In God's hands

...and ours



A plan for disaster preparedness and response in the Episcopal Diocese of Eastern Oregon

A Message from the Bishop

People of Eastern Oregon,

The Scriptures speak in many texts and through many speakers/writers about the need for God's people to be alert, to be diligent, and to mark the times. These are calls for preparedness, to be ready for what may be coming their way. In truth, these calls are largely of a spiritual nature, but they all impact the physical nature of our spiritual existence. To be prepared spiritually requires us also to be physically ready.

In keeping with that mandate to be prepared, the Diocese of Eastern Oregon has adopted the following Disaster Preparedness Plan. I commend others in the Diocese who have done the same. And I implore all of our Congregations to give attention to doing the same in your community.

We have a Disaster Preparedness Team who stand ready to offer their personal attention and expertise in supporting every Congregation in making ready for any potential disaster. Please take advantage of their willingness.

If we take our Baptismal Promises seriously, then being prepared to help ourselves, our families and our neighbors in the midst of crisis is the most loving, most respectful and most servant-like act we can take.

May God bless us as we prepare.

+Patrick

Bishop

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In God's Hands . . . And Ours: Disaster Preparedness and Response in the Episcopal Diocese of Eastern Oregon

Text based on materials supplied by the Episcopal Relief & Development, the Diocese of Hawaii, ("In God's Hands and Ours") and Province IV of the Episcopal Church ("Disasters: Prepare and Respond")

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1. Introduction

Disasters have been defined by the American Red Cross as an emergency that causes the loss of life and property, and a disruption in which survivors cannot manage without spiritual, monetary or physical assistance. Disasters create particularly hazardous conditions for vulnerable people and communities.

We know that disasters can and do occur — often with little or no warning.

Disasters and other crises that could require a response in the Diocese of Eastern Oregon include the following:

- Fire in a building, a home or apartment, or a wildfire
- Earthquake a continental earthquake or a massive Cascadia Subduction Zone earthquake
- Flood from winter storms or dam failures
- Winter storm
- Pandemic
- · Hazardous materials spill or other transportation accident
- · Chemical, biological, nuclear, or terrorist incident

This Diocesan Disaster Plan provides guidelines and suggested actions that the Diocese, individual parishes, and parishioners can take to prepare ahead of time to mitigate hazards and the impact of disasters, and it provides guidance on how to make sensible plans, and acquire knowledge and skills that will allow them to assess and address needs quickly and efficiently.

There are several sections to this plan at the diocesan and parish levels which are delineated in the following pages, and summarized here:

Diocesan Disaster Coordinator and the Diocesan Disaster Preparedness and Response Team

- Assists the Diocese and its parishes to activate a parish's gift of ministry when a disaster impacts the vulnerable people around them
- Coordinates disaster preparedness training within the Diocese pre-disaster
- o Builds relationships with/liaise with other ecumenical, nonprofit and governmental agencies
- Creates plans and assets for parishes and for the Diocese
- Manages communications systems throughout the Diocese during disasters

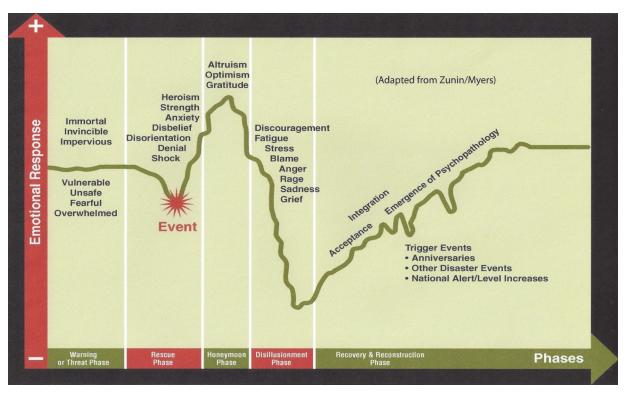
• Parish Disaster Leadership Team

- o Develops, reviews and is familiar with the Parish Disaster Plan
- Leads drills or arranges for training as needed
- Communicates the plan fully to the parish and community through trainings, preparedness Sundays, etc.
- o Helps to resume parish life as soon as possible after a disaster
- o Protects parish assets after a disaster
- Supports impacted parishioners and assists them to recover
- Reaches out to vulnerable neighbors

1.2 What is the life cycle of a disaster?

To facilitate making appropriate disaster preparedness plans as a Diocese, a parish or as parishioners, it is helpful to understand the life cycle of a disaster. The American Red Cross defines the life cycle of a disaster as years, not months, over which time a community progresses through phases of rescue, relief and recovery.

The following diagram illustrates the emotional response to the various phases of a disaster cycle, which may extend for years after a major event:



(Convoy of Hope)

Rescue

The first phase of a disaster centers on saving lives and safeguarding property. Essential personnel include emergency and law enforcement professionals, and those in the immediate vicinity who are able to call for help and to provide first aid.

In a parish, the clergy and lay leadership will respond as they —

- Assemble a team and implement the parish disaster plan
- Communicate with parishioners and with the larger community via the media
- Listen in order to facilitate the process of "meaning making" the struggle to come to terms with the
 disaster and its repercussions and help to discern the needs of those affected, especially those with
 special needs and those who have lost friends or family members
- Plan opportunities for public worship an act of Christian hope and faith in God at work, even in the midst of devastation
- Pay special attention to the needs of family and loved ones
- Pray practice self-care and maintain awareness of personal emotional health

1.2 What is the life cycle of a disaster? (cont)

Relief

The major task in the second phase is to create safe and sanitary conditions for survivors and emergency personnel so that they may alleviate suffering in the aftermath. Essential personnel include government and health-care professionals, relief agencies, and faith communities who provide shelter, health, and medical attention to survivors.

In a parish there may be opportunities to contribute to the relief effort by —

- Mobilizing trained response chaplains to provide spiritual and pastoral assistance
- Deploying grief counselors to help survivors process and alleviate the emotional pain of those suffering loss
- Inviting parishioners to participate in the recovery efforts
- Assessing damage to homes, church and community, contacting insurance companies and perhaps an attorney
- Helping victims as they endeavor to make needed contacts
- Maintaining communication with local officials and other clergy, as well as the diocese, and asking for whatever help may be needed

Recovery

During a major disaster, such as a widely-experienced weather event or a Cascadia Subduction Zone earthquake, individuals must recognize the need initially to be self-sufficient. A week or more supply of food, water and emergency supplies is recommended — in a Cascadia event it is anticipated that it will be more than 2-3 weeks before regular deliveries of food, fuel and other necessities will be reestablished in many communities.

Short-term recovery includes the restoration of utilities and services, damage assessment, temporary repairs, feeding, reestablishment of communications, reinforcement of law and beginning the process to replace damaged property.

Over the long term, lives and communities are rebuilt, counseling offers ways to cope with physical, emotional and spiritual needs, and disaster responses are evaluated to develop or reshape strategies for addressing future occurrences.

Government agencies, disaster response agencies, community social service organizations, and faith communities will work together cooperatively and collaboratively to foster healing and rebuilding of the community. Reimagining the future in this phase is an act of hope and courage.

Each parish may be called upon to —

- Assist in grief recovery and nurturing
- Assess short— and long-term needs of parishioners and community neighbors, and match them with available resources
- Continue to offer theologically-nuanced sermons and worship opportunities to assist in "meaning making" and integration
- Reflect on experiences and discuss them with community and family use insights to revise the parish response plan and to mitigate future disasters.

2. Episcopal Relief & Development

2.1 US Disaster Response Program

Episcopal Relief & Development is the international relief and development agency of the Episcopal Church. Its US Disaster Response Program assists diocesan leaders in responding to disasters by providing them with access to the Ready to Serve volunteer database, technical resources, and connections to others around the country who have faced similar disaster challenges.



When necessary, the US Disaster Response Program provides emergency financial assistance to supplement existing resources, enabling churches to reach out to their most vulnerable neighbors. The emergency funds are distributed through the local bishop's office, as the diocese ministers to underserved and marginalized populations in their communities, enabling them to make a full and sustained recovery.

2.2 US Disaster Preparedness Initiative

The US Disaster Preparedness Initiative works with dioceses to increase their resilience and ability to recover quickly from disasters. The initiative's charter includes building a national volunteer and skills database called Ready to Serve. It conducts local and regional trainings, and assists dioceses with coordination and planning.

This document outlines the Diocese of Eastern Oregon's response to Episcopal Relief & Development's US Disaster Preparedness Initiative.

