consider upgrading the facilities to make it useful as a shelter or staging area for those coming to help. Making a building disaster resistant may increase the cost; but it may also lower insurance costs and mitigate damage in a disaster. Churches in particularly disaster prone areas should seriously consider a program of mitigation that includes building renovation and strengthening.

Adding showers and planning the facilities for mass shelter can provide an opportunity for ministry to the community in times of crisis. In addition to survivors, those who arrive following a disaster to restore communications and power lines need facilities to prepare meals, shower and recoup after the day's work. In the recovery phase of a disaster, churches can host work teams from other parts of the country. Churches have been used as service centers in the relief phase and then gone on to provide support for long-term recovery efforts organized by the faith community.

Some churches have done it all! During the Ice Storm in Northern New York in 1998, the Peru Community Church made its kitchen available to the power company for the preparation of food for line crews, its fellowship building for survivors, and its parking lot for wood donated by local maple farmers for home heating in Peru… and as far north as Quebec. Of course, the ability of the Peru Church to respond so quickly and so positively to this crisis depended upon the willingness of the church to be used by the community, the accessibility and usability of the church facilities, and the prompt response of the middle judicatory to the church's request for support.

Participate in and help organize the faith community response:

All disasters are local. Even in the midst of national organizations and regional and state bodies arriving to help with emergency assistance and relief, the local congregation is the most important body in deterring what happens next. Outside agencies only help for a little while, and much of the aid and support that will be available in the Long-Term will be determined shortly after emergency phase is over. **It is essential that the local congregations in the area of a disaster quickly become involved in the faith community's response. Without the involvement of the local congregation – and frequently without the leadership of the pastor or trained laypersons – the long-term response will leave many survivors without adequate resources to rebuild… resources that would readily have been available with a faith community organized to receive them.** To this end, the establishment of a Long-Term Recovery Group is critical to the mission.

The Long-Term Recovery Group

Soon after the disaster impacts the local community, congregations and other local agencies must begin planning for Long-Term recovery. Long-Term Recovery Groups (LTRGs) vary greatly in their composition and functioning. Nonetheless, some commonalities exist. They have a Board of Directors, which directs the overall mission. They have a corporate charter from their state and recognition as a 501(c)3 from the IRS. (This can temporarily be borrowed from a non-profit agency willing to serve as a fiduciary agent until a permanent arrangement can be made.) There is an Unmet Needs Committee that utilizes the skill of a Caseworker to track those who "fall through the cracks." i.e. the uninsured and underinsured. Additionally, there will be a Donations Management Committee and a Worksite Coordination Committee. Each of these will function in a manner most appropriate to the affected community and culture.

Once the LTRG is in place and recognized, FEMA and other response partners will share the information, which they have as respects names, addresses, and needs of those requiring assistance. Hence, the need to get the LTRG in place as soon as possible.

Resources available to local congregations:

Advisors

Members of the Presbyterian Disaster Assistance National Response Team are available to congregations **upon the invitation of the Presbytery Executive**:

- When they are in the area following a disaster to provide emotional and spiritual care for the congregation and community.
- On an as available basis to provide consultation with churches planning mitigation.
- To provide advice to congregations on becoming involved in the recovery stage of the disaster.
- To provide spiritual, emotional and other assistance to leaders suffering from compassion fatigue and other forms of PTSD.

Coordination for work teams

Once a Long-Term Recovery Group is in place, PDA can coordinate information about opportunities for work teams in areas affected by disasters. Initial information is available on the PDA website: http://pcusa.org/pda. In addition, PDA can provide written material on organizing and managing a work team. Work teams may register on-line at the PDA website or by calling the National Call Center at 866.732.6121. The Call Center can also be reached at pda.callcenter@pcusa.org.

When work teams identify a prospective site and make arrangements to schedule a mission trip, PDA will provide the well-known blue PDA t-shirts for the whole team.

Support while in the field

When local congregations become involved in the faith community response to a disaster, PDA provides support and counsel both to the faith community and to the local congregation.

While early work teams may need to be self-supporting in the field, the PDA office is available for support and consultation in case of emergencies or difficulties while on site. Work teams relate directly to the faith communities where they go to serve and are encouraged to work out difficulties directly with their host community. However, at times problems arise that can't be solved by the local congregation or the faith community. PDA can be helpful in finding solutions and facilitating better outcomes.

Volunteer Villages

In response to catastrophic events which compromise the local infrastructure, PDA may provide a Volunteer Village or make arrangements with a local congregation to host volunteer work teams. Congregationally based villages typically host a work team or teams in numbers of 5-50, depending upon the size and capacity of the hosting church.. Provision is made for food, water, sanitation, tool storage, sleeping quarters, and other needs. Community is created one week at a time as volunteers come and go.

A Village Manager is on site or available at all times, coordinating the life of the village and interfacing with the affected community. He or she will orient the individual work teams to village life and will assist with planning and logistics, so that a meaningful experience may be had by all participants. Additionally, a Work Supervisor will be responsible for identifying jobs, assessing skills, providing materials, field safety, transportation, etc.

The entrance to the Volunteer Village housed at a church in Port Neches, Texas.

UNIT IV

Congregational Disaster Response Coordinator

Roles and Responsibilities

The Congregational Disaster Response Coordinator shall serve as the resource person in the local church for the purposes of disaster preparation, mitigation, response and recovery. To this end, the CDRC should:

- Have current knowledge of members of the congregation and access to their addresses, phone numbers and special needs.
- Be thoroughly familiar with community infrastructure, roads and emergency shelters.
- Be knowledgeable as to the roles and responsibilities of local organizations active in disaster, e.g. local government, ARC, Salvation Army, local EMAs and VOADs.
- Participate in disaster response training provided by PDA, and/or presbytery and synod.
- Coordinate the disaster response of the local church with the Presbytery Disaster Response Coordinator.

The CDRC shall oversee and maintain emergency communications within the congregation and share necessary information with the Pastor, Clerk of Session and the PDRC. It is anticipated that this will be accomplished through the use of systems such as a telephone tree, e-mail, or house-to-house welfare checks by members of the Session or their designees.

The CDRC shall conduct an in-house disaster drill at least annually to maintain an adequate level of preparedness. This shall additionally serve to insure the accuracy of congregational information and special needs.

Following a disaster, the CDRC shall participate in the formation of an Interfaith Response Team under the direction of PDA or Church World Service.

The CDRC shall assist the Pastor and Session in assessing and responding to needs within the congregation and community, giving special attention to individuals and families who are in danger of "falling through the cracks" of relief efforts.

ACCOUNTABILITY: The CDRC shall report to the Head of Staff, the Session, and the Presbytery Disaster Response Coordinator (PDRC).

TERM: The CDRC will serve on a yearly basis, subject to renewal by the Session. There will be no specific limitations on renewals.

Congregational Disaster Preparedness Checklist

_____
Name of Church

Pastor_____ Clerk of Session_____
Phone_____ Phone_____

Congregational Disaster Response Coordinator_____
CDRC phone_____Cell phone_____

Preparatory Phase

1. Alert is issued by NOAA, Department of Homeland Security, or state/local EMA.
2. Advise Congregational Disaster Response Coordinator to initiate telephone tree for elder notification.
3. Elders notify members of their respective under-shepherd groups of the developing situation, status of local shelters, and plans for disaster mitigation.
4. Special attention given to shut-ins and elderly who may need assistance.
5. Elders report completion of their calls to CDRC, noting special needs.
6. Church Staff backs up computer files, financial data, rolls, etc. and stores electronic and hard copies in a secure location, preferably off campus.

☐ CDRC notified Date and Time_____

☐ Elders notified Date and Time_____

☐ Reports received from Elders Date and Time_____

☐ Electronics and Hard Copies of Data Secured Date and Time_____

Emergency Phase

Everyone remains in place, sheltered against the event. Use of NOAA radio encouraged to remain safe until the "all clear" is given.

Inventory Phase

1. Elders see to the safety of their families and property first.
2. Elders contact those on their under-shepherd list. If p hone service is out, individual visitation should be attempted with respect for public safety and National Guard lines. Information should be given to CDRC.
3. Within 24 hours of the incident, the Session holds a Called Meeting at the church or other location if the church is not usable. During this meeting, the following items should be addressed by the CDRC.
    a. Status of members and their needs to the extent that it can be known.
    b. Status of church facilities and discussion of possible use for the benefit of the community.
    c. Status of local shelters, both primary and secondary.
    d. If the church is a shelter, status of coordination with ARC, Salvation Army or other relief agencies.
    e. Schedule a time for congregational gathering and worship.

☐ Called Meeting of Session Scheduled Date and Time_____
☐ CDRC Reports Shared Date and Time_____
☐ Status of members and needs Date and Time_____
☐ Status of facilities Date and Time_____
☐ Discussion of availability to community Date and Time_____
☐ Coordination with relief agencies
    ☐ American Red Cross
    ☐ Salvation Army
    ☐ Local VOAD
    ☐ Other (Specify)_____
☐ Gathering and Worship of Congregation Scheduled Date & Time_____

Relief Phase

1. Within 24 hours of the Called Session Meeting, the CDRC, Pastor and/or Clerk contact the Presbytery Disaster Response Coordinator and give a full report of the impact on the church, its members and community.
2. PDRC assimilates information from all churches impacted within the Presbytery and, in conjunction with the Presbytery Executive or his/her delegate, provides information as to injuries, damage, needs etc. to the Presbytery-at-large.
3. PDRC and/or Presbytery Executive notify Presbyterian Disaster Assistance of injuries, damage, needs etc. (PDA #888.728.7228 x5840)
4. CDRC and PDRC assist in the formation of a local VOAD, if one is not already formed and arrange for volunteers, resources, and funding to aid in relief and recovery.

5. During this phase, it is imperative that members with special needs (elderly, shut-ins, chronically ill, families with young children, the poor, etc. are closely supported.)

☐ Presbytery Office or PDRC notified and report give Date & Time_____
☐ Information received as to the status of Presbytery. Date & Time_____
☐ Local VOAD formed, if not already in place Date & Time_____
☐ Special-needs members identified and supported. Plans made for on-going support.

Recovery Phase

Each recovery phase is unique to the incident and the community involved. Most often there is not a clear delineation between the Relief and Recovery phases, rather organizations and events take shape in response to the realities present. As infrastructure is being restored, homes and businesses re-built, each congregation can discover its own, unique ministry within the community. Suggestions include, but are not limited to:

- Serve as a childcare center for families affected by the disaster. Have someone familiar with childhood trauma and stress available to consult or assist with caregiving.
- Make facilities available for community meetings. Churches often serve as community activity centers. Hospitality has historically been one of the callings of the Church of Jesus Christ.
- Consider offering fellowship halls, education buildings and even sanctuaries as shelter facilities for volunteers. The American Red Cross, Salvation Army and other relief agencies have shelter guidelines for victims. Become familiar with these insofar as possible. Volunteers usually need only a place to sleep, eat and bathe.
- Warehouse space can often be established in church facilities. Have someone with knowledge of materials management available to supervise or consult on the reception, cataloging and distribution of materials. Establish early on the type of materials that will be accepted. Beware of an influx of unusable items. This is often termed the Second Disaster.
- Serve as a clearinghouse for information about people, needs, opportunities, etc. This can be as simple as setting up and maintaining a community bulletin board or as complex as working with USPS to establish a temporary mail center.
- In all cases, keep the PDRC and the Presbytery informed of what the church is doing. As a connectional church, we celebrate and struggle together.

