



[Image description: 12 hands reaching toward one another to form a circle of hands.  
Each hand is a different color such as reds, yellows, blues, greens, etc..]

## Natural Disasters, Health Crisis, & Other Crises: Congregations Supporting People with Disabilities



2020 and now into 2021 has been a challenging year. This experience has brought about much separation, fear, and loss. It has also brought much innovation and an attempt to remain connected during times of tragedy and uncertainty. PDC would like to offer these tips, suggestions, and tools as resources for you. May we continue the connecting and loving work of Christ even during the most uncertain and tragic of times.

Rev. Sarah VanderZee McKenney, Chair of PDC



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## Lessons Learned from a Slide

Written by PDC's physical disability consultant Rev. Sue Montgomery

As toddlers one of the activities that can be both scary and exciting is riding down the slide at the local park. Some lessons quickly learned are one: hold on, two: (on a day filled with sunshine) make sure your pants cover your skin! Going down the emergency evacuation slide on an airplane to escape an engine fire is a learning experience that not only changes your life, but opens one's eyes to the unexpected realities of living life with a disability. Here are some of the lessons I learned from that experience.

First, if we are honest, most of us, including me, who live with a disability, think emergency situations are not going to happen to us. It is so easy to convince ourselves that when natural disasters or catastrophic failures of energy grids, fires, active shooters, people are going to be out there to assist and keep us safe. The reality is, no one is immune. The reality is living life with a disability means we have to be more aware, responsible, communicative, and pro-active to assure our survival and safety in a catastrophic situation. A young deaf man lived along a river with a history of flash flooding. The waters rise quickly and flow with tremendous force. The young man was aware of the dangers and knew not to ignore any evacuation order. What the young man did not know was that he needed to have a plan in place in case his deafness prevented him from being aware of an emergency. Evacuation orders are sent out through fire department sirens, scrolling notices on television screens, or via cell phones. What happens if you don't hear the warnings or you aren't in a place where you can read closed captioning on the TV, or see the alert on a phone? On that day as the river rose, this young man was unaware of the evacuation warnings. Once he was aware of the rising waters, he knew he needed to get out fast. It was too late. He was swept away in the turbulent waters and drowned. His lack of awareness led to his tragic death. In the aftermath many of his neighbors, family members, and friends asked this question: What if he had arranged for someone—a fire department or law enforcement employee, a neighbor, a family member—to physically connect with him and make sure he knew about the life-threatening dangers? A simple plan could have saved his life.

People living with disabilities need to think of and plan ahead for difficult situations. The 9-11 attacks on the Twin Towers, the Pentagon, and Shanksville made everyone aware of the need to have a plan in place for all people, especially those with disabilities, to find a safe place. Many high-rise buildings now have e-vac chairs designed to assist in the evacuation of people for whom physically climbing stairs is not possible by enabling the person to slide down a flight of stairs. However, e-vac chairs require trained people to use them. More importantly there needs to be an awareness of who would need them. Without pre-planning and communication, the need for assistance in evacuating the building is not going to be on anyone's radar screen. For us who live with disabilities, our need for support in the midst of an emergency situation cannot be presumed or considered to be some kind of automatic response. Knowledge of our needs—specific needs—has to be communicated. It is best communicated prior to any event, not when looking at a flight of stairs and wondering, how do I get out of here?

For some reason we who live with disabilities have been taught that we need to be totally independent, self-determined, resilient, and tough. Although these can be positive characteristics, the reality is, we cannot survive alone. We need one another. It is imperative that we meet with our local fire departments and

inform our local first responders of what would be helpful. There is NOTHING wrong in pre-planning. You may never face a fire, flood, or dramatic event, but if it happens, you and the team around you—are prepared and ready. Not just for you, but for all who require additional supports.

What we need to learn is that asking people to join with us in emergency planning, forming a team, and creating a plan is a smart move. It is equally as smart as covering our sensitive skin with clothing before sliding down a hot sliding board! The lessons I personally learned from sliding down an airplane chute to escape a burning flight are shared here. These are not meant to be a universal plan for all people with disabilities. There is no one plan fits all. Not all suggestions will work for everyone, nor are they meant for everyone. However, they are shared as a starting point for conversation and communication.

1. First lesson learned, just because you are flying to meet with a PC(USA) committee in Louisville, does not mean God will protect you from an airplane catching fire! There were multiple Presbyterians and people of faith on board that flight!
2. Escaping a burning airplane is an extremely rare experience. However, escaping a restaurant, movie theater, office building, or mall is something that could happen to any of us, any day, at any time. Be aware of your surroundings, have a plan. Communicate that plan with others and be prepared. Speak with hotel and motel staff, ask what their evacuation plans are for you and your family. If at all possible ask for your room to be on the ground floor or the lowest floor possible. It is incredibly difficult to evacuate a building of you are a person who uses a wheelchair and are housed on the 34th floor with no working elevators. In hotels and motels, count the rooms between yours and the exits. Measure the steps, the pushes of your wheels to give you a sense of distance between your room and the exits. Familiarize yourself with where the exits are. Seek answers to the instructions posted outside an elevator: “In case of fire, do not use.”
3. NEVER allow anyone to take your adaptive aids from you and place them in a lobby or the back of a sanctuary, meeting room, or theater. The time it takes to retrieve your aids could make the difference in whether or not you live or die. If you are able to transfer from your wheelchair to a seat, break your chair down, place the various parts beside your seat, and do not let it be outside of your personal reach!
4. Be aware, you could be exiting in darkness. Carry a small flashlight with you everywhere you go. Pack it in your backpack, purse, or your wheelchair bag. Phones make great flashlights but you may need to be on the phone speaking to others. Even if you are blind, a flashlight can direct first responders to you. When it is dark, no one can see,
5. When boarding a plane, train, or any public form of transportation, ask the crew their plans and requests of you in the presence of an emergency. Ask passengers around you to partner with you should an evacuation be ordered. Don’t be afraid or shy to ask for their assistance in advance. It may save your life—and you’ll make a new friend!

The most important lesson to learn is to have a plan—whether it be for hurricanes, floods, winter storms, power failures, active shooters, fire—have a plan. Have your plan identify the how, when, why, where, and who that are specific to you. Make a list of what you need, have it ready before any evacuation is ordered—be prepared, be ready. Get to know your local first responders. Have conversations with the firefighters and police to see how you can partner with them and others in your community who, like you, may need some



extra supports in a difficult time. No one knows when or if ever an emergency will change your life. My trip down the airplane chutes made me more aware than ever of the need to have a plan for safe evacuations every place I go—even the local grocery store! Everyone safely escaped the plane that day. It was hard watching the elderly and the mother with babies sliding down the chutes. As the smoke billowed around us, the airplane crew—and the passengers—all worked together as one by one we made our escape. The theory was that as the plane was coming in for landing in Louisville the engine sucked in a Canadian Goose causing it to catch on fire. Since it was Louisville it was a Kentucky Fried Goose!

Sliding boards are fun—even when the sun heats up the slide. One of the greatest joys is watching a toddler bravely slide down and land in the arms of a caregiver. Being prepared for an emergency means we know we will be working together with people who care and want to be there with us. There is strength and comfort in knowing we are a part of a team that is informed, prepared, and ready. May such planning never be needed, but if so, by the grace of God, may we be ready.

# Shenandoah Presbytery

A Community of Christ for Worship, Nurture, and Mission

## Disaster Preparedness and Response Plans



June, 2014

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## Acronym List

COM	Committee on Ministry
DRT	Disaster Preparedness & Response Team, Shenandoah Presbytery
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
KCC	Key church communicators
LTRO	Long-term recovery organization
MC	Mission community
MOU	Memorandum of understanding
PC(USA)	Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)
PDA	Presbyterian Disaster Assistance
PLT	Presbytery Leadership Team
VOAD	Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster

## **Disaster Preparedness and Response Plans - Overview**

### **A. Background**

This Plan defines roles and responsibilities across the Presbytery for response to disasters. It recognizes our relationships with local and national disaster assistance organizations and develops an organization structure and communication paths within the Presbytery. These response protocols will facilitate the flow of information to bring appropriate resources to those most in need. This Plan is tailored around several unique characteristics of our Presbytery, but also is based on training and materials provided by Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (PDA), a ministry of the PC(USA), supported primarily by One Great Hour of Sharing.

This Plan serves as a beginning of an evolutionary and expanding system of connecting members of our Presbytery to resources and needs both inside and outside of our boundaries. It is hoped that future iterations of this Plan can serve as a model for congregations to develop their own specific disaster plans.

There are many volunteers in the Presbytery who have experience with disaster response efforts in the Gulf Coast, the Northeast, and in more local emergencies. This Plan is designed to focus this experience in an organized manner to prepare and respond to future disasters both within the Presbytery and reaching out to other parts of the nation and the world. For example, this experience has evolved into a shower trailer ministry. The Plan recognizes one of the key tenants of disaster response: **all disasters are local**. Therefore, pastors play a key leadership role in disaster situations and often require an extra measure of emotional and spiritual support. Even in widespread events, the effects of a disaster are always *localized* right down to individuals and their lives.

### **B. Rationale**

Shenandoah Presbytery, as a collection of church families, characterizes itself as a *community of Christ for worship, nurture, and mission*. As such, it is important to us to be a part of the healing love of Christ by caring for communities adversely affected by crises and catastrophic events – both natural and human-caused. From PDA's perspective presbyteries are gateways for an organized response to disaster. To be effective in this ministry, we recognize the need for careful preparation, communication, and mobilization plans that reach across our many churches and can be activated in a timely manner.

Presbyteries and congregations need to have good communication plans in place in the event of a disaster. Often without reporting from the local community, the Presbytery (and Synod) is dependent on news accounts rather than first-hand information, which could lead to an uneven or inadequate response

### **C. Scope**

Disaster response addressed by this Plan moves in two directions. It reaches inward to churches and communities experiencing disaster events within the boundaries of Shenandoah Presbytery. It also includes reaching out to areas in need beyond our Presbytery. It encompasses not only a disaster response plan, but also addresses shower trailer operations, protection and recovery of the Presbytery office facility, a training plan and model disaster plan for congregations, and a list of disaster response resources.

The nature of disasters covered by this Plan is purposely left unspecified. This Plan is not tied to a specific class of disasters. Disasters are events that cause human suffering or create human needs that survivors cannot alleviate without spiritual, monetary, material, and/or physical assistance. However, because Shenandoah Presbytery is in the unique position of being west of Washington, D.C., it may assume a role of providing sheltering for National Capital Region evacuees that should be addressed in disaster planning.

Disaster planning covers three distinct phases: preparation, immediate response, and recovery. Our response philosophy includes offering a ministry of presence, assessing need, and coordinating a response. An adequate response meets physical, emotional, and spiritual needs. Special attention must be paid to care of pastors who often bear a tremendous leadership role in local disasters. We will address these phases by:

- Identifying experienced individuals and congregational resources within the Presbytery that can respond to a disaster,
- Developing a response organization and communication protocols that can be activated as needed,
- Managing donated material and financial resources,
- Training teams and collecting resources for response, and
- Linking our resources among:
  - Presbytery churches
  - Presbytery mission communities
  - Community-based and ecumenical response organizations
  - National and international relief agencies.

We remain especially attentive to responding to those of our communities with limited personal options and resources to overcome the chaos often delivered by disasters.

Although this Plan focuses primarily on responding to disasters within the Presbytery, guidelines for responding to national situations are included. We recommend using the resources and connections provided by PDA for response to national and international disasters. A section regarding shower trailer operations is included.

## **D. Plan Contents**

This Disaster Preparedness and Response Plan organizes its contents in appendices to facilitate future plan expansion and revision. It is the responsibility of the Shenandoah Presbytery Disaster Preparedness and Response Team to review and coordinate development of the entire Plan content and to report to Presbytery on an annual basis.

Here is a description of each appendix. Appendix A -

Disaster Response Plan:

- Describes the organization structure for disaster response for both disasters within the Presbytery and for responding to events in other parts of the country
- Includes roles and responsibilities for the Presbytery Disaster Preparedness and Response Team (DRT) and mission community representatives.
- Outlines a communication plan and protocols for disaster response actions.

Appendix B – Administration Office Disaster Plan: Covers two scenarios:

- Using the Presbytery Center as a shelter, work camp, or material distribution site
- Protecting Presbytery resources and developing contingency operating and staffing plans.

Appendix C – Disaster Preparedness and Response Education Plan: Outlines educational processes for mission communities and congregations about disaster preparedness and response.

Appendix D – Disaster Preparedness and Response Resources: Lists materials developed by PDA and other organizations regarding disaster planning, work team coordination, volunteer management, emotional and spiritual care, long-term recovery, and volunteer hosting.

Appendix E – Sample Planning Guide for Church Disaster Response: Provides a guide for a local disaster plan with checklists of items to consider for disaster preparation.

Appendix F – Shower Trailer Operations

- Describes the concept of operations for two shower trailers owned by the Presbytery
- Includes the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with PDA for loan of the trailers for national responses.
- Includes a sample generic MOU for shower trailer deployment with Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (VOAD) or other regional and local agencies.

# **Appendix A**

## **Disaster Response Plan**

## Appendix A Disaster Response Plan

### I. Introduction

This Disaster Response Plan is an appendix of a set of Disaster Preparedness and Response Plans developed within Shenandoah Presbytery. The Overview section discusses the background, rationale, and scope of preparedness and response plans being developed in the Presbytery. This Plan defines roles and responsibilities across the Presbytery for response to disasters. It recognizes our relationships with local and national disaster assistance organizations and develops an organization structure and communication paths within the Presbytery. These response protocols will facilitate the flow of information to bring appropriate resources to those most in need. This Plan is tailored around several unique characteristics of our Presbytery, but also is based on training and materials provided by Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (PDA).

Disaster response in Shenandoah Presbytery is organized around two key groups. First a Presbytery Disaster Preparedness and Response Team (DRT) will coordinate communication and response to both disasters within the Presbytery and our help with disasters nationally and internationally. Second, mission community representatives will help train and deploy volunteers as needed.

This specific Plan focuses on the Shenandoah Presbytery disaster response organization and communication protocols. It also addresses long-term recovery issues and response to national and international disasters.

### II. Disaster Response Organization

#### A. Presbytery Disaster Preparedness and Response Team

A Disaster Preparedness and Response Team (DRT) will be formed at the Presbytery level. The functions of this team are to:

- Assist Mission Communities (MCs) with organizing and training
- Coordinate a rapid response to local and national disasters
- Operate, maintain, and deploy shower trailers
- Form and activate communication protocols as needed
- Ensure that pastors affected by disasters receive pastoral care
- Disseminate assessment and response information to affected churches and responding churches, PDA, and other organizations including local inter-faith networks and Volunteer Organizations Active in Disasters (VOAD)
- Provide information for the news media
- Develop and maintain comprehensive Disaster Preparedness and Response Plans with provision for the formation of an Administrative Commission
- Plan training for DRT members and field volunteers
- Plan training for the Committee on Ministry (COM) and a pastoral care plan for clergy serving in areas affected by a disaster

- Liaison with inter-faith and civic disaster response agencies, and provide representatives as requested
- Develop and maintain master phone lists of MC and field volunteers
- Recommend creation of financial accounts to receive and disburse relief funds
- Review and revise this plan as needed
- Provide an annual report to Presbytery.

The Disaster Preparedness and Response Team will be organized as a sub-committee of the Presbytery Leadership Team reporting directly to the Team. It will include the following members:

- Director
- Co-Director
- Mission Community (MC) representatives (minimum one from each MC)
- Disaster Preparedness Education Coordinator
- Transitional Presbyter
- Presbytery Communications Coordinator.

Non-staff DRT members will be selected by the Nominating Committee after input from the DRT and will normally serve a three-year term that can be renewed.

The responsibilities of the Director can often be shared or delegated. The Co-Director provides back-up availability and general assistance to the Director. As a leadership team, their responsibilities include:

- Convene and chair bi-annual meetings of the DRT
- Coordinate with the Presbytery Nominating Committee for the recruiting of members of the DRT
- Maintain routine contact with and support for MC representatives
- Coordinate training of DRT members across the Presbytery
- During times of disaster, activate the Communication Plan via the DRT and coordinate information flow to/from the appropriate MC representatives; communicate directly with the Transitional Presbyter, Communications Coordinator, other members of the DRT
- Coordinate a Presbytery response to any disaster brought to the attention of the DRT including ministry of presence visits, assessments of need, delivering spiritual care, and coordinating volunteer response
- Coordinate the operation, maintenance, and deployment of shower trailers
- Coordinate communication with other inter-faith and civil disaster response agencies; develop recommendations for partnerships, certifications, and memorandums of understanding with other organizations; recommend response requests to PDA
- Report training accomplished, disaster response actions, and lessons learned to the Presbytery Leadership Team (PLT).

## **B. Mission Community Disaster Response**

The ministry of disaster response fits well within the vision and structure of our Mission Communities. Each Mission Community is encouraged to form at least one informal DRT. An informal team can simply be a list of MC members who have had disaster response experience or who lead church mission committees. Recent success in coordinating Presbytery responses has come from mobilizing folks involved in church mission activities. It is very important to identify these leaders ahead of a disaster or response event. These teams are a critical part of disaster response because these are the people who can lead and coordinate a local response.

The functions of these MC teams are to:

- Facilitate communication among churches and ensure information is passed to the Presbytery DRT
- Form response teams to help assess the need for an expanded response
- Coordinate response from incoming teams (outside the MC)
- Assign a Disaster Coordinator in the case of a local disaster
- Provide support for pastors of affected churches
- Coordinate disaster response with local agencies.

The responsibilities of the Presbytery DRT MC Representatives can often be shared or delegated. Their responsibilities include:

- Assemble a list of potential disaster response leaders and volunteers from MC churches
- Establish an emergency communication plan within the MC (e.g., calling tree)
- Coordinate training of volunteers across the MC
- During times of disaster, activate the communication plan and coordinate information flow to/from the appropriate congregations; communicate directly with the Presbytery DRT
- Coordinate a MC response to any disaster brought to the attention of the MC DRT including ministry of presence visits, assessments of need, delivering spiritual care, and coordinating volunteer response
- Coordinate communication with other inter-faith and civil disaster response agencies; recommend requests for PDA assistance to the Presbytery DRT
- Report training accomplished, disaster response actions, and lessons learned to the Presbytery DRT.

