

MASSACHUSETTS CONFERENCE
OF THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
DISASTER PROTOCOL

Our goal is to help our churches and pastors and, with and through them, those impacted by disaster (mindful that disaster is in the eye of the beholder) as they move through response, rescue and recovery towards a new normal.

Advanced Prep:

- Send out email with suggestions and preparations when Disaster is predicted
- Seek host churches for out of state disaster response volunteers
- Provide workshops for church preparedness
 - Emotional resilience
 - Media usage training
 - Church and personal preparedness
- Assist churches to connect with their local community disaster response protocol and people
- Provide online and social media trainings and educational resources including weblinks to existing resources
- Recruit and train additional clergy and lay experienced mentors and volunteers
- Explore trauma remediation and resilience resources and trainings
- Provide resources for annual emergency preparedness day/month

Within 12 hours:

- Determine who will take point to guide Disaster Response Team (DRT) through protocol
- Conference Minister (CM) and Associate Conference Ministers (ACM) coordinate with DRT and Admin Assist.
- CM sends out pastoral email and update
- ACMs begin contacting churches via phone and email to offer support and assess need, (if electricity is down this may require travel for direct contact)

Within 36 hours:

- CM calls pastors in damage zone
- CM/ACM visit if possible
- CM, ACM, DRT and Admin Assist continue to compare and update information
- Mentoring/Coaching assignments are made for each pastor/church in impacted area
- Send email update to churches and post on web
- Connect with Disaster Partners
- Contact National Disaster Ministries

Within First Week:

- Collaborate with rescue and recovery efforts
- Continue meetings to collaborate support and relief efforts
- Keep Conference Churches informed as needed and National UCC
- Assess, Stabilize and support churches in the disaster zone...ministering in and through them
 - a. This will include practical, emotional and spiritual needs

- Work with and through partners

Second Week through 3 months

- Continue support in and through local churches
- Continue support to pastors, consider lunch gatherings
- Support and Educate churches about delivery of benefits protocol including FEMA application deadlines
- Provide ‘debriefs’ if helpful
- Conference staff continues to collaborate information gathered
- Continue collaboration with Disaster Partners and National UCC, including application for funds through UCC National Disaster Ministries
- Collaborate and coordinate with efforts of immediate responders
- Facilitate assistance from Conference Churches and send Thank You notes
- Continue Communication to Conference Churches
- Begin conversations and education around Long Term Recovery Groups formation
- Gather stories of storm impact and recovery efforts to update Conference churches

3 Months and Beyond

- Support Efforts of Long Term Recovery Groups and local church pastors
- Continue Collaboration with Disaster Partners
- Continue communication and coordination with Conference Churches
- Facilitate Assistance with National UCC
- Assist in coordinating out of region disaster volunteers
- Begin evaluations to gather lessons learned and best practices
- Develop a plan for long term monitoring of pastors (and their families), churches and recovery efforts
- Recruit experienced people who are willing to be future mentors, coaches and team members

DISASTER PARTNERS:

- FEMA
- MEMA
- RED CROSS
- ECUMENICAL PARTNERS
- UNITED WAY
- SALVATION ARMY