2.3 Resources

The Episcopal Relief & Development website offers many resources that are relevant to disaster preparedness for the parishes and congregations of the Episcopal Diocese of Eastern Oregon:

Episcopal Relief & Development — main website

www.episcopalrelief.org

Episcopal Relief & Development — resource library

www.episcopalrelief.org/press-and-resource-library

o Comprehensive Preparedness Planning Guide for Congregations

The "Comprehensive" version of the *Preparedness Planning Guide* helps a congregation plan for a disaster, from taking inventory of physical and human assets to determining its niche in assisting vulnerable people in the larger community.

o Silver Level Preparedness Planning Guide (intermediate level)

The "Silver Level" version of the *Preparedness Planning Guide* collects the necessary basic information to protect parishioners and church property in times fo disaster, and also pays the foundation for congregations interested in responding to their most vulnerable neighbors after a disaster

o Bronze Level Preparedness Planning Guide (basic level)

The "Bronze Level" version collects the most basic information needed in times of disaster

Preparedness Plan for Diocesan Offices

3. Diocese - Disaster Plan and Response

At the diocesan level, the Episcopal Relief & Development's US Disaster Preparedness Initiative centers on the following activities:

- Organize a viable disaster preparedness program for the diocese
- When needed, coordinate response activities in the diocese

3.1 Diocesan Bishop

The Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Eastern Oregon has the following duties and responsibilities:

- Before a disaster
 - o Appoint the Diocesan Disaster Coordinator
 - o Approve the Diocesan Disaster Plan
 - Authorize the Diocesan Disaster Coordinator as the focal point for communications with parishes,
 Episcopal Relief & Development, and the Bishop during a disaster
- During and after a disaster
 - Be in communication with the Diocesan Disaster Coordinator, the Diocesan Disaster Preparedness
 Response Team, and the Diocesan Office Disaster Leadership Team
 - Contact Episcopal Relief & Development to request assistance as needed if the Bishop is not available or cannot be contacted in a major disaster, an alternate will be designated beforehand.

3.2 Diocesan Disaster Coordinator

The Diocesan Disaster Coordinator has duties and responsibilities before, during and after a disaster.

- Before a disaster
 - Recruit the Diocesan Disaster Preparedness Response Team to assist with tasks
 - o Coordinate the creation and/or maintenance of a Diocesan Disaster Plan
 - Assist parishes as they create their disaster plans
 - Verify that the parishes and the diocese keep their plans up-to-date
 - Coordinate and plan local parish and/or diocesan-wide trainings
 - Attend national, regional and diocesan conferences on request
 - Build relationships with other ecumenical, nonprofit and governmental agencies
 - o Designate an alternate Diocesan Disaster Coordinator, with the Bishop's concurrence
- During and after a disaster
 - Communicate with the Parish Disaster Coordinators to assess needs and assist them in implementing response plans
 - o In the event of a disaster, communicate with the Bishop's staff, the Diocesan Disaster Preparedness Response Team, and Episcopal Relief & Development staff regarding needs and how to best deploy resources to vulnerable communities
 - Coordinate local recovery as directed by the Bishop
 - Other duties as assigned reports to the Bishop

3.3 Diocesan Office Disaster Leadership Team

The Diocesan Office Disaster Leadership Team is responsible for helping the diocesan functions to resume as soon as possible after a disaster.

- Suggested members
 - o Bishop
 - Executive Secretary
 - o Executive Director, Ascension School Camp and Conference Center
 - Diocesan Communications Specialist
- Responsibilities
 - o Develop, review and know the diocesan disaster plan
 - Lead drills or training as needed
 - Communicate the plan fully to the diocesan staff
 - o Ensure that preparedness activities continue and are current
 - Help diocesan functions to resume as soon as possible
 - Protect diocesan assets
- To fulfill their responsibilities, the members of the Disaster Office Disaster Leadership Team must:
 - Know their own area of responsibility within the plan
 - o Review and update the plan regularly to make sure it is operational
 - o Activate the preparedness or post-disaster plan after a disaster
 - o Evaluate the plan when enacted; make changes as needed
- Planning considerations and best practices
 - Assigned responsibilities need timelines for accomplishment
 - o Diocesan office plan should govern only the diocesan facilities and staff
 - Plan should be sufficiently brief that staff will know it and can put it into motion quickly, without needing to take time to read it
 - Plan for offsite secure storage of the following, with back-up copies at multiple locations
 - ♦ Electronic and written records
 - ♦ Deeds
 - ♦ Financial records
 - ♦ Insurance policies
 - o Compile a portable traveling box of essential supplies so that diocesan operations can be resumed elsewhere, and assign custody of the supplies to a staff position
 - Keep and regularly update an inventory of valuable and/or historic items. Photographs and video documentation are important
 - Update copies of contact information for clergy and lay leadership on a regular basis, and keep a copy of this information at home

A *Preparedness Planning Guide for Diocesan Offices* template that can be completed as a Word document is available at the URL listed below, and will assist the Diocesan Office Disaster Leadership Team:

www.episcopalrelief.org/press-and-resources/resource-library select page 2 to access the document

The Diocesan Disaster Coordinator is available to assist the Diocesan Office Leadership Team as they create and implement their disaster plan.

3.4 Diocesan Disaster Preparedness Response Team

The mission of the Diocesan Disaster Preparedness and Response Team is to help the diocese and its parishes activate a parish's gift of ministry when a disaster impacts the vulnerable people around them. The team will be briefed on all disasters within the diocese, and will be called activated as necessary when disasters impact multiple parishes, or a major disaster affects a single parish.

Recommended members include a core of diocesan and parish leaders who are committed to fostering local disaster preparedness and response efforts.

- Suggested size: 4-6 members who
 - have experience with long-term disaster response
 - are well-connected with local parishes
 - have relationships with vulnerable groups in the community and the network of organizations that serve them
- Tasks and responsibilities
 - Communications within the diocese pre-disaster training and preparedness
 - Build relationships with/liaise with other ecumenical, nonprofit and governmental agencies
 - Organize preparedness training
 - Create plans and mapping assets for parishes and for the diocese
 - o Manage communications systems throughout the diocese during disasters

3.5 Diocesan Disaster Preparedness Response Team — During a Disaster

During a disaster, the Response Team will be activated to consider and initiate appropriate actions:

- **Activation** when activated the Team will meet as soon as possible at the direction of the Coordinator at a location determined by the disaster
- Assessment the Team will assess the event and discuss possible responses with the Bishop
- **Implementation** when the response is determined, the Team will confirm and act on the steps required to implement it
- **Communication** the diocesan spokesperson or other designated person will communicate details of the diocesan response throughout the diocese and with governmental and law enforcement contacts, and media representatives as appropriate

3.6 Response Chaplains

Response chaplains are clergy, religious or laity who have taken Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) or Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) courses, progressed through a screening interview and disaster preparedness orientation, and are certified to respond in the event of a disaster. Invitations to serve as response chaplains will be issued on a periodic basis, and training opportunities will be provided.

Who can become a response chaplain, and how?

The opportunity to serve in response to a disaster is open to diocesan clergy, religious and laity. An individual letter of agreement that sets out the terms, conditions and policies under which chaplains will respond will be signed by the approved training agency, and the individual response chaplain. There will be an annual refresher course for those involved in this ministry. All clergy, religious and laity who have an interest in becoming response chaplains are invited to call the diocesan office for more information.

Diocesan policy for response chaplains

For urgent and compelling reasons of safety, it is diocesan policy, as well as that of the local emergency management authorities, that no clergy are to deploy themselves to the scene of a disaster without proper training and as part of a coordinated disaster response.

Where response chaplains serve

Response chaplains are not first responders to any emergency or disaster. A response chaplain may serve in a family assistance center, in respite centers for uniformed personnel, and after additional screening for suitability, in temporary morgues. If a response chaplain is brought onto the actual site of a disaster, he or she must be escorted onto and off the site by uniformed personnel at the uniformed personnel's request, subject to the local emergency management authority's rules.

Training course

A training course will be offered by an agency that is qualified to train chaplains for disaster response, in accordance and conformity with the local emergency management authority's standards of care provided by chaplains across faiths and denominational affiliation. It will provide basic training in how to be with victims, families and members of the uniformed services during and after a disaster, as well as details on how to work as part of an overall response team.

4. Parish Disaster Planning

Episcopal Relief and Development summarizes the ideal parish roles in disaster as follows:

"Though we don't always want to think about it, one of our roles as a church in the community is to be prepared to be of assistance after a disaster. We plan for four basic reasons:

- To mitigate the damage to our church community's buildings and belongings
- To be able to resume the business of the church as soon as possible post-disaster
- To support our parishioners in times of crisis
- To assist our vulnerable neighbors after an emergency"

The Diocesan Disaster Coordinator is available to assist parishes as they create and implement their individual parish disaster plans.

4.1 Parish Disaster Coordinator

The Parish Disaster Coordinator provides leadership and guidance to the parish in advance of, during, and following an emergency. The Coordinator should be —

- A regular member of the parish, familiar with its facilities and families
- Available to implement the emergency plan and oversee the collective activities of the Parish Disaster Leadership Team members (i.e., not be an on-call emergency responder).

4.2 Parish Disaster Leadership Team

The Parish Disaster Leadership Team is a group of committed individuals willing to support the Parish Disaster Coordinator and the parish in preparedness and response efforts. Typically the team is comprised of 3-8 members, who may include the following —

- Rector/Vicar/Priest-in-Charge
- Assisting clergy
- Junior and Senior Wardens
- Parish administrator
- Altar Guild leader
- Other possibilities: sexton, church school director, webmaster, etc.
- People with experience within the disaster/emergency response field
- People with experience in planning
- People willing and able to help in disaster

4.3 Parish Disaster Leadership Team - Responsibilities

Each parish's Disaster Leadership Team has the following responsibilities:

- Develop, review, and be familiar with the Parish Disaster Plan
- Lead drills or training as needed
- Communicate the plan fully to the parish and community through trainings, preparedness Sundays, etc.
- Help the parish resume its normal routine as soon as possible after a disaster
- Protect parish assets after a disaster
- Serve the parish during the acutely stressful time after a disaster
- Mirror to the community Christ's commitment to truth, mercy, justice and love

4.4 Parish Disaster Leadership Team - Top-Level Tasks

Episcopal Relief & Development has created the *Comprehensive Planning Guide for Congregations and Parishes* that will assist parish leaders as they implement a disaster preparedness program. The Guide can be downloaded from the Episcopal Relief & Development website, saved as a Word document, and completed as the Parish Disaster Leadership Team addresses the various suggested tasks. It is available at

www.episcopalrelief.org/press-and-resources/resource-library

After reviewing the Guide, if there are questions or if assistance is needed, contact the Diocesan Disaster Coordinator.

The following tasks are identified and discussed in the Guide.

- Establish goals should be simple and reflect the needs and abilities of the parish and the mission of the diocese, and be agreed to by each member of the team. Suggested goals include
 - o Ensure safety of older and disabled members of the parish
 - Provide an effective relief ministry to the local community after a disaster
 - o Protect valuable church assets
 - o Reestablish Sunday services as soon as possible post-disaster
- Identify highest priorities specific to the parish during and after a disaster
- Conduct risk assessment
 - o Identify vulnerabilities and hazards to the community determine what disasters to prepare for
 - Take steps to mitigate hazards for the church buildings, parishioners and neighbors
 - Know who and what is most vulnerable, and plan to protect or help them accordingly
- Identify church property assets
 - Inventory property-related assets
 - Make a list of items that will be removed in an evacuation (i.e., computers, portable electronics, church heirlooms, etc.)
 - Make a list of items that cannot be removed from the building, specify how they will be protected, and who is responsible for the task
 - Prepare and have ready a church "Go Kit" containing items essential to hold worship: communion silver, BCP, hymnal, important insurance information, back-up files and other documents essential to the continuation of church work
 - Make a list of all insurance information and contracts. Have a copy in a secure place off-site and another copy in the Go Kit

