**CENTRAL APPALACHIAN MISSIONARY CONFERENCE DISASTER RESPONSE PLAN**

***Do Good***

***Do No Harm***

***Stay in Love with God***

Our Conference Disaster Response Plan is designed to be a living document. It serves as a guide - for the conference, local churches, clergy, and all those who find themselves within our annual conference - to plan for, respond to and recover from a disastrous event. The Central Appalachian Missionary Conference Disaster Response Coordinator (CAMCCDRC) and Conference Operational Team will evaluate, practice, and critique the plan annually. Any additions, deletions, and updates without budgetary implications will be made by the committee and shared with the Annual Conference.

**Purpose**

* To prepare for, coordinate, and implement a conference-wide disaster response.
* To resource and equip local United Methodist churches as they assist their communities and individuals for, respond to and recover from disaster.
* To provide immediate relief for the human need to respond to the suffering of persons in our communities caused by disasters.
* To work cooperatively with faith-based and other non-profit organizations, and with governmental disaster response agencies in planning and implementing disaster response ministries on behalf of the Central Appalachian Missionary Conference of the United Methodist Church.

**What is a Disaster?**

A disaster is an event that negatively affects life, property, livelihood, or industry, often resulting in permanent changes to human societies, ecosystems, and the environment. “Natural or civil disasters are interruptions of such magnitude that they overwhelm a community’s ability to recover on its own.” Not all disasters which overwhelm a community’s ability to respond are state or federally declared, which paves the way for public and/or individual household assistance. While disaster response may rise to the county, state, regional or federal levels, disasters are always experienced “locally.” Thus, disaster response always begins locally.

**The Five Phases of a Disaster**

**Readiness –** The Readiness phase includes training, planning, practicing, and equipping for any disaster. A disaster plan should be developed during this phase and teams should be trained and equipped. Preparations are made and precautions are taken for potential events, including evacuation.

**Rescue –** The Rescue phase incorporates the time for first responders to do what they do best. Among other emergency response activities, public responders, and the Conference Disaster Response Team monitor, makes assessments, and possibly stages equipment or response during this phase.

**Relief –** The Relief stage includes crisis intervention, emergency assistance, provision of shelter and housing, distribution of food and clothing, beginning the clean-up process (with ER teams), assessment of the extent of damage, and planning for long-term recovery if needed.

**Review –** the Review phase is an intentional period following the relief and recovery phases where all actions are reviewed and ways to improve future readiness and response for the next disaster are considered.

**Disaster Timeline**

The “Rule of Time” in general, a given phase of a disaster is ten times as long as the previous phase. For example, if the rescue phase lasts 1 day, the relief stage will last 10 days, and the recovery phase will last 100 days.

**General Structure**

The Conference Disaster Response Team is structured to develop, assist, and implement a comprehensive disaster plan for the Central Appalachian Missionary Conference of the United Methodist Church (CAMC UMC). This committee is composed of clergy and laity under the direction of the Conference Operational Team. There is interaction and coordination between the CAMC Disaster Response Team and the Conference Operational Team. The Conference Disaster Response Coordinator leads this committee. There will be a variety of roles and responsibilities within the Conference Disaster Response Committee that will be established and implemented before and at the time of an event.

Each church should have a local church disaster plan, designating a Local Church Disaster Response Coordinator (LCDRC). Here again, the CAMC CDRC can be a resource for plan development.

**Responsibilities**

Disaster preparedness and response can be very specific for each event and location. However, the following responsibilities are common in most situations.

