



CONNECTING NEIGHBORS:

A “Disaster Ready Congregations” Curriculum of the United Methodist Church

To the people of the United Methodist Church and their community partners:

This curriculum is intended for broad use by dedicated volunteers willing and able to facilitate workshops and webinars with the **goal** of inspiring congregations and communities to be better able to minimize disaster-caused harm to people and property and to respond to our neighbors in helpful, cooperative and caring ways on behalf of the church and in the spirit of Jesus Christ.

This curriculum incorporates knowledge and experience gleaned over many years by dedicated volunteers who have served their neighbors on behalf of the church. Rich information has also been included from other organizations and community partners - most notably the American Red Cross, National Disaster Interfaith Network, and FEMA. UMCOR is grateful to these partners for providing public access to helpful resources.

Your partners in disaster ministry,

The United Methodist Committee On Relief

U.S. Disaster Response



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The Connecting Neighbors curriculum consists of an overview of disaster ministry, three units and supporting handouts.

Module 1: Ready Congregants focuses on preparing individuals and families to be disaster-ready.

Participants will be inspired to take action in order to prepare themselves, their households and others before and immediately following a disaster.

Target Audience: Everyone.

Module 2: Ready Churches emphasizes the importance of protecting church property and the people within the property, before and immediately following a disaster, and of appropriate use of church property in disaster response.

Participants will (1) identify one or more steps to take in order to mitigate against disaster-caused damage to property; (2) identify one or more steps to take in order to prevent harm to people who are present in or on church property when disasters or emergencies occur; and (3) be able to assess the utilization of church property following a disaster within or near the community of the church.

Target Audience: Everyone, especially church leaders including, but not limited to, pastors, trustees, Sunday school superintendent, lay leader, missions coordinator, treasurer and finance committee members, young adult and youth representatives, and others.

Module 3: Ready Response encourages churches to explore their capacity for various disaster response ministries and to consider ways to engage community partners.

Objectives: Participants will (1) be able to identify at least one disaster ministry their church might be willing and able to implement before and/or after a community disaster; and (2) initiate a preliminary plan to engage the church and to cooperate with other households of faith and the community in order to be prepared to respond in the event of a disaster.

Target Audience: Everyone interested in disaster-ready congregations and communities, particularly mission and outreach personnel, lay leaders, United Methodist Women, United Methodist Men, youth ministry leaders, lay servants and Stephen’s Ministers!