**C. Administrative Commission**

An Administrative Commission can be a very useful body to act on behalf of the Presbytery in directing a significant and/or long-term disaster response. The responsibilities of an administrative commission can include managing a response from PDA, creating and managing accounts to receive donations and grants, disbursing funds to congregations and long-term recovery organizations, forming partnerships with other disaster recovery agencies, managing volunteers, and hiring staff if needed. When warranted and within the guidelines of the Book of Order G-3.0109b, the Director of the Disaster Preparedness and Response Team shall make a recommendation to the Transitional Presbyter, Moderator of Presbytery, and Chair of the Presbytery Leadership Team to create an administrative commission for a specific disaster response. The recommendation will include specific responsibilities for the commission and an expected end date.

**III. Response and Communication Protocols**

The principle methods of communication during disaster situations will be direct phone/cell phone contact among Pastors and DRT Directors. Information can be passed throughout the Presbytery via the Key Church Communicators (KCC).

Guidelines for communication and response are provided by PDA. The following protocol is recommended for responding to disasters within Shenandoah Presbytery and is based on a PDA model.

**A. Pastors**

1. Remain sheltered until danger passes.
2. Assess your own damage and attend to loved-ones and yourself first.
3. When it is safe, assess the general situation and physical needs of your neighbors, congregation, and community.
4. Respond to the immediate needs of survivors in cooperation with local emergency response agencies.
5. Report your status and immediate needs to the Transitional Presbyter.
6. Undergird all efforts with spiritual support to the survivors in cooperation with other spiritual leaders of the community. (No secular agency is equipped to perform this unique and vital role.)
7. Coordinate efforts of the congregation, relying as much as possible on church members to lead work teams – focusing on those in the community with the most need.

**B. Presbytery Disaster Response Team Director, Co-Director**

1. Establish a plan for maintaining communications with the Presbytery Communications Coord. & Transitional Presbyter. Advise PLT about contacting PDA and requesting a National Response Team deployment.
2. In addition to the above DRT items, assemble information to send an update communication to all churches via the KCCs about the current status of areas affected and any expected needs.
3. Direct a complete assessment of damaged churches and community needs.
4. Communicate needs to DRT MC representatives and assist them with coordinating volunteer responses when it is safe to send in field workers.

5. Establish a regular meeting schedule (conference calls) for the Presbytery DRT as long as the situation warrants support from the Presbytery and national organizations including PDA.
6. If necessary, take the initiative to convene an Inter-faith Disaster Response Network. This may include representatives from Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (VOAD), PDA, Red Cross, Salvation Army, FEMA, and other inter-faith response groups.
7. As FEMA and insurance companies respond, begin a list of “unmet needs” that can serve as an assignment guide for volunteer work teams. Enlist the aid of local church members in this survey, paying special attention to the poor, minorities, disabled, elderly, and uninsured. Coordinate this effort through the local long-term recovery organizations (LTROs) and VOAD.
8. Assess and respond to spiritual care needs, especially for pastors of affected churches.
9. Seek professional advice as needed from a panel of advisors (see Long-Term Recovery section below).

### **C. Presbytery DRT**

1. Remain sheltered until danger passes.
2. Assess your own damage and attend to loved-ones and yourself first.
3. Communicate with DRT members via phone/email.
4. Form a more formal MC DRT if necessary. Contact pastors in affected areas to begin an assessment of the local situation.
5. Send a communication to all KCCs with initial information about the disaster and the areas affected.
6. Together make a “ministry of presence” visit to all affected areas. Report initial findings to PDA, Synod executive, and neighboring presbyteries.
7. Request PDA support as appropriate.
8. Assist mission communities in coordinating response from the MC and other incoming resources.
9. Where appropriate, arrange for long-term recovery partnerships among Presbytery churches and other inter-faith and civic long-term recovery organizations.
10. Create financial accounts and authority to receive and disperse relief donations.

### **D. Mission Community DRT Representatives**

1. Remain sheltered until danger passes.
2. Assess your own damage and attend to loved-ones and yourself first.
3. Communicate via phone to Presbytery DRT Director if in an affected area, or remain accessible to receive phone calls from the DRT if unaffected.
4. Assist as needed with the Presbytery DRT functions above.
5. Assemble and deploy teams of field workers as requested by the Presbytery DRT.
6. Collect assessment information from work teams and report to the Presbytery DRT. Needs assessment may include contacting pastors and community leaders.
7. Coordinate requests for supplies with the Presbytery DRT and VOAD, if applicable.
8. Maintain frequent communication with work team leaders to keep information current.
9. If necessary, appoint a MC Disaster Director to coordinate multiple work teams over an expected long period of disaster assistance.

#### **IV. Long-Term Recovery**

While immediate disaster response periods can be counted in terms of days and weeks, long-term recovery efforts may stretch into several months and even years. If these efforts continue for extended periods, it is very important to enlist help from long-term recovery organizations. In this situation the Presbytery DRT may recommend creation of an Administrative Commission (see Section II, C. above). During this extended period, pastors and relief workers will need pastoral care for themselves and their families. Disasters always put great stress on persons and families involved in response and recovery, especially those in leadership positions. Shenandoah Presbytery will make a special effort to minister to the special needs of these persons during times of crisis.

In most cases long-term recovery is managed by local (county) long-term recovery organizations (LTROs) that may be set-up as the recovery process proceeds. These organizations are aided by FEMA, VOAD, and other national agencies that may have partnerships with local jurisdictions. The DRT will identify all local LTROs and will foster participation by our congregations that will connect us to those with unmet needs. Support for this effort can come from PDA.

Another valuable resource during a long-term recovery situation is an Advisory Panel. The Presbytery DRT will foster relationships with specialists who can provide professional advice to guide the Presbytery in decision-making and recovery planning. Generally such advice will pertain to:

- Protection and safety of survivors and workers
- Possibilities for advocacy, relationships, and creative responses
- Propriety issues around norms and issue ownership
- Community re-development issues

Advisors will be available in many areas including medicine, law, finance, banking, insurance, engineering, community organization, psychiatry, agriculture, human rights, religion, ecumenical and inter-faith relationships, governmental agencies, private enterprise, the environment, etc.

#### **V. Responding to National and International Disasters**

Responding to persons in need is a very natural way of showing Christ's love and putting faith and concern into action. An increasing number of congregations seek to respond to those in need by:

- Organizing and sending volunteer work teams to disaster sites
- Collecting and donating money
- Building or donating various disaster recovery kits for survivors (e.g., shelter, hope-in-a-box, medical, school, flood buckets).

Shenandoah Presbytery will use the resources of PDA to communicate need and coordinate management of work teams, monetary donations, and disaster kits. PDA maintains a list of disaster sites across the country in need of volunteer teams and can provide helpful information on forming teams and planning a work trip. Information about current national and international disaster response needs are contained on the PDA web site and are communicated via e-mail on the PDA Rapid Information Network. Monetary donations for disaster response may be given through One Great Hour of Sharing. During the year when a special appeal is made if there are significant recovery needs, the PDA office will assign a designated account number for giving to a specific disaster response. Even if there is no specific appeal issued for a disaster, gifts may still be sent to Presbyterian Disaster Assistance for general disaster response.

Congregations are encouraged to coordinate relief efforts through their Mission Communities. Mission Communities are encouraged to maintain lists of parishioners who have disaster response work trip experience and who can be mobilized in case of a disaster within the Presbytery or an urgent national appeal for assistance.

## **Appendix B**

### **Administrative Office Disaster Plan**

## **Appendix B**

### **Administrative Office Disaster Plan**

#### **I. Introduction**

This plan is an appendix of a set of disaster preparedness and response plans developed within Shenandoah Presbytery. The Overview section discusses the background, rationale, and scope of preparedness and response plans being developed in the Presbytery. This appendix outlines the beginning disaster plans for the administrative functions and the Presbytery facility. The plan covers two scenarios:

- Using the Presbytery Center as a shelter, volunteer work camp, or material distribution site; and
- Protecting Presbytery resources and developing contingency operating and staffing plans.

#### **II. Scenario A – Using the Presbytery Center as a facility for Outreach**

- A. Conduct a site review to determine changes needed to function as work camp.
- Well?
  - Outside water hookups
  - Generator/fuel
  - Outside electrical hookups
- B. Determine supplies needed to use facility as a temporary shelter.
- Cots/blankets
  - Non-perishable foods
  - Toiletries/hygiene

#### **III. Scenario B – Ensuring continuing function of Presbytery Office**

- A. Develop Memoranda of Understanding with several churches/entities for temporary housing of the Presbytery Office.
- B. Develop contingency staffing plans

C. Create a disaster “Go Box” containing:

- Current Directory
- Hard copy of Presbytery Manual
- Copy of Presbytery Disaster Response Plan
- Community emergency contacts
- Current Planning Calendar
- Official copy of the property deed
- List of credit card numbers and holders
- Account numbers and contact information for all bank accounts
- Copy of insurance policy
- Copy of PDA Memorandum of Understanding
- Complete computer record backup (flash drives)
- Presbytery stationery/stamps
- Business cards for all Presbytery staff
- Memoranda of Understanding for temporary housing of Presbytery Office
- Contingency staffing plan
- Book of Order/Confessions
- Book of Common Worship
- Hymnal
- Bible.

D. Secure equipment:

- Four laptop computers (at least one capable of reading backup flash drives)
- Four cell phones
- One satellite phone?
- One fax machine?
- Copier?
- Surge protectors.

E. Other considerations:

- Records preservation
- Evacuation plan
- Severe storm shelter
- Plan for sheltering in place.



## **Appendix C**

# **Disaster Preparedness and Response Education Plan**

## Appendix C

### Disaster Preparedness and Response Education Plan

#### **Objective:**

This plan outlines educational processes that will encourage congregations to develop their own emergency or disaster response, whether local, national or international.

#### **Goals - Local Disaster**

- Provide list of resources for congregations to use in developing their congregational disaster plans and print resources as needed.
- Provide list of resources for families to use in developing their family disaster plans and print resources as needed.
- Provide sample plans

#### **Goals - National Disaster**

- Provide list of resources for congregations to use in developing their response to a national disaster
  - How to organize and plan for a work team
  - Prepare “kits” to be available as Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (PDA) determines the need

#### **Goals - International Disaster**

- Provide list of resources for congregations to use in developing their response to an international disaster
  - How to connect with Presbyterian Disaster Assistance to determine needed resources
  - How to publicize information about needed resources

#### **Process**

- Create list and CD of resources
- Develop a presentation for churches about disaster planning
- Be prepared to make presentations to churches
- Post materials for developing plans on the Shenandoah Presbytery website

## **Appendix D**

# **Disaster Preparedness and Response Resource**

## **Appendix D**

### **Disaster Preparedness and Response Resources**

Listed below are sources for disaster planning materials developed by PDA and other organizations regarding disaster planning, work team coordination, volunteer management, spiritual care, and long-term recovery. Many items are annotated with a summary of the content.

As this list evolves, it will be dumped to a CD for dissemination to Presbytery mission communities and congregations.

#### **FEMA Are You Ready Guide**

<http://www.fema.gov/areyouready/index.shtm>

An Extensive guide on preparing for disasters. The entire document is available online, in pdf format and in bookform. Also available is the Are You Ready? Facilitator Guide (IS-22FG). The Facilitator Guide is a tool for those interested in delivering Are You Ready? content in a small group or classroom setting. The Facilitator Guide has instruction modules for adults, older children, and younger children. Copies of Are You Ready? and the Facilitator Guide are available through the FEMA publications warehouse (1.800.480.2520)

#### **Presbyterian Disaster Assistance**

<http://www.pcusa.org/pda>

The PDA web site has a number of resources for training.

- **Community Arise** (<http://www.communityarise.com/>) curriculum is appropriate for a wide range of audiences: potential volunteers; faith-based and secular community groups; disaster response groups (long-term recovery, pre-disaster planning, or immediate post disaster); and denominational and community decision-makers.
- **God With Us** – (<http://www.pcusa.org/media/uploads/pda/pdfs/god-with-us-curriculum.pdf>) worship and Christian Education Resources for Congregational use after a local disaster with emphasis on the needs of children, youth, and families immediately after a disaster

#### **Peace River Presbytery (Southwest Florida)**

<http://www.peaceriverpresbytery.org/cre.revised.htm>

Peace River Presbytery has an excellent plan with attachments that are easily adapted to the needs of any church. Although the Peace River Plan is strongly oriented toward hurricanes, many of the checklists are general.

**The American Red Cross**

[http://www.redcross.org/services/prepare/0,1082,0\\_239\\_00.html](http://www.redcross.org/services/prepare/0,1082,0_239_00.html)

The Red Cross provides a series of articles covering all aspects of disaster preparedness.

**Church World Service**

Prepare to Care: Guide to Disaster Ministry In Your Congregation

<http://www.cwserp.org/training/ptc/carecon.php>

This online resource provides an overview of church response to disasters in their communities and in the world. It does not provide detailed help for planning for local disasters, but is an excellent general resource.

## **Appendix E**

# **Sample Planning Guide for Church Disaster Response**

## **Appendix E**

### **Sample Planning Guide for Church Disaster Response**

This is a guide to help congregations prepare for disaster response in their church or local community. It consists of steps that can be accomplished in sequence or concurrently by a group involved in planning. The guide breaks the many important steps of disaster planning into smaller more manageable blocks. It covers many, but not all, of the topics that should be considered in making your church plan. Adapt this list to meet the unique needs of your congregation.

A church member emergency contact information form is included.

This checklist as adapted from:  
*AT THE HEART OF THE STORM*

*Lessons learned from the Bush Disaster Recovery Foundation*

Sponsored by: Southern Minnesota Initiative Foundation and the Bush Foundation

[http://www.ncg.org/s\\_ncg/assets/dpri/HeartOfTheStorm.pdf](http://www.ncg.org/s_ncg/assets/dpri/HeartOfTheStorm.pdf)

**STEP ONE: INITIAL PLANNING**

<b>Task:</b>
Determine each staff member's personal scenario and discuss how they might be impacted in a disaster
Plan for varying effects of disaster depending on time of day it occurs.

**Back-up of Documents and Off-site Storage.** Put the following documentation together, make copies and distribute to designated people in your organization. Have a copy in the office and several copies off-site. Create a **GO BOX**.

Documents	Backed up	In GO BOX
Insurance policy, insurance binder, insurance agent's name, and contact numbers		
Insurance company's contact numbers Inventory of equipment, furniture, fixtures and manuals, warranties, supplies.		
Presbytery, Mission Community, congregation contacts and essential written and computer records		
Member directory		
Up to date copy of this worksheet. Historic documents		
Tax Exemption certificate with ID number		
Up-to-date brochures and literature		
List of all places where copies of all pertinent information is housed		
Where is the GO BOX?		
Who is responsible for the GO BOX?		

**Preparation for Disaster Kits:**

Contents	Location
Personal Hygiene Kits	
Shelter Kits	
School Kits	
Flood Cleanup Kits	

**Emergency Equipment List – In house (church) and membership**

Equipment	Resource	Address	Phone



**STEP TWO: CREATE AN ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE**

Position	Name	Contact Numbers	Responsibilities
Team Leader			
1 <sup>st</sup> Back up			
2 <sup>nd</sup> Back up			

Position	Name	Contact Numbers	Responsibilities
Team Leader			
1 <sup>st</sup> Back up			
2 <sup>nd</sup> Back up			

Position	Name	Contact Numbers	Responsibilities
Team Leader			
1 <sup>st</sup> Back up			
2 <sup>nd</sup> Back up			

Position		Name	Contact Numbers	Responsibilities
Team Leader				
1 <sup>st</sup> Back up				
2 <sup>nd</sup> Back up				

Position	Name	Contact Numbers	Responsibilities
Team Leader			
1 <sup>st</sup> Back up			
2 <sup>nd</sup> Back up			

Related Tasks

Name a staff member to each position	
Meet to determine how team will operate	

**Create an Emergency Portfolio with the following content. Keep a current copy in the GO BOX and in an off-site location.**

Chain of command worksheet	
Staff roster including home addresses, home phone numbers, cell phone numbers, pager numbers, email addresses and out of town contacts.	
Church Leadership contact information as above	
Church Membership contact information as above	
Emergency equipment resource list	
Non-profit status and Tax Identification Number	
Insurance documentation	

**Emergency contact numbers roster:**

	Contact	Phone
Ambulance Animal Control Attorney Electrician		
Fire department		
Glass company		
In-house security Insurance company Locksmith Maintenance company Plumber		
Police or sheriff		
Ambulance Animal Control Attorney Electrician		
Fire department		
Glass company		
In-house security Insurance company Locksmith Maintenance company Plumber		
Police or sheriff		
Ambulance Animal Control Attorney Electrician		
Fire department		
Glass company		

**Utility companies:**

Electric	
Gas	
Telephone	
Water	
Computer Technician	
Other	

**Roster of area response agencies:**

911 Non-Emergency Number	
Emergency Management	
Office Red Cross	
Presbytery Disaster Response Team	
Interpreter(s)	
Others	

**STEP THREE: SECURING RESOURCES AND BUILDING**

Consider who should have this information and train all appropriate people. Designate primary and back-up responsibility.

<b>Task</b>	<b>Whose Responsibility</b>	<b>Back Up</b>
Learn how to shut off main electric power		
Learn how to shut off power to the sanctuary		
Learn how to shut off power to other buildings		
Learn how to shut off main water supply		
Learn how to shut off other buildings' water		

<b>Consider</b>	<b>Whose Responsibility</b>
Identify sources for emergency generators	
Identify location(s) of nearest pay phones	
Place multiples of correct changes and/or phone cards in emergency kits	
Secure emergency bottled or other viable drinking water	
Plan for how interruption of normal transportation will affect Church operations.	
Consider needs for additional resources of staff, materials and funding and sources.	