1. **Everyone – Regardless of your role or position**
   1. Readiness
      1. Develop your own family’s disaster plan
         1. Create an emergency kit (check Red Cross for suggested list and procedures).
      2. Become familiar with your local church disaster plan.
      3. Become familiar with the CAMC Conference Disaster Response Plan.
      4. Determine your primary and secondary family meeting points in the event of an evacuation. Communicate the information to all of your family members.
      5. Provide security for important documents and electronic files.
      6. Determine how you will communicate with others and have contact names and numbers available.
      7. When a disaster is imminent:
         1. If you need to evacuate, inform someone out of the affected area of where you are going and how to communicate with you.
         2. If safe, assist in the mitigation of damage.
   2. Rescue
      1. Be safe, don’t be a hero! Let the emergency personnel do their jobs.
   3. Relief
      1. Assess damage to personal homes and family members.
      2. Assist in safely securing the property from further damage as you are able.
      3. Take pictures of your damaged property before undertaking repairs and before attaching tarps of cleaning up debris or mold. Do not undertake repairs until after contacting the insurance company and arranging for an inspection.
      4. Ask for help as needed / register for disaster relief and recovery programs if applicable.
   4. Recovery
      1. Follow the guidance provided to you by experts in recovery and stay in contact with relevant agencies.
   5. Review
      1. Assess your plan and revise it as needed for any future storms.
2. **Local Pastor / Clergy**
   1. Readiness
      1. Talk with your congregation about disaster preparedness.
      2. Become familiar with the conference disaster plans.
      3. Work with the congregation and local church disaster response coordinator (LCDRC) to develop a local church disaster response plan.
         1. Include in the plan both the protection of people and property. Consider how you can offer ministry before, during, and after the disaster.
         2. Identify and develop a part of your plan to care for all professing and constituent members of the congregation and the surrounding community with special attention to the most vulnerable and families.
      4. Determine how to best secure the church buildings and parsonage to mitigate damage.
      5. Communicate with the Conference Disaster Response Coordinator, and inform him/her of the scope of your plans and the availability of your church to help in a disaster that might occur outside of your local community.
      6. Receive disaster readiness and response training and encourage your congregation to do the same.
      7. Be sure you have personal insurance information with you. Note: Please be advised that the conference insurance plan does not cover your personal property.
      8. When a disaster is imminent:
         1. If you have to evacuate, inform your Superintendent and a local church leader that you are evacuating, where you are going, and how to communicate with you during and immediately after the evacuation.
         2. If safe, assist in the mitigation of damage.
   2. Rescue
      1. Be safe, don’t be a hero! Let the emergency personnel do their job.
      2. Communicate with the membership as possible.
      3. If you are not properly trained, it may not be safe to offer assistance to others at this point. Your safety and that of your family come first.
   3. Relief
      1. Assess damage to personal homes and family members. If you have suffered loss or injury, seek assistance as needed. Remember that your judgment might be impaired during the crisis. Notify the fact of being affected to the Chair of PPRC, Chair of Trustees, and Superintendent as soon as possible.
      2. As soon as possible, conduct an initial on-site assessment of church buildings and property with the Chair of Trustees and communicate damage with the Conference Disaster Response Coordinator and Superintendent. Photograph all damage.
      3. Identify someone capable of safely securing church property to prevent further damage.
      4. Assess the needs of the community. If members of your congregation are able and prepared to help in ministry under the leadership of trained volunteers, safely begin. For assistance contact your Conference Disaster Response Coordinator.
         1. Within the community concentrate on BASIC needs – food, shelter, cleaning out homes of debris or mud, securing homes from further damage, e.g., tarping structures (FYI – this may be a health risk if not conducted properly. It can also lead to masking hidden damage).
         2. Be the pastoral presence in the community that you are called to be.
   4. Recovery
      1. Engage with the local community’s Long Team Recovery
      2. Keep the Conference Superintendent and the Conference Disaster Response Coordinator informed of the recovery effort.
      3. Resume pastoral duties as soon as possible.
      4. Provide direction for volunteer teams.
      5. Consider ways the local church can support the recovery effort.
      6. Plan for church and ecumenical opportunities to celebrate milestones.
   5. Review
      1. Gather with the leadership of the congregation – thank them for their ministry and assess the local church’s plan and response post-disaster.
