



CONFERENCE DISASTER RESPONSE COORDINATORS HANDBOOK



Revised April 2024

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Part I: UCC Global H.O.P.E.

Mission

United Church of Christ Disaster Ministries seeks to be the expression of our faith through compassionate witness and service to our neighbors.

Background

The Global H.O.P.E. team, a part of the United Church of Christ's (UCC) Love of Neighbor ministry brings together the UCC's refugee and migration ministries, volunteer engagement, disaster response and recovery, and sustainable development support. The acronym H.O.P.E. makes clear the team's vision: Humanitarian. Opportunities. Progress. Empowerment. <https://www.ucc.org/what-we-do/wider-church-ministries/global-hope/>

The United Church of Christ is committed to long-term recovery after a community has experienced a natural or human-caused disaster. Our Love of Neighbor runs so deep, that after many organizations have left an area and finished their work, we continue to love and care for our neighbors in these communities. This ongoing commitment to loving our neighbors after they have experienced disasters embodies the work of the UCC "United in Spirit, and inspired by God's grace, we welcome all, love all, and seek justice for all."

Part II: Essential Information

Conference Disaster Response Coordinator Position Description

The role of the Conference Disaster Response Coordinator (CDRC) is to further the mission of UCC's Disaster Ministries, by helping churches, associations and conferences prepare for and respond to natural and human-caused disasters locally. The CDRC is encouraged to create a Conference Disaster Response Team (CDRT). The CDRT supports the CDRC by being additional "eyes, ears, and hands" across the conference to assist congregations to prepare their disaster response and recovery plans and to help with response and recovery to disaster events within the conference and in other conferences across the country.

When appointed, it is the responsibility of the CDRC and CDRT to become familiar with the UCC Disaster Ministries program, especially the role of UCC Disaster Ministries in responding to disaster events.

Flow of Information

- Minister for Disaster Response and Recovery
 - Conference Disaster Response Coordinator
 - Conference Disaster Response Team
 - Conference Association Coordinators
 - Local Church Ambassadors

Accountabilities of the Conference Disaster Response Coordinators

- Support the mission of the UCC Global H.O.P.E. Disaster Ministries program of preparedness within the Conference and long-term recovery where needed domestically.
- Increase awareness of UCC Disaster Ministries (domestic/international response/recovery) and One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS) and other disaster appeals.
- Serve as liaison between UCC Global H.O.P.E. Disaster Ministries and Conference leadership on issues of preparedness, response, long-term recovery, and mitigation.
- Coordinate response and recovery services provided by UCC Global H.O.P.E. Disaster Ministries within the Conference.

Credentialing of the Conference Disaster Response Coordinator

- Appointed by the Conference Board and/or Conference Minister.
- Works in cooperation with the Conference Office, UCC Minister for Disaster Response and Recovery and UCC Global H.O.P.E. staff.
- Serves in covenant with other Conference Disaster Response Coordinators across the United States.
- UCC Disaster Ministries will provide a badge for Conference Disaster Response Coordinators. If you have never previously received a badge, or require a new badge, please contact the Minister for Disaster Response and Recovery.
- Conferences are encouraged to dedicate a portion of their annual meeting toward commissioning their Conference Disaster Response Coordinator. See *Appendix B* for suggested liturgy for this commissioning.

Responsibilities of the Conference Disaster Response Coordinator

- Distribute updates, requests, and information about UCC Disaster Ministries' domestic work to congregations in the Conference.
- Establish a Conference Disaster Response Team (CDRT) that is representative of Conference diversity to disseminate information and engage supporters related to disaster ministries across the Conference. The CDRT will provide additional support and coverage to the Conference Disaster Response Coordinator.
- Prepare and maintain a current e-mail/telephone/ mailing list of all Association Coordinators, local Church Ambassadors and CDRT members.
- Serve as the primary point of contact when local disasters occur, providing information about the event and recovery needs to the UCC Disaster Minister for Response and Recovery and the Conference leadership.
- Connect with the state-wide VOAD(s) in the conference to understand potential points of collaboration prior to disasters occurring in the community.
- Represent the UCC at state-wide VOAD meetings, advocate for resources that the CDRC can provide, and identify gaps where the UCC may be able to provide additional support.
- CDRCs may be asked to represent the UCC on various NVOAD Committees. It is essential that CDRCs that are currently representing the UCC on NVOAD calls follow through with that commitment. If a CDRC is unable to fulfill that commitment, please communicate with the Minister for Disaster Response and Recovery to determine the best path forward.
- Identify locations for work teams to volunteer in coordination with CDRT and local Long-Term Recovery Groups. Once these have been identified, work with the Minister for Volunteer Engagement to ensure that these volunteer opportunities are accessible for potential volunteers to find.
- Establish and maintain relationships with other local and state organizations active in disaster preparedness and recovery and share the role of UCC Disaster Ministries' capacity and availability of support.

Conference Disaster Response Team (CDRT) Responsibilities

- Support the CDRC to coordinate preparedness planning for congregations and to recruit volunteers for long-term recovery opportunities, locally and in other parts of the country.
- Increase awareness, education, and motivation within the Conference about disaster response and the role of UCC Global H.O.P.E. Disaster Ministries by direct contact with congregations and congregational leaders.
- Coordinate with the CDRC to establish and maintain relationships with other local and state organizations active in disaster and with Long-Term Recovery Groups and share the role of UCC Disaster Ministries and its capacity and availability of support in disaster recovery.
- Maintain membership and active participation and engagement with local VOADs or COADs. Depending on the type and location of a specific disaster it may make sense for CDRT members to participate in state-wide VOAD calls.
- Participate in and support training events, workshops and webinars that foster the mission of UCC Disaster Ministries.
- Respond to disasters within the Conference as invited by local and state authorities and in coordination with the CDRC and UCC Disaster Ministries by following the CDRC-CDRT guidelines for early response and long-term recovery.

Annual Conference Disaster Response Coordinators Gathering

- CDRCs are expected to attend an annual gathering.
- Details of the annual gathering will be shared by the Minister for Disaster Response and Recovery.
- National UCC Disaster Ministries will cover the following expenses:
 - Hotel
 - Food
 - Ground transportation to/from the airport to the gathering location
 - All transportation while at the gathering
- Conferences are expected to cover the travel to/from the gathering location including but not limited to:
 - Mileage
 - Airfare
 - Parking

Guidelines for Conference Disaster Response Coordinators/Conference Disaster Response Teams

Before a Disaster Event

- Develop and maintain relationships with other CDRCs and with local emergency responders and officials.
- Work with local churches to encourage them to engage with their local emergency responders and officials. It's important that churches have a relationship with the emergency management in their community, so the emergency manager knows who to contact in the event of an emergency.
- Evaluate the existing services in a local community to identify potential areas of collaboration, and existing capacity.
- Engage the local community and leaders in developing an understanding of the disaster response and recovery process.
- Collaborate with local partners who have previously been involved in disaster response and recovery in the same area.
- Inform local leaders of the organizations, resources, and funding mechanisms available at different points along the disaster response and recovery continuum.
- Educate local UCC leaders about Long-Term Recovery, the sequence of delivery of services, and the role of a Long-Term Recovery Group.
- Assist local churches to develop preparedness plans.

Early Response

- Contact the congregations in the impacted region to determine if any UCC congregations and/or members have been impacted by the event. If possible, visit in person.
 - Report findings, needs, observations and specific requests to the local Conference office and the National UCC Disaster Ministries office within 24 hours. Include pictures, stories, and quotes if possible.
 - Contact the Minister for Disaster Response and Recovery to determine available resources and inform pastors what is available to support all members of the community.
 - Maintain direct communication with local pastors sharing information about what, when, where, and how resources can be maximized to meet needs. Include relevant information about how to connect with the different organizations engaged in early response work, the sequence of delivery and the role of UCC Disaster Ministries.
- In consultation with the Conference Minister, develop a plan for sharing information for how donors and supporters can most appropriately engage during response and recovery.
 - Discuss the plan with the Minister for Disaster Response and Recovery to ensure consistent messaging.
 - Disseminate information through the CDRC and CDRT networks and the local Conference office.
- Assess the need to order blankets, hygiene kits, school kits and emergency cleanup buckets through Church World Service
 - CWS provides blankets, hygiene kits, school kits and emergency cleanup buckets to qualifying 501(c)(3) agencies as needs arise:
 - <https://cwskits.org/resources/request-kits-2/>
- Participate in State and/or Regional VOAD conference calls.
 - Share the role and resources of UCC Disaster Ministries.
- Travel to the impacted region when necessary to meet with local leaders, pastors and partners and assess the situation and needs.
- Educate responders and potential donors on the role of UCC Disaster Ministries and the importance of supporting long-term recovery.
- Coordinate with the local Conference office to set up ways to make donations and share information about donations received through the conference with UCC Disaster Ministries. Work directly with UCC Disaster Ministries to facilitate a coordinated use of conference funds and UCC Disaster Ministries funding to avoid duplication of efforts and administer a holistic approach to response and recovery.
- Throughout the process report relevant information to the local Conference office, UCC Disaster Ministries and local congregations. Include pictures, stories and quotes.