Distribution: Pastors, Clerks of Session, CDRCs, PDRCs, Synod Disaster Response Officer, PDA

Congregational Disaster Response Coordinator FIELD MANUAL

Synod of South Atlantic
Presbyterian Church (USA)

This manual is for field use by C.D.R.C.s of individual congregations within specified presbyteries of the Synod of South Atlantic, Presbyterian Church (USA). Permission to copy, distribute and modify as needed is hereby granted with or without acknowledgement of the author or source.

Introduction

The role and responsibilities of the Congregational Disaster Response Coordinator (CDRC) is critical in helping the local congregation prepare for and respond to disasters of all kinds. The mission of the CDRC is to enable the local congregation to continue as an expression of the Body of Christ before, during and after disaster.

To this end, this Field Manual is offered as a critical tool in the accomplishment of the above. It is distilled from the larger manual, "Disaster Preparation, Mitigation and Response, a Workshop for Presbyteries."

Users are encouraged to copy and modify this manual for use in their unique setting. Obviously, more than one page of the Quick Family Reference Guide will be needed for most congregations.

Once the information has been gathered and recorded, it is recommended that it be updated every 3-6 months. Additionally, it may be useful if a current copy is laminated for protection against the elements.

Suggestions for improvement are always welcome! If you see a deficiency or have a suggestion, please do not hesitate to notify the author. Your participation in our joint ministry of disaster preparation, mitigation, and response is deeply appreciated.

Ken McKenzie, PDA Consultant/Trainer
Synod of South Atlantic, Presbyterian Church (USA)
912.399.5717

mckenzie.ken@att.net

Disaster Procedures for the Local Congregation

Before Disaster Strikes:

- ☐ Compile data on all families within the congregation using the forms in this manual.
- ☐ Compile data on Important Contact Information form. Adapt as necessary.
- ☐ Complete listing of area shelters. May be accessed at your local EMA.
- ☐ Determine people with special skills and ask them to be volunteers. List on Roster.
- ☐ Create a communications network such as a phone tree, e-mail list, among leaders.
- ☐ Work with staff, dividing responsibilities so that communications are maintained.
- ☐ Train congregation in disaster preparation, mitigation and response.
- ☐ Establish relationships with local EMA, Red Cross, Salvation Army and others.
- ☐ Investigate the formation of a local VOAD, if one is not already in place.

When Disaster is Imminent:

- ☐ Activate communication network, if time permits, to warn congregation.
- ☐ Secure yourself and your family in a safe place until the event has passed.

After Disaster Strikes:

- ☐ Assess yourself, your family and home for injury or damage.
- ☐ Activate communication network to begin assessment of congregation and campus.
- ☐ Begin filling out Disaster Checklist, noting dates, times and people.
- ☐ Notify PDRC and Presbytery of injuries, damage, etc.
- ☐ Assist Pastor in preparing a Called Meeting of Session.
- ☐ Assist Pastor in preparing a Service of Worship.
- ☐ Contact EMA and find out what kind of information should be shared.
- ☐ Find out how and where response agencies are responding and communicate same.
- ☐ Coordinate with local VOAD, if present.
- ☐ Coordinate with PDA National Response Team, if deployed
- ☐ **PACE YOURSELF! GET REST WHEN YOU CAN! TRY TO EAT PROPERLY! PRAY, PRAY, PRAY! KEEP PERSPECTIVE AND THAT ALL-IMPORTANT SENSE OF HUMOR. REMEMBER, LAUGHTER IS THE HAND OF GOD ON THE SHOULDER OF A TROUBLED WORLD.**

Quick Family Reference Guide

Unless otherwise noted, this information is confidential and should not be shared or distributed.

Last Name_____ Primary Contact_____ Home Phone_____
Dependents_____,_____,_____,_____,_____,_____
Address_____
Cell Phones_____
Primary Shelter_____ Secondary Shelter_____
Emergency Contact_____ Phone # _____
Out of Town Contact_____ Phone # _____
Special Needs or Considerations_____

Last Name_____ Primary Contact_____ Home Phone_____
Dependents_____,_____,_____,_____,_____,_____
Address_____
Cell Phones_____
Primary Shelter_____ Secondary Shelter_____
Emergency Contact_____ Phone # _____
Out of Town Contact_____ Phone # _____
Special Needs or Considerations_____

Last Name_____ Primary Contact_____ Home Phone_____
Dependents_____,_____,_____,_____,_____,_____
Address_____
Cell Phones_____
Primary Shelter_____ Secondary Shelter_____
Emergency Contact_____ Phone # _____
Out of Town Contact_____ Phone # _____
Special Needs or Considerations_____

Last Name_____ Primary Contact_____ Home Phone_____
Dependents_____,_____,_____,_____,_____,_____
Address_____
Cell Phones_____
Primary Shelter_____ Secondary Shelter_____
Emergency Contact_____ Phone # _____
Out of Town Contact_____ Phone # _____
Special Needs or Considerations_____

Last Name_____ Primary Contact_____ Home Phone_____
Dependents_____,_____,_____,_____,_____,_____
Address_____
Cell Phones_____
Primary Shelter_____ Secondary Shelter_____
Emergency Contact_____ Phone # _____
Out of Town Contact_____ Phone # _____
Special Needs or Considerations_____

Important Contact Information

Quick Reference

Pastor
Name_____Phone_____Cell_____E-Mail_____

Associate
Name_____Phone_____Cell_____E-Mail_____

Clerk of Session
Name_____Phone_____Cell_____E-Mail_____

PDRC
Name_____Phone_____Cell_____E-Mail_____

Presbytery Executive
Name_____Phone_____Cell_____E-Mail_____

Synod Disaster Response Officer
Ken McKenzie Cell: 912.399.5717 mckenzie.ken@att.net

Emergency Management Agency
Name_____Phone_____Cell_____E-Mail_____

American Red Cross
Name_____Phone_____Cell_____E-Mail_____

Salvation Army
Name_____Phone_____Cell_____E-Mail_____

Other Contacts

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Area Shelters

Name_____Address_____Agency_____
Contact_____Phone/Cell_____Assistance_____

Name_____Address_____Agency_____
Contact_____Phone/Cell_____Assistance_____

Name_____Address_____Agency_____
Contact_____Phone/Cell_____Assistance_____

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Contact_____Phone/Cell_____Assistance_____

Name_____Address_____Agency_____
Contact_____Phone/Cell_____Assistance_____

Name_____Address_____Agency_____
Contact_____Phone/Cell_____Assistance_____

Disaster Checklist

☐ Disaster Notification Received
Date and Time_____
Type of Event_____

☐ Pastor and Clerk Notified
Date and Time_____

☐ Congregation Notified
Date and Time_____
Method (s)_____

☐ Impact Recorded
Date and Time_____
Brief Description_____
_____
_____

☐ Initial Assessments
Date and Time_____
Conditions_____
_____
_____
_____

☐ Congregational Assessment
Date and Time_____
Total Households in Congregation_____
Total Households contacted_____
Total Households unaccounted for_____

☐ Report to Pastor and Session
Date and Time_____

☐ Report to PDRC
Date and Time_____

☐ Called Meeting of Session Scheduled
Date and Time_____

☐ Worship Service Scheduled
Date and Time_____

☐ Contact Made with PDA NRT
Date and Time_____

☐ Coordinate Recovery with First Responders, Local VOAD, etc
Date and Time_____

☐ Begin Long-Term Recovery
List Partner Agencies, contacts, phone numbers, etc.

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Roster of Volunteers with Special Skills

Name_____ Phone: H)_____C)_____
Skills_____
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Name_____ Phone: H)_____C)_____
Skills_____
_____

Name_____ Phone: H)_____C)_____
Skills_____
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Name_____ Phone: H)_____C)_____
Skills_____
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Name_____ Phone: H)_____C)_____
Skills_____
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Name_____ Phone: H)_____C)_____
Skills_____
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Name_____ Phone: H)_____C)_____
Skills_____
_____

Name_____ Phone: H)_____C)_____
Skills_____
_____

Name_____ Phone: H)_____C)_____
Skills_____
_____

Name_____ Phone: H)_____C)_____
Skills_____
_____

Log of Volunteer Hours Worked

Date: _____

Name_____Location_____Task_____Hrs._____

Name_____Location_____Task_____Hrs._____

Name_____Location_____Task_____Hrs._____

Name_____Location_____Task_____Hrs._____

Name_____Location_____Task_____Hrs._____

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Name_____Location_____Task_____Hrs._____

Name_____Location_____Task_____Hrs._____

Name_____Location_____Task_____Hrs._____

Name_____Location_____Task_____Hrs._____

Presbytery Disaster Response Coordinator

Roles and Responsibilities

The Presbytery Disaster Response Coordinator (PDRC) shall serve as a primary resource at the Presbytery level for the purposes of organizing congregational preparation, mitigation response and recovery before, during and after disaster. To this end, the PDRC should:

- Have current knowledge of the congregations within the presbytery, their leadership, addresses and phone numbers.
- Be thoroughly familiar with the infrastructure of the presbytery, including roads, emergency shelters, etc.
- Be knowledgeable at to the roles and responsibilities of local organizations active in disaster, e.g. local government, ARC, Salvation Army, local EMAs and VOADs.
- Participate in disaster response training provided by PDA or Synod and be prepared to share that training with the CDRCs of the presbytery.
- Coordinate the disaster response of the presbytery, paying special attention to congregations with limited resources and populations of those with special needs.

The PDRC shall oversee and maintain emergency communications within the presbytery and share necessary information with the Presbytery Executive, Chair of Council, Treasurer, and other PDRCs.

The PDRC shall conduct a tabletop drill within the Presbytery once per year, utilizing as many of the CDRCs as possible.

Following a disaster, the PDRC shall participate with other response partners, under the guidance of PDA and/or Church World Service. This will normally include being available to give reports and updates to the PDA National Response Team, should they be deployed to the presbytery.

ACCOUNTABILITY: The PDRC shall report to the Presbytery Executive, the Council, and the Synod Disaster Response Officer.

TERM: The PDRC will serve on a yearly basis, subject to renewal by the Council. There will be no specific limitations on renewals.