**STEP FOUR: IDENTIFYING COMMUNITY RESOURCES**

Meet with Emergency Management Services Director	
Review Emergency Operations Plan as it impacts agency.	
Make Emergency Management Services director aware of role church resources can play in a disaster.	
Leave Church contact information with director	
Locate potential sites for public care	
Locate potential site(s) for Emergency Operations Center	
Contact like agencies to determine heir level of disaster preparedness.	
Discuss potential collaborating or mutual aid with other churches and non-profits.	
Visit appropriate businesses and organizations to make them aware of agency and determine possibilities for mutual aid and record findings.	
Consider potential need for interpreters and identify availability of such within community.	
Contact other response agencies as necessary (eg. Police, fire, public health, etc)	

**STEP FIVE: DEVELOPING CONTINGENCY PLANS**

Brainstorm with full staff and Session on all possible “what if” scenarios	
Discuss possible unique area problems	
Flood	
Hurricane remnant	
Church fire	
Chemical accident	
School violence	
Severe storm	
Key Personnel major illness/death	
Leadership Crisis	
Impact of evacuation of nearby metro areas	
Document and rehearse final plan	
Determine ways to keep your information accurate and current	

**STEP SIX: DEVELOP A CONGREGATIONAL COMMUNICATION PLAN**

Survey the congregation for individual preparedness plans	
Gather contact information including out of area contacts from members	
Identify at risk members of the congregation who may need assistance (elderly, disabled, single parents of small children)	
Assign someone responsibility to check on and/or assist at-risk individuals	
Consider establishing neighborhood or community groupings of members for follow-up and spiritual care.	

**[Name of your Church]**

**Emergency Information Form**

FOR THE FAMILY OF: \_\_\_\_\_

PRIMARY FAMILY ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

INDIVIDUAL FAMILY MEMBERS NAMES AND NUMBERS:

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ CELL #(\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ EMAIL \_\_\_\_\_

**Evacuation Destination**

EVACUATION/REGROUPING LOCATION: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_ CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE NUMBER AT THAT LOCATION (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

**ICE NUMBERS (In Case of Emergency)**

Program into your cell phone, as ICE 1 and ICE 2 so emergency personnel reading your phone know whom to contact

1 <sup>st</sup> Out of area contact #	2 <sup>nd</sup> Out of area contact #
<b>Name:</b>	<b>Name:</b>
<b>Address:</b>	<b>Address:</b>
<b>Home Phone:</b>	<b>Home Phone:</b>
<b>Work Phone:</b>	<b>Work Phone:</b>
<b>Cell Phone:</b>	<b>Cell Phone:</b>
<b>Email:</b>	<b>Email:</b>
<b>Other:</b>	<b>Other:</b>

ANY ADDITIONAL INFORMATION YOU WOULD LIKE TO SHARE WITH THE CHURCH STAFF

*This form will be used by church staff only in the event of an emergency.*

# **Appendix F**

## **Shower Trailer Ministry**

## **I. Introduction**

Shenandoah Presbytery responded to a plea from Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (PDA) for shower trailers. Mountain Valley Mission Community and Covenant Church raised funds to procure box trailer shells and outfit them for showers. PDA matched the funds donated to Covenant Church to complete that project. The two trailers are owned and operated by the Presbytery primarily for the use of PDA. The Presbytery also desires to provide assistance to not-for-profit organizations with a focus on disaster response, particularly those organizations working in cooperation with Presbyterian Disaster Assistance or other partners affiliated with Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (VOAD). A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with PDA governs deployment and management of the trailers when assigned to a PDA long-term disaster recovery site (see Section IV. below).

## **II. Responsibilities**

The trailers are permanently registered by the Presbytery in the Commonwealth of Virginia. The Presbytery holds the primary responsibility for insurance.

The Mountain Valley Mission Committee Shower Trailer Team manages the trailer they built and the Presbytery DRT manages the Covenant-built trailer.

Specific notebooks of operational specifications and guidelines, along with manuals and maintenance information are developed for each trailer and are maintained by their respective managing committee/team.

The respective trailer-managing committee/team is responsible for obtaining the annual Virginia Safety Inspection for each trailer.

## **III. Descriptions**

### **A. MVMC Trailer:**

Title#: 53084051

VIN#: 53NBE2021D1008569

License#: 420408TL

Expiration: N/A (Permanent)

Characteristics: Twenty feet long box trailer, tandem axles, five showers

### **B. Covenant Trailer:**

Title #: TBD

VIN#: 58ABE2025EN025143

License#: TBD

Expiration: N/A (Permanent)

Characteristics: Twenty feet long box trailer, tandem axles, four showers, washer/dryer, two inside sinks, two outside sinks

**IV. Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with PDA:**

**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING (MOU)**

**Between**

**Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), a Corporation (“PCUSA”)**

**100 Witherspoon Street, Louisville, KY 40202-1396**

**And**

**The Presbytery of Shenandoah (“Presbytery”)**

**1111 North Main St, Harrisonburg, VA 22802**

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WHEREAS the Presbytery is a presbytery of the PCUSA, and

WHEREAS the Presbytery desires to aid PCUSA’s Presbyterian Disaster Assistance Ministry (“PDA”) in responding to disasters by maintaining and supplying equipment and developing disaster response capabilities.

NOW, THEREFORE, in consideration of the mutual promises contained herein, and other good and valuable consideration, the receipt and sufficiency of which are hereby acknowledged, the parties agree as follows:

**Presbytery shall:**

1. Title, license, and insure all Equipment in the name of the Presbytery and provide proof of such actions to PCUSA within thirty (30) days of the signing of this MOU.
2. Presbytery will provide space for Equipment to be safely stored and ensure the Equipment is fully stocked, maintained, and ready to be deployed.
3. Presbytery will respond within thirty (30) days to a request from PDA regarding the availability of the Equipment and Presbytery’s agreement to deploy the Equipment.
4. Designate at least one person who will be the Equipment contact at the Presbytery. When a disaster occurs where PCUSA determines the Equipment is needed, as described above, PCUSA shall arrange, with the designated equipment contact, the request for sending of the Equipment to the disaster location. If available, such Equipment will be transported using paid or volunteer staff from the Presbytery to transport and assist with set-up/knock-down as requested by PCUSA. When deployed by PCUSA, PCUSA will reimburse the Presbytery for the cost of travel (including lodging, food, etc) for persons accompanying the Equipment) at a rate agreed to at the time of PCUSA deployment.
5. Have the right to remove the Equipment at any time with two (2) weeks notice if, in the sole opinion of the Presbytery, the Equipment is being misused, abused, or otherwise neglected or not adequately maintained.
6. Have the right to remove the Equipment at any time, with thirty (30) days notice, if in the sole opinion of the Presbytery, a greater need for the Equipment exists elsewhere.

**PCUSA shall:**

1. Provide support, coordination, guidance, information, and promotion related to the Presbytery; specifically when requesting use of the Equipment, provide information about the nature of the disaster, site location, name of managing organization, and expected duration of deployment.
2. Assess and monitor the progress of the arrangements and provide feedback and reporting to the Presbytery.
3. Supply the Presbytery with quarterly reports within three (3) weeks of the end of the calendar quarter listing the number of total user days. User days shall be the number of persons staying overnight in the hosting facility multiplied by the number of nights stayed per person. These reports will be submitted to the Presbytery regularly and failure to report promptly shall be cause for the Presbytery to remove the Equipment from any PCUSA site.
4. Provide for the complete operation, and maintenance of the Equipment that may include, but is not limited to site preparation, electric, water, sewer, and propane.
5. Train on-site managers regarding the operation, maintenance, and security of the Equipment.
6. Provide liability insurance coverage for operation of the Equipment while at a PCUSA site.
7. Reimburse the Presbytery for expenses incurred in the use of the Equipment while deployed (including while in transport to and from) in response to PDA assignment, including all insurance costs within the financial limits agreed to in writing between the parties when the vehicles are deployed.
8. Reimburse the Presbytery for expenses incurred to maintain the Equipment while it is deployed.
9. Bear the cost of pre-approved maintenance or stocking needs related to the Equipment to ensure it is returned to the Presbytery in the same condition as it was upon delivery to disaster site, excluding normal wear and tear.
10. Be ultimately responsible to reimburse the Presbytery for any costs resulting from loss, theft, or damage resulting from misuse, abuse, neglect or inadequate maintenance, including those that might not be covered by insurance. The Presbytery will be the ultimate arbiter of these costs.
11. Receive written approval from Presbytery to move Equipment to a different site than specified for a current deployment.

The Equipment subject to this MOU is listed on Exhibit A, attached hereto and by this reference incorporated herein.

The Presbytery grants all decisions regarding governance, disposition, and operation of applicable Equipment to Mountain Valley Mission Community, a division of Presbytery, and/or to the Disaster Preparedness and Response Team, a sub-committee of the Presbytery Leadership Team (see Exhibit A).

This MOU is in effect for a five (5) year period with annual review by the parties. Either party may terminate this agreement with sixty (60) days' prior, written notice to the other party.

