

**Disaster Response Ministry is
a ministry of caring.**

Caring:

- **For people**
- **For church facilities**
- **For community**
- **For others in the
conference and beyond**



California-Nevada Conference
Of the United Methodist Church

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DISASTER RESPONSE MINISTRY



“While we may not be able to solve the many crises facing us, we are very well positioned to offer hope where there is fear and the promise of God’s presence when we feel lost.”

•Rev. Jane Schlager

IS YOUR CHURCH PREPARED?

The Conference Disaster Response Ministry can provide tools that will enable churches to develop a viable disaster response plan which can provide assistance to those effected by a disaster.

WAITING UNTIL AFTER THE DISASTER HAS OCCURRED IS TOO LATE!

Some day, a disaster will happen.

People in your church will either need help or want to give help.

So, in some way, your church will need to respond.

Are you prepared?

Do you have written plans and procedures to:

- Protect your staff and congregation in the event of an earthquake, fire or flood?
- Minimize damage to your physical facility and church records?
- Evaluate the needs of the most vulnerable of your congregation and provide immediate aid?
- Prepare to send people and supplies to a neighboring church that has been devastated?

HOW DO YOU START TO BE PREPARED?

The first requisite is motivation. Developing a disaster plan takes a lot of time and effort.

Then you need to select the right people to:

- learn about disasters the church is vulnerable to and their effects,
- study the church, both the congregation and the physical plant, to determine needs and capabilities,
- write the plan and get it adopted.



Then you need to develop the cadre of people who will actually perform whatever labors the disaster plan requires. The planners are generally not the doers. After selection the people must be trained, and the plan practiced, evaluated and revised.

IS THERE HELP TO DO THIS?

There is a lot of help available. The conference Disaster Response Ministry has presentations, publications and people available to assist in developing your plan.

UMCOR and UMVIM have training available that help in gaining the skills and knowledge to become a leader of disaster response groups.

“Googling” **church disaster plans** or **disaster response plans** will provide more source material than may be able to use! Attending an UMCOR “*Connecting Neighbors*” course is even better.

Our suggestion is to start with a motivational presentation on local church disaster planning. This presentation can be made by a member of your congregation who is experienced in managing disaster response, using a PowerPoint program supplied by the conference, or by scheduling a member of the conference Disaster Response Ministry to make the presentation. Then two publications of the conference should be used by your disaster planners: the Local Church Disaster Planning Guide and the Local Church Disaster Planning Workbook. Following this, your group should be well on its way to developing a plan based on your specific vulnerabilities and suited to your specific needs .