Presbytery Disaster Response Coordinator FIELD MANUAL

SYNOD OF SOUTH ATLANTIC
Presbyterian Church (USA)

This manual is for field use by P.D.R.C.s of presbyteries within the bounds of the Synod of South Atlantic, Presbyterian Church (USA). Permission to copy, distribute and modify as needed is hereby granted with or without acknowledgement of the author or source.

Disaster Checklist for the Presbytery Office

Before Disaster Strikes

- Create a communications network among CDRCs and PDRCs such as a phone tree or e-mail list. Consider housing the website in a different region so that it will be less likely to be impacted by a disaster.

- Create an evacuation plan and divide responsibilities so that communications can still flow from the Presbytery Office. Who will update the website? Who will initiate calls among the staff and the disaster response coordinators?

- Consult with PDA and establish a checking account with a bank which can receive funds via electronic transfer for distribution to relief efforts.

- Make the Presbytery Office more disaster resistant by shuttering windows, building a safe room, securing equipment and appliances, and by putting records in a safe place. Electronic back ups may be sent to a neighboring presbytery for safekeeping.

- Understand the details of the Presbytery's insurance coverage.

- Encourage churches within the Presbytery to prepare their facilities for disaster and participate in the PAIIR model through the training and designation of CDRCs.

- Establish a relationship with local Emergency Management Agency officials and keep a phone list of your contacts.

- Encourage staff to prepare themselves and their homes and make sure they understand the policy regarding reporting to work during and after a disaster.

After a Disaster Strikes

- Use your communications network to ensure that staff, CDRCs and other PDRCs are physically well.
- Call the office's insurance agency if there is damage to the physical plant.
- Do not return to your facility until you are sure it is safe to do so.
- Check with CDRCs as to injuries, casualties and damages, beginning with the most vulnerable church populations.
- Inform the Executive Presbyter and/or Moderator of Council of your findings. Consult with the above to determine whether or not a PDA presence is needed.
- If PDA presence or assistance is needed, call 888.728.7228 x5806.
- Contact your local EMA liaison and ask about the priority information which should flow from the office. Meet with the staff to discuss what information to distribute and the best way to do so.
- Find out how local organizations are responding so you can tell people what services are available.
- Distribute correct information to the community about what to do. Be specific about what donations are needed, keeping in mind that used clothing is almost never needed.
- Begin to organize a local VOAD, if one is not already in place.
- **PACE YOURSELF! GET REST WHEN YOU CAN! TRY TO EAT PROPERLY! PRAY, PRAY, PRAY! KEEP PERSPECTIVE AND THAT ALL-IMPORTANT SENSE OF HUMOR. REMEMBER, LAUGHTER IS THE HAND OF GOD ON THE SHOULDER OF A TROUBLED WORLD.**

Quick Reference Guide to PDRCs and CDRCs

Church_____ Address_____ Phone_____
CDRC_____ Phone: H)_____ C)_____
Primary Shelter_____ Secondary Shelter_____

Church_____ Address_____ Phone_____
CDRC_____ Phone: H)_____ C)_____
Primary Shelter_____ Secondary Shelter_____

Church_____ Address_____ Phone_____
CDRC_____ Phone: H)_____ C)_____
Primary Shelter_____ Secondary Shelter_____

Church_____ Address_____ Phone_____
CDRC_____ Phone: H)_____ C)_____
Primary Shelter_____ Secondary Shelter_____

Church_____ Address_____ Phone_____
CDRC_____ Phone: H)_____ C)_____
Primary Shelter_____ Secondary Shelter_____

Church_____ Address_____ Phone_____
CDRC_____ Phone: H)_____ C)_____
Primary Shelter_____ Secondary Shelter_____

Church_____ Address_____ Phone_____
CDRC_____ Phone: H)_____ C)_____
Primary Shelter_____ Secondary Shelter_____

Church_____ Address_____ Phone_____
CDRC_____ Phone: H)_____ C)_____
Primary Shelter_____ Secondary Shelter_____

Church_____ Address_____ Phone_____
CDRC_____ Phone: H)_____ C)_____
Primary Shelter_____ Secondary Shelter_____

Church_____ Address_____ Phone_____
CDRC_____ Phone: H)_____ C)_____
Primary Shelter_____ Secondary Shelter_____

Important Contact Information
Quick Reference

Presbytery Executive
Name_____ Phone_____ Cell_____ E-Mail_____

Associate Executive
Name_____ Phone_____ Cell_____ E-Mail_____

Moderator of Council
Name_____ Phone_____Cell_____ E-Mail_____

PDRCs

Name_____ Phone_____ Cell_____ E-Mail_____

Name_____ Phone_____ Cell_____ E-Mail_____

Name_____ Phone_____ Cell_____ E-Mail_____

Presbyterian Disaster Assistance
888.728.7228 x 5806

Synod Disaster Response Officer
Ken McKenzie Home: 912.450.0041 Cell: 912.399.5717 mckenzie.ken@att.net

Local Emergency Management Agency
Name_____ Phone_____ Cell_____ E-Mail_____

American Red Cross Contact
Name_____ Phone_____ Cell_____ E-Mail_____

Salvation Army Contact
Name_____ Phone_____ Cell_____ E-Mail_____

Other Contacts

_____
_____
_____
_____
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_____

UNIT V

Model Presbytery Disaster Preparedness & Response Plan

Introduction

Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (PDA) enables congregations and mission partners of the Presbyterian Church (USA) to witness to the healing love of Christ through caring for communities adversely affected by crises and catastrophic events. In accomplishing this mission, PDA provides training and support in disaster preparedness and response to the church's congregations, middle governing bodies, and interfaith partners. Members of the **National Response Team** are available to assist churches and middle governing bodies in both short and long-term recovery efforts. In addition, emergency assistance grants are available to help meet immediate needs and set up long-term disaster response. PDA is part of the Worldwide Ministries Division of the PC(USA) and receives its primary funding from the **One Great Hour of Sharing** offering.

- **Steps to prepare for a disaster**
  - Develop a directory of pastors and churches to include all necessary communications information: home and office telephone numbers of pastors, church telephone numbers, telephone numbers of clerks of session, cell phone and/or pager numbers for any of the above, e-mail addresses for any of the above. During a disaster many telephone and electric lines are knocked out, therefore, an alternative communications network consisting of pagers, cell phones, and amateur radios may be needed.
  - Establish a "telephone calling tree" to include each active pastor or interim and each clerk of session. One person, the presbytery executive or a person designated by him/her, is responsible for activating the system when a disaster is imminent, or when an unexpected disaster has occurred.
  - Presbyteries, especially those in high-risk areas, are encouraged to elect a permanent **Disaster Response Team (DRT)**, on a three-year rotating basis, to respond to large or small disasters. During the year, team members would receive training in responding to disasters and develop resources (printed, video, or human) to be available to the presbytery for additional study and consultation. One way to organize the team is provided below:
    - **Presbytery Disaster Response Coordinator (PDRC) –** Overall leadership and coordination of the presbytery disaster preparedness and response plan.

- **Field Workers –** Trained to move directly into locations where a disaster has occurred to counsel survivors, assess damage, and provide immediate relief if needed.
- **Advisors –** People with different knowledge, skills, and abilities that can assist the presbytery in executing the disaster preparedness and response plan.
- Presbyteries with established Disaster Response Teams should notify Presbyterian Disaster Assistance so that a central data bank may be maintained and publicized throughout the church.
- Share the plan and names of key people with the Southern Baptist Association, Methodist district and conference offices, the Lutheran Synod office, and other ecumenical partners active in disaster relief. Presbyteries and member congregations are encouraged to be actively involved in interfaith disaster response networks and Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (VOAD), or to take a leadership role in forming such organizations.

- **Steps to take when a disaster is imminent**
  - Activate the calling tree, warning pastors and churches of the imminent disaster and suggesting preparation steps to take to minimize damage.
  - Instruct each pastor and clerk to respond immediately after the disaster with a preliminary estimate of damage to their home, church, and neighborhood. Give out cell phone and pager numbers, or amateur radio contacts for the DRT director and presbytery office for alternative ways of reporting.
  - Encourage the DRT director to establish an emergency communications center, possibly at the presbytery office, that will be ready to receive calls and serve as team headquarters as soon as the disaster has passed.
  - Contact any local interfaith disaster response network or VOAD about its plans to respond to the imminent disaster.
  - Prepare yourself, your family, your church, and your home to weather the disaster in the best way possible.
  - If the disaster strikes without warning, such as the Oklahoma City bombing, initiate the appropriate above steps, combining them with the steps in III below.

- **Steps to take immediately after a disaster**
  - **Pastor**
    - Stay where you are until danger passes.
    - Assess your own damage, and attend to family, loved ones and yourself first.
    - When it is safe, contact your CDRC(s) to begin assessing general conditions of the congregation and community.

- Respond to the needs of the survivors, in cooperation with local emergency response agencies – police, fire department, American Red Cross, The Salvation Army, local interfaith response teams, etc.
- Have CDRC report to the PDRC, Presbytery Executive and Director of the Disaster Response Team as soon as possible.
- Undergird all efforts with spiritual support to the survivors of the disaster. No secular agency is equipped to do this. Play this unique and important role, in cooperation with other pastors, priests, rabbis and spiritual leaders of the community.
- Assist the presbytery response by working closely with the PDRC and your assigned Field Worker.
- When the Relief Phase of the disaster response begins, coordinate efforts of the congregation on the local level, working in cooperation with other pastors, interfaith response groups, Department of Homeland Security, FEMA, civil and governmental authorities, etc.

- **Presbytery Executive and PDRC**
  - Stay where you are until danger passes.
  - Assess your own damage and attend to family, loved ones and yourself first.
  - When it is safe, move immediately to the disaster response office and be available to receive messages.
  - Monitor news reports of damage and contact those pastors or churches who have yet to report.
  - If not already accomplished, activate the Disaster Response Team.
  - Arrange for temporary staffing of the emergency communication network until the Disaster Response Team becomes operational.
  - Together, make a "ministry of presence" visit to all affected areas. Report findings to the PDA associate for disaster response, Synod executive, and to neighboring presbyteries. Request the services of the Presbyterian Disaster Assistance Team as appropriate.
  - After immediate disaster response needs are met and the recovery phase begins, make arrangements for room and board for volunteer work teams. Volunteer management should be coordinated with the interfaith network and/or VOAD.
  - Where appropriate, begin to arrange for long-range recovery partnerships between damaged churches, or congregations whose members' homes have suffered damage, and other churches in the presbytery of the General Assembly. These partnerships of mutual aid have potential for long-term reconciliation and spiritual development for all concerned.
  - After a disaster, presbyteries will receive donations from individuals and churches that want to give directly to those

managing recovery efforts. They will expect the presbytery to direct these funds in the most immediately helpful ways. Presbyteries are encouraged to appoint a small committee with authority to distribute non-cash resources promptly to families with immediate unmet needs, in collaboration with other agencies. However, care must be taken to not jeopardize eligibility for funds from the American Red Cross, insurance settlements, and FEMA (see FEMA publication "When Disaster Strikes," #7, p6).

