

Church Disaster Relief Training

Handout

(local church plan)



United Methodists In Disaster Response

Disaster Training

Purpose of Training: To give churches tools that will enable them to construct a viable disaster response program that can assist in both a local disaster and non-local disasters.

Areas to Cover:

- Establishing the basic structure for a disaster relief program
- Determining the needs of the congregation that must be considered during a disaster
- Assessing areas of strength that can be utilized during a disaster
- Establishing leadership for each area of strength
- Communicating with District and Conference teams who provide training and other tools that will be a help in disaster relief.
- Developing working relationships with established local disaster relief agencies
- Building relationships with other churches in your area to expand the scope and strength of your local church plan
- Tools to prepare your congregation for a disaster

Need for a disaster response program:

Discussion: Disasters happen at the most inopportune times.

Establishing a Structure for Disaster Relief

1. Select a coordinator – This person must possess the following skills:
 - They must be a person
 - They must be willing to put forth a small amount of effort
 - They must be able to talk
 - They must be willing to make decisions
 - They must be willing to communicate with the District and Conference
 - Most important – They must have a desire to help people in need.
2. Establish a leadership team (suggestions)
 - The Pastor should be one of the team members.
 - Because a disaster will require the use of church facilities it would be good to have the Chairperson of the Trustee's as a team member.
 - Because there will be expenditures it would be good to have the Chairperson of Finance as a team member.
 - Because there is church action required it would be good to have the Chairperson of the Administrative Council/Board as a team member.

Now you have a small team of five (including the Disaster Coordinator). The team is small enough to be a good decision making group, and large enough to make sure there is leadership during a disaster.

Job Description:

- This group will be in charge of determining the areas of strength that can be utilized in a disaster
- They will establish the leadership for each area of church involvement
- They will coordinate a disaster response
- They will keep themselves available for decision making during the disaster

Thanks David Harris!

Determining the needs of the congregation that must be considered during a disaster

There needs to be a real assessment made of the demographics of your church and your community! Who are you, and who makes up your community.

IDENTIFY NEEDS

1. What is the makeup of our congregation?
 - a. young
 - b. elderly
 - c. retired
 - d. well off
 - e. primarily on social security
 - f. low income
 - g. children
 - h. established families
 - i. mobile yuppies
2. What Special Situations Do You Have?
 - Home Bound People
 - Elderly
 - Handicapped
 - Low Income families
 - People without transportation
 - People without relatives or a place to go
3. What special needs are in your community
 - Non-insured families
 - Low income families
 - People without transportation
 - Nursing Homes close by
 - Mobil homes

Assessing areas of strength that can be utilized during a disaster

The real question you must seek to answer is, “How can we, as a church, help in the event of a disaster.” Since we have looked at the church and community demographics now we must identify the strengths of your church that might be useful in a disaster. You may also include in this process thought about what could become a strength if purposefully planned for the future. This is what disaster preparedness is all about.

IDENTIFY RESOURCES

1. What facilities do you have?
 - Kitchen
 - Fellowship Hall
 - Day Care
 - Food Bank
 - Classrooms
 - Showers
 - Large Bathrooms
 - Computers/internet availability
2. What Human Resources Do You Have?
 - Contractors
 - Electricians
 - Truck Drivers
 - Cooks
 - Farmers
 - Ham Radio Operators
 - Doctors
 - Nurses
 - Volunteers

Enclosed is a possible form to adapt for use in your congregation!

DISASTER PLANNING AND RESPONSE

Part of our Disaster Plan is being prepared to assist our church family and the community after a storm. Please complete this questionnaire if you can assist in any of these areas.

