

Lowcountry Presbytery (LCP)

DISASTER PREPAREDNESS, RESPONSE & RECOVERY PLAN

July 25, 2020

*"Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?"
And I said, "Here am I; send me!" Isaiah 6:8*

The Plan

The following describes the Plan for disaster preparedness, response, and recovery within the LCP. Hereafter, "The Plan" refers to the LCP Disaster Preparedness, Response & Recovery Plan.

The goal is to have a high level of disaster preparedness and quick response capabilities within the LCP by helping churches and families plan in advance for emergencies, become aware of potential disasters in their community, and develop a plan to survive after a disaster as well as minister to others. We take seriously our stewardship of the resources God has provided that we may be prepared to serve in both the "day of prosperity" and the "day of adversity" (Ecclesiastes 7:14).

The Plan also allows LCP to pull together resources which may include funds, volunteers, equipment and facilities to respond to disasters locally and/or regionally as an act of mercy, to give that community relief from a calamity and, at the same time, to plant seeds for the Kingdom of God.

- A. The LCP's role is to provide a Subcommittee for Disaster Preparedness and Response, which will develop, administer and maintain The Plan, working under the oversight of the presbytery MNA Committee.
- B. Also, the LCP, through the LCP Mission to North America (MNA) Committee, is the point of approval for The Plan.
- C. Even though The Plan is developed at the LCP level, the information is collected and provided by the local church. Each church should provide a DR Coordinator who will work with the subcommittee and General Assembly (GA) MNA Disaster Response (DR). The Coordinator should be one that the local church leadership has identified as having the necessary leadership and management skills as well as the heart for this vital mercy ministry.
- D. By General Assembly assignment, MNA Disaster Response is charged with coordinating the response of the PCA to disasters in the US and Canada. MNA DR does this through a network of staff, key leaders and many volunteers. When disaster occurs, overwhelming presbyteries, MNA DR is available to come alongside local churches and presbyteries to coordinate the response by mobilizing the greater PCA to assist. They bring a proven leadership team and strategies learned during past responses to mobilize volunteers, channel prayer focus and appeal for finances on behalf of affected churches.

- E. Since The Plan is a work in progress, we earnestly solicit your comments to improve The Plan. Based on their individual needs and capabilities, local churches may want to develop a customized plan which supports The Plan (*see Appendix D*). The intent is not to dictate but to offer assistance and work side-by-side with the presbytery Coordinator and the local church. Send comments to ahooten@pcanet.org.

The Concept

“Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ.” Galatians 6:2

Disasters can strike quickly and without warning. There are numerous examples of disasters both natural and man-made, such as chemical spills, earthquakes, fires, floods, lightning strikes, thunderstorms, hurricanes, pandemics, industrial accidents, power failures, terrorist attacks, tornadoes and straight-line winds, gas explosions, volcanic eruptions, building or bridge collapses, transportation accidents, snow/ice storms, tsunamis, landslides, dam failures, etc.

Knowing what to do in advance of a disaster is the best protection and the responsibility of each individual. With God's help, families and churches can cope with disasters by preparing in advance and working together.

As those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. (Colossians 3:12)

The LCP can multiply its efforts by working together as a team. Does God call your church to respond with compassion, kindness, generosity and the Word during disasters? How can you prepare yourself and your church? How can you help protect your community? We can begin to build a more robust LCP response toward disasters by:

- Coordinating our efforts locally and nationally
- Collaborating on disaster response to take advantage of our individual church resources
- Communicating so all within the LCP are aware of opportunities and to become more efficient and effective in disaster response ministry
- Cooperating on training, equipping, and responding
- Celebrating what God is doing in our midst

The PCA has responded enthusiastically to this vital ministry over the years to alleviate suffering from the seemingly growing number of disasters. The key to being effective during the time of a disaster is preparation. When a disaster occurs, there is no time to discuss issues and approve courses of action that require immediate attention; we must be prepared in advance of disasters.

MNA DR's goal is to help stabilize and then restore affected PCA physical plants and the homes of members, and then to reach out to the community with Christ's love. It does this by working through presbyteries and local churches.

Before Disaster Strikes

A structure needs to be in place in order to mobilize the volunteers and to put into motion the chain of events that begins the response to victims of disaster. In general, disaster preparedness begins with the individual member, then the church body as a whole. From there the church, with support from the LCP and MNA DR, can support other PCA churches.

