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PARTNERING FOR DISASTER RESPONSE

“Then I told them of the hand of my God which was good upon me ... And they said, ‘Let us rise up and build.’ So they strengthened their hands for this good work.”

Nehemiah 2:18

Disaster Times

Heavy rain floods northeast South Dakota

Streets Paved with Water



On May 4th, 2007, Aberdeen and a good portion of the rest of Brown County in South Dakota saw rain coming their way. It was not just a sprinkling or light shower, but a heavy down-pouring that lasted 24 hours. When the veil of rain finally lifted, the streets of Aberdeen were covered with water. A total of 12 counties in northeast South Dakota were impacted by these heavy rains and floodwaters.

Lutheran Social Services of South Dakota responded immediately by helping with services, taking a leadership role in the Volunteer Hotline and setting up a

system to assist residents clean-up over 350 homes that were impacted by floodwaters in the area.

Clean-up proved to be a long and detailed process. Some homes took five to seven volunteers one to several days to clean-up. Many homes required disinfecting due to sewage back-up in addition to growing mold from the warm weather. It was several weeks before all of this work was finished. Fortunately for those in several of the affected counties, FEMA declared Individual Assistance on May 22nd, 2007. As of June, over \$3.6 million had been distributed to families in Brown County alone.

As recovery continued, LSS-SD worked with many local VOAD agencies to meet the unmet needs of the community and assisted in public education, resource development, and resource management. LSS-SD was also instrumental in helping to put together the area’s long term recovery committee, “Back on Track”. The goals of “Back on Track” include providing service and support to promote healing and wholeness; providing coordinated management of community resources for long term recovery of individuals, families and rehabilitation of households; to become a sustainable organization to assist in other disasters. “Back on Track” is currently serving the following counties in South Dakota impacted by the May 4th, 2007 rains: Brown, Marshall, Spink, Clark, Campbell, McPherson, Walworth, Edmunds, Potter, Faulk, Day, and Roberts.

For more information about “Back on Track”, call Lisa Adler at (605) 229-1239.

RISE UP & BUILD

North Dakota • South Dakota • Montana



Gearing up for New Orleans

Rise Up & Build 2007 proved to be a successful and rewarding experience for both the volunteers and the Camp Victor staff in Ocean Springs. The camp staff was well organized and helpful during the many weeks before, during and after volunteers were there, and they had nothing but praise and wonderful things to say about the volunteers and their work.

After forging such a smooth and well organized working relationship with Camp Victor, it would be very easy to go back there again for the 2008 mission trips. However, after much research and deliberation, it was decided that we should share our volunteers and rebuild efforts with more than one location.

The location *Rise Up & Build 2008* has decided to work with is Bethlehem Volunteer Center in New Orleans, Louisiana. Bethlehem is operated locally by Lutheran Social Services Disaster Response and works with up to 100 volunteers a week doing clean-up and rebuild, as well as maintaining the camp facility. We are still gathering facts and specifics about the camp, but this is what is currently onsite: Separated dorm areas for men and women with bunks, bathroom and shower facilities, kitchen facilities (three meals a day provided Monday through Friday), and five full service RV hookups available by reservation.

Rise Up & Build 2008 will be taking about 50 volunteers each week to Bethlehem Volunteer Center on the following dates:

January 26-February 2,
February 2-9,
February 9-16
February 16-23.

More information and details will follow as soon as they are confirmed, but please note that we will be in the New Orleans area during Mardi Gras season. In fact, Fat Tuesday falls on February 5, so volunteers in New Orleans

the week of February 2-9 should be aware of this in planning. If any volunteers decide to stay in the area for a few days before or after their work week, note that you will not be able to stay at the camp during your sightseeing, so make plans accordingly.

Also note that previous *Rise Up & Build* volunteers were fortunate that Lutheran Disaster Response National was able to cover the costs of food and lodging at Camp Victor for volunteers. However, this is no longer available since reconstruction will continue in the Gulf for an indefinite amount of time and additional disasters continue to happen. While the need for volunteers remains great, we must now look to providing the funds for food and lodging at camps ourselves. Camps suggest an average donation of \$20 a day person to cover the costs of food and lodging, which would be \$140 a week per volunteer.