Both PCUSA and Presbytery understand and agree that they are at all times, and shall remain, independent contractors in the performance of the duties under this agreement and shall not be considered an agent or employee of, partner of, joint venture with, or joint employer with the other party. Presbytery hereby acknowledges that it is an independent contractor and has no authority to represent, obligate, or bind PCUSA in any manner or to any extent. PCUSA hereby acknowledges that it is an independent contractor and has no authority to represent, obligate, or bind Presbytery in any manner or to any extent.



Shenandoah Presbytery

Disaster Preparedness and Response Plans

This agreement represents the entire understanding and agreement between the parties with respect to the subject matter hereof and supersedes all previous negotiations, representations, and writings between the parties relating hereto. No modification, alteration, waiver, or change in any of the terms of this agreement shall be valid or binding upon the parties hereto unless expressed in writing signed by both parties.

It is understood and agreed that this agreement shall be construed in accordance with laws of the Commonwealth of Kentucky.

**IN WITNESS WHEREOF**, the parties hereto have signed this agreement as of the dates below written. This MOU becomes effective upon the date of signing of the last party to sign.

Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), a  
Corporation

The Presbytery of Shenandoah

By: (Toni Carver-Smith)

By: (Roy A. Martin)

Date: 3/13/14

Date: 1/18/14

---

Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), Internal Signatures

Presbyterian Disaster Assistance

By: (Laurie A. Kraus)

Date: 2/28/14

**EXHIBIT A**  
**Of**  
**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING (MOU)**  
**Between**  
**Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), a Corporation (“PCUSA”)**  
**100 Witherspoon Street, Louisville, KY 40202-1396**  
**And**  
**The Presbytery of Shenandoah (“Presbytery”)**  
**1111 North Main St, Harrisonburg, VA 22802**

---

The following Equipment is subject to this MOU:

1. Shower Trailer titled and registered in the Commonwealth of Virginia by The Presbytery of Shenandoah as follows:

Title#: 53084051

VIN#: 53NBE2021D1008569

License#: 420408TL

Expiration: N/A (Permanent)

Characteristics: Twenty (20) feet long box trailer, tandem axles, five (5) showers

Managed by: Mountain Valley Mission Community, a division of Presbytery

2. Shower Trailer to be titled and registered in the Commonwealth of Virginia by The Presbytery of Shenandoah as follows:

Title #: TBD

VIN#: 58ABE2025EN025143

License#: TBD

Expiration: N/A (Permanent)

Characteristics: Twenty (20) feet long box trailer, tandem axles, four (4) showers,  
washer/dryer, two (2) inside sinks, two (2) outside sinks

Managed by: Disaster Preparedness and Response Team, a sub-committee of the Presbytery  
Leadership Team, with maintenance support by Covenant Presbyterian  
Church

**V. Sample Generic Memorandum of Understanding (MOU):**

**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING (MOU)  
Between**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**And**

**The Presbytery of Shenandoah (“Presbytery”)  
1111 North Main St, Harrisonburg, VA 22802**

WHEREAS the Presbytery is a presbytery of the Presbyterian Church (USA), and

WHEREAS the Presbytery desires to provide assistance to not-for-profit organizations with a focus on disaster response, particularly those organizations working in cooperation with Presbyterian Disaster Assistance or other partners affiliated with Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster, and

WHEREAS the Presbytery desires to aid (agency name) \_\_\_\_\_  
affiliated with (organization name) \_\_\_\_\_ in responding to disasters by  
maintaining and supplying equipment and developing disaster response capabilities.

NOW, THEREFORE, in consideration of the mutual promises contained herein, and other good and valuable consideration, the receipt and sufficiency of which are hereby acknowledged, the parties agree as follows:

**Presbytery shall:**

1. Designate at least one person who will be the Equipment contact at the Presbytery.
2. Transport such Equipment using paid or volunteer staff from the Presbytery as available to assist with set-up/knock-down as needed. At the time of the Equipment deployment request Presbytery will negotiate a reimbursement amount from the requesting agency for the cost of travel (including lodging, food, etc) for persons accompanying the Equipment for set-up, operation training, and knock-down.
3. Have the right to remove the Equipment at any time with one (1) day notice if, in the sole opinion of the Presbytery, the Equipment is being misused, abused, or otherwise neglected or not adequately maintained.
4. Have the right to remove the Equipment at any time, with five (5) days notice if, in the sole opinion of the Presbytery, a greater need for the Equipment exists elsewhere.

**Requesting Agency shall:**

1. Provide support, coordination, guidance, information, and promotion related to the Presbytery; specifically when requesting use of the Equipment, provide information about the nature of the disaster, site location, name of managing organization, and expected duration of deployment.
2. Assess and monitor the progress of the arrangements and provide feedback and reporting to the Presbytery.
3. Supply the Presbytery contact with monthly verbal or written reports summarizing the frequency of use of the Equipment and any issues regarding operation and maintenance.
4. Provide for the complete operation, and maintenance of the Equipment that may include, but is not limited to site preparation, electric, water, sewer, and propane.
5. Train on-site managers regarding the operation, maintenance, and security of the Equipment.
6. Provide liability insurance coverage for operation of the Equipment while at the Agency site.
7. Reimburse the Presbytery for expenses incurred in the use of the Equipment while deployed (including while in transport to and from) in response to Agency assignment, including all insurance costs within the financial limits agreed to in writing between the parties when the vehicles are deployed.
8. Reimburse the Presbytery for expenses incurred to maintain the Equipment while it is deployed.
9. Bear the cost of pre-approved maintenance or stocking needs related to the Equipment to ensure it is returned to the Presbytery in the same condition as it was upon delivery to disaster site, excluding normal wear and tear.
10. Be ultimately responsible to reimburse the Presbytery for any costs resulting from loss, theft, or Damage resulting from misuse, abuse, neglect or inadequate maintenance, including those that might not be covered by insurance. The Presbytery will be the ultimate arbiter of these costs.
11. Receive written approval from Presbytery to move Equipment to a different site than specified for a current deployment.

The Equipment subject to this MOU is listed on Exhibit A, attached hereto and by this reference incorporated herein.

The Presbytery grants all decisions regarding governance, disposition, and operation of applicable Equipment to Mountain Valley Mission Community, a division of Presbytery, and/or to the Disaster Preparedness and Response Team, a sub-committee of the Presbytery Leadership Team (see Exhibit A).

This MOU is in effect for a six (6) month period. Either party may terminate this agreement with five (5) days' prior, written notice to the other party.

Both the Agency and Presbytery understand and agree that they are at all times, and shall remain, independent contractors in the performance of the duties under this agreement and shall not be considered an agent or employee of, partner of, joint venture with, or joint employer with the other party. Presbytery hereby acknowledges that it is an independent contractor and has no authority to represent, obligate, or bind the Agency in any manner or to any extent. The Agency hereby acknowledges that it is an independent contractor and has no authority to represent, obligate, or bind Presbytery in any manner or to any extent

This agreement represents the entire understanding and agreement between the parties with respect to the subject matter hereof and supersedes all previous negotiations, representations, and writings between the parties relating hereto. No modification, alteration, waiver, or change in any of the terms of this agreement shall be valid or binding upon the parties hereto unless expressed in writing signed by both parties.

It is understood and agreed that this agreement shall be construed in accordance with laws of the Commonwealth of Virginia.

**IN WITNESS WHEREOF**, the parties hereto have signed this agreement as of the dates below written. This MOU becomes effective upon the date of signing of the last party to sign.

The Presbytery of Shenandoah  
By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Agency: \_\_\_\_\_  
By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_

---

Presbytery, Internal Signatures

Director, Disaster Preparedness and Response Team

Mountain Valley Mission Community  
Shower Trailer Team

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**EXHIBIT A Of  
MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING (MOU)**

**Between**

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**And**

**The Presbytery of Shenandoah (“Presbytery”)**

**1111 North Main St, Harrisonburg, VA 22802**

The following Equipment is subject to this MOU:

1. Shower Trailer titled and registered in the Commonwealth of Virginia by The Presbytery of Shenandoah as follows: Title#:

53084051

VIN#: 53NBE2021D1008569

License#: 420408TL

Expiration: N/A (Permanent)

Characteristics: Twenty (20) feet long box trailer, tandem axles, five (5) showers

Managed by: Mountain Valley Mission Community, a division of Presbytery

2. Shower Trailer to be titled and registered in the Commonwealth of Virginia by The Presbytery of Shenandoah as follows:

Title #: TBD

VIN#: 58ABE2025EN025143

License#: TBD

Expiration: N/A (Permanent)

Characteristics: Twenty (20) feet long box trailer, tandem axles, four (4) showers,  
washer/dryer, two (2) inside sinks, two (2) outside sinks

Managed by: Disaster Preparedness and Response Team, a sub-committee of the Presbytery Leadership Team, with maintenance support by Covenant Presbyterian Church

## How to Make Zoom Meetings More Accessible

Written by Rev. Rick Roderick, PDC Consultant for Visually Impaired

Covid-19 has impacted our lives in many ways, most of them negative. However, some benefits have come out of this time. Many meetings have moved from in-person to online platforms. In many ways, meetings and worship have become more accessible for many of us with disabilities, but these formats have presented their own challenges. Since I am most familiar with Zoom, and since the basic commands are usable with a screen reader, I will discuss it in my examples. Here are some things that churches and other governing bodies can do to make online meetings accessible to most users.