- **Presbytery Disaster Response Coordinator**
  - In addition to the above, begin now to give necessary disaster response information to all pastors and churches.
  - Begin now to keep an updated list of damages to each congregation and community, surveying each affected pastor, church, or campsite.
  - If necessary, set up an emergency communications network, and arrange for temporary staffing.
  - Convene the team for decision making, evaluating those situations that need the most immediate attention.
  - When it is safe, deploy Field Workers to the most critical places to deliver immediate emergency assistance and provide for temporary shelter.
  - Take the initiative in convening, if it has not already been done, an Interfaith Disaster Response Network, including representatives from VOAD (if available), PDA, UMCOR, other denominational response groups, American Red Cross, The Salvation Army, and FEMA. Coordinate with FEMA and the Seventh Day Adventists before opening warehouses for supplies and materials. Arrange for a phone line and number, with appropriate staffing, for those individuals and churches which have donations to offer. Apply for grants from denominational sources and Church World Service. Establish priorities for the use of grant money. Begin planning for the long haul. Activate the Advisory Panel.
  - As FEMA and insurance companies respond, begin a list of "unmet needs" which can serve as an assignment guide for work teams who come to assist in recovery. Pay careful attention to the needs of the poor, minorities, handicapped, elderly, the uninsured, and others who might "fall through the cracks" when aid is dispersed. Ask each affected church to carefully survey its community to bring these unmet needs to light. Check these needs through VOAD or the Interfaith Disaster Response Network.
  - Assess spiritual as well as physical needs. Make plans to meet these, using as a resource #13 in the list of "Resources for Presbyteries."

- **Field Workers**
  - Stay where you are until the danger passes. Be available to send and receive messages.
  - Assess your own damage first.
  - Monitor damage in your area via news reports.
  - Report damage in your area to the director and come to the initial meeting of the Disaster Response Team. Determine most immediate needs.
  - When it is safe, enter the affected area with emergency relief supplies.
  - Continue to meet with the PDRC and the DRT, making contacts with assigned pastors, churches, and community leaders.
  - Compile a list of needs for your assigned area and convey this to the PDRC.
  - Report daily to the PDRC about changing needs.
  - Minister to pastors and key lay leaders. Be particularly sensitive to their needs.

- **Advisory Panel**
  - These individuals are responsible for providing specialized professional advice. Such advice will generally have to do with PROTECTION AND SAFETY (of survivors, workers and the Presbytery), POSSIBILITIES (for advocacy, contacts, creative response), and PROPRIETY (what norms, whose turf may be involved). Advisors will be available in many areas: medicine, law, finance, banking, insurance, engineering, community organization, religion, psychiatry, agriculture, human rights, ecumenical and inter-faith relationships, governmental agencies, private enterprise, the environment, etc.

- **Long-Term Recovery**
  - It is important to remember that while immediate disaster response times can be counted in terms of days and weeks, long range recovery efforts may stretch into many months and even years. As these efforts continue, pastors and other disaster recovery workers will need pastoral care for themselves and their families, in order that these workers may continue to be effective leaders. Disasters always put great stress on persons and families involved in response and recovery. Presbyteries will need to plan for ways to minister to the special needs of these persons during times of crisis.

Plan Proposal:
Disaster Preparation and Response
XYZ Presbytery

Overview
In the event of a disaster of any type, proper planning and preparation serves to reduce the overall damage, keep the ministry of the Presbytery functioning on an interim basis, inform congregations and membership during an evacuation, and enhance the recovery efforts upon return to the Presbytery Office. This proposed plan provides counsel for

- The preparation of the Presbytery Office and Camp.
- The orderly shutdown of operations.
- The safekeeping of records.
- A format for interim operations.
- A clear communication process, through the establishment of an
- Administrative Commission which shall provide leadership during an emergency.

It should be noted that there are many disaster scenarios possible where there will be no warning of the event. In these cases the efforts towards planning, training of personnel, and an open communication process to the congregations and membership are of paramount importance.

This plan proposes the identification of actions which need to be taken before and after a disaster event and assigns responsibility for those actions to key members of the Staff and Presbytery Leadership.

Pre Event Actions
- Physical preparation
- Record duplication and safekeeping
- Communications
- Closedown procedures
- Establishment of an Administrative Commission

Interim Actions
- Selection and operation of a possible remote site.
- Staff policies
- Communications
- Operating needs

- Management and structure control
- Contact information and procedures

Post Event Actions

- Clean up process
- Authorization to act
- Management structure and control
- Insurance

Pre-Event Actions

Pre-event actions for disaster response planning center on the objectives to provide for the safety of the Presbytery Staff, to function as a part of a larger service organization for an interim time during possible evacuation, to assist congregations in the formation of disaster plans, and to resume the unique ministry of the Presbytery immediately following the disaster event. In order to meet these objectives, the Presbytery Council may consider establishing the following policies and action checklist.

Presbytery Disaster Response Coordinators (PDRC)

The Council should select five (5) persons to serve as PDRCs in the five geographic areas of the Presbytery (North, South, East, West, and Central). An example of this might be selecting persons from Dalton First, Marietta First, Deer Creek Shores, Westminster and Cartersville First. It is the responsibilities of the PDRCs to coordinate the preparation of the individual plans of the churches in cooperation with the Congregational Disaster Response Coordinators (CDRCs) and collaborate on the preparation of a wide range of contingency plans. Training for these persons shall be provided by the Synod of South Atlantic through the Synod Disaster Response Officer.

Closing of Operations and Release of Staff

The safety and well being of Presbytery staff is very important and, accordingly, the day-to-day operations of the Presbytery Office will close upon notice by government agency of a voluntary evacuation order. The staff, upon completing an orderly shut down of their respective work areas, will be allowed to leave at this time. A recorded message to inform callers of the office closing shall be left on the answering machine by the Administrative Assistant. Additionally, a group e-mail will be forwarded to all congregations and members of Council. Date and time of the office closing, reference to the Presbytery web site, and address and telephone number for interim communications during and immediately following the event shall also be provided.

Preparation of the Office

The Office and Camp shall be secured respectively by the Administrative Assistant and the Director. Security operations should include:

- Removal or tie down of any loose exterior items. (i.e. canoes, tools, etc.)
- Shut-off of any natural gas or propane gas service.
- Shut off of water service to all buildings.
- Lock all exterior doors.
- Disconnect electrical power from all appliances and computers.
- Move computers to a storage closet or other enclosed space.
- Cover printers and/or other large office machines with tarps.

Preservation of Records and Documents

The operating records of the Presbytery should be backed up at least weekly and a copy of these records, as well as historical records, should be held in the possession of the Stated Clerk of the Presbytery at a remote location from the Presbytery office. The safekeeping and planning for the removal of these records shall be the responsibility of the Administrative Assistant. All financial records, checkbooks, and financial instruments shall be the shared responsibility of the Book Keeper and Treasurer.

Ecclesiastical documents, Presbytery Minutes, property records, building documents legal papers and all insurance policies should be collected and held in the possession of the Stated Clerk. A copy of all these records should also be kept at a remote site.

Personnel records should be the responsibility of the Chair of the Personnel Committee.

Communication with the Presbytery and Congregations

The Presbytery Council should be informed regarding the planned actions of the Presbytery prior to any disaster event. Planning sessions with the Council should be conducted to inform the Council of procedures which will be implemented by the Presbytery prior to a disaster event.

Upon the closing of Presbytery operations, all telephone calls should be routed to a temporary answering service. The website shall display pertinent shutdown information.
The initiation of the answering service and provision of information to the website should be the responsibility of the Administrative Assistant. Access and response to telephone messages should be the responsibility of the Presbytery Executive. It is highly recommended that a communication chairperson take responsibility to plan and implement these procedures and that the PDRCs be kept full informed of all communications.

Develop the Emergency Contact List

The PDRCs should develop an emergency contact list of key personnel and agencies. At a minimum, this list should contain the emergency contact telephone numbers for the following:

- Presbytery Executive
- Council members
- Staff personnel
- PDRCs
- CDRCs
- SDRO
- County Emergence Management Agency
- Local chapter of ARC
- FEMA/DHS
- Insurance carrier
- Local electric and gas provider
- Local water provider
- Banks
- Public Safety
- Local EMS provider.

INTERIM ACTIONS

Following the closing of operations of the Presbytery in anticipation of a disaster event, the Council should prepare policies and a plan that provide for the interim operation of the Presbytery in a remote location and the ongoing management structure for regular as well as response operations. Flexibility and communications in the light of unknown variables (e.g. damage to infrastructure, impact area, duration of the response) are essential and must play a key role in this portion of the disaster response plan.

Interim Site Locations

It is recommended that memoranda of understanding be initiated with the following churches, allowing Presbytery functions to continue on an interim basis:

North: Northminster Presbyterian Church
South: Southminster Presbyterian Church
East: Eastminster Presbyterian Church
West: Westminster Presbyterian Church

The memoranda should address the issues of office space, telephone communications office equipment, parking spaces, and other component pieces which will be discerned.

Activation of the Presbytery Disaster Administrative Commission

The PDAC shall be activated upon agreement between the Executive Presbyter, the Chair of Council, and the Moderator of Presbytery.

Membership
The PDAC should be comprised of the following personnel: The Executive Presbyter, Chair of Presbytery Council, Presbytery Moderator, Presbytery Treasurer, the Director of CRC, and the PDRCs.

Responsibilities
The PDAC shall coordinate the overall response program of the Presbytery through communication with individual pastors and congregations, coordination with such relief agencies as may be deployed, notification of the Board of Pensions as respects special needs of members, and the receipt and disbursement of funds from PDA and other entities.

Authority
The PDAC shall have the authority to act on behalf of the Presbytery in matters of receipt and disbursement of funds for response work, the establishment/revision of job descriptions as may be necessary for adequate response, the hiring and retaining of temporary personnel as necessary, the authority to represent the Presbytery to both insurance and government entities, the negotiation of interim office space and the costs relating thereto, and the oversight of the day-to-day interim operations of the Presbytery.

Accountability
As soon as practical, the PDAC shall report all of its actions to the Council and to the Presbytery. All actions of the PDAC are provisional, pending Presbytery approval.

Conclusion
The work of the PDAC shall be concluded when so decided by the Presbytery at a regularly stated meeting.

Interim Communications

The Executive Presbyter shall facilitate all communications during the interim time. The communications plan should include e-mail accessibility, the Presbytery website, and a telephone answering service. Updated reports should be posted on the website daily.

Staff Policies

The Presbytery should establish policies for the payment of staff for normal wages and benefits during the interim time in the event of a disaster.

