



September is National Emergency Preparedness Month!

See the link following link for more info: <http://www.cdc.gov/features/beready/>

As a result of Hurricane Sandy, the newly established **NY Crisis Response Team** would like to remind and help our District Church's, Minister's and Families to adequately prepare and respond to severe weather emergencies, when they arise.

Pastors and those of influence in choosing Christian Education curriculums-

A very simple way that you can influence the outcome of a disaster is to prepare. Please consider printing this material off and making it a 2 part Stewardship emphasis on Church Preparedness and Family Preparedness.

This would be 2 very valuable discussions for all adults in Sunday School/Christian Education/small groups and Church boards! **Help us help you!**

Following, you will find helpful links containing vital **Church Preparedness** and **Family Preparedness** information from the Convoy of Hope Preparedness Initiative to assist and equip you. Nationwide polls indicate that 7 out of 10 people are not prepared to survive three days following a natural or man-made disaster. Because we know it's a matter of "when, not if," Convoy of Hope has developed a multi-faceted strategy that helps churches and individuals with preparedness and response education called H.O.P.E. Begins Here (Helping Others Prepare for Emergencies). HBH strategies provide valuable tools and resources to help families and local churches build their own resiliency to disaster and, as a result, strengthen their position from which to help others when disaster strikes. *Based on the concept of Prepare It Forward: Learn, Live, Lead, HBH advocates (1) learn what you need to do to help yourself and others, (2) live it out in your own life, home, and church, and (3) lead others through action in disaster preparedness and response.*

Take the first step and learn more at: <http://www.hopebeginshere.org>

Church Preparedness

To minimize the potential for disruption to church ministries and operations, and to strengthen your position from which to minister to others when disaster strikes, you must prepare. In this part, you will find important information about building church resilience to disaster: what is a disaster, why prepare, where to begin, what to do and templates and resources.



Why Prepare: Fulfill Our Commission: As Christians our commission extends beyond just telling others about the love of Christ to demonstrating His love through action. In The Parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37) Jesus tells a story about a man that fell into the hands of robbers who stripped and brutally beat him; leaving him half dead on the road. Two religious leaders see the man lying on the road but choose not to stop and help. A third individual sees the man and stops, goes to him, and provides the emergency care he needs. In addition, this Good Samaritan provides for the man's long term recovery.

Jesus then reframes the question that prompted the parable from "Who is my neighbor?" to "Who is the neighbor of the man who was robbed and beaten?" His answer is the one who showed mercy. God is calling us to be this kind of neighbor.

Scriptures for Further Study: *Matthew 25:34-40* - Compassion in light of eternity; judged by response to human need and the situations of others; *James 2:14-17* - No deeds, dead faith; do something about the physical needs of others and give life to faith; *1 John 3:17-18* - No pity, no love; love those in need with actions and truth; *Acts 2:44-47* - Together as believers; share what we have to meet the needs of others

Prepare the Way: John the Baptist prepared the way for Jesus, and made straight paths for Him (Luke 3:4). Today, the Church has opportunity to "make straight a highway for our God" (Isaiah 40:3) to reveal His glory to people who are hurting and searching for answers. Disasters like the one described above, can lead people to question their own mortality and the existence of God. The Bible teaches us God is a refuge, strength and ever-present help in trouble (Psalm 46). When disaster impacts a community, God is faithful to show His love and compassion through the local church - as "neighbors" who show mercy to the suffering and hurting.

Find Our Place: Though government and national agencies are prepared to help people when disaster strikes, it is the local church, its people and social network that remain long after other organizations have moved on. No greater or more effective mechanism in a community exists to assist people in times of disaster than a local church. It is the local church that best understands the culture and people of the community. It is the local church which has a mandate from God - not just to preach the Gospel, but to love others and be the neighbor God calls us to be.

It is widely accepted that a huge deficiency in disaster preparedness exists in many communities. When disaster strikes, many churches do not know what to do - or how to do it, and therefore they do nothing. Other churches jump in to help with little to no preparation or training and, more often than not, create additional concerns for local authorities. Few churches adequately prepare to mitigate risk to their own facilities, ministries and congregation. Still fewer invest time to discover and develop their unique niche



in disaster preparedness and response ministry (i.e. the small thing a church can do which results in doing a lot within a community in the right circumstance). It is time to change that and find our place.

Build Church Resilience: Resilience is the ability to bounce back and recover quickly from adversity (i.e. disaster) in a healthy manner. An analogy of resilience is a beach ball in a swimming pool. When pushed under water the ball may be stressed (compressed) by the surrounding pressure, but it can resurface quickly near its original shape and position. Church leaders who take action to prepare their church and congregation for disaster recover more quickly from adversity; and, more importantly, strengthen their position from which to respond and help the community when disaster strikes.

Other Benefits: Some benefits of church preparedness include the following: Develop a Continuity of Ministry and Operations Plan and all-hazards emergency response plan to mitigate property damage, parishioner impact and ministry disruption; Carefully examine and assess capacity to help, serve and minister to the community in time of need; Discover small things churches can do that result in doing a lot within a community in the right circumstance; Network and participate in the community in tactical ways that will help lessen the impact of future disasters; Increase level of credibility and influence among local officials; Increase pastor, staff and parishioner resilience to disaster; Position and mobilize parishioners to serve others in need; Show families how to prepare an emergency kit for their home; Encourage families to develop an emergency plan including communication and home exit strategies; Teach families, including children, what to do and how to do it when emergencies arise.

Family Preparedness

Before you can (or oftentimes will) help others, you must first be prepared to help yourself and your family. In this part, you will find important information about building your family's resilience to disaster: get a kit and make a plan, home safety, children, seniors and special needs, pets, and utilities.

Get a Kit / Make a Plan: The HBH Family Preparedness Kit takes the basics of survival (i.e. fresh water, food, clean air, and warmth) and other commonly recommended items for an emergency supply kit, and breaks them down into a five week preparation cycle. *This approach allows individuals and families to build their kits over time in a way that is manageable. The 5 week cycle includes:*

Week 1: Water

Week 2: Canned, Packaged & Comfort Food

Week 3: Warmth, Weather Radio, Flashlights & Extra Batteries



Week 4: Clean Air, First Aid & Personal Hygiene

Week 5: Special Items

How the 5 Weeks Work: For each week, add the recommended items to your family preparedness kit. Determine quantities you need based on the number of people in your household. Begin with a 3-day supply. Use the HBH Family Preparedness Checklist to help you.

Cannot afford to get everything at once? No problem. Simply finish the 5-week cycle and then repeat the entire cycle (or the weeks you still need to finish) as many times as needed until you complete the minimum recommended 3-day supply. It is not a matter of how quickly you complete your kit, but that you do complete your kit.

Family Preparedness Kit Checklist (Microsoft Excel):

[http://www.hopebeginshere.org/images/HBH_Family_Preparedness_Kit_Checklist_\(Microsoft_Excel\).xls](http://www.hopebeginshere.org/images/HBH_Family_Preparedness_Kit_Checklist_(Microsoft_Excel).xls)

HBH Family Emergency Plan: Develop a family emergency plan for your family and utilize this plan as a preparedness strategy for your church or organization. Convoy of Hope offers the HBH Family Emergency Plan which helps parishioners, employees, and their families think through home escape routes and meeting locations, evacuation plans, family communication, utility shut-off and safety, and more.

HBH Family Emergency Plan (PDF):

http://www.hopebeginshere.org/images/HBH_Family_Emergency_Plan.pdf