



Implementation Guide

2026

Northwest Baptist Convention

Disaster Relief

Preface

The disaster-ready church has committed to influence/impact/reach the community/communities God has called them to serve. Being a disaster-ready church is not a function of perceived size or resource but of commitment to serve Christ in the crisis. Any church entrusted with God's purpose of helping people recovering from disaster grow in their relationship with Christ can become a disaster-ready church.

Northwest Baptist Disaster Relief (NWBDR) is a ministry of and resource to Northwest Baptist Convention (NWBC) churches. NWBC is a group of churches in Oregon, Washington, and north Idaho (the Pacific Time Zone north of California) working cooperatively to advance the Great Commission in the spirit of the Great Commandment.

This implementation guide supports churches in preparing for disaster by developing an effective plan to minister to their communities during crisis. This plan involves preparing their facilities, training their members, securing resources, building community relationships, and developing protocols that will activate their disaster response plan. The unprepared church will always miss valuable opportunities to minister and communicate the Gospel.

We want to be living proof of a loving God to a watching world. – Timothy Moore

Pause

Pray and seek God's wisdom on how to engage in this ministry, that He would be glorified, that the church family would be moved to minister to the community, and that the community would come to know Jesus Christ.

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INTRODUCTION

WHAT IS **DISASTER READY CHURCH**?

Many local churches and organizations fail to plan and prepare, tending to be more reactive rather than proactive in any type of crisis or disaster. As a result, they often find themselves wondering what to do, how to do it, and who to call for assistance. Often these churches have the resources and volunteers capable of the work; however, failing to prepare appropriately leaves these churches unable to respond effectively when disaster strikes (Matthew 25:1-13).

Northwest Baptist Disaster Relief offers a strategic plan. **DISASTER READY CHURCH** is a plan of action and a tool to aid churches to *prepare, connect* and *respond* in times of crisis or disaster. This strategic plan will give churches ideas, tools, and guidelines to respond effectively and in a timely manner, bringing help, hope, and healing to their communities.

The goal of **DISASTER READY CHURCH is three-fold:**

- To assist churches to **PREPARE** for disasters by developing a preparedness plan.
- To assist churches to **CONNECT** with their local community before a disaster or crisis.
- To assist churches to **RESPOND** in their local community when disaster or crisis happens.

WHAT IS A DISASTER?

A disaster is an occurrence that causes human suffering or creates human needs that disaster survivors cannot alleviate without assistance.

DISASTER READY CHURCH will help with your church plan for:

- How to respond to crises or disasters, large or small.
- How to involve your church family with ministry training and roles.
- How to minister and evangelize during a crisis or disaster.
- How to be the light of Christ beyond the crisis or disaster.

In Titus 3:1 & 14 Paul challenges Titus and the church *to be ready for every good work*.



WHY DISASTER READY CHURCH?

Communities across the Northwest have the potential to experience floods, ice storms, earthquakes, terrorist attacks, windstorms, power outages, fires, explosions, industrial accidents, vehicle crashes, train derailments, civil unrest, public shootings, and more.

When communities experience such tragic events our emotions and compassion kick in, and we tend to react rather than respond. The goal of **DISASTER READY CHURCH (DRC)** is to prepare your church to respond promptly and appropriately to make a lasting difference in the communities God has called you to serve.

During times of tragedy and loss, people will need compassionate people to love them, care for them, and help them physically, emotionally, and spiritually deal with their loss. The Bible encourages us to minister and care for the widow, orphans, strangers, broken, wounded, and the *very least of these* (Matthew 25:31-46). This is the perfect time for the church to demonstrate God's love and care for all people.

We live in a dark and fallen world that needs to see and hear the light of the Gospel. Compassion ministry creates opportunities to share hope and the Gospel through Jesus Christ. Local churches that compassionately respond and care for those who are hurting during disasters and crises see doors open that have often been closed to the Gospel.

DISASTER READY CHURCH enables the local church to build community relationships and prepare for times of disaster. DRC will help you identify real needs and not perceived or manufactured needs. The Bible does not speak of **IF** disaster or crisis will come to a community, but **WHEN**. Churches need to be ready to respond promptly and effectively.