Post-Event Actions

Recovery

The range of recovery actions in response to a disaster event may range from relatively minor clean up to total destruction of facilities with or without loss of life. It is important, therefore, to train staff and officers regarding possible steps towards recovery.

Recovery may take many avenues. All of these avenues should be considered important. Spiritual and psychological recovery should be considered along with the recovery of physical facilities. Resources such as "Light Our Way: A Guide for Spiritual Care in Times of Disaster" should be readily available. (NVOAD, 2006)

Emergency Repairs

Prompt temporary repair to Presbytery and church property is important in that it may mitigate both long-term damage and psycho-spiritual trauma to members, staff and officers. The boarding up of broken windows, tarps over damaged roof areas and similar actions that prevent further damage are essential as a first step in recovery.

Pre-event purchase of repair supplies and tools is encouraged.

The PDAC should have responsibility for making an initial evaluation of damage to the Presbytery Office and CRC.

Clean Up

Clean up operations may range from the very simple to very complicated, from pick-up of downed tree limbs to replacement of entire buildings. The PDAC shall be empowered to make an initial evaluation of the scope of damage and make a preliminary assessment and recommendation to the Council regarding steps for clean-up, repairs or replacement.

Specific To Camps And Conference Centers

In the event of a disaster without warning, the Director of CRC may act independently to secure the safety of guests and/or campers. This authority shall include, but not be limited to: Closing all operations without consultation with the Presbytery Office, arranging emergency transportation from the center to a designated safe area, coordination with local EMA and public safety for first response services, and offering the center as a Disaster Response Area for local residents who are in need.

This authority shall remain in effect until the PDAC is activated, at which time the Center Director shall give a full report of actions taken.

Putting it All Together: Presbyterians and Disaster Response

By this time you should have an understanding of the disaster cycle, something of the variety of resources available in the event of a disaster and the opportunity for ministry in a disaster. This chapter will focus specifically on the Presbyterian pieces of the puzzle that make up the whole picture of disaster preparedness and recovery. If any of this is a bit hazy at this point, you will need to go back to earlier chapters for background on some parts of this chapter.

This training is just a piece of the puzzle… the real work starts **AFTER** training. Since disaster response is largely a volunteer ministry, training people throughout the church is vital for this ministry to be both effective and timely. This training is the first step in ensuring that your governing body, whether it is a Synod, a Presbytery or a Session, is prepared to respond to a disaster. Being prepared requires planning, coordination and understanding of the Disaster Response Cycle prior to a disaster. When governing bodies take the time to plan, prepare and train prior to a disaster, the resources of the whole church can be used more effectively and promptly.

Like humor, effective disaster response is about timing. Some meetings spent this year on developing plans for a response will save months of organizing time when a disaster strikes. Planning and preparing **NOW** means that relationships can be built and decisions can be made without the added stress of coping with the immediacy of the damage from a disaster.

HELP Only Comes When Requested

Except in cases of catastrophic disaster covering several counties or presbyteries, PDA responds only when requested. Every effort will be made by PDA to contact affected judicatories, but an invitation to participate in the recovery must come from one or more middle governing bodies. (Presbytery or Synod)

SUPPORT Comes to Organized Communities

Following our tradition of ecumenism, middle governing bodies and congregations are encouraged to be a part of ecumenical or interfaith organizations as they organize for long-term recovery. By experience it has frequently fallen to the Presbyterians to be actively involved in organizing the faith community's response to a disaster, either locally or regionally. Our strong ecumenical tradition can be a way of including those otherwise excluded from such a response… we DO bring the pieces together.

In June of 1998, Steve Shusette, the Pastor at First Presbyterian Church of Frostburg, was key to bringing the pieces together when tornados ripped through one side of this western Maryland Community. With the on-site advice of a PDA-NRT Advisor, Steve helped ensure that those who could easily have been marginalized – the poor, renters and the elderly – instead were included in the recovery effort.

RESPONSE is Proportional to the Need

Not every disaster requires funding or even a visit from PDA. Local congregations and the communities they serve, using local resources, can handle many small, local disasters effectively. Not every disaster warrants even the use of the disaster response plan of the Presbytery or Synod. But when a disaster is so large and the effects are far reaching, the resources of the church can be readily available. In addition to the annual One Great Hour of Sharing funds (received on Easter Sunday each year), PDA can call for a special APPEAL for designated giving to assist in the long-term recovery efforts following larger disasters.

The four main components of PDA U.S. disaster assistance are:

- **Support and Funding for Recovery after a Disaster. (Assessment and Long Term)**
- **On-site Advisors through the PDA National Response Team.**
- **Disaster Preparedness and Response training for Presbyteries and Synods**
- **Information and Printed Resources for Volunteer Work Teams.**

Understanding what pieces are available as one begins to do the work helps bring a sense of connectedness to ones own work… we don't have to reinvent the wheel, nor is there only ONE way to do this, the pieces can fit together many different ways.

Disaster Response can be a piece of the puzzle for local congregations seeking to be connected with their communities and to carry out their calling as God's people.

Theological Affirmations:

Presbyterians have come to disaster recovery ministry through their understanding of the Scripture and a theological perspective that affirms the church's role in having a special concern for the poor, the powerless, and those most vulnerable. Some of these themes are:

- God is with us. (Psalms)
- Christ calls us to ministries of compassion and justice. (Matthew 25:40)
- Christ is present with us even in disaster (Light shining in the darkness.)
- The church is called to respond to those in need. (Bear one another's burden's)
- The church is called to have a special concern for the poor, the helpless, and those without political influence.

PDA and the Mid Councils (Presbyteries and Synods)

Responsibility for disaster response rests with Synods, Presbyteries and local congregations. PDA resources are available only upon request by Presbytery or Synod (whichever body provides oversight and coordination).

Resources available to the Presbytery and Synod:

Advisors

Since 1996 a group of approximately forty trained and experienced volunteers, representing the PC(USA), have been available to assist middle governing bodies following a disaster. These advisors are available by request of a middle governing body to visit with pastors and congregations in the area affected by the disaster, help Presbyterians become involved with the faith community response and provide on-site assessments and consultation to PDA as well as the leaders of the middle governing body. Those Presbyteries and Synods that have received Advisors from the PDA National Response Team report a more effective response. PDA-NRT Advisors bring with them a wealth of knowledge about what to expect from other agencies as well as experience with other communities recovering from disasters. Even though they normally stay for a maximum of two weeks, they can be an invaluable resource in organizing the Presbyterian participation in the recovery phase. Team members bring a variety of gifts from volunteer management to organization design and training.

Clergy Crisis Unit

Not all crises are disasters. Unfortunately, school shootings and terrorist attacks have become all too frequent. In response to the need for pastors and sessions to have immediate and specialized support, a smaller unit of the larger PDA Team was formed. The Clergy Crisis Unit has had training in Critical Incident Stress Debriefing and other processes for responding to traumatic stress. When there is a crisis, the team member closest to the incident may contact the Presbytery and/or the Presbyterian Church nearest the incident. Since time is of the essence in such situations, team members may respond to the area immediately, but will keep the affected presbytery(ies) advised of their actions.

Financial Assistance

Immediately following a disaster in the U.S., a grant from PDA may be released upon request of a middle governing body executive (or designated representative). Ordinarily, initial funding from the One Great Hour of Sharing offering will not exceed $7,500.00, per middle governing body. This funding may be released upon review by PDA staff.

Long-Term response and additional grants are made possible through designated funds. Where one responding partner (i.e. Middle governing body, partner church, or ecumenical partner) is involved, PDA staff is authorized to release such funds contingent upon receipt of adequate project information that meet applicable criteria. Where two or more responding partners are involved and there is not agreement among them as to the division of available resources, the Presbyterian Disaster

Assistance Advisory Committee will act on requests. If the crisis is of major proportions, requiring a protracted recovery period, PDA will issue an APPEAL that is sent to all churches in the denomination. 100% of the gifts marked for designated accounts are used for compassionate assistance in the disaster-affected area.

Printed Material

Prepare to Care: Church Response to Disaster
Booklet for local congregations preparing for disaster. Encourages work with other faith groups. Contains information on other organizations active in disaster. Available from Presbyterian Distribution Service (PDS), 800-524-2612, #74340-00-002

Together We Triumph: Youth Response to Disaster
Booklet containing a leader's manual and student activity guide organized into five modules for preparing young people for ministry in disaster situations. Available from PDS, #74340-95-019

Technological Disasters: People of Faith Respond
Booklet containing a set of tools for use in responding to technical disaster. Available from PDA, 888-728-7228 x5806

Safety Manual for Work camp Leaders and Volunteers
Manual containing important safety information for volunteer work teams interested in responding to disaster situations. Available from PDA

Disaster Response – How you can make a difference
Brochure with answers to frequently asked questions on how individuals or congregations can be involved following a disaster. Available from PDS, #74340-99-002

Work Team Opportunities in Disaster Response
Brochure contains a listing of current work team opportunities and advice for team leaders and volunteers. Available from PDA.

National Response Team
Brochure contains information on the mission of the team, response protocols, and how to request the services of the team. Available from PDS, #74340-99-003

Coordination of Volunteer Work Teams

An increasing number of Presbyterian congregations seek to respond to those in need by organizing and sending volunteer work teams to disaster sites. Responding to persons in need is a very natural way of showing Christ's love and putting faith and concern into action. Volunteers bring talents and abilities that provide valuable assistance to communities affected by disaster in the form of clean-up, repair, and rebuilding teams.

Presbyterian Disaster Assistance maintains a list of disaster sites across the country in need of volunteer teams and can provide helpful information on forming teams and planning a mission trip. Contact the PDA National Call Center at 866.732.6121 for more information, or visit the PDA website at http://pcusa.org/pda

Training Events for Regional Bodies

In cooperation with middle governing bodies, PDA provides leadership and resources for regional training events for church leaders in Synods, Presbyteries and local congregations. An effective response by Presbyterians to disasters depends upon the widespread understanding of roles and resources. Many times assistance is delayed or deferred because local leadership is unaware of their role in responding to a disaster. At other times, Presbyteries or congregations fail to respond because they believe, incorrectly, that resources are not available. Regional training events are intended to increase the awareness and understanding of the Presbyterian ministry to disaster-affected communities.

Presbyteries and congregations have a pivotal role in organizing and leading the Presbyterian Church's response to disasters in their area. Therefore, it is important to train a core of leaders in middle governing bodies about their vital role in organizing and coordinating their response to disaster.

Summary

Synods and Presbyteries are the **gateway** for an organized response to disasters. Prior to and following a disaster, middle governing bodies have an important role to play in:

- **Planning and Preparation**
  Without a plan, response to a disaster can be delayed, confused, and poorly organized; all of which makes recovery more difficult for survivors. In addition, if Presbyteries and Synods do not have Disaster plans, then local congregations are unlikely to take such planning seriously.