Image Description: Light blue background, with a cell phone in the center. All around the cell phone are different tech symbols including: voice search bar, text icon, CC icon, picture icon, etc.

1. For both meetings and worship, make sure sound is clear. Those with a hearing loss may find sound very frustrating when they can hear the person speaking, but they can't understand what people are saying. Each person should use the best sounding microphone he or she has, whether it be on the phone or the computer. Before a worship service, leaders should test each person's mic to make sure that sound is clear. Check sound levels, so that people don't have the frustration of constantly adjusting volume controls.
2. Make sure that the audio is going directly into the microphone picked up by the computer. Failure to do this will result in getting the ambience of the sanctuary or the room involved. If a hybrid service of in-person worship and Zoom is involved, make sure that the computer is plugged directly into the sound system.
3. In a meeting, unless voices are familiar, ask people to identify themselves before they speak.
4. If someone is blind, text shown in screen sharing will probably be inaccessible. Provide it in an alternate means, such as a Word document. PDF sometimes works, but it is usually not the best

format, especially if braille translation is involved. Text may be put on the screen that is not part of the bulletin. This is particularly true of Communion liturgy. It may or may not be necessary to provide the words to hymns. Some hymnals, such as Glory to God, are available electronically. Check if the person involved can use these formats

5. It is good if someone in the congregation is familiar with keyboard commands for Zoom. People who are blind usually don't use the mouse. For example, Alt+A turns muting on and off. Alt+Q moves one to the Leave Meeting control. Many committees use Google Docs to edit joint work. This program has a steep learning curve, and it may be necessary to put documents in another format for easy reading, such as Microsoft Word.
6. Respect people's privacy. During a long meeting or because of a time difference, a person may want to eat or drink during a meeting or class. They may want to turn off video during these times.
7. Keep meetings short, when possible. With an online format, keeping focus can be more difficult.
8. Zoom is in the process of incorporating closed captioning for people who are deaf or hard-of-hearing. This may be useful for members of your congregation.
9. Get help when necessary. Many presbyteries have resources to help congregations to maintain best practices when electronic communication is involved.

By doing these things, you may make the online experience as pleasant and fulfilling as possible.

## Technology and Belonging

Written by Rev. Adam Ogg, Burke Presbyterian Church

For a month or so in online worship, we had a mother and son worship with us who were typically unable to join us in person. From interactions I could gather, the son was non-verbal and had to communicate through a board. I believe he also had mobility and sensory needs, so going out in general required more time and effort. The mother hinted that the requirements to do so on a weekend in person might not necessarily be worth it for their family. In our Sunday worship over Zoom, part of our liturgy gathers prayer requests through the zoom chat. Every Sunday for a few weeks the mother would input “my son says:” and then would follow some particularly profound and beautiful prayer or affirmation.

This family was able to “be in the room” with us. Theologian John Swinton makes a helpful distinction between *inclusion* and *belonging*. Inclusion is the bare minimum of a functional community, and can even be legally mandated to a point (or at least exclusion can be mandated against). However, churches are sources of belonging because they intentionally make ways and means for people with disabilities to participate, create meaningful relationships, and are engaged seriously in their capacity (on their terms, development and ability) to be disciples who follow Christ, or are a part of the community that Jesus seeks to build in his Kingdom. Galatians 3:28 says “There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus”. Difference is essential to life and community in Christ.

Technology, and having support to operate this technology, can be a leveling of the field for people with disabilities, as well as a way for people with disabilities to be in the room in ways they might not have before. I say this fully aware that at the same time technology can be just as alienating depending on the ability of the disciple.

However, in Zoom time, we saw that this can starting point for communities to reorder themselves for the sake of inclusion, belonging, and discipleship. We saw that this could work by giving opportunities to type into a chat box as a way to communicate, as well as being seen from your home when being seen in person requires more. I do even wonder if inviting a person with disabilities to participate in front of a camera from their home with the necessary support off-screen could be possible.

We’ve seen that while a more narrow subset of our community takes part in our “coffee hour” in Zoom breakout rooms after worship, this legitimate way to connect with a smaller group of other members of the community. People with disabilities can and should be a part of this connection for the sake of belonging.

All of this assumes technological access like a functional computer, good wi-fi, and any necessary support. It would also mean that if a church is committed to belonging, it would rearrange its gathering to be accessible, pivoting as often as needed. Jesus did not call us to just be included. Jesus called us to belong to him and his community, and to be his disciples, following and serving God and neighbor. Technology is a way forward to do this, if we pay attention to who is not in the room, and who God calls us to include, create belonging with, and call to discipleship.

## In-Home Worship Aids: Accessible Gospel, Inclusive Worship

Written by Dr. Evelyn McMullen, PDC member

In April of 2020, the leaders of First Presbyterian Church’s adult Bible Study group faced the challenge of engaging digitally with our group. We wondered, “How will our friends, who have such a wide variety of abilities, adapt to learning and worship over Zoom?” Fortunately, our prayer practices already included worship icons, a set of eight images from Barbara Newman’s practical theology guide: Accessible Gospel, Inclusive Worship. These icons have strengthened our group’s weekly prayer life and are used by many in their homes. They are offered to you in this brief guide in hopes that they will strengthen the worship experience of those who will continue “in-home” worship, whether a parent with a sick child, a family whose teenage son has multiple disabilities, or an elderly church member who can no longer attend in person.

The Calvin Institute of Worship developed the framework of Vertical Habits on which Newman’s guide is based. We recognize them as movements of worship, many of which are highlighted weekly in printed bulletins: Praise, Confession, Lament, Illumination, Petition, Thanksgiving, Service, and Blessing. Worship icons representing these Vertical Habits were developed by artist Bruce Benedict. He has granted permission for their use through PDC’s website, with “(c) Cardiphonia Music” to be included with all uses.

Here are some suggestions of ways that these icons can help people engage visually. They can be adapted for use by other senses. A tactile representation of these icons could be made in relief in paper, wood, or clay.

Print out the Vertical Habits icons. They can be printed separately and laminated or printed on one page. Depending on the ability of your worship group, introduce one or more of the worship icons at a time.



**PRAISE:** “When are we praising God today?” Hold up this icon or point to it on the sheet when songs of praise are sung or Psalms read.



**PETITION or PLEASE HELP:** Before the service, ask individuals who they would like to pray for. If possible, print out a picture of a person or the situation. This is a good way to pray with the newspaper (or newsfeed). Save this picture and icon as a reminder to pray.



**LAMENT/WHY?** Another helpful prayer icon is LAMENT or WHY? Practice with Lament helps all of us cry out to God.



**CREED or I BELIEVE:** This icon can be used during worship to identify Affirmations of Faith or a Scripture passage. It's also a tangible way to follow Lament with a reminder of God's steadfast love. "I don't understand why this is happening. But I know that you are always with me."



**CONFESSION or I'M SORRY:** With clay (play-doh) or colored chalk on paper, create an image of something that you need to confess to God. Then demonstrate forgiveness by balling up the clay image and placing the lump beside a cross or rinsing the chalk picture under water. These physical worship practices are easier to do at home than in a sanctuary!



**SERVICE or HERE I AM, LORD:** How can we show God's love through our actions? What can we do for others?

Barbara Newman's book, [Accessible Gospel, Inclusive Worship](#) includes outlines of a Psalm Study, focusing on each of the Vertical Habits (pages 91-133). Any of these suggestions could enrich worship at home.

Some have found "couch worship" difficult. Some have said that watching a screen does not seem like worship. It may be hard to re-create a sense of awe on our own couches, but by adapting worship practices to a home setting, we may engage with God in new, meaningful ways. The rituals of worship have changed over two thousand years, but they are all sensory ways to engage with God's Word: choral music, congregational singing, scripture readings, scripture in stained glass and banners, sermons, prayer in many forms, and the sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper. We can create a worship center in our homes and practice new ways to engage with God's Word as we worship together.



Image description: Inside a circle is a person lifting up a heart. The person is smiling.

**Praise**



Image description: Inside a circle is a person looking up, has hands placed on cheeks, and a question mark on his shirt. The person is frowning in concern.

**Lament**



Image description: Inside a circle is a person is holding a heart to their chest with one hand, and the other hand is up and facing out. The person's mouth is open.

**Creed**



Image description: Inside a circle is a person is holding onto a half wall, looking up, with one hand in the air.

**Petition**



Image description: Inside a circle is a person holding a broken heart and looking down. The person is frowning.

**Confession**



Image description: Inside a circle is a person holding a heart with one hand and lifting the other as if to give someone a high five.

**Blessing**



Image description: Inside a circle is a person has a shovel in one hand and the other hand appears to be waving.  
A heart is on the person's chest. The person is smiling

**Dedication/Service**



Image description: Inside a circle is a person with prayer hands above their head, they are looking up, and a heart is on their chest.  
The person is smiling.

**Gratitude**



Image description: Inside a circle is a person with their eyes closed and head tilted upward.  
Hands are in a prayer position in front of them.