We do not want to let this become prohibitive to volunteers who want to help, and at the same time, we want to make sure that the camps are able to continue doing the wonderful work they have been doing. Perhaps consider doing fundraisers at church or in your community or making a donation to help cover these costs. Assistance is still very much needed in the Gulf Coast, and we want to serve them as God's hands for as long as possible.

If you would like to make a donation to Rise Up & Build, please make checks payable to Lutheran Disaster Response and note *Rise Up & Build* in the memo line. Donations may be mailed to your appropriate state:

Ashley Kallod - Lutheran Social Services/ND
PO Box 389 Fargo, ND 58107

Julia Anderson - Lutheran Social Services/SD
705 E 41st St Suite 200 Sioux Falls, SD 57105

Ruth Lindabury - Lutheran Social Services/MT
PO Box 1345 Great Falls, MT 59403

Burning Ring of Fire

Wild fires bring economic backlash

Wildland fires are showing up in the news across the country, and it's no wonder when you stop to look at the number of fires that continue to burn. During an average year in the United States, nearly 70,000 wildland fires burn approximately 4.5 million acres. As of mid-August, Montana alone reported a year-to-date total of 1,478 fires and 336,887



acres burned. This includes such incidents as the Jocko Lakes Fire near the resort area of Seeley Lake where 1,500 structures were threatened, some 675 of which have had to evacuate more than once.

It has become widely accepted that wildland fires are a natural part of the ecosystem, but times when as many as 15 fires continue to burn and grow in one state seems to feel a bit extreme. While wildfires are sometimes human-caused, many times they are caused by dry conditions such as Montana and other areas have been experiencing this year. Hot, dry weather with little to no moisture contribute to fire-starting lightning accompanied by occasional winds that spread the fire. So if wildland fires are

a natural part of the ecosystem that help forests regenerate and encourage new growth, what does that mean for those who have to live with the effects of wildland fires? What are the economic impacts to the community?

Often we hear of those who must evacuate and leave behind their

homes because wildland fire has threatened their area. A few times a year we hear that five homes here and ten homes there have been lost to these fires. For some homeowners returning after a wildland fire, it can be difficult to renew homeowner's insurance policies because of increasing rates and government policies requiring a minimum clearance around homes in susceptible areas.

But wildland fires don't affect just the homeowners near them – they affect the economy around them. What is the impact on a community that relies on seasonal tourism for income if businesses and seasonal homes are lost, or if fires continue to burn through peak tourism months, driving tourists away? Consider the loss of income to the timber industry and loggers who unexpectedly lose forest acreage prior to harvest, or perhaps the loss of large state and federal forests that are used for recreation and tourism. Farmers are affected when dry grasslands catch on fire, causing loss of farming acreage, grazing pastures, outbuildings and even equipment and machinery.

There is no all encompassing answer to the problems wildland fires produce as their range of destruction can be sporadic, unpredictable, and wide-spread. The best thing to do is to be well-informed and prepared for wildland fires in susceptible areas - *trust what the experts tell you*; they are working hard to fight the fires and keep the community safe.

Pandemic Potential

Be aware of the symptoms and prepare

Everyone is aware of seasonal flu. Flu season in the United States begins every fall and runs through the winter until its end in spring. The difference between a seasonal flu and a pandemic is in the type of flu virus.



While the influenza viruses that cause seasonal flu can be dangerous, those viruses in a pandemic are far worse. A pandemic occurs when a new virus emerges which the population has little or no resistance to. These types of viruses can spread more easily from person to person around the world in very little time, often causing serious illness and death.

The best thing you can do to protect yourself and your family in the event of

a pandemic is to be prepared for a possible quarantine and be aware of pandemic flu symptoms early on.

Prepare

In the event of a pandemic, government officials may restrict travel to prevent the spread of the flu virus. Banks, grocery stores, schools and other places of business may need to shut down and mass transportation may be limited.

Think about how this would affect your everyday life and answer the following questions to help yourself prepare:

- **If the grocery store closes for a length of time,**
Do I have enough food in my home to feed everyone?
- **What happens if I am unable to go to work or the banks close?**
Do I have enough cash to travel/purchase necessary items?
- **Are schools and day cares closing?**
Where will your children go if you are still able to go to work?
- **What about the elderly and people with special care needs?**
How will they receive care during times of restricted travel?
- **What about prescriptions?**
Do you have an adequate supply on hand should you be unable to get to your pharmacy?

Prepare yourself for a flu pandemic by keeping extra food, water, medications and your disaster supply kit on hand. Some supplies you should gather for pandemic flu caregiving include: thermometer, soap, box of disposable gloves, acetaminophen, ibuprofen, bleach, alcohol-based hand sanitizer, paper towels, tissues, surgical masks, sugar, baking soda, salt and salt substitute.

Be Aware

Exact symptoms of pandemic flu remain unknown, but are expected to be similar to that of seasonal flu, and may include:

- Fever
- Cough
- Runny nose
- Muscle aches and pains

Many flu symptoms can be treated by a health-care professional over the phone, so call at the first sign of symptoms. In some cases health-care professionals may also prescribe antiviral drugs to treat the flu.

Monitor the flu symptoms in a log book every four hours, noting the date and time, as well as fever, medicines given and dosage. Call your health-care professional again if you notice a heightened fever, shaking chills, coughing that produces a thick mucus, dehydration/dry mouth or worsening of an existing serious medical condition.

For more information about preparing for a pandemic, visit <http://www.redcross.org/new/ds/panflu/planahead.html>



Are you prepared for a disaster?

Prepare your church for a disaster.

Preparedness planning may make a great difference in depth of destruction and speed of recovery – that means analyzing potential losses and planning to minimize its effects. Consider the implications and ramifications of these points.

• Insurance Coverage

Is the structure covered sufficiently? When was policy last reviewed? Are the contents of the church sufficiently insured?

• Member Safety

If a disaster strikes during worship activities, do you have: An evacuation plan? Storm shelter readily identified? Who is in charge? Who will call whom to check on members?

• Vital Church Records

Are records secure if flood/tornado/fire/vandalism happens?

• Church functionality

If a pandemic outbreak occurs, how will normal events be continued?

• Serving the Community

How can the church serve its members and the community at large?

• Building functionality

If the church building is heavily damaged or destroyed: Do you have another location secured to hold worship services? Do you have a written agreement securing that site?

• Is your plan in writing

and a copy stored off church property?

Lutheran Disaster Response (LDR) has a free guide available to help you put together a preparedness plan for your church. To secure a guide and for possible assistance with preparing a plan, call (800) 950-2901 or visit www.ldrnd.org.

A disaster can strike at any time with little or no warning leaving devastation and debris in every area it touches. Advanced preparation can insure that your family's basic needs will be covered, and helps minimize potential losses.

How to prepare a disaster supplies kit.

• Water

A three-day supply of one gallon per person in your household. Store water in containers that will not break or decompose, such as soda bottles or plastic gallon jugs. Replenish every 6 months.

• Food

A three-day supply of nonperishable food. Choose items that don't require refrigeration, preparation or cooking, and little to no water. If some items require heating, pack a few cans of Sterno.

• First Aid Kit

Assemble one for the home and one for each vehicle that includes adhesive bandages and tape, sterile dressing and gauze pads, alcohol-based hand sanitizer, antiseptic wipes, medical non-latex gloves, anti-bacterial ointment, cold pack, small scissors, tweezers, CPR breathing barrier, and non-prescription drugs (aspirin or pain reliever, antacid, anti-diarrhea medication, syrup of Ipecac, laxative, activated charcoal).

• Tools and Supplies

Disposable cups, plates and utensils, battery operated radio, flashlight, extra batteries, cash/traveler's checks, can opener, utility knife, fire extinguisher, tube tent, pliers, tape, compass, matches in a waterproof container, aluminum foil, signal flare, plastic storage containers, paper, pencil, needles, thread, medicine dropper, whistle, plastic sheeting, map of the area, and a wrench to turn off household gas and water.

• Sanitation

Toilet paper, towelettes, soap, liquid detergent, feminine supplies, plastic garbage bags with ties, plastic bucket with tight lid, disinfectant, household chlorine bleach.

• Clothing and Bedding

At least one complete change of clothing and footwear per person, sturdy shoes/boots, rain gear, blankets/sleeping bags, hat and gloves, thermal underwear and sunglasses.

In case of an evacuation, keep the items you are most likely to need in an easy-to-carry container. For a more complete list of items to include in your disaster supplies kit and for information on making a disaster plan visit www.redcross.org/services/prepare/0,1082,0_77_00.html

What to say when you don't know what to say

Here are some suggestions of things to say and keep in mind when offering Spiritual Care to disaster survivors from Rev. Kevin Massey's "Light Our Way."

- "I am so very sorry."
- "My heart is with you."
- "I am here to help you in any way I can."
- "You have my sincere sympathy."
- "Friends are here with you at this time."
- "My sympathy for your loss."
- "You will be in my prayers at this time."
- "My prayers are with you at this time."
- "What can I do to help you at this time?"

Things to keep in mind.

- Avoid clichés.
- Don't avoid a deceased person's name.
- Never preach or proselytize.
- Offer prayer if requested.
- Support people finding their own solutions to problems.
- Be cautious about giving advice.
- Permit persons to share memories.
- Share your emotions sincerely.
- Encourage people to be connected to loved ones.
- Let people share their stories.

To read more of Rev. Kevin Massey's Light Our Way, visit www.nvoad.org/articles/Light_Our_Way_LINKS.pdf.

Spiritual Care

*One way to be there
for those in need*

When a disaster strikes, the survivors it leaves behind have immediate needs: food, water, shelter, clothes, help cleaning up. Survivors, however, have more than just physical care needs; many survivors also need spiritual care.

What is Spiritual Care?

"Spiritual Care includes anything that assists an individual, family or community in drawing upon its own spiritual perspective as a source of strength, hope and healing. In disaster, anything that nurtures the human spirit as a source of strength in coping with the crisis is Spiritual Care.

Spiritual Care activities and gestures may include things such

as prayer, special worship services and rituals to commemorate the disaster. Often times these activities and gestures will be facilitated by the local faith community, disaster response organizations and other trained professionals.

While these practices are extremely helpful to disaster survivors, sometimes the most important thing to them is having someone there. Someone who is a caring friend or neighbor, or even a stranger who will listen to their story and lend a supportive voice during this difficult time; someone to walk beside them in their journey to recovery. *You could be this person.*

"Sometimes Spiritual Care is an activity or gesture which may not be performed with the direct intention of providing Spiritual Care, but which nonetheless results in a bolstering and nurturing of the Spirit."

Rev. Kevin Massey, "Light Our Way"

Let it be S.A.I.D

Spiritual accompaniment training comes to North Dakota and Montana

Across America there is a heightened emphasis for organizations and individuals to be prepared to respond to disaster. The church has a unique role in reaching out to those in need, but often is not well informed concerning the particular dynamics of trauma and crisis.

Spiritual Accompaniment In Disaster (SAID) Training helps answer important questions for clergy, parish nurses, mental health professionals, chaplains and other faith leaders. It provides an opportunity for members of the faith community to find guidance on how to walk with people in times of disaster and crisis.

You are invited to come and learn the answers to these questions and more including:

- What really happens in a disaster-affected community?
- What do you say to people who ask, "How could God let this happen?"
- How do ecumenical and secular partners work together in response?
- What is the long-term role of the faith community in disaster recovery?

Training sessions are led by disaster response and faith community leaders, who will be able to give great insight into what happens to survivors of disaster and how to walk with them through the after effects. After training, all attendees are eligible to apply to become part of the SAID Network. Those involved in the SAID Network may be invited to take the following roles when called upon in a disaster: helping survivors draw upon their own spiritual/religious resources; providing respite for clergy and other spiritual caregivers; offering assistance in coping with grief, loss and stress; and working cooperatively with federal, state and other emergency service organizations.

There will be three SAID Training sessions held this year; one in Montana and two in North Dakota. Seating will be limited, so call for more information about training session dates and registration.

save the date

**Friday,
Oct. 26, 2007**
Christus Collegium
Bozeman, MT
(406) 761-4341

**Thursday,
Nov. 1, 2007**
Olivet Lutheran Church
Fargo, ND
(800) 950-2901

*Western ND locale
TBD*

Lutheran Disaster Response are programs of



Web site: www.lssnd.org

Mission: "Guided by God's love and grace, Lutheran Social Services of North Dakota brings healing, help and hope."



Web site: www.lssmt.org

Mission: "Lutheran Social Services of Montana is a ministry of caring people and congregations responding to God's love in Jesus Christ by serving children, families and individuals through counseling, education, adoption, and specialized ministries."



Lutheran Social Services
of South Dakota

Web site: www.lsssd.org

Mission: "Inspired by God's love, we care for, support and strengthen individuals, families and communities."



Contact Us
**Lutheran Disaster
Response**
1325 11th St. S
Fargo, ND 58103

www.ldr.org
www.ldrnd.org