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| US DISASTER PROGRAMOur Congregation’s Disaster Plan |  |
| Mini Planning Guide |  |

# PLANNING RESOURCES FROM EPISCOPAL RELIEF & DEVELOPMENT

This mini-guide is based on Episcopal Relief & Development’s Preparedness Planning Guide for Congregations and Parishes, which can be downloaded for free from episcopalrelief.org/resourcelibrary. The guide is available in three versions:

* The “Comprehensive” version of the Preparedness Planning Guide helps a congregation plan for a disaster, from taking inventory of physical and human assets to determining its niche in assisting vulnerable people in the larger community. This process is best done over several meetings, requiring about 10 to 15 hours to complete.

To assist in the comprehensive process, we’ve created a Facilitator’s Guide that a group leader can use to facilitate a planning team in completing the heart of the plan in four meetings of 60 to 90 minutes.

* The “Silver Level” version collects necessary basic information to protect parishioners and church property in times of disaster, and also lays the foundation for congregations interested in responding to their most vulnerable neighbors after a disaster.
* The “Bronze Level” version collects the most basic information needed in times of disaster.

## DISASTER RESPONSE CURRICULA

Ministering After a Disaster Resources help Christian formation directors and youth ministers plan programming for children, youth, teens and adults during the first few weeks after a disaster. The resources contain lesson plans, teaching tips, bibliographies and handouts for parents. The can also be downloaded for free from episcopalrelief.org/resourcelibrary. They include:

* Ministering to Teens After a Disaster (Grades 9-12)
* Ministering to Youth After a Disaster (Grades 6-8)
* Ministering to Children After a Disaster (Grades K-5)
* Ministering to Adults After a Disaster

Ready to Serve with Compassion is a curriculum for preparing volunteers to participate in disaster response efforts that promote long-term recovery, such as rebuilding.

Episcopal Relief & Development’s Resource Library also contains downloadable best practices that describe how congregations throughout the United States have prepared for and responded to disasters in their communities.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| * Congregation/Church:
 |  |
| * Phone:
* Address:
 |  |
|  |  |
| * Congregational Disaster Coordinator
 |  |
| * Cell-phone:
 |  |
| * Landline/Phone:
 |  |
|  |  |
| * Date of Completion:
 |  |
|  |  |
| * Scheduled Review:
 |  |

# CONGREGATIONAL GOALS

It’s important to think of who you are as a congregation and what you want to accomplish after a disaster. While these steps are filled out for you here, a congregation might have a few more to add based on its unique ministries. These goals drive what you will strive to accomplish after a disaster; the specific steps to accomplish these goals will be defined later in the guide.

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| 1) | Reestablish Sunday services as soon as possible. |
| 2) | Ensure the safety of older, disabled and other vulnerable members of the congregation |
| 3) | Provide an effective relief ministry to the local community after a disaster |
| 4) | Protect valuable church assets |

## IDENTIFYING GROUPS THAT INCLUDE OR SERVE VULNERABLE PEOPLE

People with special needs will be at higher risk during a disaster. Take the time to identify those people within your congregation, and brainstorm what problems they may face and how you could help with those problems as a congregation.

INSTRUCTIONS: List the groups in the parish that are either comprised of or serve people who might be especially vulnerable after a disaster. These might include senior citizens’ groups, groups for new mothers, and religious education programs that include children with special needs. List the contacts for each group, so that they can be contacted after a disaster to help assess needs and facilitate the response. (Note: The Comprehensive Preparedness Planning Guide for Congregations and Parishes takes this goal further by also suggesting a parish-wide survey that captures both the gifts and needs of church members in a disaster.)

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| GROUP | CONTACT | TYPES OF NEEDSMEMBERS MIGHT HAVE. |
| Ex. The Senior Citizens Club is comprised of parishioners aged 65 and older. | Betty Jones | Difficulty evacuating. Medical conditions. |
| Ex. The Lay Eucharistic Visitors have a current list of people who are home- bound or who are in the hospital. | Deacon Williams | Difficulty evacuating. Medical conditions. |
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# CONGREGATIONAL RESOURCES

Identify what facilities or resources your congregation can offer to fellow parishioners or to the broader community in the event of an emergency – do you have vehicles? Do you have a space that could be used as a shelter? Do you have a commercial kitchen?

## CONGREGATIONAL PROPERTY RESOURCES FOR USE POST-DISASTER

INSTRUCTIONS: MAKE A LIST OF PROPERTY ASSETS THAT CAN BE USED FOR RESPONSE ACTIVITIES IN CASE OF AN EMERGENCY.

## LIST YOUR BUILDINGS – INCLUDE APPROXIMATE CAPACITY AND ACCESSIBILITY

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| BUILDING | DESCRIPTION |
| * Sanctuary
 |  |
| * Parish Hall
 |  |

DO YOU HAVE:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| YES/NO | FACILITY | DESCRIPTION/QUANTITY |
|  | * Storage Capacity
 |  |
|  | * Kitchen Capacity
 |  |
|  | * Refrigerator/freezer
 |  |
|  | * Space to Shelter
 |  |
|  | * Exterior Grounds
 |  |
|  | * Other:
 |  |

ARE YOU CERTIFIED:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| YES/NO | CERTIFICATION |
|  | * American Red Cross Disaster Feeding
 |
|  | * American Red Cross Mass Care
 |
|  | * American Red Cross Shelter Care
 |
|  | * Other:
 |

WHAT EQUIPMENT/RESOURCES DO YOU HAVE TO OFFER THE WIDER COMMUNITY?