3. **Local Church Disaster Response Coordinator (LCDRC)**
   1. Readiness
      1. Develop a local church disaster response plan. Review it annually.
      2. Encourage families to develop a personal disaster plan.
      3. Board of Trustees should annually review insurance coverage, provide a safe repository of valuable records, and inventory church property and contents.
      4. Consider if and how your church buildings and property will be used before, during, and after a disaster. Preplanning and pre-agreements can save much time, financial resources, and insurance liabilities. The Conference Disaster Response Committee is available to be a resource for you.
      5. Develop a means of communication with all members and constituents of the congregation.
      6. Decide if your local church is willing to be a shelter. If so, have your facility pre-approved as a shelter by the Red Cross.
      7. When a disaster is imminent:
         1. Board of Trustees should make sure that ALL church-owned buildings and properties have been secure to assist in the mitigation of damage.
         2. Communicate with the membership. If they are evacuating, where are they going and how will the church be able to communicate with them?
   2. Rescue
      1. Be safe, don’t be a hero! Let the emergency personnel do their jobs.
      2. Do not open as a shelter without prior approval/direction by the Red Cross.
   3. Relief
      1. As soon as possible conduct an initial on-site assessment of church buildings and property with the pastor and Chris of Trustees present. Communicate damage with the Conference Disaster Response Coordinator and Conference Superintendent.
      2. Communicate with the congregation membership, assess their needs, and provide assistance as you are able.
      3. Assess the needs of the community. If your congregation can help in ministry, safely begin. If you need assistance, contact your Conference Disaster Response Coordinator. Within the community concentrate on BASIC needs – food, shelter, and securing of homes.
      4. Take pictures of damaged church property before undertaking any repairs and before attaching tarps or cleaning up debris or mold. The church should not undertake repairs until after the insurance inspection.
      5. Keep detailed records of any volunteer activities and work accomplished.
   4. Recovery
      1. Engage with the Long-Term Recovery Group; identify resources that the local church may be able to provide or acquire through connectional ministries.
      2. Keep the Conference Superintendent and Conference Disaster Response Coordinator informed of the recovery effort.
      3. Resume church ministries.
      4. Keep detailed records of disaster response and disaster funds received and spent.
      5. Provide facility assistance/hospitality for work teams as resources allow and as approved by the congregation.
      6. Participate in local community recovery closeout process.
   5. Review
      1. Share lessons learned/best practices with Conference Superintendent and Conference Disaster Response Coordinator.
      2. Review your local church plan and revise it as necessary.
4. **Conference Early Response Team Coordinators (CERTC)**
   1. Readiness
      1. The Conference Early Response Team Coordinators are the communications liaisons between the Conference Team, Conference Disaster Response Coordinator, and Conference UMVIM Coordinators as available.
      2. Make your presence known among ERTs in your regions and let the teams know how to communicate with you.
      3. Assist CDRC and UMVIM Coordinators in the formulation and training of team members.
      4. Organize and attend training sessions.
      5. Identify unaffiliated ERTs and offer them possibilities for assimilation into a team.
      6. Attend meetings of the CAMC CDRT
      7. When disaster is imminent
         1. If you have to evacuate, inform the Conference Superintendent and the Conference Disaster Response Coordinator that you are evacuating, where you are going, and how to communicate with you during and immediately following the evacuation.
         2. If safe, assist in the mitigation of damage.
   2. Rescue
      1. Be safe, don't be a hero! Let the emergency personnel do their jobs.
   3. Relief
      1. Communicate with the CDRC and organize the mobilization of Early Response Teams (ERTs)
      2. Communicate with Early Response Team leaders in your region when an invitation for ERTs is received by the CAM Conference.
   4. Recovery
      1. As the affected area transitions into long-term recovery, focus on review, planning, and preparations for future recovery.
   5. Review
      1. Be intentional about communicating thanks to those who provided aid to your region.
      2. Review the response plan and amend it as needed.
      3. Participate in the reviews of the Conference Disaster Response Plan.
5. **Conference Superintendent**
   1. Readiness
      1. Be trained by UMCOR regarding Conference Disaster Response Team ministries.
      2. Prepare communication procedures between clergy, Local Church Disaster Response Coordinators, and Conference Office.
      3. Appoint the Conference Disaster Response Coordinator in consultation with the Conference Disaster Response Team. Please take into consideration the time investment necessary in disaster readiness and response. The role can be filled by either laity or clergy.