Connections Note: The connections you build, and the contacts you make (**pgs. 12 & 13**) during preparation will greatly aid your *Prepare* process, your decision making, and your ministry response. Disaster relief ministry is highly relational; as you move through your community, government structures, and marketplace, remember that you carry the Gospel in all you do and say (II Corinthians 5:18-20).



How Do We Do **DISASTER READY CHURCH**?

DISASTER READY CHURCH will guide you through assembling your team, identifying community leaders, understanding needs and opportunities, knowing your resources, and accompanying you through the implementation of your plan.

DISASTER READY CHURCH will help you:

- DEVELOP YOUR ROLES
- DETERMINE YOUR RESOURCES
- DEFINE YOUR RESPONSE

The National Incident Management System (NIMS) defines preparedness as a “continuous cycle of planning, organizing, training, equipping, exercising, evaluating, and taking corrective action to ensure effective coordination during incident response.”

In other words, **DISASTER READY CHURCH** is not designed to be an exercise for information, but rather a preparation for continual action. The chart below illustrates the Continual Preparedness Cycle.



SIX STEPS TO PREPARE

STEP ONE: FORM A DRC PLANNING TEAM

- ✚ Identify DRC Planning Team Roles
- ✚ Recruit team members based upon the *WHY*
- ✚ Engage/connect with the whole community (*Connect*, pgs. 12, 13 & 23)

STEP TWO: UNDERSTAND THE SITUATION

- Identify Needs and Opportunities
- Identify Threats and Hazards
- Assess Risks

STEP THREE: DETERMINE THE GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

- Identify Ministry Focus
- Determine Operation Priorities
- Set Goals and Objectives

STEP FOUR: PLAN DEVELOPMENT

- Develop and Analyze Course of Action
- Identify Resources
- Identify Information and Communication Needs

STEP FIVE: THE PLAN – PREPARE, REVIEW, AND APPROVE

- Write the Plan
- Review the Plan
- Approve and Disseminate the Plan

STEP SIX: PLAN IMPLEMENTATION AND MAINTENANCE

- Training Based on the Plan
- Exercise the Plan
- Review, Revise, and Maintain the Plan



STEP ONE: FORM A DRC PLANNING TEAM

SELECT 3 TO 6 PEOPLE, EACH WITH 1 OR 2 OF THE FOLLOWING ASSIGNMENTS:



*Able to see what needs to be done, and the ministry's nature, scope, and scale.
Serves as the team chairperson.*



Able to see how-to-do what needs to be done.



Able to see how to support the people doing (ministry) what needs to be done.



Able to see how to provide administrative support.



Able to see how to identify, recruit, and schedule people to do what needs to be done.



Able to see how to plan and focus on emotional and spiritual care during a response. _____

Engage and know your community (**Connect, pgs. 12, 13 & 23**) so you will know who to call and be able to involve more people in the process of responding to the needs in the community when disaster strikes. *Two are better than one – a threefold cord is not quickly broken (Ecclesiastes 4:9-12).*



STEP TWO: UNDERSTAND THE SITUATION

IDENTIFY OPPORTUNITIES:

Identify opportunities amid difficulty: (*Ephesians 2:10*)

E.g., feeding responders and victims; sheltering; communications hub (p.17)

Consider skilled volunteers, facilities, equipment, finances, resources, etc.

Begin developing relationships with community leaders (**Connect**, pgs. 12, 13 & 23).

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

IDENTIFY THREATS AND HAZARDS:

Disasters bring their own threats and hazards. **Keeping your team, church, and community safe is a priority.** Identify known and potential threats and hazards to the response and make them known. Consider weather conditions, road conditions, utility hazards, abilities of volunteers, improper equipment, lack of knowledge/training, etc.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

ASSESS THE RISKS (Disaster response brings its own risks):

- Do not exceed your training/ability.
- Is the outcome worth the risk investment?
- Are there safety issues to consider and/or address?
- Are there continued or potential threats in the community (**Connect**)?



STEP THREE: DETERMINE GOALS / OBJECTIVES

DETERMINE OPERATION PRIORITIES:

What are we able to do? These operational priorities define what the **DISASTER READY CHURCH** is to accomplish to achieve the ministry goal. Involve the pastor in helping establish the priorities and direction that will align with the church's overall vision.

