

To whom it may concern,

We would like you and your church to consider becoming a major player in Disaster Response Ministries. The storms and flooding around the state this last spring and the recent hurricanes have brought about an urgency to act on this vision, thus the timing of this introduction. Please allow us to introduce you to a vision Disaster Response Ministries has had for a while.

First, let me share how Disaster Response **currently** operates. Disaster training is mostly for Early Response Team which is normally hosted by a church or district. The invitation to train is extended to anyone interested. When the call goes out to deploy, it is a blanket call to all trained volunteers. However, our experience has poor response to the call and poor retention of volunteers.

Consequently, we are asking for your support in implementing the new vision for Disaster Response Ministries for future operations. We would like to identify churches strategically located around the district to be the "go to", "getter done" churches when disaster strikes in your community and beyond. Ideally those churches would name a disaster response coordinator, commit to having an early response team, and commit to a series of trainings. Trainings would not be exclusive, as your church would reach out to others in the area to build capacity, resources, etc. The trainings would include:

Disaster 101 - an overview of how disaster response works locally, district wide, conference wide, and how it is supported by the Jurisdiction and UMCOR. And how it fits into overall response within the community or communities affected.

Early Response Team - so that a team is established, trained, equipped and ready to deploy when needed.

Connecting Neighbors - a preparedness training for the local church which equips to help individuals and families be prepared, to prepare the church for disaster, to effectively utilize the church facility in response, and to be a part of the community preparedness and response plan.

We can meet with you or an appropriate church committee or group. This meeting would be to introduce ourselves and your District Disaster Response Coordinator, to share more information, and answer any questions. You know what will work best for your church family, so we will be glad to hear any recommendation you may have as to how to proceed.

Process steps (what would be needed):

1. Meet with Conference and/or District Disaster Response Coordinators.
2. Make the commitment to engage in Disaster Response Ministries
3. Identify a Local Church Disaster Response Coordinator
4. Schedule trainings
5. Establish an Early Response Team
6. Establish a Local Church Disaster Response Team (Committee)
7. Implement

Thank you for your consideration. Please reply with thoughts and proposed next steps. We look forward to hearing from you.

Janice Mann
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