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| YES/NO | EQUIPMENT/ RESOURCES | DESCRIPTION/QUANTITY |
|  | * Vehicles
 |  |
|  | * Aircraft
 |  |
|  | * Boat
 |  |
|  | * Bus
 |  |
|  | * Bed/Cot
 |  |
|  | * Tent
 |  |
|  | * Other:
 |  |

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# CONGREGATIONAL ACTIVITIES RESOURCES

Make a list of important activities and services already provided by the congregation. What do you know how to do? What outreach programs does your congregation already run? What vulnerable communities might be associated with those programs? Because you already have the experience and infrastructure in place, these programs may be a good starting point for providing services to the greater community after a disaster.

## ACTIVITIES:

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| --- | --- |
| * Ex. Vacation Bible School for parish children and their friends
 | * Ex. Food bank based at local Presbyterian church, coordinated by Ministerial Association leaders
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CONGREGATIONAL HUMAN RESOURCE ASSETS:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Primary Languages: | English |
| Groups that could be of service: |  |
| Ex. Brotherhood of St. Andrew | Contact Person: |  |
| Resources they can provide: |  |
| Skills they can provide: |  |
| Ex. | Contact Person: |  |
| Resources they can provide: |  |
| Skills they can provide: |  |
| Ex. | Contact Person: |  |
| Resources they can provide: |  |
| Skills they can provide: |  |
| Ex. | Contact Person: |  |
| Resources they can provide: |  |
| Skills they can provide: |  |
| Ex. | Contact Person: |  |
| Resources they can provide: |  |
| Skills they can provide: |  |
| Ex. | Contact Person: |  |
| Resources they can provide: |  |
| Skills they can provide: |  |
| Ex. | Contact Person: |  |
| Resources they can provide: |  |
| Skills they can provide: |  |

**CONGREGATION’S EMERGENCY CONTACTS**

Partner congregations can serve as a center for communications, an evacuation site, or a source of relief volunteers, among other things. Partnering with another congregation within the Diocese

provides an opportunity to both serve others and receive services in an emergency. A relationship with a congregation located in a separate region not susceptible to the same emergencies at the same time as your congregation should also be established as a possible evacuation site.

It may also be a good idea to keep a complete set of keys to the church at one of these locations, or at your diocesan offices – in case yours are lost.

## PARTNER CONGREGATION – LOCAL

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Partner Congregation: |  |
| Contact Person |  |
| * Landline:
 |  |
| * Cell Phone:
 |  |
| Address: |  |

PARTNER CONGREGATION – OUTSIDE THE DIOCESE

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Partner Congregation: |  |
| Contact Person |  |
| * Landline:
 |  |
| * Cell Phone:
 |  |
| Address: |  |

**BRAINSTORM LIKELY DISASTERS AND EMERGENCIES**

Make a list of all potential disasters/emergencies. Examples of common emergencies may include: weather and fire-related events, vulnerable adults, lost and missing children, medical emergencies, intruders, etc. Also consider even the most extreme possibilities: chemical spill, fire, mass violence, etc.

After you have created the lists, go through and rank the top 5 that you think are most likely. We will return to these in the final section of this guide, “Developing Templates for Initial Response.”

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| --- | --- |
| MAJOR DISASTERS | LOCAL EMERGENCIES |
| * Flood
 | * Ice Storm
 |
| * Hurricane
 | * Apartment fire in the neighborhood
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| • | • |
| • | • |
| • | • |
| • | • |
| • | • |
| • | • |
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| • | • |
| • | • |

Consider whether your top five events in both columns would be the type that occur with some warning, such as a hurricane or spring river flood, or would happen suddenly, such as a chemical spill. Place them in the appropriate box below.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Major Disaster with Warning | Major Disaster with No Warning | Local Emergency With Warning | Local Emergency with No Warning |
| • | • | • | • |
| • | • | • | • |
| • | • | • | • |

# INITIAL RESPONSE FOR MAJOR DISASTERS WITH WARNING

## EXAMPLES OF DISASTERS THAT MOST LIKELY TO AFFECT OUR REGION:

DESCRIPTION: THIS PLAN WOULD WORK FOR ANTICIPATED DISASTERS SUCH AS A MAJOR HURRICANE, WHERE THERE IS TIME TO ARRANGE FOR AN EVACUATION AND PROTECT PROPERTY BEFORE THE EVENT.

FIRST 10 STEPS: WHAT ARE THE FIRST THINGS THAT NEED TO HAPPEN? BY WHEN DO THEY NEED TO START? AND WHO IS IN CHARGE?

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | STEP | TIME FRAME | PERSON RESPONSIBLE |
| 1 | Call priest to find out how emergency has affected church and/or services/ministries |  | Congregational Disaster Coordinator |
| 2 | Call Disaster Leadership Team to activate phone tree |  | Congregational Disaster Coordinator |
| 3 | Call Diocesan Disaster Coordinator to inform diocese of what is happening |  | Congregational Disaster Coordinator |
| 4 |  |  |  |
| 5 |  |  |  |
| 6 |  |  |  |
| 7 |  |  |  |
| 8 |  |  |  |
| 9 |  |  |  |
| 10 |  |  |  |

PRIOR PREPARATION: What needs to happen or what things are needed before a disaster in order to ensure the safety of the church and its parishioners?

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| ACTIVITY | PERSON RESPONSIBLE |
|  |  |
|  |  |
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|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |