

# Disaster Planning For The Local Church

## Disaster Planning: Overview

### The Local Church—

- A Spiritual Center: September 11, 2001—How many people showed up at your church in the days following 9/11?
- A Community Center
  - Facilities that are centrally located
  - Resources that are available
  - People with a concern to help

## Disaster Planning: Overview

### The United Methodist Church's Responsibility—

- To protect its Members
- To protect those who are invited
- To serve the community at large

Who has that responsibility at the local level?

You do— the ministers, the trustees and the leadership

# Disaster Planning: Overview

## How Do You Meet Those Responsibilities?

Step One      Recognize What You Are Responsible For

Step Two      Become Informed About What You Need To  
Plan For

Step Three    Find Out What Is Available To Help You  
Make Plans

Step Four     Develop Your Plans

Step Five     Develop the Resources to Implement Those  
Plans

# Disaster Planning: Overview

## TODAY

**Step One**—Recognizing What You Are Responsible For

**Step Two**—Becoming Informed About What You Need To Plan For

**Step Three**—Finding Out What Is Available To Help You Make Plans

# Disaster Planning: Overview

## What The Local Church Is Responsible For:

### EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE—

Protecting those involved in activities on the grounds and facilities of the church.

### DISASTER RESPONSE AND RECOVERY—

Actively participating in the Virginia Conference Disaster Response and Recovery Plan

# Disaster Planning: Overview

## Emergency Preparedness and Response—

Protecting those involved in activities on the grounds and facilities of the church.

- Medical Emergencies
- Fire
- Gas Leak
- Bomb Threats
- Active Shooter
- Other emergencies or disasters

# Disaster Planning: Overview

Disaster Response and Recovery—

Actively participating in the Virginia Conference Disaster Response and Recovery Plan

- Severe Storms
- Tornados
- Hurricane
- Flood
- Other community-wide disasters



# Disaster Response & Recovery Planning: Overview

Why the UMC Participates In Local Community Disaster Response and Recovery Efforts—

**Local Churches have** local knowledge of resources, housing, hospitality, volunteers, office space

**Districts have** volunteers, guidance, housing for teams, office space, damage assessment

**Our Conference has** funds, support, training, personnel. Receives all offers of assistance and client needs then matches resources to needs to help survivor achieve recovery

**UMCOR has** funds, supplies, training, and technical assistance, equipment, and kits

# Disaster Response & Recovery Planning: Overview

We are Called and Sent

Proverbs 27:10

Don't desert your friend or a friend of your family; don't go to your relative's house when disaster strikes. Better a neighbor nearby than a relative far away.

Galatians 6:2

Carry each other's burdens and so you will fulfill the law of Christ.

2 Corinthians 1:3-4

May the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ be blessed! He is the compassionate Father and God of all comfort. He's the one who comforts us in all our trouble so that we can comfort other people who are in every kind of trouble. We offer the same comfort that we ourselves received from God.

# Disaster Response & Recovery Planning: Overview

“Disaster Response and Recovery is a vital part of our church Mission. We are called to love one another. One of the ways we can show the love and the hands, feet, and face of Jesus is through the efforts we make in the community and around the world.”

Introduction

*Virginia Conference Disaster  
Response and Recovery Plan*

# Disaster Response & Recovery Planning: Overview

*Virginia Conference Disaster Response and Recovery Plan:*  
(Last revised May 2012)

- ❖ Sets out detailed processes, procedures and personnel requirements and responsibilities at the
  - Conference
  - District and
  - Local Church levels
- ❖ Mandates District and Local Church planning
- ❖ Provides general guidance for equipping church leadership to respond to disasters

# Disaster Response & Recovery Planning: Overview

## UMC Response and Recovery

**The Virginia United Methodist Conference:** a member of Virginia VOAD (Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster) that is a volunteer agency comprising of the ARC (American Red Cross), Salvation Army, other denominations, and private organizations.

**United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR):** fielding Early Response Teams in the early days of a disaster to establish a caring presence of the church

**United Methodist Volunteers in Mission (UMVIM):** fielding follow-up teams to assist survivors in rebuilding lives

# Disaster Response & Recovery Planning: Overview

## Local, State, and Federal Resources

### City

- City of Alexandria Office of Emergency Management and Homeland Security
- City of Falls Church
- City of Fairfax Virginia, Office of Emergency Management

### County

- Arlington County Office of Public Safety Communications & Emergency Management
- Fairfax County Office of Emergency Management
- Loudoun County Office of Emergency Management
- Fauquier County Department of Fire Rescue and Emergency Management

# Disaster Response & Recovery Planning: Overview

## Local, State, and Federal Resources

### Regional

- Northern Virginia Office of Emergency Management

### State

- Virginia Department of Emergency Management

### Federal

- Federal Emergency Management Agency

# Disaster Response & Recovery Planning: Overview

## **WHEN THERE IS A NATURAL DISASTER—**

- NOTE: Not an “IF”
- The Local Church is a Key Component to Community Disaster Preparation and Relief Efforts

“The success of all local disaster response efforts rests in the hands of local pastors and congregations who must prepare for a disaster long before the threat of an event occurs”

Virginia Conference Disaster Response Team



# Disaster Response & Recovery Planning: Overview

Following a Disaster:  
Pastor's responsibilities—

1. **Report** to the District Disaster Response Team **ASAP**, who will then report to the Superintendent, as much of the following information as possible:
  - Status of the Congregation (including you and your family)
  - Damage to church and parsonage
  - General condition of neighborhood

# Disaster Response & Recovery Planning: Overview

## Following a Disaster: Pastor's responsibilities (con't.)

2. **Report** to the District Superintendent the Pastor's ability to minister to the congregation if the Pastor's family is also affected by the disaster.

3. **Relay information** to the congregation and community about federal, state and conference relief options for locations of shelters, food, supplies filing centers for financial assistance, pastoral care and counseling and other vital information which will be supplied to you by the District's Disaster Response Team.

4. **Provide for Sunday worship**—if the church is damaged, finding alternative locations

# Disaster Response & Recovery Planning: Overview

Following a Disaster:

District's responsibilities—

1. **Report** to the Conference Disaster Response Coordinator ASAP
2. **Ability to Provide Housing:** a minimum of three volunteer housing sites with combined accommodations totaling at least 50 persons, each to include:
  - a building with separate showers and bathrooms for men and women (or showers nearby).
  - a kitchen either on site or nearby
3. **Ability to Provide Office Space:** a minimum of three sites that can be used as a command center to include up to three rooms with doors, tables and chairs in each room, an agreement to add up to three separate phone lines at conference expense, access to a copier and access to bathroom facilities.

# Disaster Response & Recovery Planning: Overview

MEETING THESE RESPONSIBILITIES REQUIRES PLANNING  
BEFORE YOU NEED TO ACT

Bringing together:

Who we have—personnel, talents, training, availability  
with

What we have—facilities, equipment

In order to:

Quickly respond

and

Effectively respond.

# Disaster Response & Recovery Planning: Overview

Next Steps—

## **Updating the District Plan—**

- Local Church Questionnaire—Determining our current capabilities and needs
- Working with Larger Churches—Responding to Conference requirements
- Organizing Response Capabilities—Coordinating communications and with local organizations

## **Developing Local Plans and Resources**

- Providing guidance
- Ensuring adequate personnel in place
- Providing training opportunities
- Enlisting congregational interests and talents