- Envision a mock disaster and think it through. This scenario should be as realistic as possible. Consider multiple scenarios in the planning process.
- Imagine the incident's development from prevention to protection efforts.
- Consider initial warnings and concerns about the impact on the church and community.
- Think through possible consequences, damage, and destruction due to the incident.
- Determine the church's operational priorities and what it can do to help those affected by the crisis.
- Be careful; do not try to *do all things for all people*. That is the value of partnering with other organizations in a disaster/crisis response. Each one does what they do well, and it works well. (Connect)

SET GOALS AND OBJECTIVES:

Goals and objectives need to be carefully considered so that they not only meet the needs of the affected community but also fulfill the mission and vision of the church. Churches do not need something else to do but do need a plan and purpose of why they are doing it.

- Consider the church's mission and vision plan.
- Consider the church's resources and abilities.
- Consider the church's scriptural mandate, the Great Commission in light of the Great Commandment.
- Consider the church's responsibility of equipping the saints for the work of ministry (Ephesians 4:12).

This will be an ever-evolving area of the process and contingent upon the specific crisis.

STEP FOUR: PLAN DEVELOPMENT

DEVELOP AND ANALYZE COURSE OF ACTION:

This step is a process of generating, comparing, and selecting workable solutions and ministry plans for achieving the goals and objectives identified in Step 3. As you think through a possible scenario there are several things to determine:

- How quickly can we respond?
- Who do we contact/call?
- Identify and outline decision points (e.g., when to activate the plan; engage the DRC team; begin ministry; conclude ministry, etc.).
- Identify and outline operational tasks (e.g., the steps needed to begin feeding).
- Determine course of action.

IDENTIFY RESOURCES:

Once the course of action is determined, specific resources will be needed.

- **Finances.** What financial help is available through your church, local association, NWBC, or other community and non-profit partners?
- **Equipment.** What equipment is needed and/or available?
- **Personnel.** Are there skilled volunteers available and what skills are needed? What effective roles will unskilled volunteers fill? Match a specific need(s) to a specific volunteer(s).
- **Supplies.** What donated supplies are available and how can they be distributed? Be specific (need-based) with requests for supplies.
- **Caution.** There is a **help that hurts**. Well-meaning people want to help but can offer things that are not helpful.
 - Used clothing/shoes/stuffed animals are not needed in every response.
 - Bottled water (often available via other partners like American Red Cross in large quantities).

IDENTIFY INFORMATION AND AWARENESS NEEDS:

- Identify progress made toward goals and objectives, and awareness of new needs.
- Identify “single point failures” (tasks not completed, causing operational failure) and adjust as needed.
- Check for omissions or gaps in the plan. Consider unmet needs.
- Check for inconsistencies in organizational relationships (be actively aware of ministry team connections and relationships, especially involving communications with other organizations).
- Stay focused on the ministry goal and adjust as needed. Remember to be fluid.



STEP FIVE: THE PLAN - PREPARE, REVIEW & APPROVE

This step turns the results of the course-of-action stage into an Emergency Operational Plan (EOP). Start with a rough draft and adjust as needed. Too much detail can bottleneck the process; too little detail can confuse direction.

WRITE THE PLAN:

Step-4 gives the overall rough draft of the basic plan. This step streamlines the plan. The rough draft is shared with the church staff and key leaders for their input, suggestions, and buy-in.

Keep these simple rules in mind when writing the plan:

- Keep the language simple and clear.
- Avoid using jargon and minimize the use of acronyms.
- Provide enough information to communicate an actionable plan, but not so much detail as to not allow for being flexible and fluid.
- Format the plan into a document that is easily read, and contents can be found quickly and effectively.
- Have the plan readily accessible for any emergency.

REVIEW THE PLAN:

The team should periodically review the plan as things will often change.

Consider:

- Adequacy
- Feasibility
- Acceptability
- Completeness
- Compliance
- Resources

Keep in mind; some needed resources may not present themselves until the crisis comes.

APPROVE AND PUBLICIZE THE PLAN:

Present the plan to the applicable church leaders and gain appropriate church approval. Also, establish the authority (position, role, and accountability) required for changes and modifications to the plan during a disaster response.



STEP SIX: PLAN IMPLEMENTATION & MAINTENANCE



TRAINING:

What good is a plan if it is not communicated, trained, and supported?

Sharing and training should take place for all personnel involved so they have the knowledge, skills, and abilities to work toward the same goal.