      4. Through the CDRC, communicate the work of the Conference Disaster Response Team to the local laity and clergy.
      5. When a disaster is imminent:
         1. If you have to evacuate, inform the Dean of the Cabinet and the Conference Disaster Response Coordinator that you are evacuating, where you are going, and how to communicate with you during and immediately following the evacuation.
         2. If safe, assist in the mitigation of damage.
   2. Rescue
      1. Be safe, don’t be a hero! Let the emergency personnel do their jobs.
   3. Relief
      1. Assess damage to personal homes and family members. If you have suffered loss or injury, seek assistance as needed. Remember that your judgment might be impaired during the crisis. Notify the fact of being affected by the Dean of Cabinet and Conference Disaster Response Coordinator.
      2. If your housing has suffered damage, take pictures of the damaged property before undertaking any repairs, and before applying tarps or cleaning up debris. Do not undertake repairs until after the insurance inspection. Notify your liaison to the Conference Board of Trustees of damage sustained.
      3. Contact pastors in affected areas to assess the physical, spiritual, and emotional needs of the clergy, clergy families, and congregations.
      4. As soon as safe and physically possible visit the affected areas with the Bishop.
      5. If a pastor has been directly affected by the disaster, a Supply Pastor may be appointed immediately for a specific time.
      6. Visit affected areas as often as possible with and without the Bishop.
      7. If pastor/s are likely to be overwhelmed by church and community duties during the disaster response, appoint a temporary Assisting Pastor to provide an extra pair of hands.
      8. Watch for ‘burn-out’ on all levels within the conference personnel.
      9. Encourage unaffected churches to share resources.
      10. Use the authority of your office to ask people to do certain tasks.
   4. Recovery
      1. Communicate local needs to the conference.
      2. Encourage local churches to volunteer.
      3. Communicate with Disaster Recovery about any unmet needs that arise or areas that may need additional resources or assistance.
      4. Periodically assess the well-being of pastors in affected areas. Consider pulpit supply or other forms of support as needed.
      5. Support and/or assist in celebrating milestones in recovery.
   5. Review
      1. Be intentional about communicating thanks to those who provided aid to your conference.
      2. Participate in the closeout evaluation of the disaster at the conference.
      3. Participate in post-disaster evaluation and the need for possible plan revision.
6. **Conference Disaster Response Coordinator (CDRC)**
   1. Readiness
      1. Communicate the work of the Conference Disaster Response Team to the Conference, local churches, and clergy.
      2. Foster partnerships with other volunteer agencies that are active after a disaster and other emergency response organizations.
      3. Ensure discussion of a business continuity plan for the conference.
      4. Plan appropriate training – UMCOR is a resource.
      5. Conduct meetings of the Conference Disaster Response Team as needed.
      6. When a disaster is imminent:
         1. If you have to evacuate, inform the Superintendent and/or a member of the Conference Disaster Response Team that you are evacuating, where you are going, and how to communicate with you during the evacuation.
         2. If safe, assist in the mitigation of damage.
   2. Rescue
      1. Be safe, don’t be a hero! Let the emergency personnel do their jobs.
   3. Relief
      1. Assess damage to personnel’s homes and family members. If you have suffered loss or injury, listen to and rely on the judgment of experts. Notify the fact of being affected by the Conference Superintendent. And/or member of the Conference Disaster Response Team.
      2. Work closely with Conference Communications to publicize disaster-related needs.
      3. Issue a call for Early Response Teams, from other conferences, as needed and determined by the appropriate individuals and approved by the Bishop.
      4. Serve as the Disaster Coordinator until the needs arise to delegate the task.
      5. Plan and execute an Episcopal visit to the affected areas as soon as safe and possible. It is suggested that the team be made up of:
         1. CDRC
         2. Superintendent
         3. DDRCs
         4. Communications Coordinator
         5. Bishop
      6. Coordinate with the Bishop if an invitation for assistance needs to be made to UMCOR.
   4. Recovery
      1. Work with ongoing disaster recovery efforts providing support as needed.
      2. Work with Bishop to have all involved leaders meet for reports and evaluation.
   5. Review
      1. Participate in post-action evaluation Plan revision.
      2. Work with Bishop to publicly acknowledge workers and work done.
      3. Lead a review of the Plan with CAMC CDRT annually and after each disaster.
      4. Maintain communications with UMCOR and inform of lessons learned and best practices.
7. **Conference Treasurer’s Office**
   1. The Conference Treasurer and/or staff will assist the CDRC in keeping track of and dispensing funds for disaster relief while following UMCOR and conference standards. The Treasurer’s office is not responsible for determining how the funds are spent.