- I. Do you have a CB radio? YES____NO____
If you answered yes, would you be available after a disaster to assist the Church with this means of communication? YES____NO____
2. Do you own a cellular phone? YES____NO____
If you answered yes, would you be available after a disaster to assist the Church with this means of communication? YES____NO____
3. Are you a HAM radio operator? YES____NO____
If you answered yes, Would you be available during or after a disaster to assist the Church with this means of communication? YES____NO____
4. Are you a builder or contractor? YES____NO____
If you answered yes, would you be available after a disaster to assist the Church and local community? YES____NO____
5. If you are a builder or contractor Would you be available to travel to other areas in Florida in the event of a disaster? YES____NO____
6. Are you a nurse licensed to practice in Florida? YES____NO____
Would you be available to assist the church? YES____NO____
7. Have you ever had training as a mental health counsel? YES____NO____
8. Would you be available to serve as a counselor after a disaster YES____NO____
9. If you have not had prior training in mental health counseling, would you be interested in this training? YES____NO____
10. Would you be available to assist with child care following a disaster? YES____NO____
11. Would you be available to assist with food distribution after a disaster? YES____NO____
12. Do you own a truck? YES____NO____
If you answered yes, would you be available after a disaster to assist the church with transporting goods? YES____NO____
13. Would you be interested in serving on a Church Disaster Committee? YES____NO____

Assessing areas of strength that can be utilized during a disaster (continued)

Now that you have listed needs and identified facilities and areas of strength, it is time to determine what areas your church can help in a disaster.

Here are a few of the ways in which a church can help:

- A secondary Red Cross Shelter
- Pantry or food supplies
- Supply Day Care for affected families
- Supply communications
- Organize work teams
- Help with collecting Disaster Relief Information to assist families in getting help
- Offer counseling for victims
- Provide water
- Mobilize workers for feeding disaster workers
- Provide transportation for handicapped or elderly
- Follow up on congregation through volunteer callers
- The list could go on and on

Establishing leadership for each area of strength

Once you have determined areas where you can assist during a disaster, thought needs to be given to potential leaders that could work in that area.

Example:

Providing food for disaster workers

- Procurement Coordinator
- Inventory Director
- Preparation Coordinator
- Set-up Coordinator
- Volunteer Coordinator
- Media Coordinator
- Treasurer

For each area of disaster assistance there needs to be individuals that know they are to meet at the church as soon as possible.

Communicating with District and Conference

Once disaster plans have been developed for your local church, a copy of your plans should be filed with the District disaster relief coordinator, your district UMCOR coordinator and the Conference UMCOR coordinator. Included with those plans should be an indication of your churches willingness to assist with disasters outside of your immediate area, and contact persons for your church. These plans should be updated annually and sent to the above listed persons.

A representative from UMCOR is here to talk about what they provide during a disaster and you will be able to learn what they do for you in a disaster situation.

Developing working relationships with established local disaster relief agencies

3. What kinds of certifications or connections have you made?
 - The first and most important relationship will be with UMCOR
 - Red Cross Shelter
 - Linked with V.O.A.D
 - Connect with your local Emergency Management Director
 - Contact Local Salvation Army

Much of this will be determined by what areas your church has decided to develop in disaster relief. All of these organizations are resources for you to be registered with.

Building relationships with other churches in your area to expand the scope and strength of your local church plan

This is one of the most important parts of Disaster Preparedness. We suggest the following:

1. Make a list of churches in your area
2. Contact each church and find out if they have a disaster program of any kind
3. If they do not, determine if they are interested in working with you to develop one that can be used to assist their church and community.
4. Develop a list of contacts for each church (hopefully there will be someone designated to contact)
5. Have a meeting with all churches in your area to discuss disaster plans. Show your plan as a model for them to look at.

Once this network of churches has been formed (some call it an Inter-faith), inform district and conference disaster coordinators of what resources are available from the group of churches.

THEY DO NOT HAVE TO BE METHODIST CHURCHES TO RECEIVE HELP FROM THE METHODIST DISASTER RELIEF ORGANIZATION.

What we need are point churches that will take a lead in various areas of disaster relief. UMCOR and other District Methodist Disaster Relief groups will work with all of the other disaster relief organizations to provide relief in case of a disaster.

Tools to prepare your congregation for a disaster

This is a critical area to begin preparations for now! Your congregation will need to know that you are there when a disaster strikes. Now we get into the collecting of information on special needs and informing your congregation of what is available.

Much of the work was done during the demographic evaluation, but now we need to put feet to the process. Included are some questionnaire forms for you to start with. Every church should develop a phone system to reach all of their members. If you have an established phone ministry, such as a Shepherding Program, it is easy to do this part, otherwise you will need to enlist some volunteers to start.

