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“Be dressed ready for service
 and keep your lamps burning.”
 -Luke 12:35



A Newsletter of the US Disaster Program

Issue #7 - May 2011

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NEWS

***Preparedness
Planning Guide
online!***

Use this online guide to walk your congregation through the process of disaster preparedness planning.

Join Ready to Serve!

Offer your services to your vulnerable neighbors after a disaster. Sign up [online](#) to be called upon to

A Note from Katie

I'm sure you've watched with horror as I have, as seemingly every night for the past several weeks, disaster upon disaster has hit our country. Fires, floods and now these tornadoes. My heart and prayers go out to those communities impacted by this destruction and to the churches that minister to them. I've been in touch with disaster coordinators in these impacted dioceses, and we are working together to support the parishes and their vulnerable neighbors. There will be a need for volunteers in the coming months, but not yet. Please be patient as the churches work to assess needs and build programs, and I will let you know when the time has come for out-of-town mission teams.

It's important to remember that we're not first responders-our churches assist in these early days after an event as best they can, housing, feeding, providing spiritual support-but our strength and our gifts lie primarily in the long-term. In a few weeks, many of the big organizations will begin to pull out of these communities-I have that heard that this withdrawal has already begun in North Carolina. Our churches and our leaders will remain; these are their homes as well. We, at Episcopal Relief & Development, will stand with those community church leaders for the long-term and accompany them as they assist their neighbors on the recovery process.

volunteer if a disaster affects your area.

We are building up our resource library!

Now you can go [online](#) to find tools and stories about preparedness planning and response programming. Do you have a document that might help another community? Do you have a story to share? Please send them so that knowledge can be shared around the country! Email Alison at ahare@er-d.org.

Trainings

May 4: Training for Diocesan Disaster Committee in the Diocese of Louisiana

May 16 - 18: Conference for Diocesan Disaster Coordinators on the West Coast

May 31 - June 2: Conference for Diocesan Disaster Coordinators in the Southeast

Current Emergency Relief Projects:

White Swan, WA
Fire Response, Christ Episcopal Church

Brookings, OR
Tsunami Response, St. Timothy's Church

Newton Grove, NC
Tornado Response, La Iglesia de la Sagrada Familia

Windsor, NC
Tornado Response, St. Thomas' Church

Please keep all those impacted and those who care for them in your prayers in the coming weeks, and we'll provide updates on these programs and how you can help in the next month.

Peace,
Katie

Preparing for Disasters with Church Partnerships

In the chaos after Hurricane Rita, Tammy Taylor's family didn't know what had happened to their elderly uncle, who had been staying in a nursing home in Louisiana and evacuated before the storm. They later discovered him in a town outside of Houston, after he was recognized by friends who saw his interview with a local TV station. All this confusion struck a chord with Tammy's husband, Bill. He said, "I got thinking, what would happen with our church during a natural disaster?" So he called the diocesan office to find out what their disaster plan was. There wasn't one.



St. Augustine's - Galveston, TX

When Bill and Tammy moved to Galveston, an island off the coast of the Texas Gulf Coast, one of the first things they did was join the congregation at St. Augustine's, the oldest African-American church in Texas, which has a long history in the community. With Hurricane Rita still fresh in his mind, Bill was thinking about the next natural disaster, namely the hurricanes that often hit the Texas coast. His biggest concern: "If forced to evacuate, who can people call so we know they're OK?" He had previously gotten to know Ora Houston, a member of St. James' congregation in Austin, another predominantly African-American Episcopal church. Together they set up a system whereby members of St. James' would volunteer to staff the phones at the church if news reached them of an evacuation on Galveston Island. Congregants at St. Augustine's were then given laminated cards with St. James' numbers to call once they were safe.

During Hurricane Ike, they were able to put the system to the test, with great success. The Galveston congregation was accounted for within days, and St. James' was able to provide a little extra help to one family that had been evacuated. To learn more about the relationship between these two parishes and the success of their preparedness plan, please see ["Preparing with Church Partnerships"](#) in our online [resource](#)

Current Disaster Recovery Programs:

Episcopal Diocese of Tennessee: St. Luke's Community House is now a Restore the Dream Center site and serves the neighborhood of West Nashville by supporting home reconstruction, providing case management services and care for the caregiver trainings.

The Episcopal Community Services of Louisiana (ECSLA):

supports oil spill-affected communities as they adapt to the financial, emotional and social changes caused by the oil spill through case management and supporting community resilience.

Jericho Road:

a neighborhood-based home-building organization working to revitalize Central City, a New Orleans neighborhood recovering from Hurricane Katrina and decades of disinvestment.

Contact Us:

To add your name to the "Ready to Serve" volunteer and skills roster:

volunteer@er-d.org

Katie Mears
Program Manager

Tsunami Response in Oregon

The Rev. Bernie Lindley is a third-generation commercial fisherman who moors his boat at the docks in Brookings, Oregon. In the early morning of March 11 he took his fishing boat out into deep open waters to avoid the imminent surge of water from the Japanese earthquake and tsunami. Lindley was able to protect his boat from damage caused by the rising water, but many people who live on their boats in the docks weren't so lucky. Though residents were evacuated in time, some people's boats were swept out to sea. Others, like the boat belonging to Lindley's friend Bobby, sustained damages from being thrown against other boats as the pier disintegrated due to the surge and fall of the tide. The hull of Bobby's boat was pierced right below the water line, so the boat takes on water sporadically and unpredictably. This means he has to keep a close eye on it, and Bobby hasn't gotten a good night's sleep since the big wave.



The Rev. Bernie Lindley

When Lindley isn't out on the water, he is rector of St. Timothy's, a small parish of about 55-60 members in Brookings, a town of about 14,000 people. His parish has a long history of outreach ministry, including a free health clinic and mobile dental clinic, and they knew they wanted to help their neighbors who were affected by the tsunami. Lindley quickly responded to Episcopal Relief & Development's offer to help, and developed a program to aid his vulnerable neighbors in the local boat basin.

At a port meeting soon after the tsunami, residents of the boat basin were informed that reconnecting their services was low on the priority list. Therefore, the first concern for families living on the docks was to find temporary housing until plumbing and electricity were connected again. A volunteer from St. Timothy's and a resident of the dock walked through the small community of 15 boats and found 10 families that would need extra help. With funds from Episcopal Relief & Development, St. Timothy's was able to provide motel rooms for nine families and a bus ticket to Utah for one other resident, so that they could have a place to stay while repairs were made to their boats and the docks.

Another problem facing boat residents was fixing damages. Many

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families didn't have insurance, and even if they could afford the necessary repairs, many could not cover the expensive cost of hauling their boats out of the water to be serviced. With the remaining funds from Episcopal Relief & Development, St. Timothy's has offered to help seven families haul their boats out of the water. They will also help provide materials for repairs to those that need them, and a list of trusted and qualified repairmen to carry out the work.



Brookings Harbor. Photo: Mail Tribune 4/11/11

Bobby and his son, the local high school's varsity quarterback, are one family that will receive help from St. Timothy's. Before the storm Bobby - a single dad - had trouble finding steady work and had been doing odd jobs to make ends meet. He doesn't have the money to haul his boat out of the water to repair it, so St. Timothy's offered to help. Bobby responded, "Why don't you use the money for someone who really needs it?" So they came up with a compromise: St. Timothy's will haul the boat out of the water, and Bobby will do the repair work himself.

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