After Disaster Strikes

Once we receive a call for assistance, we will solicit volunteers and/or disaster response teams from the local churches within the bounds of LCP and coordinate and dispatch them based on availability and the type and extent of the disaster. This mobilization is done in coordination with MNA DR, the Volunteer Organizations Active in Disaster (VOAD) and local and state emergency management offices.

Roles and Responsibilities

"As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another as good stewards of God's varied grace." 1 Peter 4:10

Presbytery

Approves enabling motions to adopt The Plan as advanced by the Presbytery MNA Committee

Subcommittee:

- A. Develops, administers and maintains The Plan
- B. Elects a Chairman, Vice Chairman and Secretary and appoints other officers as necessary
- C. Meets as needed to discuss the action items necessary for the development and execution of The Plan, normally each quarter, more often when presbytery is responding to a new disaster
- D. Appoints a LCP Coordinator and Alternate to make or receive calls for assistance; normally this would be the Chairman and the Vice Chairman
- E. Encourages each church in the LCP to pray about disaster response and to appoint a Church DR Coordinator that allows for immediate contact to be made in the event of a disaster; typically this is a RE or DE
- F. Develops a database of resources to be used in the event of a disaster
- G. Promotes disaster preparedness and response within the LCP

Chairman, or Alternate if the Chairman is unavailable:

- A. Reports to the LCP MNA Committee on matters concerning disaster response and subcommittee actions
- B. Investigates and lobbies for yearly funding through the adoption of a line item in the presbytery budget; if funds are available within the LCP, those could be used in the event an affected church is unable to handle the financial fallout of a disaster event

LCP Disaster Response Coordinator or Alternate:

- A. Takes calls from MNA DR, LCP, individual PCA churches, governmental agencies, or volunteer agencies requesting assistance after a disaster
- B. Contacts the LCP churches in a disaster area to determine if assistance is needed
- C. Contacts the MNA DR Director if a disaster strikes within the region
- D. After consulting with the Subcommittee, sends out requests to LCP churches for volunteers, equipment or other resources
- E. Coordinates the dispatching of disaster response teams and volunteers
- F. Keeps the MNA DR Director apprised of events where action may be necessary or may be of interest
- G. Reports back to the Subcommittee after a disaster response action has been completed and sends reports to the LCP MNA Committee

Local Church Disaster Response Coordinator:

- A. Works together with the Subcommittee to customize the role of Local Church DR Coordinator
- B. Works with local church leadership to assess the capabilities of the church to provide volunteers, equipment, finances, and facilities
- C. Keeps the information updated at the local church level including resources such as volunteers, equipment and facilities
- D. Contacts the LCP DR Coordinator or Alternate and MNA DR Director when a disaster occurs and help is needed
- E. Receives calls from the LCP DR Coordinator or Alternate and MNA DR Director requesting or offering assistance to meet a disaster response need
- F. Solicits disaster response volunteers, gathers equipment and materials, and schedules the dispatching of teams/individuals in coordination with the LCP DR Coordinator
- G. Keeps the Subcommittee apprised of local church efforts in disaster response
- H. Promotes disaster preparedness and response in the church

LCP Preparedness and Response to Disasters

“...whatever you do, do all for the glory of God” 1 Corinthians 10:31

Coordinating – efforts locally and denomination-wide

- A. The LCP DR Coordinator or Alternate may receive a call for help from a Local Church DR Coordinator, the Presbytery, the MNA DR Director, and governmental agencies.
- B. The LCP DR Coordinator or Alternate may become aware of a disaster occurring outside the LCP geographical bounds such as Savannah River, Palmetto, Pee Dee, Fellowship, or Calvary Presbyteries, and may initiate calls to the MNA DR Director, or governmental and volunteer agencies
- C. The LCP DR Coordinator or Alternate would then solicit volunteers and/or disaster response teams from Local Church DR Coordinators based on availability and the type and extent of the disaster in coordination with the Subcommittee, the LCP MNA Committee, MNA DR and local and state emergency management offices
- D. Teams and volunteers dispatched will coordinate their work through the local PCA church and/or the locally established emergency disaster response center or MNA DR. No one should go uninvited as this can cause problems for local officials, the emergency operations center and/or the local PCA church
- E. The Local Church DR Coordinator should, to the extent possible, coordinate with the LCP on disaster response to maximize the impact of the response

Collaborating – on disaster response to take advantage of individual church resources

- A. The Subcommittee will provide questionnaires to each LCP church to assist the leadership in assessing their ability to respond to disasters and the resources they have available (*see Appendices A & B*)
- B. The LCP DR Coordinator or Alternate will solicit volunteers and/or disaster response teams and dispatch them based on availability and the type and extent of the disaster
- C. Volunteers may go individually or as part of teams of the LCP. There may be other PCA groups there as well
- D. We also may be collaborating with other denominations or organizations in response to a disaster

Communicating – so all within the LCP are aware of opportunities and to become more efficient and effective in disaster response ministry

- A. The LCP Disaster Response Subcommittee will provide information about opportunities for training and for volunteering for disaster response
- B. The Local Church DR Coordinator should keep the LCP DR Coordinator apprised on local church disaster response efforts outside of a LCP response

Cooperating – on training and responding

- A. The LCP DR Subcommittee will develop a training schedule which will be provided to all LCP Local Church Disaster Response Coordinators. This subcommittee may also seek out additional training and MNA DR consultation.
- B. The Local Church DR Coordinator should provide information to the LCP Coordinator of any local disaster response training which could benefit others in the LCP.
- C. Individuals and teams must be flexible and patient when responding; the on-site manager may have to change the schedule and type of work to be accomplished so there may be downtimes during a disaster response trip. Also, when working on disaster victims' property, individuals and teams need to be respectful and non-judgmental.

Celebrating – what God is doing in our midst

*“Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good deeds
and praise your Father in heaven”. Matthew 5:16*

- A. The most critical part of preparing for and responding to disasters is seeking God's will, asking for His help, trusting Him completely, and giving Him praise and thanks throughout the process.
- B. The spiritual aspect of a disaster response effort has as high of priority as any of the physical labor being accomplished. Give God the glory!
 - 1. First, we should be “door openers” for the local PCA church by following up, inviting and building a relationship with disaster victims.
 - 2. Second, that doesn't mean we can't share the gospel with victims of disasters. Each day during a disaster response, the leaders should give the team members adequate time in the morning to ask God to provide opportunities to witness leaving the results to Him. Also, during the work day leaders should encourage prayer breaks.
 - 3. Third, a key part of any disaster response effort should be gathering the team together daily to pray and worship God as well as discuss the day's activities and the interactions with disaster victims. A sample Devotional Guide for Disaster Response Volunteers is available. Use this guide or develop your own for prayer and worship prior to, during and upon conclusion of your effort.

Appendix A

**CHURCH MEMBER
DISASTER RESPONSE INTEREST & SKILLS SURVEY**

Name: _____

Street Address: _____ Home Phone: _____

City/State/Zip: _____ Work Phone: _____

E-mail: _____ Cell Phone: _____

Church: _____ Church Phone: _____

Church Address: _____

Would you be interested in assisting with a disaster relief project by our church? ☐ In this community?
☐ In this county? ☐ Within the Presbytery? ☐ In this state? ☐ In the USA? ☐ Internationally?

How much lead-time would you need to get ready to participate in a project? _____

INTEREST/EXPERIENCE/TRAINING

Check the disaster ministries that interest you. Place **two checks** by areas where you are experienced.

<input type="checkbox"/> Advisory/advocacy	<input type="checkbox"/> Driver	<input type="checkbox"/> Reconstruction team
<input type="checkbox"/> Bulk distribution	<input type="checkbox"/> Elderly care	<input type="checkbox"/> Repair (emergency)
<input type="checkbox"/> Caring for pets	<input type="checkbox"/> Employment assistance	<input type="checkbox"/> Resources/logistics
<input type="checkbox"/> Casework	<input type="checkbox"/> Evacuation of persons	<input type="checkbox"/> Safety
<input type="checkbox"/> Chainsaw crew/tree removal	<input type="checkbox"/> General handyman	<input type="checkbox"/> Salvage
<input type="checkbox"/> Child care	<input type="checkbox"/> Housing coordinator	<input type="checkbox"/> Sanitation
<input type="checkbox"/> Cleanup crew/debris removal	<input type="checkbox"/> Interpreter/translator:	<input type="checkbox"/> Security
<input type="checkbox"/> Clerical assistant	Language(s) _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Shelter management or care
<input type="checkbox"/> Communications	<input type="checkbox"/> Legal aid	<input type="checkbox"/> Site manager
(including Ham Radios)	<input type="checkbox"/> Meal preparation	<input type="checkbox"/> Special needs care
<input type="checkbox"/> Computers	<input type="checkbox"/> Medical emergency team	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation
<input type="checkbox"/> Counseling	<input type="checkbox"/> Prayer team coordinator	<input type="checkbox"/> Other _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Damage assessment	<input type="checkbox"/> Procurement	

Check if you have **specialized training** in the following (please add comments below):

<input type="checkbox"/> Advanced first aid and CPR	<input type="checkbox"/> Electrician	<input type="checkbox"/> Paramedic
<input type="checkbox"/> Bricklayer	<input type="checkbox"/> Emergency child care	<input type="checkbox"/> Physician
<input type="checkbox"/> Carpentry	<input type="checkbox"/> Evangelism	<input type="checkbox"/> Plumbing
<input type="checkbox"/> Chaplain	<input type="checkbox"/> General contractor	<input type="checkbox"/> Roofer
<input type="checkbox"/> Crisis counseling	<input type="checkbox"/> Heavy equipment operator	<input type="checkbox"/> Safety
<input type="checkbox"/> Disaster relief	<input type="checkbox"/> Mass Feeding	<input type="checkbox"/> Other _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Dry walling/Painter	<input type="checkbox"/> Nurse	

Appendix B

CHURCH POTENTIAL FOR DISASTER RESPONSE

The following may be available during disaster response in or near our community:

Church Facilities

☐ Classrooms
☐ Dining room
☐ Dumpster
☐ Fellowship hall
☐ Food bank
☐ Gymnasium
☐ Ice makers
☐ Kitchen
☐ Nursery
☐ Outside electric hookup
☐ Outside sewage hookup
☐ Outside water hookup
☐ Refrigerators/freezers

☐ Rest rooms
☐ Showers
☐ Storage/vacant buildings
☐ Other _____

Communication Equipment

☐ Cell phones
☐ Ham Radios
☐ Satellite phones
☐ Other _____

Equipment

☐ Air compressors
☐ Chainsaws, etc.

☐ Generators
☐ High volume pumps
☐ Oxygen tanks
☐ Portable stoves
☐ Power painters
☐ Power washers
☐ Sanitation equipment/supplies
☐ Submersible pumps
☐ Other _____

Vehicles

☐ 4x4's
☐ Aircraft
☐ ATVs

☐ Back hoes
☐ Boats
☐ Bobcats
☐ Buses
☐ Campers/RVs
☐ Cargo Trailers
☐ Dump trucks
☐ Front loaders
☐ Portable showers
☐ Tractor-trailers
☐ Flat bed trailers
☐ Trucks
☐ Vans
☐ Other _____

Construction Supplies

☐ Electrical

☐ Hardware
☐ Lumber
☐ Plumbing
☐ Other _____

Medical Supplies

☐ Crutches
☐ First-aid kits
☐ Medical supplies
☐ Wheelchairs
☐ Other _____

Supplies

☐ Cots
☐ Drinking Water
☐ Ice
☐ Non-perishable food

☐ Sanitizing liquids
☐ Tarps
☐ Tents
☐ Other _____

Tools

☐ Brooms/mops
☐ Electric extension cords
☐ Garden hoses
☐ Hand tools
☐ Paint brushes/rollers
☐ Power tools
☐ Rakes
☐ Shop vacuums
☐ Shovels
☐ Other _____

Appendix C

Key People in the PCA, State, County, City, and Community

After listing the officials, list any church members or friends who may work in a particular office or agency. Sometimes, the personal contact is helpful.

TITLE

NAME

CONTACT INFORMATION

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN AMERICA

MNA Disaster Response Director	Arklie Hooten	678-294-3011 ahooten@pcanet.org
LCP MNA Committee Chairman	Craig Bailey, TE	843-345-1325 craig@redeemer-charleston.org
LCP Disaster Response Coordinator	Troy Jones, DE (???)	843-560-1267 troyjones29448@gmail.com
LCP Disaster Response Alternate	???	
Local Church Disaster Response Coordinator		

STATE GOVERNMENT

State Representative		
State Senator		
Office of Public Safety or Emergency Management		
Area Coordinator		

COUNTY OFFICIALS

Emergency Mgmt Director		
Commissioner or Judge		
Sheriff		
Fire Marshal		

CITY OFFICIALS

Emergency Mgmt Director		
Fire Chief		
Fire Marshal		

Council Member		
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VOLUNTEER ORGANIZATIONS

American Red Cross		
The Salvation Army		
VOAD		

OTHER CONTACTS