Church staff and key leaders are critical individuals needing to stay well-informed about the plan. In a crisis, people will often look to them for direction, guidance, and comfort.



EXERCISE THE PLAN:

After communicating the plan to church leaders, talk through a practical potential scenario for your church/community (tabletop exercise). Walk them through the plan to gain valuable participant feedback to identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and possible threats to effectiveness.

The DRC Planning Team should reconvene to discuss any problems and consider remedies for any issues. Communicate those changes to church leaders.

Just as schools and some businesses have fire/storm drills, the same can happen in a church setting. Determine how and when this can happen.



REVIEW, REVISE AND MAINTAIN THE PLAN:

A continual reevaluation, review, and revision of the plan will help maintain the effectiveness of the plan. Planning is a continuous process that is not completed when the plan is published. Plans evolve as lessons are learned, new information and insights are obtained, and priorities are updated.

Changes in church facilities and organization can dictate a change or revision to the plan. The Planning Team should review the plan at least every 6 months. A review and update should also occur after any incident, response, changes in resources or operational standards, various risks, insurance requirements, or local ordinances.



CONNECT

To maximize your effectiveness in your community, preparation is a must and your connections in the community are critical. Those connections need to be made long before any disaster or tragedy happens in your community. Building healthy, strong relationships makes for a much smoother, more effective response. Connect with your community leaders and be ready to work well together. Be an active part of any Community Organization Active in Disaster (COAD – your local emergency manager can connect you). See Appendix 2 (pg. 23) for script suggestions.

Local Emergency Manager (city/county):	
Phone #:	Email:

Police Chief and/or Sheriff:	
Phone #:	Email:

Fire Chief:	
Phone #:	Email:

Mayor / Judge:	
Phone #:	Email:

School Superintendent:	
Phone #:	Email:

Local Red Cross Contact:	
Phone #:	Email:

Local Salvation Army Contact:	
Phone #:	Email:

Associational Missionary/ DOM/Strategist:	
Phone #:	Email:

NWBDR Regional Coordinator:	
Phone #:	Email:

Local Food Bank:	
Phone #:	Email:

Local Health Department:	
Phone #:	Email:

Other:	
Phone #:	Email:

Other:	
Phone #:	Email:

SOME THINGS TO CONSIDER

“A disaster is an occurrence that causes human suffering or creates human needs that the victims cannot alleviate without assistance.”

Once a crisis or disaster strikes, it is time to respond. Your planning, preparation, and hard work are now ready to be put into action. Remember to always be considerate and fluid.

Disasters are always about loss: food, water, home, income, material possessions, photos, keepsakes, loved ones, and more. Caring for immediate needs comes first because there is more to come in the message of God’s love and care for hurting, broken humanity.

Keep in mind there are various kinds of survivors:

- **Direct Survivors** – People directly impacted by disaster.
- **Indirect Survivors** – Friends and family related to the disaster.
- **Hidden Survivors** – Those who are assisting victims (1st responders, ministry teams, response partners, etc.).

Keep in mind that people will react differently:

- **Physical Response** – shock, numbness, disorientation, fight-or-flight, heightened sensory perception, etc.
- **Emotional Response** – shock, denial, disbelief, anger, fear, frustration, confusion, guilt, grief, overwhelmed.



ACTIVATE your team and volunteers.

Remember the type, scope, and severity of the crisis or disaster will determine who you call. Always know **who** to call on your contact list to gather information, identify the needs, and initiate your plan. ***It is imperative to establish relationships long before any disaster or crisis occurs.***

Community partnerships are important to have in place so you will know the scope of local services available and how your ministry can be most effective.



CHURCH'S RESPONSE TO CRISIS AND DISASTER

We live in a world where it seems that crises and disasters are happening more often. These events happen in our communities and our homes. The severity of the crisis or disaster will determine the need for and level of emotional and spiritual care.

Research has consistently shown that the more personal exposure a survivor has to the disaster's impact, the greater his or her post-disaster reactions. Always be attentive and sensitive to this. You do not want to create a disaster within a disaster.

Some of these reactions will be temporary and short-lived. That is part of the process. Others may get caught in an emotional crisis which makes it difficult if not impossible to move forward. Know your limitations and know when it is time to refer to a qualified person.