**Conclusion**

The plan serves as a guide to moving from preparing to respond to recovery from a disaster that could strike our homes, churches, and communities. With its implementation, we begin to coordinate our efforts as the Central Appalachian Missionary Conference to deal with the next disaster.

Looking ahead the CDRC will be assessing the needs of the Conference and the gifts that we United Methodists can offer and weave into the fabric of disaster response. We recognize that by coordinating our efforts with other agencies we can best serve those in need.

**Conference Disaster Response Coordination - Structure**

Diagram

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**Appendix A: Committee Budget and Funding**

* + - 1. Disaster Response Team will function under the structure set by the Conference Operations Team; meeting annually for budgeting and funding purposes.
         1. Reviews and measures the effectiveness of the current budget in meeting the needs of the CDR Team.
         2. Using the budget previously set budget, the team establishes the specific line items for the upcoming budget year.
         3. Evaluates and set strategies for the next annual budget.
      2. Monitors/executes budget actions throughout the year.
      3. In case of a disaster:
         1. Request supplemental requests for initial disaster action.
         2. Draws from available funding

Promotes Advanced giving for disaster response/recovery

Establish an online giving channel

c. Through the Bishop, contact UMCOR and request initial grant funding

d. Consider/explore other funding resources

e. Write and submit grants for disaster funding.

f. Establish event-specific accounts through Treasurer’s office as needed.

g. Coordinate with the disaster recovery superintendent (if applicable) to ensure proper coordination and management.

**Appendix B. Step-by-Step / Conference Response**

**Disasters are experienced and responded to initially by local volunteers – trained and untrained. UMCOR’s‘ Connecting Neighbors’ training can prepare local church volunteers to better assist their neighbors.**

In the aftermath of a disaster, The Conference Disaster Response Coordinator will begin to assess the damage within the communities of the conference with the help of Pastors and Church leaders.

The CDRC verifies the request with the survivors and determines the appropriate level of response.

1. If the first level of response – Neighbors Assisting Neighbors (Community Response) is adequate then the CDRC reports back to the Superintendent and monitors for future development.

2. If assistance is needed to help the community, the CDRC contacts an Early Response Team (ERT) from within the conference. The CDRC will have a list of available ERTs during the Conference. It should be noted that ERTs may self-deploy in their local community when local authorities determine it is safe to do so. These deployments and any damage observations should be reported to the CDRC to help identify any pockets of damage that might otherwise be missed.

If the extent of the need appears greater than can be handled within the Conference, then the CDRC requests ERTs from other areas of the conference to deploy.

The CDRC will coordinate the assignment of teams from other areas of the conference. The CDRC is solely responsible for inviting ERTs from outside the Central Appalachian Missionary Conference.

ERTs will assist in the damage assessment and assist in the development of on-site resources. ERTs are required to complete the ERT Safe Assessment course at the discretion of the CDRC.