4.4 Parish Disaster Leadership Team — Top-Level Tasks (cont)

- Identify and establish storage locations for church archives and records preferably in a fireproof, waterproof, quake-proof lockable box or safe, or safe deposit box
 - Parish registers and service books
 - Confidential records
 - o Contracts, titles and deeds, other legal documents
 - o Routine back-ups for computer files on CE, DVD or USB
 - Paper records and files
 - o Archives
 - o Software and electronic files
- Identify and build response and recovery capacity
 - Brainstorm what resources (human and physical) can be utilized to help both parishioners and the members of the greater community recover and work toward creating a "new normal"
 - Parish property resources for use post-disaster buildings (are they certified by ARC or other entity?), equipment or other physical resources
 - o Parish human resources
 - Outreach programs
 - Groups that could be of service
 - Members with disaster-related skills, certification, resources
 - o Conduct a parish member questionnaire to determine members' special skills in responding to disaster, as well as needs that might make them vulnerable in a disaster. Information will be kept confidential, and will only be used by the Disaster Leadership Team to involve parishioners appropriately in disaster response.
- Maintain an updated contact list for the members of the parish, and specifically include those who are vulnerable so that the team knows to check on their situation.
- Identify who to contact for help and how to plug into the local emergency response network. Important contacts might include
 - Diocesan and parish emergency contacts
 - o Parishioners
 - o Parishioners who are infirm, elderly, disabled, or have special needs
 - Local emergency contacts
 - Insurance company
 - Contractors and vendors
 - Outside users of the buildings
 - Local print, radio and broadcast media

5. Individual and Family Preparedness

Previous sections of this diocesan disaster plan have addressed activities necessary to guard and maintain the corporate life of the parish. Using this section, response team members can function as role models in the parish by planning for the protection of their own household members, and by helping other parishioners to do so as well.

This section also offers information for families and individuals to consider in the event of an evacuation.

There is a saying in the disaster preparedness community "if you are prepared for earthquakes, you probably are well prepared for any other disaster that can come along." The following Seven Step Plan is taken from the Earthquake County Alliance, a public-private partnership of people, organization and regional alliances that work together to improve preparedness, mitigation and resiliency (see www.earthquakecountry.org).

5.1 Seven-Step Disaster Plan for Individuals and Families

All members of the parish and diocesan community are encouraged to prepare using the following Seven Step Plan that is summarized below —

Prepare

- 1. Secure your space by identifying hazards and securing moveable items
- 2. Plan to be safe by creating a disaster plan and deciding how you will communicate in an emergency
- 3. Organize disaster supplies in convenient locations. Assemble a "grab n' go" kit for every member of the family, including infants, elders and pets. Your household emergency kit should have food, water, medications for a week or more. Have an emergency kit at your work, and another one in your vehicle.
- 4. Minimize financial hardship by organizing important documents, strengthening your property, and considering insurance

Survive

- 5. Drop, cover and hold on when the earth shakes
- 6. Improve safety by evacuating if necessary, helping the injured, and preventing further injuries or damage

Recover

7. Reconnect and restore. Restore daily life by reconnecting with others, repairing damage, and rebuilding community

For detailed information, checklists and resources for each of the Seven Steps, see www.earthquakecountry.org, then select "Prepare—Before," "Survive—During," and "Recover—After."

5.2 Obtain Training

In-person training can make a difference in how successfully people prepare for the inevitable disasters and hazards that residents of our region face — training to prepare the parish leadership, as well as training for parishioners. For further information, and to schedule training, contact —

Judy Warren Diocesan Disaster Coordinator owlandcompass@gmail.com (541) 639-4111

5.3 Ready to Serve

As part of the US Disaster Preparedness Initiative, Episcopal Relief & Development is building a database of volunteers who are ready and willing to respond in the event of a disaster.

When parishes and/or dioceses around the nation are affected by disaster, Diocesan Disaster Coordinators will have access to this list of potential volunteers, who may be called and asked to serve.

Parishioners who are interested in being contacted about volunteer opportunities or disaster response training are asked to fill out a Ready to Serve sign-up form, which is available at

www.episcopalrelief.org/what-you-can-do/act/volunteer/ready-to-serve

5.4 Other Resources

Episcopal Relief & Development provides disaster response curricula specifically designed for parishes and congregations. See www.episcopalrelief.org/resourcelibrary

Ministering After a Disaster

These resources help Christian formation directors and youth ministers plan programming for children, youth, teens and adults during the first few weeks after a disaster. The resources contain lesson plans, teaching tips, bibliographies and handouts for parents. They include:

- Ministering to Adults after a Disaster
- Ministering to Teens after a Disaster (grades 9-12)
- Ministering to Youth after a Disaster (grades 6-8)
- Ministering to Children after a Disaster (grades K-5)

Ready to Serve with Compassion

This is a curriculum for preparing volunteers to participate in disaster response efforts that promote long-term recovery, such as rebuilding. It may be scheduled through the Diocesan Disaster Coordinator.