What can a church do to assist those who have experienced a crisis or disaster?

- ✚ **Observe their behavior.** Are there indicators of Post-Traumatic Stress or other issues requiring help?
- ✚ **Be there.** Sometimes your silent presence is all that is needed.
- ✚ **Empathize with them in their pain and suffering.** You cannot make it go away, but you can share with them in their pain. Everyone needs support. Let them know they are having a natural reaction to an unnatural event.
- ✚ **Listen, listen, listen.** Even if we have good advice, great wisdom, or know what they need, sometimes all they need is for someone to just be there.
- ✚ **Help them with what you can actually perform.** You cannot be all things to them; offer only what you can do to meet their needs.
- ✚ **Cry with them or laugh with them.** Emotions can be all over the place and that is okay.
- ✚ **Allow them to grieve.** Grief is not an event, but a process and takes time. Allow that time to happen.
- ✚ **Appropriate hugs and physical touch.** Sometimes a shoulder to cry on or a hug is what is needed, which can bring healing and comfort. Ask permission.
- ✚ **Pray with them.** Ask if you can pray, but keep the prayer personal, focused and brief.
- ✚ **Crisis is not the time for a theology lesson.** They will want to know why and want answers. Sometimes there just are no answers. But they need to know you care.

God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble. Therefore, we will not fear, though the earth gives way, and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea. (Psalm 46:1-2)



EVANGELISM DURING CRISIS OR DISASTER

But this I call to mind, and therefore I have hope: The steadfast love of the LORD never ceases; his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness. (Lam. 3:21-23)

During a crisis or disaster, many people are often searching for answers as to why this would happen to them. Those questions may come in different forms, but they are there, nonetheless. Some may even be angry and blame God. A person of faith will look at disaster much differently than someone without faith in God.

Either way, the questions are still there, and this opens the door for evangelism. Studies show that people are more open to life-changing truth during times of disaster, crisis, life-changes, or extreme stress than at any other time.

Often the question is “If God is a God of mercy and love, and if He is faithful, how could He let this happen?” That can open the door for them to hear the truth of the Gospel.

Below are some considerations when sharing the Gospel during times of crisis:

- ✚ **LISTEN** to their story. They need to tell their story. Remember, this is not your story.
- ✚ **LOVE** them by listening to them and demonstrating genuine concern.
- ✚ **ASK** if there are any immediate needs they may have.
- ✚ Be **CAUTIOUS** in making any promises.
- ✚ **REALIZE** that people react to disasters in many ways. Do not correct or scold them for how they react or feel. What they feel IS what they are feeling.
- ✚ **AVOID** using manipulative words or actions. Choose your words carefully and be sensitive to the leadership of the Holy Spirit.
- ✚ Be **PREPARED** to share your faith story. Ask if you can share your spiritual history. Your personal faith story is the most powerful testimony you have. But keep it brief.
- ✚ **SHARE** with them how Christ came to provide salvation for them if they will repent of their sin, believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and confess Him as Savior and Lord.
- ✚ Be **CAREFUL** not to use this time of crisis to manipulate someone into a decision. If they say No, then stop. Trust that the Holy Spirit is continuing to work in their lives.
- ✚ **ALLOW** time for questions, and conversations, and to help make a connection to a local church or pastor.
- ✚ **PRAY** with them. Always ask permission (*May I pray with you?*). They may be surprised that someone would pray for them. Use their name in your prayer; many people have never heard their name used in prayer.

It is not a lack of training that keeps us from sharing the gospel, it is a lack of compassion. Evangelism doesn't require more of your time, it requires intentionality. – Mike Thibodeaux



WHAT CAN MY CHURCH DO?

A **DISASTER READY CHURCH** can assist with mitigation, preparation, warning, rescue, and evacuation. It can also provide facilities, volunteers, and supplies to assist with emergency feeding, shelter, childcare, or other functions. Church facilities can be an information center for disaster survivors and provide pastoral counseling or crisis intervention.