The ideal is to have a SPECIAL group of volunteers separate from any other program who will make these calls, and then commit to contact their people during a disaster and keep track of them.

PLEASE DEVELOP FORMS THAT FIT YOUR NEEDS. THE ENCLOSED FORMS ARE JUST SAMPLES!

EVACUATION LIST

This list contains names of those in the congregation that we have identified as possibly having to evacuate in the event of a hurricane. Our goal is two fold- (1) to inquire about their plan, what is it?; and (2) to record vital information regarding where they can be reached after a storm.

Please make your calls between September 11th and September 25th.

.....
NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

PHONE: _____

1. Identify yourself as a member of the calling committee for the Disaster Response Committee.

2. Ask if they are in an evacuation zone or a mobile home? If yes, what evacuation level are they in? (A____, B____, C____, D____, E____)

3. Where do they plan on going?

A. Family or friend (circle one)

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Do they have family or friends that will assist them?

YES _____ NO _____

B. Shelter

Name of Shelter: _____

If they answer yes to (going to a shelter: ask this question: Would you be more comfortable staying with a church family?

YES _____ NO _____

If they answer Yes, inform them that they will receive a questionnaire to complete and mail back to the church office so arrangements can be made with another church family.

4. Assure those on the list that you will call after a storm to be sure they are safe.

Please be sure to call _____ at _____ if we need to mail a questionnaire.

MEMBERS TO BE CALLED BEFORE OR AFTER A STORM

This list contains names of those in the congregation that may need some type of assistance before, during or after a storm. Their name appears on this list because they live alone or have been identified as someone that may need assistance or reassurance. We are attempting to identify how we might assist them and/or if they would like a call before and/or after a storm.

Please make your calls between September 11th and September 25th

.....

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

PHONE: _____

1. Identify yourself as a member of the calling committee for Disaster Response Committee.
2. Explain that you are calling to determine if they would like a call in the event of a disaster.
YES ____ NO ____ BEFORE _____ AFTER _____ BOTH _____

3. Is their plan to remain at home during a storm?

YES ____ NO _____

4. If they plan on leaving their home, where will they go?

Name of friend or relative _____

Phone number _____

5. Do they have family or friends that they can count on during a storm that will assist them?

YES ____ NO _____

NAME: _____

PHONE: _____

Is the individual that will assist them always available?

YES ____ NO _____

If NO, do they have others in mind that could assist them?

NAME: _____

PHONE: _____

SAMPLE LETTER TO INFORM YOUR CONGREGATION

Dear Members:

First let me share with you that the Disaster Relief Committee wishes to commend all those that have offered to house members of our congregation that may be required to evacuate in the event of a disaster. Also we are grateful for the many members that have identified various functions that they would be willing to participate in after a storm. Hopefully our disaster plans will never require implementation.

However, in the event that we may have the misfortune of some kind of disaster, the disaster committee has been very busy compiling a list of members that may be required to evacuate; members that may be at home alone; and others that may need assistance

A disaster phone committee has been established to phone those members that may need assistance before or after a disaster. **Members of the phone committee will be calling members in the next two weeks to identify themselves and gather any pertinent information that may assist the committee in the event of a disaster.**

If you do not receive a call and feel you may need assistance, please call the church office so that your name can be added to our list.

Your well being and safety is very important to us. Thank you for your cooperation with this most important project.

Some Personal Do's and Don'ts of Disaster Preparedness

Develop a personal disaster plan for your family

Contact church and keep updated information regarding where you will be during a disaster.

Keep an up to date list of emergency telephone numbers.

Have a battery radio that carries emergency stations.

Keep your yard cleaned up. Check it again when disaster threatens.

Learn how to turn your utilities off outside your house.

When Disaster Threatens

Check your supply of nonperishable food.

Store adequate containers of water. Plastic containers, bathtub,, etc. Toilet water tank, hot water tank, sporting equipment

Have containers with (double) plastic liners for human waste available.

Secure your valuables, official papers, jewelry, etc. in a location that will be safe and dry.

If flooding is a consideration, pile your expensive furniture up in the middle of a secure room and cover it with plastic.

DO's of the disaster situation

Learn how Disaster Reports are usually transmitted.