Long-Term Recovery Guidelines

- Maintain established relationships.
- Connect with an established LTRG or coordinate with local VOAD members and UCC leaders to establish an LTRG.
 - Provide educational materials such as the “National VOAD Long-Term Recovery Guide” to assist leaders exploring LTRG development.
 - Provide experience and technical support to local Long-Term Recovery Group organizing or reorganizing their efforts.
 - Advocate for the prioritization of disproportionately impacted and under-served populations.
- Monitor and report recovery progress to the local Conference office and the National UCC Disaster Ministries office.
- Coordinate with the local churches that have been affected by the disaster to determine the proper level of engagement for them (engagement in state VOAD, local COAD, volunteer housing, emotional and spiritual care support, collection/storage of donations, or other engagement)
- LTRGs that need a fiscal agent are encouraged to reach out to Church World Service to have conversations about possible support.
- Identify LTRGs where UCC Disaster Ministries funding could fill gaps and reduce bottlenecks and tell the story of recovery.
 - Share funding applications with the LTRG and inform UCC Disaster Ministries of your recommendation.
 - Monitor the funding efforts of the LTRG and help to share stories about the recovery efforts through Conference and National Communications websites, social media and the CDRC e-News.
 - Prioritization of disproportionately impacted populations including those who are living in underserved areas and have received minimal attention.
- Engage LTRGs to determine any unmet needs.
 - Choose one or two LTRGs to work with. Do not overextend or overpromise.
 - Seek LTRGs that are not receiving adequate support (volunteers, funding, emotional and spiritual care) to assist with Long-Term Recovery.
 - Work with UCC Disaster Ministries for resources the LTRG may need including training, emotional and spiritual care support, grants, volunteers and housing.
- Develop a plan to respond to the unmet needs as identified and requested of the UCC by the LTRG.
 - Assess the need for short-term or long-term volunteers to support the recovery process (including but not limited to volunteer management or construction management)
 - Contact UCC Disaster Ministries and Volunteer Engagement Offices to discuss opportunities for engagement. For more

information about long-term volunteers see **Partners in Service section.**

- Work with the Minister for Disaster Response and Recovery and the Minister for Volunteer Engagement to discuss logistics for working with volunteers through disaster ministries (recruitment, supervision, accommodations, materials etc.)
- Provide stories, photographs and updates to UCC Disaster Ministries and the local Conference about the ongoing recovery efforts - see communication section.

Trauma Support for Pastors and Local Conference Staff

The United Church of Christ has an Emotional and Spiritual Care Team that provides emotional and spiritual care to churches and communities that have recently experience a disaster. The Emotional and Spiritual Care Team provides programming that is responsive to a full range of challenges posed by tornadoes, flooding and other naturally occurring disasters as well as continuing issues of public health pandemics, racial justice, the tragedy of mass shootings, and other technologically and human caused disasters. The Emotional and Spiritual Care Team provides pastoral ministry support for conference staff and leadership in communities affected by disasters. In all our programs, the UCC Emotional and Spiritual Care Team members facilitate and offer materials on maintaining self-care and building personal resilience through relationships, storytelling, and spiritual practices. Participants are encouraged to share their experiences and wisdom with one another while doing this work. If a community feels that they would benefit from additional support from this team, please contact the Minister for Disaster Response and Recovery (see Appendix C for contact information). Here are some ways that the emotional and spiritual care team may be able to help after a disaster.

- Provide psychological and spiritual support for pastors serving in disaster-impacted areas.
- Provide to clergy and lay leaders informational seminars related to spirituality and trauma so that there is a greater degree of preparedness should a disaster occur. This includes seminars on resiliency.
- Host trauma retreats or workshops.
- Deployment of disaster spiritual care team members to provide on the ground support for the pastors who have been most impacted.

Volunteer Tracking and Reporting

As of January 2024, Conference Disaster Response Coordinators are being asked to track the time that they are spending doing disaster ministries work. This includes times spent visiting disaster-impacted locations, making phone calls, sending e-mails, attending CDRC monthly meetings, attending long-term recovery meetings, writing newsletter articles, travel time and any other tasks that are directly related to your work as a CDRC. For those that are hosting volunteer groups, you will be asked to report on the number of volunteer hours that these groups are completing in addition to your own time. For more information about tracking and reporting please contact the Minister for Disaster Response and Recovery, or the Minister for Volunteer Engagement (see Appendix C for contact information).

Partners in Service

The Partners in Service Program provides United Church of Christ Members and affiliates the opportunity to serve collaboratively with local church congregations, their conference, non-profit hosting agencies and with Conference Disaster Response Coordinators. Individuals live out their faith through volunteer engagement and live the United Church of Christ Mission Statement: To welcome all, love all and seek justice for all. The program also aims to increase the service capacity of the Conference Disaster Response Coordinators ministry and the volunteer can serve in a variety of roles. Some in the past have hired construction managers, case managers and volunteer coordinators.

How long can volunteers serve? The volunteer can serve with the CDRC for 1 - 12-month time periods.

What are volunteer benefits? Volunteer benefits include housing (if needed), monthly stipend, health insurance and community.

What is the age requirement? 18 years old and older.

Interested in learning more? Please contact the Minister of Volunteer Engagement (see Appendix D for contact information)

Mission Trip Opportunities

Mission Opportunities provide United Church of Christ and affiliates the opportunity to enter a community and serve along individuals that are doing great work. The Minister of Volunteer Engagement helps UCC members connect to meaningful Mission Trip Opportunities that align with our theological beliefs and worldview. As a conference disaster minister, if you host volunteers, please connect with the Minister of Volunteer Engagement so she can list your site as an opportunity to serve in Disaster Relief Ministry. If you are not hosting volunteers, our office serves as a resource for you and your congregation. The United Church of Christ Mission Page is currently being updated. Once community partners and Conference Disaster Response Coordinators have been added, we will share the new website. Please contact the Minister of Volunteer Engagement directly with questions and inquiries about Mission Opportunities.