Other ministry opportunities for churches:

- Minister to Event Based Volunteers (EBV) with orientation, just-in-time training, work assignments, supervision, emotional-spiritual care, etc.
- Identify volunteers (in the church or the community) who can advise on insurance, repair contracts, and applications for loans or grants.
- Locate qualified people to care for children, the elderly, and sick or disabled people who need special facilities, diets, transportation, and/or recreation.
- Identify members who can provide temporary housing for disaster survivors.
- Identify multi-lingual interpreters to assist when needed.
- Provide companionship to displaced people who are unfamiliar with their new surroundings, community services, and stores.
- Participate in ministries such as receiving, sorting, and distributing clothing, bedding, bulk food, clean-up, and household supplies.
- Assistance with food, housing, communication, and the other needs of out-of-town volunteers who come to help with the disaster response.
- Cooperate with other organizations and agencies during disasters.
- Have a voice in the rebuilding/relocation process and make sure disaster survivors are treated the same regarding physical, social, and spiritual recovery. Participate in the Long-Term Recovery Group
- Begin a transportation bank by developing a database of cars, vans, pickups, dump trucks, boats, planes, ATVs, etc. which might be available during a disaster.
- Organize clean-up, salvage, security, or repair crews, as well as help disaster survivors clean their homes and furniture, install temporary roofing or board up windows and doors or remove household contents for safe storage.



NWBDR



WHAT IS NORTHWEST BAPTIST DISASTER RELIEF?

When disaster strikes, trained Southern Baptist Disaster Relief volunteers stand at the ready to respond often on a moment's notice to aid in the relief and recovery of those suffering due to disaster. Disasters open the door for us to be the hands and feet of Jesus to those who are hurting and suffering.

Northwest Baptist Disaster Relief began in 1995 and is part of the greater Southern Baptist Disaster Relief (SBDR) cooperative ministry network. SBDR is a Christ-centered partnership of national, state, and associational ministries serving through the local church to bring help, hope, and healing to individuals and communities affected by disaster. Northwest Baptist Disaster Relief is supported by the generous gifts of Northwest Baptists through the Cooperative Program, the Northwest Impact Missions Offering, and direct giving to Northwest Baptist Disaster Relief Ministry.

In times of crisis and disaster, people need our prayers, our encouragement, and our help. Jesus knew the hearts of all men and did not deny meeting physical needs because of their hearts. NWBDR models the *meet-the-need-first* ministry of Jesus Christ. We say meet the need first because there is more to come in the message of God's love and care for hurting, broken humanity. Jesus would meet the physical needs of those He met, opening the door to their spiritual need. As NWBDR volunteers respond, they bring help for physical needs, bring hope through Christ Jesus, and they witness the beginning of physical, emotional, and spiritual healing.

NWBDR-trained volunteers are ready to respond in a variety of ministry areas:

- | | | |
|---------------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| ✚ Feeding | ✚ Flood Recovery | ✚ Chaplaincy |
| ✚ Chainsaw Recovery | ✚ Wildfire Recovery | ✚ Shower / Laundry |

NWBDR ministry has resources that can mobilize when and where needed in support of disaster-ready churches.

- Field Kitchens
- Mobile Shower/Laundry
- Flood/Wildfire Recovery
- And additional resources nationally



WHY GET TRAINING IN DISASTER RELIEF MINISTRY?

Being prepared with quality training in any area of ministry enables us to be more effective as God calls us to serve Him. Many times, God gives us natural talents, skills, and abilities, but other times He provides opportunities for training so we will grow and improve in our effectiveness. Paul reminds us, *we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them. (Ephesians 2:10)*

TEN REASONS TO BE TRAINED IN DISASTER RELIEF

1. Training prepares us for our understanding of disasters and the needs of people that arise in times of disaster.
2. Training enables us to respond in appropriate and effective ways during times of disaster.
3. Training prepares us to understand our role as part of a disaster team. Emergency managers often list untrained volunteers as one of their greatest challenges in times of disaster.
4. Training enables us to sharpen our abilities to be most effective as we serve to be an asset and not a hindrance in the response. Spontaneous volunteers typically lack familiarity with situation assessments and incident management processes.
5. Training helps us to understand hazards and safety concerns in disaster areas. Untrained volunteers are much more likely to be injured in disaster response as they are unaware of risk factors.
6. Training prepares us to understand more deeply some of the trauma experienced by disaster victims, enabling us to offer appropriate compassion.
7. Training prepares the hands to be ready to serve effectively. Becoming trained enables you to respond in times of disaster with needed skills and safety.