If the cumulative store damage warrants the establishment of one or more ERT centers, the CDRC will guide the establishment of the centers and will schedule ERTs. In no case should an ERT deploy without request by CDRC.

ERT work is to be assigned and directed by the CDRC or a designated Site Manager. The CDRC will guide housing capacities, availability of kitchen equipment, availability of showers, etc. so they can communicate effectively with teams about needs in the field and available response sites.

**Appendix C: Role of ERTs**

**In most cases, the local church provides the first response following a disaster. the basic understanding – that disaster response is local – forms the foundation for CAMCUMC’s Disaster Response Plan as well as UMCOR’s national training and response model. The goal is to equip United Methodists to prepare for, respond to and recover from disasters.**

**Disaster Response Training**

Local churches, districts, and conferences can request training to help them learn how to prepare for and respond to local disasters. These training programs address resilience against unpredictable weather, urgent and rapid response after a disaster, and ministry options for communities bracing for a long recovery. Available training includes but is not limited to Basic ERT Training, ERT 200 Classes (detailed to specific tasks or situations), Neighbors Helping Neighbors and more.

Embedded in all UMCOR training is the underlying message of love and hope that The United Methodist Church offers through Jesus Christ. Because of who we are, UMCOR’s training embraces a ministry of presence – a loving recognition that spiritual and emotional scars matter as much as broken doors and windows.

**Early Response Team Training**

Early Response Teams (ERTs) fill a specific need in the early days after a disaster to clean out damaged homes, remove debris, place tarps on roofs, and otherwise help to prevent further damage while providing a caring Christian presence. They do not perform permanent repairs.

Under very specific guidelines, ERTs assist survivors without causing further harm or being a burden to the affected community. ERTs require an invitation to travel to another district, conference, or jurisdiction. ERTs are not a first-response group of emergency workers, nor are they recovery, rebuild or repair teams.

All ERT members are trained by authorized UMCOR trainers and are given identification badges as evidence of successful completion of the basic class. Badges require a background check and are valid for three years. There are advanced-level classes available for badge renewal. ERTs may self-deploy locally and are otherwise deployed at the request of the CDRC, Conference ERT Leader Coordinator, or Site Managers designated by the CDRC.

**Appendix D: Inventory of Available Equipment and Supplies**

The Conference Disaster Response Coordinator will assure that a dynamic inventory of equipment, team leaders, and pre-deployed disaster supplies is kept (asset mapping). These lists may be maintained by a designee and should be available to the Disaster Response Team when needed. Since asset mapping is a dynamic process with frequent changes it is not published in this plan.

**Appendix E: How to Best Deal with Mold and Mildew After a Flood**

Homeowner and Volunteer Guidance

After many years of dealing with the aftermath of storms, we have learned some valuable lessons about mold removal and prevention. Standing water and wet materials are breeding grounds for microorganisms, such as viruses, bacteria, and mold. They can cause disease, trigger allergic reactions, and continue to damage materials long after the flood. This tip sheet outlines some key findings and suggested steps.

1. The key to mold control is moisture control. If mold is a problem in your home, you should clean up the mold promptly and fix the water problem. It is important to dry water-damaged areas and items that can be salvaged. All contaminated (wet) items that cannot be cleaned and dried completely should be removed and disposed of. The sooner mold is dealt with the less chance it has to grow and spread.

2. Visible mold should be removed using water and detergent. BLEACH WILL NOT KILL MOLD ON THE ROOTS EXCEPT ON IMPERMEABLE SURFACES. THERE ARE BETTER WAYS TO DEAL WITH MOLD (see steps below). Other home remedies like vinegar and peroxide are also not the preferred way to deal with mold issues.

3. while working on mold and in the vicinity of the mold you should wear protective goggles, filtration masks (n95), gloves, long sleeve shirts, long pants, and waterproof boots to prevent contact with the mold. When you are finished working shower as soon as possible to prevent the spreading mold spores.