- **Providing Training and Communication**
  Presbyteries and Synods need to lead the way in making local congregations and pastors aware of the importance of church participation in disaster response. Taking the lead in offering training in

disaster response planning and preparation can enhance the congregation's ability to respond and recover from disaster.

Congregations and middle governing bodies need to have good communications in place in the event of a disaster. Many times without reporting from the local community the Presbytery and Synod are dependent on news accounts rather than first hand reporting. This can lead to an uneven or inadequate response.

- **Providing Coordination and Oversight**
  Without an invitation from a middle governing body, none of the assistance available from PDA will automatically come into the affected area. Without the middle governing body's willingness to coordinate regional assistance and provide access to a financial agent (a responsible body to receive and account for the use of funds), Presbyterian Assistance will in all likelihood be channeled through ecumenical bodies like Church World Service or a council of churches.

PDA and the Local Congregation

If the Presbytery is the gateway for response, the local congregation is the front line of that response. The knowledge and understanding of the local community can be invaluable to disaster response personnel. At the same time, the community naturally looks to the church for leadership in times of crisis. It is important for the church to be able to give helpful, accurate information to survivors, provide appropriate pastoral care and be involved in the organization of participation in a long-term recovery.

> ***It was now a month after the disaster.*** *A group of ten ministers gathered with a denominational representative to discuss the possibilities of organizing the Long-Term recovery. Everyone looked tired. After some introductions and a lengthy discussion of how the disaster had affected each of them personally, the idea of the faith community organizing a response was raised. Almost everyone gave a weary nod of the head in response.*
>
> *Then one of the ministers said, almost in exasperation, "I am ready for this to be over. I mean I know it is hard for some people, and there will be some people who will take a long time getting over this; but I am ready to get things back to normal and move on."*

The desire to get things back to "normal" is an understandable feeling. The problem is that disasters, like any crisis, have a life of their own. Recovery takes time and the church has a part in that process, regardless of whether members of the church have been directly affected. When we try to "get back to normal" too soon or without dealing adequately and appropriately with recovery issues, there can be a lasting impact on the life of the church. As Robert Burns wrote, "The best laid plans of mice and men gang oft aglee." When a disaster occurs, our best laid plans have just gone aglee. The best plan in such a circumstance is to become part of the recovery process… the church and the community will be the better for it.

Preparing a plan for responding to disaster can and should be a part of a congregation's ministry. The preparedness and response plan should consider what to do when disaster hits a neighboring area.

Before the disaster strikes

Designate a committee or group of individuals to coordinate disaster ministry for your congregation. Assign responsibility for disaster planning to a particular committee or group of volunteers (perhaps your mission committee). Using the detailed guide for planning included in this manual develop a list of potential ministries for your Church in a disaster. Review the entire list of possible ministries in disaster and identify those that will require advance planning. Then using the enclosed planning guide, follow those steps for implementing a disaster plan for your church.

Opportunities for Ministry in response to a disaster in another area

Work teams

Following disasters, volunteers may be needed to clean up debris, rebuild homes, and simply listen to survivors' stories. Disaster volunteers often cite these experiences as among the most rewarding of their lives. Many congregations have formed work teams to help with clean-up or long-term recovery after disasters. Some considerations for congregations planning a work team experience are:

Get organized: Well-intended volunteers can cause havoc if a disaster-affected community isn't ready to accommodate them. PDA maintains a list of disaster sites across the country in need of volunteer teams. Have the team spend time together going over the Frequently Asked Questions handout and the Principles for Partnerships For Work Teams appended to this chapter. Many teams find it helpful to have a leadership team that includes a Team Leader who is responsible for the overall coordination of the team's work, a Work Supervisor who is responsible for connecting with the requesting organization and planning the team's on-site work, a Chaplain to tend to the spiritual needs of the team, and Logistics Coordinator who oversees the food and shelter needs of the team.

Be prepared to be self-sufficient: A community recovering from a disaster needs help and support from volunteers. Resources, even for purchase, may be scarce or difficult to obtain. Go prepared to be self-sufficient. PDA does not provide funding for work teams. Sponsoring churches and volunteers need to be prepared to cover their own costs for travel, food and incidentals. Most disaster sites make arrangements for lodging at reduced cost.

Size: Teams that can be divided into groups of 7 or 8 are more easily utilized on sites than larger groups that need to stay together.

Age: Older teens find work team experiences helpful if there are enough adults to help with supervision and respond to the special needs of adolescents. Volunteers recruited should be appropriate to the work being planned; smaller children and persons with physical limitations may not be appropriate for building sites and debris clearance. NOTE: Please check with the Call Center regarding age restrictions for each site.

Distance: Pick a site that fits the team's comfort level for distance. Know your limits. Going too far away may prove to be an unnecessary stress for the team, while sometimes being too close allows for distractions from home.

Financial and in-kind donations for specific disasters

When disaster strikes many people will be motivated to help. Not all help that is offered will be useful. Money is almost always helpful; but be careful about material donations. First and foremost, DO NOT send relief supplies until you know exactly what is needed and exactly who will receive and distribute the supplies. Presbyterian congregations are encouraged to participate in the **Church World Service Gifts of the Heart Kit** program. Contact PDA or Church World Service for more information.

Gifts to Disaster Response may be given through One Great Hour of Sharing all year long. Even if there is no specific appeal issued for a disaster, funds may still be sent to PDA for Disaster Response. Check with your middle governing body to see how to transmit funds designated for a specific disaster. If an appeal has been made or if there is significant recovery needs, the PDA office will assign an account number for designated gifts. Generally, it is a poor idea to send funds directly to churches in the affected area.

Sponsor Other Teams

Sending a work team into a disaster recovery site can be expensive. If your church is unable to send a team, perhaps a group of churches can organize a team or provide financial support for another church in your area that has a work team organizing to go in the future.

UNIT VI

Other Disaster Response Partners

"The media – particularly television – is pretty bad about sticking a microphone in people's faces right after a disaster so they can film them saying "we need everything." Well, the best bet for people who need everything is to affiliate themselves with some group that can respond in an informed manner."

- Kathy Guy, donations coordinator in Kansas for the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)

Church leaders in disaster response are not acting in a vacuum. Instead, they interact with a variety of government agencies and non-governmental organizations. Contacting representatives of these organizations – and understanding their roles and responsibilities – before a disaster, is a good way to expand your knowledge and will ensure a more efficient response.

As a church leader, you may or may not already be familiar with some of the groups and agencies that help people in need. But unless you have some prior experience with disaster response, you may not be familiar with the role of FEMA, the SBA, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and other agencies. Below are some more detailed explanations of the services some major government agencies provide in the wake of a disaster.

As part of your advocacy role on behalf of the disaster survivor, you should understand how FEMA, SBA and other agencies work so that you can explain the process to disaster survivors who are under stress. Many church leaders find themselves serving as liaisons – or even mediators – between disaster survivors and the government. It is vitally important that disaster survivors apply for the aid for which they are eligible – because they may not be eligible for further aid unless they can document another agency or program has turned them down.

A Presidential Declaration – Excerpted from **FEMA** information

If the President declares the community a disaster area, survivors are eligible to receive certain forms of assistance from FEMA, which may include:

- Temporary housing for disaster survivors whose homes are uninhabitable until other housing resources are available. No rental is charged for the first 12 months of occupancy.
- Minimum essential repairs to owner-occupied residences in lieu of other types of temporary housing resources, so that families can return quickly to their damaged homes.
- Temporary assistance with mortgage or rental payments for persons faced with loss of their residences because of disaster-created financial hardship for a period not to exceed 12 months.
- Disaster unemployment assistance and job placement assistance for those unemployed as a result of a major disaster.
- Disaster loans to individuals, businesses and farmers for refining, repair, rehabilitation or replacement of damaged real and personal property not fully covered by insurance.
- Agricultural assistance, including technical assistance; payments of up to 80 percent of the cost to eligible farmers who perform emergency conservation measures on farmland damaged by the disaster; and donation of federally owned feed grain for co-mingled livestock and herd preservation.
- Distribution of food coupons to eligible disaster survivors.
- Individual and family grants of up to $5,000 to meet disaster-related necessary expenses or serious needs of those adversely affected by a major disaster when they are unable to meet such expenses or needs through other programs or other means.
- Legal services to low-income families or individuals.
- Consumer counseling and assistance in obtaining insurance benefits.
- Crisis counseling and referrals to appropriate mental health agencies to relieve disaster-caused mental health problems.
- Social Security assistance for recipients or survivors, such as death or disability benefits or monthly payments.

- Assistance for Veterans, such as death benefits, pensions, insurance settlements, and adjustments to home mortgages held by the Veterans Administration if VA-insured home has been damaged.

A State Declaration

Before a disaster can be federally declared, a governor usually declares a state of emergency in the affected area. Then the state emergency management agency assesses damages and submits the assessment to federal officials.

If a disaster is severe, and damages are widespread, it will likely be declared a federal disaster. But many times a disaster declaration remains at the state level. In those cases, survivors may be eligible for state aid which can include relief funds and loans, and other assistance similar to that offered after a presidential declaration (see above) but on a smaller scale, if at all.

Small Business Administration

The U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) serves as the federal disaster bank in the wake of hurricanes, floods, earthquakes, wildfires, tornadoes and other physical disasters. Once a disaster declaration has been made, those who suffered uninsured or underinsured losses may be eligible for:

- Home disaster loans made to homeowners or renters to repair or replace damaged real estate or personal property. Renters are eligible for loans to cover personal property losses. Individuals may borrow up to $200,000 to repair or replace real estate, $40,000 to cover losses to personal property and additional 20% for mitigation. Refinancing of existing liens is sometimes possible.
- Business physical disaster loans for businesses to repair or replace damaged property owned by the business, including real estate, equipment, inventory and supplies. Non-farm businesses of any size, as well as non-profit organizations are eligible. The loan limit for business loans is $1.5 million.
- Economic injury disaster loans (EIDL) provided needed working capital until normal operations resume after a physical disaster. These loans cover operating expenses the business could have paid but for the disaster. They are restricted to small businesses. The loan limit for both physical and EIDL is $1.5 million.

Interest rates are usually 4%, with up to 30-year repayment terms, based on the applicant's ability to repay. By law, the determination of interest rates depends on

whether the applicant has credit available elsewhere. SBA Disaster Loans are affordable.

U.S. Department Of Agriculture

When a disaster impacts farmers, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) may offer relief. Through the USDA, the Farm Service Agency may administer agricultural assistance. This assistance may include technical assistance; payment covering a major portion of the cost to eligible farmers who perform emergency conservation actions on farmland damaged by the disaster; and provision of federally-owned feed grain for livestock and herd preservation.