8. Training prepares the head by giving the knowledge to increase effectiveness. Untrained volunteers are often unprepared to work long, stressful days in harsh and rugged living conditions.
9. Training and relating to a known disaster response organization enables better security in disaster areas. Untrained volunteers create atmospheres where those who seek to prey on hurting and vulnerable people can get access to disaster settings under the guise of being a volunteer.
10. Training proves that we desire to give God our absolute best in all that we do and to achieve the best requires discipline, effort, and knowledge. Training is an opportunity to grow as believers so that when God calls, we are ready to serve.

It is not a question of ***if*** there will be a disaster or crisis, but ***when***. And to think *it will never happen here* is denying reality and burying your head in the sand. Do not bury this opportunity to demonstrate and communicate God's love to a hurting world (Matthew 25:25). Your church, your community, and above all your God deserve your absolute commitment. Effective training makes us effective servants.

You can learn more about how to become connected, involved, and trained by visiting the Northwest Baptist Convention Disaster Relief website at: www.northwestdr.com.



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JUST A FEW FINAL THOUGHTS

➤ Do

- Pray. Enlist a prayer team; senior adult groups are great for this.
- Determine what your church can do well and strive for effectiveness.
- Look for unmet needs in your community.
- Respect and follow community and government directives.
- Build relationships with your local Red Cross, Salvation Army, and Emergency Management.

➤ Do NOT

- Do not try to be all things to all people. It is impossible.
- Do not offer what you want, offer what they need.
- Do not promise things you cannot deliver.
- Do not forget to work with community partners.

IS YOUR CHURCH PREPARED?

- Does your church have a disaster plan?
- Does your church have a shelter-in-place plan?
- Does your church have a fire plan?
- Does your church have an earthquake plan?
- Does your church have a plan if your meeting space becomes temporarily unusable?
- Does your church have a plan to conduct business (do ministry) when electronic/digital access to financial institutions is not available?
- Does your church know who to call when disaster strikes?



Disaster Ready Church Decisions

DRC Resolves To

- A. Agree with God that He cares for all people in crisis; that He loves all people regardless of circumstance (Romans 8:31-39).
- B. Agree with each other that the Christ who lives within us loves those in crisis around us and compels us (II Corinthians 5:14-15) to fulfill the Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20) in the spirit of the Great Commandment (Matthew 22:36-40).
- C. Realize that the greatest opportunity for the church to influence its community is during times of crisis or disaster (Genesis 41:1-57).
- D. Pray.

DRC Prepares – Selects ministry team (3-6) to lead the church in creating its disaster response ministry plan

- Facility
- People
- Ministries
- Continuous Operations site
- Immediate ability to be involved
- Housing response teams/staging teams
- Ministry Site
- Define your local *Jerusalem* to serve (the neighborhoods God has called you to serve)
- Identify ministry areas to develop based upon your community needs (see DRC Connects)
- Train church members based upon the *why* and ministry plan

DRC Connects

- Local Emergency Manager
- Your community
- Know your People Groups (Map your neighborhood)
- Intentional in Serving throughout the Year
- Organizing activities
- Local association and NWBC

DRC Responds

- When disaster strikes, work your plan
- Support your community
- Engage in Recovery activities
- Attach to SBDR Teams
- Engage community partners
- Evaluate the plan & response



Sample Interview Community Leaders

Phone Call:

Hello, my name is _____. I am a member of _____ Baptist Church and on our disaster preparedness task group. We are looking for ways to be of service to our community and are interested in any insights or recommendations you might have. Would you have some time to meet with us and give us some of your observations?

Leader Name: _____ Role/Position _____

Organization/Government Entity: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Date of Meeting: _____ Time: _____

Meeting Location: _____

At the meeting:

- Introduce yourselves. It is helpful to have calling cards (or a card) with your names and phone numbers (not just the church's number).
- *Say, Thank you for your time. Our church wants to learn more about our community so we can better serve our neighbors.*
- Ask questions that will give you workable data. Consider the following questions. **Take careful notes.** Obtain quotes where possible. Remember, you are there to listen and learn.
 1. What does your agency/organization do in crisis/disaster response?
 2. What is your role in your agency/organization's response plan?
 3. What do you consider to be the major risks and/or threats to our community?
 4. In a disaster response what hindrances do you encounter in carrying out your services?
 5. What are 2 or 3 ways a faith-based organization could be a partner in your response plan?
 6. We are contacting several organizations in our community to discover one or two ways we can be a good partner. May we contact you if we have follow-up questions?
 7. May we pray for you and your work before we leave?
- *Thank you for your service to our community and your time with us today.*