**Prayer**

## Phone Tree Guide (effective practices)

Written by Rev. Deb Trevino, PDC member

The phone tree has been used for many years by organizations, including the Presbyterian Church USA, to circulate short messages to its members. Many small to moderate-sized congregations continued using the phone tree as a tool to keep members engaged while quarantined during this year of Covid-19. It can be particularly valuable for faith and senior communities with members who may live with disabilities.

### Phone Tree Process Diagram

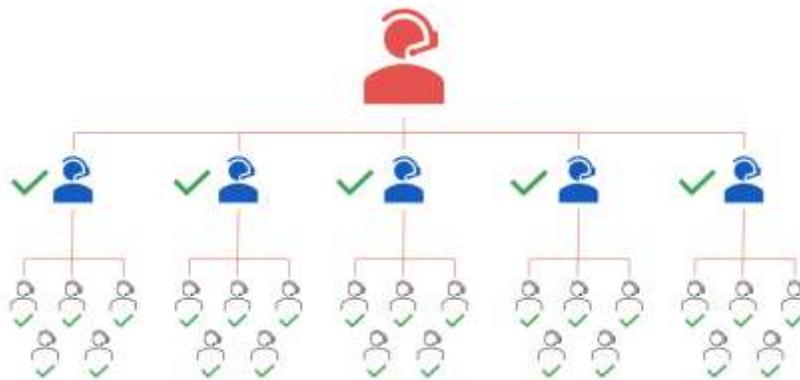


Image description: Top of picture reads “Phone Tree Process Diagram”. The top is one person, then below that person there are 5 people, and below each of those 5 people are 5 more people.

What makes the phone tree so attractive as an inclusive means of connecting members of the congregation? The call tree or phone tree invites connection through conversation. Not only is it an opportunity to share valuable information from the church/organization, but it is also a chance for a meaningful exchange of personal information. It is a way that we as a congregation care for each other as God's people. In senior communities, it can serve as a source of comfort when there is a regularly scheduled call minimizing loneliness and the sense of being forgotten.

Another benefit to the phone tree is that it can provide purpose for people with disabilities. Yes, people with disabilities can play an active role in reaching out to congregants by phone, text, email, and available social media outlets.

Unfortunately, while phone trees represented a step forward compared to other manual communication, they are susceptible to human error and long delays. This means they are rapidly becoming less popular. As with any manual process, there are always risks: errors of inputting information, phone numbers which have changed, and members who have become inactive.

Considering all of these risks and potential issues like those listed above, the phone tree remains a way for congregations to stay connected in a personal way.

## Personal Social Integration of People with Intellectual Disabilities & Its Impact on Personal Safety

Written by Milton Tyree, PDC Intellectual and Developmental Disability Consultant

Social distancing. Few could have imagined how these two words would be embedded in our everyday language and lives. We've become accustomed to physical distancing signs affixed to grocery store floors and announcements by robotic voices on city buses. And we've not liked this new reality. Not one bit! We are, after all, social beings. Needing to be with others. Needing to belong. Needing to be needed. So, while "social distancing" is an entirely new way of life for most of us, for many people with intellectual disabilities it's an extension of what they've come to know as ordinary.

Historically, many having intellectual disabilities have been congregated and segregated—kept apart and away from non-disabled people and valued functions of everyday life. Patterns of separation include where and with whom people with intellectual disabilities live, work, go to school and worship.

I think of this as the "old story" of what people with intellectual disabilities are believed to need — often originating from good intentions, but nonetheless harkening back to beliefs prevalent in the early 20th century. Isolation. Rejection. Congregation. Segregation. These are markers of the old story.

And the costs are significant. The Health Resources & Services Administration within the US Department of Health and Human Services reports that loneliness and social isolation can be as damaging to health as smoking 15 cigarettes a day. (<https://www.hrsa.gov/enews/past-issues/2019/january-17/loneliness-epidemic>)

In 2018, National Public Radio completed a yearlong investigation for its series, "Abused and Betrayed: People with Intellectual Disabilities and an Epidemic of Sexual Assault."

(<https://www.npr.org/series/575502633/abused-and-betrayed>) One grim finding is that people with intellectual disabilities are sexually assaulted at a rate seven times higher than those without disabilities.

So, where is safety to be found? What needs to be in place for people with intellectual disabilities to reduce their isolation and abuse? What's the role of our churches?

The "new story" that has been emerging over the last 50 years recognizes the peril of congregation and segregation and instead promotes the benefits of personal social integration and valued societal participation of people with intellectual disabilities. The new story has benefits for all, people with and without intellectual disabilities, including:

- **Relationships** - Being appreciated as an individual, known for one's commonality with others, engaging in mutually beneficial relationships, experiencing the give and take of reciprocity — this is the nature of relationships that increase the likelihood of personal safety. Such relationships between people with and without disabilities offer opportunities for interpersonal identification and friendships — setting the stage for people voluntarily wanting good things for others and looking out for their well-being. (e.g., being determined to know what caused the bruise on Mary's neck noticed during a conversation with her following Sunday worship) It's not about diminishing the significance of relationships and friendships between people who have disabilities, but rather acknowledging that these relationships will obviously be

prevalent for those who've been grouped together based on disability. It's meaningful relationships with non-disabled peers that are typically few and (even if unfairly true) offer the greatest degree of safety.

- **Involvement** - Being present is a prerequisite for relationships and involvement, but merely being present will be insufficient in and of itself. There's never a shortage of opportunities for involvement within the church: In addition to worship, there are books groups, Bible study groups, Sunday School topical gatherings, singles groups, breakfast, lunch, and dinner groups having varied areas of focus. Ministry team opportunities are vast including worship planning, building and grounds, hospitality, music, etc.
- **Contribution** - This topic is closely related to involvement but nonetheless requires particular emphasis. As people with intellectual disabilities develop relationships and become involved in the everyday life of the church, having opportunities for personal contribution is especially important. We're all hardwired to contribute. And from time to time, we all need assistance from others. But all too often people with intellectual disabilities have been captured on the receiving side of help and denied the innate joy of contributing to others. The same as with other congregational members, people with intellectual disabilities need to explore how their personal interests and talents intersect with the church's needs: joining the Habitat for Humanity team, serving as an usher, becoming a deacon or elder, etc. And just like everyone else, becoming involved in the work of the church builds stronger relationships, and the benefits that come from these relationships, including personal safety.

So, what needs to be in place for people with intellectual disabilities to be safe? How can our churches respond? Relationships, involvement, and contribution can replace isolation, rejection, congregation, and segregation. Personal social integration and valued societal participation within the everyday life of the church will serve as a hopeful model — providing a positive example, and perhaps opening the door for socially integrated homes, education, and employment. There is no safe alternative.

## How Do You Know?

Written by Elizabeth Reece

My youngest child Calvin is autistic and does not speak. For Calvin, autism's biggest challenge is probably this: he is often not able to get his body to move the way he wants it to move. It's called apraxia, a motor planning disorder that affects how/when/whether he moves -- his whole body or just one part, like his hands -- and is likely the reason he is unable to speak.



Calvin points to letters on a letter board to spell what he wants to say.

Here's an example:

Calvin sits on the couch, watching YouTube videos on a tablet. I suggest a hike at a nearby park. I hold a letterboard in front of him, and he points to the letter Y, then to the letter E, then to the letter S. I respond, "Ok, let's go," and step away to get my shoes.

He's still sitting on the couch when I return. I say, "I'm ready, stand up and get your shoes."

He doesn't move. I wait about 30 seconds, then repeat the command.

He still doesn't move. Since my words didn't work, I tug gently on his arms.

Suddenly, he stands up and walks briskly to grab his sneakers.

He heard me, he understood me, and he wanted to stand up and get his shoes. But he wasn't able to get his body to move until I pulled on his arms.

What's a letterboard?

It's a laminated piece of cardboard printed with the letters A through Z and some punctuation. Calvin points to the letters and symbols to spell words and form sentences. He answers questions, expresses his opinions, and tells us how he feels.

Back to my example:

Calvin and I drive to the hiking spot. I park in the lot, which happens to be near a pond. Because I know that his body loves water and sometimes can't resist the impulse to get in, I say firmly, "Don't get in the water." As we get out of the car, I repeat, "Don't get in the water." He stands next to me for a few

seconds, but then runs right into the pond. I call his name loudly, beckoning him to come out, and thankfully, he makes his way back to me, his shoes heavy with water. He hears, he understands, and he wants to control his body, but sometimes the impulse is too strong.

On the inside, Calvin is just like any other 11-year old boy. He knows that getting in the pond is taboo. He can read the NO SWIMMING sign. I don't need to say "Don't get in the water" to his brain, but his body, which sometimes seems like a separate being, needs the reminder.

Recently, I described Calvin's apraxia to a potential babysitter. She asked, "How do you know he understands? Does he give you a signal?" He does not give me a clear signal in the moment. If you were watching, you might think he is ignoring me, or you might think he doesn't understand. In reality, he is probably trying to *start moving* or trying to *stop moving*. Calvin has used the letterboard to explain how he struggles to control his body. He has apologized for the way his body acts. He has shown us his intelligence, his sense of humor, and his capacity for love. I trust that he hears, he understands, and he wants to respond.



Calvin poses after a hike in October 2020.