

An Overview of Episcopal Relief & Development's Disaster Preparedness Planning Guides

In his letter to the new churches in Asia Minor, Paul spoke of readiness as one of the primary attributes needed to be effective in proclaiming the Gospel (Ephesians 6:15).

*Readiness is a path
to peace of mind.*

Readiness is a path to peace of mind. Practicing readiness reduces anxiety, helping us follow Matthew's counsel that we "So do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will bring worries of its own" (Matthew 6:34).

We recognize some congregations might not yet be ready for a complete disaster planning process. That's why doing the ABCD goal-setting exercise in the previous chapter is important. Get to know the capacity and resources of your specific faith community and then determine which of our guides will best support your goals.

We provide three entry-level resources for the work of readiness:

1. The **Bronze Level** of the Preparedness Planning Guide includes the most basic information your community will need in times of disaster. Download it [here](#).
2. The **Silver Level** version also includes necessary basic information to protect parishioners and church property in times of disaster. It adds the foundation for congregations interested in responding to their most vulnerable neighbors after a disaster. Download it [here](#).
3. The **Gold Level**, called "The Comprehensive Version," is designed to help a congregation plan for a disaster. It includes taking inventory of physical and human assets and determining its niche in assisting vulnerable people in the larger community. Download it [here](#).

In the [Formation](#) section of this toolkit, you will find an example of how the work of these guides can be deployed during a sample disaster.

When we are confident in our preparedness, we can spend more time and energy being present to today. As Timothy reminds us, "God did not give us a spirit of cowardice, but rather a spirit of power and of love and of self-discipline" (2 Timothy 1:7).

As communities of faith, we are called to be prepared to assist after a disaster. In addition to reducing anxiety and providing peace of mind, our planning has four important goals:

- To mitigate the damage to our church community's buildings and belongings
- To be able to resume the business of the church as soon as possible, post-disaster
- To support our parishioners in times of crisis
- To assist our vulnerable neighbors after an emergency

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