Communications Guidelines

As a Conference Disaster Response Coordinator, you are on the frontlines of helping those in times of need. You see firsthand the loss, the despair, the human resolve to rebuild – and the hope that can transform tragedy to triumph.

These are the stories the United Church of Christ seeks to share as they capture how God enables the work of your hands and your heart through the generous giving from congregations across the country that help fund disaster and volunteer grants and programs.

➤ Tips for Telling a Powerful Story

The best stories are the ones that speak to your heart. Here's a step-by-step process for discerning and submitting a story.

STEP 1 – DISCERN

To discern what might be a story for UCC news channels, begin with these questions:

- What made an impact on you?
- What did you learn that others might learn from too?
- What was moving or inspiring that shows God at work among us?

STEP 2 – SHARE

After you have answered those questions and have identified a story to share, contact the Global H.O.P.E. Communication Specialist (for contact information see Appendix D).

Provide the communicator with the following:

- A summary of the story...who, what, where, etc. (A sentence or two would suffice.)
- Key contact information – person's name, title, location, email address, phone
- Any pertinent links for background information
- Photos (see Step 4 for more information!)

STEP 3 – WRITING THE STORY

If you are writing the story, keep in mind these guidelines:

- Write in the third person, never first person.
- Include quotes from at least three different sources.
- Use inclusive language, do not judge or victimize the person whose story you are telling.
- Make sure you have permission to tell a person's story.
- Never editorialize. You are not expressing your opinion. You are simply telling another's story.

STEP 4 – AIM TO GET GREAT PICTURES

Yes, a picture is worth a thousand words and now more than ever crisp, attention getting graphics are more effective in telling the story than the actual written word. Sadly, visuals are always lacking in ministry communication outlets. So, when sharing a story with the UCC, think visually and identify how a picture would tell the story.

When taking pictures, follow these guidelines:

First, get permission to take pictures. If taking a picture of a group with children and/or teens in the photo, make sure to get permission.

Send images with large file sizes (This is an important one!)

Print publications require high-resolution photos. Typically, this means the file should be at least 1 MB (one megabyte, or 1000 KB) in size. The bigger the better—a 13 MB photo gives us a lot more flexibility than a 1 MB photo. If your photo is smaller than 500 KB, we will not be able to use it.

For web publication, resolution can be lower, but still aim for 1 MB.

Send the original image files.

Please don't send images you have saved directly from Facebook or other websites. Images downloaded from the Internet are too small for publication.

Send images that portray life and evoke emotion.

Your photos will help tell your story. We're looking for images that are lively and depict action—even if that action is simply a group discussion. If an image makes you smile or pause, you're on the right track.

AVOID posed group photos or any posed photos. Seek an action shot. And avoid images of a building (church or other type of building). Such photos are often stagnant and boring and aren't as impactful as a photo taken "in the moment."

Send clear, colorful, in-focus images.

Let us see faces. Zoom in on your subject. Take a close-up of an action. Does your congregation or organization have a good photographer? If so, enlist their help!

AVOID backlit images and busy backgrounds. Eliminate the blurry photos. And let's not forget the power of video. Digital storytelling is another way of sharing the good work you are doing. Record a quick interview with someone, take footage of the scene of a disaster recovery project. Then send it to UCC news team where they can create a digital story.

STEP 5 – SHARE AND SUBMIT

Many times, we get busy with the work at hand, but the most important step in telling a powerful story within the UCC is making the news team aware of that story and sharing the ideas and news with them!

Part III: UCC Grants in Domestic Disaster Response and Recovery

Global H.O.P.E. Grants Application Process, Expectations, Requirements and Reporting

The Global H.O.P.E. Team at the United Church of Christ provides funding for Disaster Ministries, Refugee and Migration Ministries, and Volunteer Ministries. There are a variety of different grant types available serving different purposes.

The grant application for the solidarity grant, long-term recovery seed grant, and can be found here: <https://app.smarterselect.com/programs/94267-United-Church-Of-Christ>

Organizations are eligible to apply for one grant at a time. Organizations may be eligible for additional grant opportunities based on need and upon successful completion of reporting requirements.

The Global H.O.P.E team meets monthly to discuss any recently submitted grant applications. Once a funding decision has been made, a formal letter will be sent to the applicant, the Conference Disaster Response Coordinator, and the Conference Minister. It is possible that there are some grant applications that are submitted that the Conference Disaster Response Coordinator may not be aware of. CDRCs are encouraged to connect with these organizations to offer their support and determine future opportunities for collaboration.

Expectations of the applicant:

- Programming is beyond the ongoing programming and financial abilities of the applicant.
- Serves the needs of all people regardless of race, nationality, gender identity, sexuality, creed, or religion particularly addressing the needs of those who are poor, elderly, or are living with a disability.
- Coordinate activities with other community-based groups to ensure there is no duplication of effort.