INCIDENT MANAGEMENT (ICS TEMPLATE)

RESPONSE LEADER (INCIDENT MANAGER):

This role serves as the point person and oversees the planning, coordination, and oversight of the response. Think “Chairperson.” Most of their work will take place in preparing for a crisis or disaster. The DRC team will work together to organize, plan, and prepare for a response, but during a response, each role takes care of its own “lane.”

OPERATIONS COORDINATOR:

This role serves to coordinate the volunteers and the work projects. Asks the question *What work is needed and what volunteers can I assign to the project?* Recruits and works closely with the Assessment Lead and keeps Response Leader informed.

ASSESSMENT LEAD:

During a response, serves in the community as boots-on-the-ground identifying and assessing needs and the church’s potential response.

LOGISTICS COORDINATOR:

This role serves to support the operation of the ministry. They oversee any facilities, supplies, equipment, repairs, and the support of ministry team members.

ADMINISTRATIVE MANAGER:

This role provides administrative assistance to the team and operation. Keeps track of expenditures and receipts, data entry and tracking, and basic secretarial duties. Would also manage incoming communications and forward them as needed.

PLANNING COORDINATOR:

This role provides strategic management of resources and personnel needed to accomplish the ministry objectives; anticipates ministry needs based on the ministry objectives. Enlists personnel and works closely with the Donations Coordinator.

CHAPLAIN COORDINATOR:

Serves to keep the focus on the mission involving both physical and spiritual aspects. Asks the question, *how can we demonstrate and communicate the Gospel through this response to our community?* They will also oversee the spiritual care and encouragement of all volunteers.

Keep in mind that all positions could potentially use 3-5 additional volunteers to assist them.

DRC Ministry Model Core Values

Christ-centered

The Disaster Ready Church is comprised of individuals who are believers in Jesus Christ. These believers are under the imperative to minister to people and demonstrate God's love as they share the message of help, hope, and healing in Jesus Christ.

(This is how we have come to know love: He laid down His life for us. We should also lay down our lives for our brothers. If anyone has this world's goods and sees his brother in need but closes his eyes to his need—how can God's love reside in him? 1 John 3:16-17 HCSB)

Partnership Oriented

The Disaster Ready Church seeks to be a valuable partner, building strong biblical relationships that empower leaders, volunteers, and partners to serve communities affected by disaster with passion, integrity, professionalism, and credibility.

(Always praying with joy for all of you in my every prayer, because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now. I am sure of this, that He who started a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus. Philippians 1:4-6 HCSB)

Fluid in Practice

The Disaster Ready Church's hallmark is a commitment to serving Christ in the crisis, anyway, anytime, anywhere. Whatever it takes, we are His hands and feet.

(. . . we endure everything so that we will not hinder the gospel of Christ. . . . To the weak I became weak, in order to win the weak. I have become all things to all people, so that I may by every possible means save some. 1 Corinthians 9:12c, 22 HCSB)

Effective in Action

The Disaster Ready Church empowers leaders, volunteers, and partners through training, mentoring, accountability, and structure. In this way, DRC enables them to use their skills, talents, abilities, and resources to be effective followers of Christ ministering to others affected by disaster. *(Based on the gift each one has received, use it to serve others, as good managers of the varied grace of God. 1 Peter 4:10 HCSB)*

Local Church Focused

The Disaster Ready Church maintains a strategic and intentional partnership with local churches to support, reinforce, and encourage their ministry of making disciples of Jesus Christ and growing the Kingdom of God.

(Now to Him who is able to do above and beyond all that we ask or think according to the power that works in us—to Him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen. Ephesians 3:20-21 HCSB)

Matthew 25:1-46

- Matthew 25:1-13 – Prepare
- Matthew 25:14-30 – Connect
- Matthew 25:31-46 – Respond

Northwest Baptist Disaster Relief

Regional Coordinators

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MBBA, PSBA
(Gary Floyd)

Region 4

WVBA, NWBN, HDBA
(Gary Floyd)

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