

Dear Friends in Christ:

I have sunk in deep mire, and there is no foothold; I have come into deep waters and a flood overflows me- PS 69:2

Thank you for the ministry you have already offered the victims of these recent disasters. May the Lord strengthen you and your congregation for the ministry which is still ahead. Recovery from a disaster can be a long and complex process. It may be helpful to think of recovery as coming in stages each with it's own opportunities for ministry.

Stage #1 – Water in the home

Many people have water in their homes and businesses which now needs to be pumped out, the [mud and debris removed and the contaminated areas sanitized](#).

Opportunities for Ministry:

- 1) Sunday Worship which acknowledges the disaster and people's sorrow and frustration can be a great source of healing, suggestions prayers, Scripture and litanies can be found in the Evangelical Lutheran book of Worship and at http://www.neiasynod.org/synod_news/pdf/Flood%20Worship%20Resources.pdf
- 2) Hosting Disaster Response organizations like [Red Cross](#), [Salvation Army](#), and preparing meals, offering a place for coffee and sandwiches are all very helpful
- 3) Encourage all who have had property damage to register with [FEMA](#) either online or by calling 1-800-621-3362. Even if damage does not appear to be much, all should register in case some other issue may arise
- 4) Organizing volunteers is a daunting task. In most communities some organization is already in place. For more information please contact your county emergency management agency. They will have access to a new statewide database that will be able to match volunteers and needs. You may also contact [Wartburg's College's Center for Community Engagement](#) at 319-352-8701 to help in those areas. We are hoping to establish an additional site for volunteer coordination.

Role of LDR

- 1) [LDR](#) Coordinator [Pastor Michael Stadie](#) is working with other faith partners to help with the volunteer coordination efforts. With those

same partners and with FEMA, he is assessing beyond the obvious areas of greatest needs, where long term recovery committees will be created.

Stage #2 – Post Clean Up

When the cleaning up process comes to an end, the disaster victims will be faced with working with insurance companies and FEMA. This can be a slow process which creates feelings of frustration and abandonment. At this stage, [Lutheran Disaster Response](#) and [Lutheran Services of Iowa](#) begin to respond directly.

Opportunities for Ministry:

- 1) Visit with members and their neighbors listening to their stories and providing support. It is especially important that those who are unchurched or under churched have a contact from a faith community in these difficult days. It shows how God cares for the needy. Please see <http://www.ldr.org/volunteer/spiritual-care.html>

Role of LDR

- 1) LSI/LDR can be helpful in making sure the most vulnerable in the affected communities are getting their homes cleaned up. The way to initiate access to these services is to inform Pastor Michael Stadie, LDR Coordinator, and he will make sure there is follow up to this expressed need
- 2) LDR will begin the process of working in communities to establish long term recovery committee along with FEMA and other faith partners.

Stage #3 – Long Term Recovery

The recovery process will take more than year and after many agencies have gone the congregation and the church and its ministry will remain.

Opportunities for Ministry

- 1) Be an active member of long term recovery committee (LTRC) if present in your community.
- 2) Provide emotional and spiritual care to those affected as they will be easily frustrated with the process and the delays. Please see the book "Light Our Way" at <http://www.ldr.org/care/>
- 3) There are resources for those who work with youth and families to help children cope with disaster at <http://www.ldr.org/care/children.html>

Role of LDR

- 1) LDR will continue to provide case advocacy services to those communities who request LSI to provide these services. Pastor Michael Stadie will be a consultant to the LTRCs. LSI/LDR will also help address unmet needs that it receives through the case advocacy process.

*For I am sure that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present,
nor things to come,
nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation,
will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. -Romans 8:38-*

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If you have any questions or concerns please contact us.

Your Partners in Ministry,

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