Requirements for the application:

- Description of the situation (for solidarity grants and all disaster ministries grants)
- Overview of current capacity
- Information about partners involved in this project.
- Goals for the use of these funds
- Project evaluation and monitoring
- Detailed budget (including other sources of funding for this project using the attached template)
- Signed W-9
- Copy of 501c3 designation or fiscal agent information

Reporting Requirements (instructions will be sent to awarded applicants):

- Final budget outlining how funds were used.
- Description of the project outcomes and impact
- Photos and personal stories are encouraged including contact information so that we may share them with our partners.
- The Global H.O.P.E. and UCC logo should be displayed in all communication marketing and promotions where work is funded by the UCC. Please include logos on printed materials

Solidarity Grant (up to \$3,000)

Eligible Applicants: Churches, Associations, and Conferences of the United Church of Christ that are actively engaged in response situations. UCC Associations and Conference staff are encouraged to coordinate with the local churches that are launching the ministry prior to submitting the application.

Following a disaster (natural or human-caused), or a mass migration event, there is an opportunity for ministry with affected persons through local UCC Congregations. Global H.O.P.E provides solidarity grants to support this emergency relief work. Solidarity grants are intended to be used to assist or expand the capacity of local churches, associations, or a conference.

Disaster Long-Term Recovery Seed Grant (up to \$7,500)

Eligible Applicants: Newly forming or reforming startup groups that are engaged in disaster repair and recovery. Preference is given to LTRGs in which UCC Churches, Associations or Conferences are involved.

Following a disaster, there is an opportunity to assist disaster survivors by supporting the formation of a community led Long-Term Recovery Group (LTRG). Seed grants from Global H.O.P.E. are intended to support the collaborative implementation and programming of LTRGs. Funds should be directed toward areas of greatest need as determined by the LTRG.

Disaster Long-Term Recovery and Repair Grant (up to \$20,000)

Eligible Applicants: Churches, Associations and Conferences of the United Church of Christ, Long-Term Recovery Groups, and other 501c3 organizations engaging in disaster recovery in their communities.

When a Long-Term Recovery Group (LTRG) is formed and operational, a grant from Global H.O.P.E. may be provided to assist or expand its efforts to support those who seek partners to complete their recovery. These grants are intended to support the implementation and programming of a Long-Term Recovery Group operating in a disaster-impacted community throughout the disaster-recovery cycle, with the involvement of a UCC Congregation, Association or Conference. Recovery and Repair Grant availability will vary depending on existing resources and are awarded in the range of \$5,000 to \$20,000. Recipients may apply for one additional Recovery and Repair Grant upon successfully meeting the implementation and reporting requirements of the first grant.

Church World Service Kits (CWS) (up to \$250)

Eligible Applicants: Churches, Associations, and Conferences of the United Church of Christ. Grants are limited to 1 grant per church per calendar year. Applicants are expected to raise a minimum of \$250 in monetary or in-kind supplies.

CWS World Service Kit Matching Grant Application Form:

<https://app.smarterselect.com/programs/64870-United-Church-Of-Christ>

Following disasters, the need to distribute specific material aid is often crucial to the recovery process. Members of the denomination can assist disaster relief efforts by assembling various kits that are warehoused by CWS, ready to be shipped at a moment's notice when the need arises. The Disaster Ministries team is hoping the financial aid offered to congregations will kick start a church-wide effort to restock these much-needed supplies.

Part IV: UCC Reference Materials

UCC Conference Map

To find the most current list of conferences click here:

<https://www.ucc.org/who-we-are/structure/conferences/>

Disaster Ministries Contact List

To find the most current list of Conference Disaster Response Coordinators, and to learn more about their roles click here: <https://www.ucc.org/what-we-do/wider-church-ministries/global-hope/disaster/conference-disaster-coordinators-list/>

Disaster Ministries Donation Page

If you are interested in making a donation to UCC Disaster Ministries work please visit this website: <https://support.ucc.org/global-HOPE#>. At the bottom of the page, you can *Make an Online Donation Now*, you will have the option of selecting where you would like to designate those funds including active appeals, International Emergency, or USA Emergency.

Preparedness Resources for Churches

You can find preparedness resources on this webpage:

https://www.ucc.org/disaster_index/disaster_resources/

It's important to begin with a risk assessment - this tool will help you to prioritize disaster planning in your congregation. It discusses the potential impact, and the likelihood that it will occur:

<https://www.ucc.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/House-of-Worship-Risk-Assessment-Worksheet.pdf>

Once you've determined the areas of impact and how to prioritize the House of Worship Planning Tool is a helpful tool to get started:

<https://www.ucc.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/HOUSE-of-WORSHIP-DISASTER-PLANNING-TOOL-Nov-2022.pdf>

CWS Educational Videos (videos are in English and Spanish)

<https://cwsglobal.org/learn/disasters/disaster-preparedness/>

Part V: Resources from our Partners

Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) – Week of Compassion

As the relief, refugee and sustainable development ministry of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), Week of Compassion coordinates domestic disaster response and recovery efforts for Disciples in the U.S. and Canada. Initial relief is directed through local Disciples of Christ congregations, in the form of financial, pastoral, relational, and informational resources to Disciples who have been affected by disasters or who are providing relief to their neighbors. Week of Compassion invests most heavily in long-term recovery, through grant funding and volunteer coordination, with particular focus on LTRG development and equitable housing solutions. Week of Compassion also offers resources for congregational disaster preparedness:

<https://www.weekofcompassion.org/readiness.html>

Church World Service

Church World Service Emergency Preparedness, Response and Recovery Program (EPRR) seeks to advance CWS's commitment to emergency preparedness, response, and recovery for vulnerable communities within the United States with a strategic focus on refugees, asylum seekers, and unaccompanied children. To learn more about the EPRR program visit

<https://cwsglobal.org/our-work/united-states/emergency-preparedness-response-and-recovery/>

- CWS provides specialized support for newcomer populations that have been affected by disasters - for more information contact: EPRR@cwsglobal.org
- CWS offers blankets, hygiene, school kits and cleanup buckets to places that have recently experienced a disaster. To request kits for your church or community please visit: <https://cwskits.org/resources/request-kits-2/>
- CWS also supports the development of LTRG's by providing subject matter expertise and at times fiscal sponsorship. For more information please contact: EPRR@cwsglobal.org

FEMA: Federal Emergency Management Agency

FEMA: Community Emergency Response Team Training

FEMA states “The Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) program is nationally supported, locally implemented initiative that teaches people how to better prepare themselves for hazards that may affect their community.”

CERT training covers basic skills that are important to know in a disaster when emergency services are not available. With training and practice, and by working as a team, you will be able to protect yourself and maximize your capability to help the greatest number of people after a disaster.

FEMA CERT Training can be found here:

https://community.fema.gov/PreparednessCommunity/s/cert-trainings?language=en_US

Guide for Developing High-Quality Emergency Operations Plans for Houses of Worship

This guide provides houses of worship with information regarding emergency operations planning for the spectrum of threats and hazards they may face. It discusses actions that may be taken before, during and after an incident in order to reduce the impact on property and any loss of life and it encourages every house of worship to develop an Emergency Operations Plan.

<https://www.fema.gov/sites/default/files/2020-07/developing-eops-for-houses-of-worship.pdf>

Nonprofit Security Grant Program

The Nonprofit Security Grant Program (NSGP) provides funding support for target hardening and other physical security enhancements and activities to nonprofit organizations that are at high risk of terrorist attack. The intent is to integrate nonprofit preparedness activities with broader state and local preparedness efforts. It is also designed to promote coordination and collaboration in emergency preparedness activities among public and private community representatives, as well as state and local government agencies.

<https://www.fema.gov/grants/preparedness/nonprofit-security>

Sequence of Delivery

“The sequence of delivery establishes the order in which disaster relief agencies and organizations provide assistance to disaster survivors. This is intended to prevent duplication of benefits, maximize available resources, and coordinate efforts to help disaster survivors navigate the recovery process.”

https://emilms.fema.gov/is_0403/groups/29.html

Trainings for CDRCs

- IS-100.C: Introduction to Incident Command System, ICS 100
<https://training.fema.gov/is/courseoverview.aspx?code=IS-100.c&lang=en>
- IS-244.B: Developing and Managing Volunteers
<https://training.fema.gov/is/courseoverview.aspx?code=IS-244.b&lang=en>
- IS-288.A: The Role of Voluntary Organizations in Emergency Management
<https://training.fema.gov/is/courseoverview.aspx?code=IS-288.a&lang=en>
- IS-289: Voluntary Agency Overview
<https://training.fema.gov/is/courseoverview.aspx?code=IS-289&lang=en4>
- IS-315.A: CERT and the Incident Command System
<https://training.fema.gov/is/courseoverview.aspx?code=IS-315.a&lang=en>
- IS-317.A: Introduction to Community Emergency Response Team (CERTs)
<https://training.fema.gov/is/courseoverview.aspx?code=IS-317.a&lang=en>
- IS-505: Religious and Cultural Literacy and Competency in Disaster
<https://training.fema.gov/is/courseoverview.aspx?code=IS-505&lang=en>
- IS-700.B: An Introduction to the National Incident Management System
<https://training.fema.gov/is/courseoverview.aspx?code=IS-700.b&lang=en>

International Orthodox Christian Charities

International Orthodox Christian Charities (IOCC), in the spirit of Christ’s love, offers emergency relief and development programs to those in need worldwide, without discrimination, and strengthens the capacity of the Orthodox Church to so respond. While IOCC operates in various sectors throughout the world, its domestic programs focus on emergency preparedness, response, and recovery. Activities in these areas include disaster cleanup, emotional and spiritual care, and critical home repair.

For more information visit: <https://iocc.org/how-we-serve/emergency-response/disaster-relief>

Mennonite Disaster Services (MDS)

Mennonite Disaster Service (MDS) coordinates an organized response to disasters for the Mennonite and other related Anabaptist churches. In keeping with their biblical and Christian service theology, MDS responds to the needs of those affected by disasters in Canada and the United States. The major contribution of MDS is supplying personnel for cleanup, repair and rebuilding operations. As per our mission statement.