USDA-related assistance may also include:

- Disaster housing if homes are uninhabitable. Home repair funds may be given to owner-occupants instead of other forms of disaster housing assistance so that families can quickly return to their damaged homes.
- Unemployment and job placement assistance for those unemployed as a result of the major disaster.
- Individual and family grants to help meet disaster-related necessary expenses when those affected are unable to meet such expenses or needs through other programs or other means.
- Legal services to low-income families and individuals.
- Crisis counseling and referrals to mental health agencies to relieve disaster-caused mental health problems
- Loans to individuals, businesses, and farmers for repair, rehabilitation, or replacement of damaged real and personal property and some production costs not fully covered by insurance.

The VOAD

All states have a group of Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster, or "VOAD." This coalition of agencies, which varies from state to state, may include the American Red Cross, faith-based disaster response organizations, and other groups (see sidebar listing for a sampling of these groups). The VOAD is in close contact with the state emergency management agency through a FEMA Volunteer Agency Liaison, or "VAL." The VAL keeps volunteer groups informed about people's needs and also helps volunteer groups coordinate how they will help.

Church leaders should encourage and help disaster survivors to:

- Apply for federal and state disaster assistance programs by calling the toll-free registration number that is publicized by FEMA in the wake of a major disaster. 1.800.621.FEMA
- Visit a Disaster Recovery Center in their community if FEMA has established one
- Meet the 60-day deadline for applying for federal or state aid after a disaster. Submission of SBA packets **must** be done by this deadline.

Unmet Needs

Following a disaster, many of the above agencies and groups respond – but few address the long-term needs of disaster survivors. The religious community generally becomes involved in this long-term post-disaster work. After immediate assistance has been offered, many unmet needs remain. Some survivors discover that even with government loans or grants they can't pay for all the repairs they have planned. Others may not even qualify for assistance. Vulnerable population groups – older persons, children, women, poor people, the disabled, minority persons or people who don't speak English – often fall between the cracks. Even if physical needs have been met, disaster survivors continue to need assistance in working through their grief, anger, loss and isolation.

Often a disaster-stricken community will establish a Long-Term Recovery Committee through which church leaders and other responding groups can work. To organize this effort, church leaders may establish a community disaster recovery program. Church World Service offers assistance in initial organization of these kinds of groups.

Many Partners

When engaged in disaster preparedness and response ministry, church leaders work with such organizations as:

- Inter-religious organizations (i.e., state councils of churches)
- Local ministerial associations
- Voluntary Organizations Active in Disasters
- Department of Homeland Security
- Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) , especially the Voluntary Agency Liaison, or the person responsible for coordinating the response by voluntary agencies, including faith-based ones
- Small Business Administration (SBA)
- U.S. Department of Agriculture as well as state and local agriculture agencies

- U.S. Forest Service
- National Guard
- American Red Cross
- Representatives of secular agencies
- State and local emergency management officials
- Salvation Army
- Civil Air Patrol
- Police and fire departments
- Hospitals
- Mental health services
- Food programs
- Housing agencies
- Legal services
- Family violence intervention programs
- Habitat for Humanity
- Childcare providers
- United States Humane Association

Who Provides What?

Sometimes FEMA, the SBA, the USDA, and the Red Cross work so closely together that it is difficult to tell which agency is responsible for which function. But there are distinct services provided by the government, and others provided by the Red Cross.

Some of the services in the following chart – excerpted from Red Cross public information materials – are available only if a presidential disaster declaration is made.

What The Government Usually Provides

Emergency community services. The government provides police services, public health and sanitation services, identification and care of the dead (including temporary morgues), designation of hazardous buildings or areas, and emergency communication and transportation services.

"Usual" community welfare services. The government continues its usual financial and medical assistance to eligible persons, as well as social services for families and individuals with special needs.

Assistance in community restoration. The government will repair or replace sewage and water systems, streets and highways. The government will also remove debris, restore public transportation and communication facilities, repair or replace public buildings such as schools and hospitals, inspect private property for health or safety, and salvage unclaimed property.

Aid for recovery to families. The government will administer disaster loan programs, such as those provided by the Small Business Administration. The government will disburse food stamps as well as food donated from the Department of Agriculture. The government may also provide disaster unemployment insurance through the Department of labor, and temporary housing through the Department of Housing and Urban Development. Families may also be eligible to receive specialized counseling through government-sponsored programs offered through public health departments. In some states, the government may offer emergency welfare services to families with children, or may offer state grants for serious unmet needs.

SEQUENCE OF DELIVERY

Voluntary Agencies
Emergency Response
(Food, Clothing, Shelter, Medical)

Personal Insurance
(Homeowners, NFIP)

FEMA Disaster Housing Programs

Home Owners Repair Assistance (Safe, Sanitary, Secure)	Temp Housing Assistance Owners – 3 months Renters – 2 months	Mortgage/Rental Re-certify each month Up to 18 months

Other Government Programs

Disaster Unemployment	Crisis Counseling
Legal Assistance	IRS Assistance
Veterans Assistance	Farm Assistance

SBA Disaster Loans
Home and Business Loans
H – up to $200,000
PP – up to $40,000

MUST COMPLETE APPLICATION TO BE ELIGIBLE FOR ASSISTANCE

Individual Family Grant Program
State Administered Program
Up to $14,000

Long Term Recovery Committees
Voluntary Agencies

Additional Assistance Programs
American Red Cross
Others

What the American Red Cross Usually Provides

Emergency mass care assistance. The Red Cross provides food for disaster survivors and emergency workers, temporary shelter, medical and nursing aid, clothing, and blood or blood products.

Emergency assistance on an individual basis. The Red Cross provides damage assessments. It also provides emergency assistance for food, clothing, rent, bedding, selected furnishings, transportation, medical needs, temporary home repairs, and occupational supplies. The Red Cross also refers individuals and families to the appropriate government programs

Aid for additional assistance to families for whom government programs are not available. The Red Cross may provide casework, and may maintain food and clothing assistance until a family is back on its feet. The Red Cross may also provide building and repair assistance on owner-occupied homes; donations of household furnishings; medical and nursing care; and personal occupational supplies.

Other Individual Assistance Sources

Adapted from *"Disaster Response: A Handbook for Church Action,"* by John C. Bush, Herald Press

This chart lists additional sources of assistance outside the faith-based community

Food	EBT Cards Food Packages Meals & Surplus food	State Welfare Department American Red Cross Salvation Army
Clothing Administration	Personal effects Free replacement of	Small Business American Red Cross

	clothing	Salvation Army
Housing or home furnishings **Urban Development**	Temporary shelter Temporary housing Furniture and appliances	Red Cross Dept. of Housing and Salvation Army Red Cross
Medical Care	Help in getting medical care, Emergency medical care and health service	American Red Cross Public Health Service
Assistance for homeowners:		
Home Repair or construction	Loans for home repair Insurance or mortgage to fix home Help to pay for home Work assistance in rebuilding	Small Business Administration Dept. of Housing and Urban Development Local Charitable Organizations
Assistance for Business Owners:		
Business repair or maintenance	Loans to repair or replace business	Small Business Administration
Assistance for Farm Owners:		
Rural homeowners farm operation	Loans to repair or replace farm buildings Help for farmers Help in getting feed for livestock	Farmers Home Administration Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service

General Assistance:		
Social Security, Welfare or Veterans Administration	Help in locating relatives Social Security or Veterans benefits	Red Cross, Salvation Army Social Security Administration and Veterans Administration
Legal assistance – OEP	Legal advice	Young Lawyer's Section
Employment advice	Job help Compensation	State Employment Service
Income tax assistance	Tax help for disaster survivors	Internal Revenue Service
Property cleanup	Help cleaning up property	Local governmental units
Official information	General public information	Office of Emergency

	and assistance	Preparedness
Federal assistance to states and localities:	Set up emergency health and sanitation Establish public health controls	Public Health Food and Drug Administration
(cont.)	Help in clean-up operations Restore roads and bridges Search and rescue Repair flood control works	Dept. of Defense/Corps of Engineers Department of Transportation Coast Guard Corps of Engineers

UNIT VII

Pandemic Influenza and the Local Congregation

Pandemic Influenza, a world-wide epidemic of influenza for which no cure or human antibodies exists, is not a matter of "if." It is simply a matter of "when" and "how severe?" The international community has yet to agree upon plans for preparation, mitigation or response. Local governments and public health departments are divided and inconsistent in their projections as to impact on populations, economies, infrastructure, etc.

The following scenario is based on common assumptions forwarded by the CDC. Local congregations will most assuredly be affected and need to be prepared for all eventualities.

- Once Pandemic Influenza is identified, it will already be too late to prevent widespread infection. The close proximity of populations to each other through air travel and other forms of high mobility will facilitate the spreading of the disease. Whereas previous outbreaks of pandemic diseases made their way across national boundaries very slowly, Pandemic Influenza will have worldwide exposure in a matter of days.
- There is not a viable vaccine for Pandemic Influenza. Design and production of significant amounts of vaccine will take approximately 6 months. Human susceptibility during this time will be great, since there are, by definition, no antibodies to provide an immunological response.
- Approximately 40-60% of the exposed population will become sick. The remaining population will be divided between taking care of the ill and keeping the infrastructures functioning.
- With a reduced workforce, the infrastructure will begin to fail after the first few weeks. The electrical grid will not be reliable, communication will become difficult, water and gas utilities will be compromised. Transportation will slow as availability of fuel is limited.
- Social isolation will prohibit attendance at any mass gatherings. Schools and churches will be closed and athletic events will be cancelled.
- Food and water will become in short supply as the transportation networks slow down or stop completely.
- The healthcare system will be overwhelmed in the earliest weeks of the pandemic. Difficult decisions will have to be made as respects who will receive available vaccines and other medical support. Schools and churches may be pressed into service as triage locations for the ill and may become clinics, themselves.
- Social upheaval will be widespread. Those desperate for food, water, medicine and/or healthcare will use all means at their disposal to receive them. Law enforcement, decimated by illness and all of the above, will be ineffective and overwhelmed.
- The need for mortuary care for casualties will overwhelm morgues and funeral homes. The deceased will be kept in chilled truck trailers until they can be claimed by their families and given proper disposal.
- Following an initial outbreak of 4 weeks, there will be a period of relative calm for approximately 3 weeks. Then the cycle of infection will return, lasting for another 4 weeks. It is anticipated that the total outbreak will last nearly six months.
- Unlike seasonal influenza, which endangers the very young and the elderly, Pandemic Influenza will threaten all ages.

Impact on the Local Congregation

When considering the above scenario, the CDRC and PDRC must be careful not to cause undue alarm to the congregation and presbytery. Panic and preparation never work well together. Rather, careful and thoughtful preparations should be made over a long period of time. The following are some possible implications for the local church and middle governing body.