Consider all Disaster Reports seriously until you receive other reliable information.

Have yard trees surveyed so that you may recognize the dangerous ones.

Keep a reasonable supply of non-perishable food at all times depending on reported weather conditions.

Keep loose objects organized so that they will not become flying missiles in a strong wind.

Always be aware of sources for potable water in the home.

If you are told to evacuate, follow instructions carefully and inform church of your new location.

Keep phone calls to a minimum.

Cooperate with Disaster workers.

DO REMEMBER THAT YOU TOO HAVE BEEN AFFECTED BY THE DISASTER AS WELL.

DON'T during a disaster

1. Don't lose your cool.
2. Don't forget to consult your disaster checklist.
3. Don't neglect to have a supply of disaster necessities on hand.
4. Don't go to a shelter if there is an acceptable alternative.
5. Don't forget to safeguard your house and valuables.
6. Don't delay if you do evacuate, It may be fatal.
7. Don't deviate from instructions if you join an evacuation.
8. Don't forget what to do if.
 - (a) you decide not to evacuate.
 - (b) if you are unaware until a disaster is upon you.
 - (c) If you are in the house and threatened by Wind, Water, or Fire.
9. Don't think that you have to do everything by yourself.
10. Don't neglect your own family while trying to help others.
11. Don't neglect the spiritual needs of people because you are so busy dealing with the physical needs.

MISC. FORMS FOR YOUR USE

HANDICAPPED REGISTRATION FORM

NAME _____ SEX _____ D.O.B. _____

SPOUSE _____ SEX _____ D.O.B. _____

ADDRESS _____ PHONE _____
Street City ZIP

CAREGIVER _____ PHONE _____

NATURE OF HANDICAP _____

COMMENTS: _____

ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION
(Computer) - (Or Fax Machine)

NAME _____ Phone _____

E-Mail Address _____ FAX _____

NAME _____ Phone _____

E-Mail Address _____ FAX _____

NAME _____ Phone _____

E-Mail Address _____ FAX _____

NAME _____ Phone _____

E-Mail Address _____ FAX _____

NAME _____ Phone _____

E-Mail Address _____ FAX _____

NAME _____ Phone _____

E-Mail Address _____ FAX _____

NAME _____ Phone _____

E-Mail Address _____ FAX _____

NAME _____ Phone _____

E-Mail Address _____ FAX _____

NAME _____ Phone _____

E-Mail Address _____ FAX _____

RADIO AMATEURS

Name _____ I.D. _____

Address _____ Phone _____

Name _____ I.D. _____

Address _____ Phone _____

Name _____ I.D. _____

Address _____ Phone _____

Name _____ I.D. _____

Address _____ Phone _____

Name _____ I.D. _____

Address _____ Phone _____

Name _____ I.D. _____

Address _____ Phone _____

Name _____ I.D. _____

Address _____ Phone _____

Name _____ I.D. _____

Address _____ Phone _____

Name _____ I.D. _____

Address _____ Phone _____

Name _____ I.D. _____

Address _____ Phone _____

Name _____ I.D. _____

Address _____ Phone _____

CB - WALKIE-TALKIE
(Citizens Band) (Two Way Radio)

NAME _____ Phone _____

CB or WALKIE-TALKIE (*caller I. D.*) _____

NAME _____ Phone _____

CB or WALKIE-TALKIE (*caller I. D.*) _____

NAME _____ Phone _____

CB or WALKIE-TALKIE (*caller I. D.*) _____

NAME _____ Phone _____

CB or WALKIE-TALKIE (*caller I. D.*) _____

NAME _____ Phone _____

CB or WALKIE-TALKIE (*caller I. D.*) _____

NAME _____ Phone _____

CB or WALKIE-TALKIE (*caller I. D.*) _____

NAME _____ Phone _____

CB or WALKIE-TALKIE (*caller I. D.*) _____

NAME _____ Phone _____

CB or WALKIE-TALKIE (*caller I. D.*) _____

NAME _____ Phone _____

CB or WALKIE-TALKIE (*caller I. D.*) _____

NAME _____ Phone _____

CB or WALKIE-TALKIE (*caller I. D.*) _____