We respond to disasters, rebuild homes, and restore hope by organizing and empowering volunteers in the U.S. and Canada.

MDS places special emphasis on helping those least able to help themselves - that is, the elderly, widowed, handicapped and disabled; people with low incomes; people who are uninsured; or families with a single parent. MDS regional and binational offices are organized to assist its 50 local units in Canada and the United States in the effective operation of disaster programs.

Disaster Program

Although the major thrust of our traditional disaster assistance is in the areas of post-disaster residential cleanup and home building repair and rebuilds, MDS personnel are willing to consider expanding their areas of involvement where there is a need and when a sufficient number of volunteers are available, e.g. assisting municipalities with sandbagging in a flood situation. MDS is primarily a recovery and not an emergency response organization; it provides:

Cleanup of residences after flood, fire and wind damage

Recovery assessment and both **physical and emotional support** to clients

Minor/major repair and complete rebuilding of owner-occupied homes after floods, windstorms and fires.

MDS leaders and workers are volunteers who serve without pay. They carry out their disaster assistance activities, supported by the larger regional and binational network, in a spirit of cooperation with the various agencies of the government, other non-governmental disaster service organizations, e.g. Red Cross, Salvation Army, World Renew, and St. John Ambulance, churches and Interfaiths. MDS actively supports the formation and functioning of community-based long-term recovery committees to carry out client casework and bring to the table all agencies with recovery resources.

The MDS organization does not often provide resources for housing materials or heavy equipment, anticipating that these will come from other sources. MDS will require no fees for services provided, although support via other charitable organizations, local Interfaiths, etc. toward food and lodging assistance for volunteers is welcomed and appreciated.

MDS is a founding member of National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (NVOAD). For more information please visit: www.mds.org

National VOAD

Today, National VOAD is a coalition of 70+ of the nation's most reputable national organizations (faith-based, community-based and other non-profit organizations) and 56 State/Territory VOADs, which represent Local/Regional VOADs and hundreds of other member organizations throughout the country.

<https://www.nvoad.org/>

State and Territory VOADS

The Conference Disaster Response Coordinator is expected to connect with the State/Territory VOAD where they are located.

<https://www.nvoad.org/state-territory-voad/>

COAD

Community Organizations Active in Disaster (COADs) work within the State/Territory VOAD structure at the local level. This group of local community organizations work together during a disaster to provide coordination of services to ensure that unmet needs are addressed, provide financial assistance and supplies, and to share knowledge and resources with local residents during a disaster. The Conference Disaster Response Coordinators can get connected with their local COADs through the state VOAD.

Introduction to Emotional and Spiritual Care

- Introduction to the National VOAD Disaster Emotional Care Guidelines & Disaster Spiritual Care

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r4BdT3nQRvw>

- Orientation to the National VOAD Disaster Spiritual Care Guidelines

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XTx_7YJbvUQ

- Orientation to the National VOAD Disaster Emotional Care Guidelines

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O6qbKf4qc88&t=3s>

Light Our Way: A Guide for Spiritual Care in Times of Disaster

https://calnev.brtaapp.com/files/pdf_documents/disaster+response/light+our+way+book.pdf

Long-Term Recovery Guide

“Why do we have Long-Term Recovery Groups?”

The purpose of a Long-Term Recovery Group is to have a designated, centralized, coordinating group of partnering organizations whose common goal is to assist the impacted individuals and families in the community with their Long-Term Recovery. LTRGs encourage community participation and the pooling together of resources to get the most out of the recovery effort. LTRGs also help to communicate up-to-date information, organize volunteers, bring in targeted resources and money, and capture the story of your community’s disaster. This ensures that you can recover together, gather valuable information, and apply what is learned throughout the recovery process to the community’s overall resilience for future disasters.”

“A Long-Term Recovery Group (LTRG) is a cooperative body that is made up of representatives from faith-based, non-profit, government, business and other organizations working within a community to assist individuals and families as they recover from disaster. It can take time to pull these organizations together; patience and trust are essential to LTRG formation.”

An LTRG is focused on recovery in very specific geographic region. Depending on the size and scope of the disaster there may be multiple LTRGs that are formed to support recovery in the area.

For more information, please review the VOAD Long-Term Recovery Guide:

<https://www.nvoad.org/wp-content/uploads/National-VOAD-LTR-Guide-2023.pdf>

New York Disaster Interfaith Services

HOWReady – House of Worship Ready – Disaster & Crisis Spiritual Care

<https://www.nydis.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/10-NYDIS-Disaster-Spiritual-Care-Tip-Sheet-FPHNY-Language-20201124.pdf>

Spiritual Care and Mental Health for Disaster Response and Recovery

https://www.nydis.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/NYDIS_Disaster_SC-MH_Manual-1.pdf