- The need for volunteers will expand as the infrastructure begins to fail. Physicians and nurses who are members of the Medical Reserve Corps will be asked to return to active service. Those who have retired from utility companies may be asked to return to work.
- Gathering for worship may be curtailed. Pastors and Sessions may have to find creative ways to meet the spiritual and fellowship needs of the congregation.
- In the event of the failure of telephone systems, internet, etc. the sick and homebound will need to be contacted on a more frequent basis
- Building maintenance will probably be deferred due to an absence of workers.
- Staff members whose duties are deferred from worship services may be deployed in other areas, i.e. pastoral care, meal delivery, etc.
- Financial resources will quickly dwindle due to fewer and smaller gatherings, if there are any gatherings at all.
- The physical plant may be pressed into service as a clinic, triage location, or point of distribution.
- Occasional services (weddings, funerals, baptisms, etc) will be deferred, or altered in ways which may challenge the sensitivities of the congregation. Examples may be in-home baptism by a Pastor and Elder, private interments and weddings.
- Pastoral staff will be overwhelmed by congregational and larger community demands and may, themselves, be among the early casualties.

Suggested Preparation for Pandemic Influenza

Preparation for the worst while hoping for the best is the best advice. The level of anxiety expressed by the CDRC or PDRC will guide the response by many of the congregation. Thus, steady, unhurried preparation as for any other disaster, is often the best antidote to stress and anxiety. The following suggestions will help in the process.

- Become familiar with the local health department staff. They will have access to the latest information from the CDC and other health agencies.
- Join the Local Emergency Planning Team. Each county is mandated to have one in place by the Department of Homeland Security.

- Keep accurate information in the CDRC Handbook, noting those who have gifts in particular areas and may be available to volunteer in the church or community.
- Encourage the Pastor and Session to spend some time thinking about how the church life might be altered in the event of Pandemic Influenza. If you have a disaster response committee, make Pandemic Influenza a topic of discussion and information.
- Keep accurate records of the sick and homebound. Know the location of their residences
- Keep the buildings maintained as well has possible. Procure additional routine maintenance items and keep them in stock. Examples may include HVAC filters, light bulbs, disinfectants, paper products, etc.
- Encourage the Session to begin putting money into a contingency fund or, if that is not possible, to establish a line of credit at a local bank so that bills and salaries may continue to be paid on as timely a basis as possible.
- Train the Session and members in the reality and possible scenarios and impacts of Pandemic Flu.
- Distribute and encourage the congregation to fill out the Family Emergency Health Information Sheet. Keep these in a secure location, per HPPA regulations. Ideally, these should be kept and reviewed by a Parish Nurse or a nurse within the congregation.
- Distribute the Pandemic Flu Planning Worksheet following a congregational training event about Pandemic Flu. Have members keep a copy and keep an additional copy in the Church Office.
- Encourage members to procure and maintain the items listed on the Supplies list.

Remember, we can't always be ready,
but we can always be prepared.

Pandemic Flu Planning Worksheet

Directions: Complete the following statements with your plans in the event of a flu pandemic.

- Who would take care of my family responsibilities if I became ill?

- If the school or day care closes temporarily, how will I make sure my child or children are safely occupied at home?

- What will you do if you cannot go to work?

- What will you do if you cannot go to public places?
- If someone in my household shows signs and symptoms of the flu, the caregiver will be _____.
- If the primary caregiver shows signs and symptoms of the fly, the next caregiver will be _____.
- If members of my household have to stay home or be separated from others for a period of time, they will stay (**insert where in the home they will stay**) _____.
- To keep others from being infected in the household, family member will (**insert actions they will take to help prevent the spread of the flu):**_____
- Emergency telephone numbers are located (**insert where emergency telephone numbers are located**)_____.
- Emergency Supplies, including flu pandemic supplies, are located (**insert where emergency supplies are kept**)_____.

Family Emergency Health Information Sheet

Supplies

Directions: Check off the supplies that you currently have on hand. Be sure to make a shopping list and purchase the items that you do not already have on hand.

- A three week supply of food, water and medicines. Include vitamins, prescription medications and over-the-counter medicines – such as cough and cold remedies, pain relievers, fever-reducing medications (including acetaminophen and ibuprophen) and anti-diarrhea medication.
- Emergency Preparedness Kit
- Soap
- Bleach or household disinfectant
- Alcohol-based hand sanitizer
- Paper towels
- Tissues
- Thermometer
- Box of disposable gloves
- Electrolyte drinks, fruit juice and soup or ingredients for electrolyte solution (sugar, baking soda, salt, salt substitute)
- Masks (N95 & surgical)

Differences Between Seasonal Flu and Pandemic Flu Worksheet

Seasonal Flu	Pandemic Flu
Caused by influenza viruses that are similar to those already circulating among people.	Caused by a *new* influenza virus that people have not been exposed to before. Likely to be more severe, affect more people and cause more illness and deaths than seasonal flu because people will not have immunity to the new virus.
Symptoms include fever, headache, tiredness, dry cough, sore throat, runny nose and muscle pain.	Symptoms may be similar to seasonal flu but may be more severe and complications more serious.
Deaths can be caused by complications to seasonal flu, such as pneumonia. Healthy adults are usually not at risk for serious complications. The very young, the elderly and those with certain underlying health conditions are at increased risk for serious complications.	Healthy people may be at increased risk for serious complications.
Seasonal flu generally causes a modest impact on society (e.g., some school closings, encouragement of people who are sick to stay home). FYI - Every year in the United States on average: • 5% to 20% of the population gets the flu • More than 200,000 people are hospitalized from flu complications and • About 36,000 people die from the flu.	The effects of a severe pandemic could be more damaging than those of seasonal flu. It could lead to high levels of illness, death, social disruption and economic loss. Everyday life could be disrupted because so many people in so many places become seriously ill at the same time. Impacts could range from school and business closings to the interruption of basic services such as public transportation and food delivery.

Adapted from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) 7/2006 *www.pandemicflu.gov*.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

GENERAL FLU

Q: What is the flu?

A: The flu (also known as *influenza*) is a contagious disease caused by the influenza virus. The virus infects the respiratory tract (nose, throat, lungs). Unlike many other viral respiratory diseases, such as the common cold, the flu can cause severe illness and life-threatening complications.

Q: How will I know if I have seasonal flu, pandemic flu or a cold?

A: It will be safe to assume you have pandemic flu if government health officials have announced the presence of pandemic flu activity in your community and you have signs and symptoms similar to those being described in the media by local officials. The flu and the common cold are both diseases that affect the respiratory tract (nose, throat, lungs) and have similar symptoms. In general, the flu is worse than the common cold. Symptoms such as fever, muscle pains, tiredness and dry cough are generally more common and intense with the flu than with the common cold.

Q: What should I do if I have symptoms similar to the flu:

A: Unless informed otherwise, contact a health care provider as soon as you notice the symptoms.

Q: What is the lifespan of droplets on a contaminated surface?

A: Influenza viruses can live for 24 to 48 hours on nonporous environmental surfaces and less than 12 hours on porous surfaces.

Q: Can I get the flu from a person who does not seem to be ill? How long is a person with the flu contagious?

A: The period when an infected person is contagious depends on the age and health of the person. Healthy adults may be able to infect others from 1 to 3 days prior to becoming sick and for 5 days after they first develop symptoms. Some young children and people with weakened immune systems may be contagious for longer than a week.

BIRD FLU

Q: What is the bird flu? What does the bird flu have to do with a flu pandemic?

A: Bird (or avian) flu is caused by influenza viruses that occur naturally among wild birds. The H5N1 influenza virus is deadly to birds and can be transmitted from birds to humans. As mentioned in the video, scientists have been monitoring the avian influenza H5N1 virus for changes that can lead to person-to-person transmission for the potential of a flu pandemic.

Q: Can I get the bird flu from eating poultry?

A: It is safe to eat properly cooked poultry. Cooking destroys germs, including the avian influenza virus. Guidelines for the safe preparation of poultry include the following:

- Wash hands with warm water and soap before and after handling food.
- Keep r aw poultry and its juices away from other foods.
- After cutting raw meat, wash cutting boards, knives and countertops with hot, soapy water.
- Sanitize cutting boards by using a solution of 1 teaspoon of chlorine bleach in 1 quart of water.
- Use a meat thermometer to ensure that poultry fully cooks. An internal temperature of at least 165°F is necessary to kill food-borne germs, including the avian influenza virus. For example, set the oven to 325°F or more to cook a whole chicken, insert a meat thermometer into the thickest part of the chicken meat. Cook the chicken in the oven until the meat thermometer shows that the internal temperature of the chicken has reached 180°F. More information on how to kill germs on poultry by proper cooking can be found at www.usda.gov/birdflu.

VACCINATION

Q: How do I find out more about flu vaccines?

A: You can get more information by contacting the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) hotline at 1-800-232-4636 or www.pandemicflu.gov.

MASKS

Q: What are the different types of masks used for?

A: There are many types of masks. N95 masks are used to prevent inhalation of airborne particles. Surgical masks are required in health care for specific procedures and recommended in some home health care situations.

Q: Should I wear a mask at home while giving care to someone with the flu?

A: It may be helpful. The U.S. Department of Health & Human Services states that although to date no studies have shown that the use of masks at home will decrease the spread of infection, the use of surgical masks by the patient and/or caregiver during interactions may be of benefit.

PREVENTING THE SPREAD OF PANDEMIC FLU

Q: Are hand sanitizers effective in preventing the spread of germs?

A: When hands are not visibly soiled or dirty, alcohol-based hand sanitizers composed of at least 60 percent alcohol are an effective hand cleaning option.

Q: What types of household cleaners or disinfectants are best to use?

A: You may purchase household disinfectants or you can use a fresh mixture of ¼ cup household bleach in 1 gallon of water. To mix a smaller amount, use 1 tablespoon of bleach in 1 quart of water.

Family Emergency Health Information Sheet

It is important to think about health issues that could arise if an influenza pandemic occurs and how they could affect you and your loved ones. For example, if a mass vaccination clinic is set up in your community, you may need to provide as much information as you can about your medical history when you go, especially if you have a serious health condition or allergy. Create a family emergency health plan using this information. Fill in information for each family member in the space provided. Like much of the planning for a pandemic, this can also help prepare for other emergencies.

1. **Family Member Health Information**

Family Member	Blood Type	Allergies	Past/Current Medical Conditions	Current Medications/ Dosages	In Case of Emergency, Contact

2. **Emergency Contacts**

Contacts	**Name and Phone Number**
Local personal emergency contact	
Out-of-town personal emergency contact	
Hospitals near work	
Hospitals near school	
Hospitals near home	

Family physician(s)	
State public health department (See list on *www.pandemicflu.gov*)	
Pharmacy	
Employer contact and emergency information	
School contact and emergency information	
Religious/spiritual organization	
Veterinarian	

Provided by the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, CDC 1/2006 *www.pandemicflu.gov*