Presbyterian Disaster Assistance

Prepare to Care: Basic Disaster Ministry for Your Congregation

https://pda.pcusa.org/site_media/media/uploads/pda/pdfs/preparetocare2009.pdf

Appendix A: Acronyms

CDRC	Conference Disaster Response Coordinator
CDT	Conference Disaster Team
CERT	Community Emergency Response Team
CM	Conference Minister
COAD	Community Organizations Active in Disasters (you can get connected to these through your local VOAD)
CWS	Church World Service
DM	Disaster Ministries
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
ICS	Incident Command System
LTRG or LTRC	Long-Term Recovery Group or Long-Term Recovery Committee
LTV	Long-Term Volunteer
NIMS	National Incident Management System
NSGP	Nonprofit Security Grant Program
OCWM	Our Church's Wider Mission
OGHS	One Great Hour of Sharing
PDA	Presbyterian Disaster Assistance
UCC Global H.O.P.E.	UCC Global H.O.P.E. Humanitarian, Opportunities, Progress, Empowerment
VAL or FEMA VAL	Voluntary Agency Liaison
VM	Volunteer Ministries
VOAD or NVOAD	Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster

Appendix B: Liturgy for Commissioning Conference Disaster Response Coordinators

Adapted from the United Church of Christ's Manual on Ministry "Order for Local Church Commissioning of Members 2019". © 2018 by Local Church Ministries, United Church of Christ, Cleveland, OH. All rights reserved.

<https://new.uccfiles.com/pdf/MOM-Sect3-Order-for-Local-Church-Commissioning-of-Members-2019.pdf>

The liturgy below is intended to be used to commission Conference Disaster Response Coordinators for the work that they will be doing. This liturgy is intended to be used at Conference and association meetings to affirm the work of the Conference Disaster Response Coordinator. It can be adapted to be used for Conference Disaster Teams.

Leader: The United Church of Christ Disaster Ministries seek to be the expression of our faith through compassionate witness and service to our neighbors. Our Love of Neighbor runs so deep, we love and care for those who need it the most. This ongoing commitment to loving our neighbors after they have experienced disasters embodies the work of the UCC "United in Spirit, and inspired by God's grace, we welcome all, love all, and seek justice for all." Today we will be commissioning [Name] as a Conference Disaster Response Coordinator. The purpose of this role is to help churches across the conference prepare for and respond to disasters. We are grateful that [name] will be taking on this important responsibility.

Leader: Now there are varieties of gifts,
People: **but the same Spirit gives them;**
Leader: and there are varieties of services;
People: **but we serve the same One;**
Leader: and there are varieties of activities;
People: **but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone**
Leader: To each is given manifestation of the Spirit for the common good:
People: **Wisdom
Knowledge
Faith
Healing
Miracles
Prophecy
Discernment
Tongues
Interpretation of Tongues**
Leader: All these are activated by one and the same Spirit,
People: **who chooses the gifts given to each for the common good.**

SCRIPTURE: 1 Corinthians 12:4-14

Leader: [NAME] has followed God's call, in accordance with the faith and order of this (conference/association), to provide leadership among us. They have accepted this responsibility and are before us in witness to their willingness to (serve as/continue to serve as) the Conference Disaster Response Coordinator for the [Conference Name] Conference.

Leader: Do you believe in your heart that God has called you to serve as Conference Disaster Response Coordinator for the [Conference Name] Conference?

CDRC: I do.

Leader: Are you willing to take on these new responsibilities in service to the Living Christ?

CDRC: I am willing.

Leader: Are you, as Conference Minister of the [Conference Name] Conference willing to support the work of Disaster Ministries, recognizing that this is important work for the Conference to prepare for and respond to disasters throughout the Conference.

CM: I am willing.

Leader: Will you seek to witness in word an example to those around you the good news of Jesus, that there is reconciliation with God, forgiveness of sins, and power for peace and justice among those living the love of God?

CDRC: I will, with the help of God.

Leader: Will you maintain participation and communication with members of this conference that all may be strengthened by the service to which you are committed?

CDRC: I will, with the help of God

All: We have heard your commitment and we thank God for your generous response to this call to service. Through the beckoning of the Holy Spirit and the commissioning of the church, servants of Christ are both gathered and sent out around the world.
We accept your services as Conference Disaster Response Coordinator for the [Conference Name] Conference, and we pledge our support and prayers that your work may be faithful and effective.
In the name of Christ Jesus,
We commission you to this service.
May God bless you and make you a blessing.

Leader: Let us pray.

People: **Eternal God, send your spirit among us, that we may truly be your church.**

Leader: Grant sustenance and wisdom to your servant [insert name here]. That they may embrace the opportunities and responsibilities as a Conference Disaster Response Coordinator.

People: **Help those serving on our behalf
To be faithful and honorable, diligent and imaginative**

Leader: Even in times of difficulty,
Help them go forth with a real sense of joy and encouragement

People: **For your yoke is easy, and your burden is light.**

All: **AMEN**

Leader: We have heard the promises of our kindred in Christ.
We have prayed to uphold and strengthen their resolve for the work before them.
We celebrate the work of this conference, and life up the many tasks needed to provide care and growth for all those who worship and study here.
May God prosper this church in the mission placed before it, including through [enter name]'s work as a Conference Disaster Response Coordinator

Appendix C: Contact Information for Global H.O.P.E. Team

Global H.O.P.E. Team
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