

Report of the Penn Northeast Conference United Church of Christ To the Disaster Ministries, Global HOPE, United Church of Christ January 17, 2022

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In 2020 all Conference Ministry teams were encouraged to establish Action Steps which would move the Conference toward the Conference's Goals and Objectives. Here is a short report on our

Accomplishments and/or Progress Toward these Action Steps:

The Disaster Ministry Team will share effective models and opportunities of collaboration and cooperation with the Conference monthly through "This Week in PNEC" and conduct 3 workshops to educate our churches and leaders on effective, viable opportunities in 2021.

1. We continue to provide vetted information on all phases of disaster to the Conference churches through "This Week in PNEC." Thanks to the Conference staff for making this possible.
2. The Conference, on the recommendation of the Team, presented the webinar: "Staying Sane in Today's World of COVID-19 – A Helpful Look at Increasing Resiliency" on Wednesday, December 1, 2021.
3. The Susquehanna Mission Council has issued a challenge to all PNEC and PSEC churches to participate in the "High Five for Disaster Relief" challenge, encouraging churches to give an amount equal to \$5.00 a member for disaster relief in Epiphany. There will be a virtual celebration on Sunday afternoon, February 27 at 3:00 PM ET. We have made a promotional video and bulletin insert.

When the Disaster Ministry Team submits a proposal for a ministry opportunity which is not within the Conference budget it will contain the source and extent of funding for the project.

1. We continue to look for collaborative funding to do the work in our Conference.
2. The Conference did receive a UCC Long-term Recovery Grant and served as the financial sponsor for the LTRG following TS Isaias.
3. The High Five for Disaster Relief challenge should raise funding to support our work and could be used to match grants from other sources.

With the help of the Conference Staff, the Disaster Ministry Team will identify and work with 2 congregations in 2021 who seek to revitalize their ministry and their community following a natural or human-caused disaster, using a unified process that engages the congregation in vibrant worship and Bible study; intentionally listens to both the members of the church and the surrounding community; compiles data, and prayerfully identifies its future.

1. Due to COVID the team struggled with this one in 2021.
2. However, in 2022 the Team is recommending that PNEC participates in the **Willing to Respond** program. Planning is underway.
3. Through the High Five for Disaster Relief Challenge we are working with the churches of the Susquehanna Area Mission Council.
4. We are assisting Longswamp UCC as they design their response to the High Five challenge.

5. A number of our churches have put together CWS cleanup buckets and other kits. We did take one load to CWS headquarters in Maryland. Currently we receive kits at the Conference Office and Greenawalds UCC, Allentown.
6. The second tool trailer is located at Greenawalds UCC, Allentown.

The Disaster Ministry Team will present 4 programs in 2021 that educates ministers on the many and varied ways a pastor can serve the wider church and community through the programs of disaster and volunteer ministries.

Please delete this action step for the moment, as we move ahead with the next action step.

In ~~2021~~ 2022, the Disaster Ministry Team and Conference leadership will recruit, train, and authorize a PNEC Disaster Coordinator.

Due to multiple circumstances it was not possible for a replacement for the Disaster Coordinator to be found in 2022. Therefore, it will be a priority for 2022. The Team has recommended to the Board that use the new resource, the **Conference Disaster Profile**, to help us develop our Conference Disaster Plan, identify leadership, and train our Ministry Team.

Report from the Conference Disaster Coordinator:

- Working with Northampton County EMA on response to damage from Ida.
- There has been very little change in the situation with the private bridge replacement in Monroe County. At this time, we are in a waiting for the homeowners to develop a plan.
- The recovery work from TS Isaias is ongoing in Philadelphia. One of the PNEC's tool trailers is on site there, located at the Eastwick United Methodist Church.
- In 2021 I served as the Secretary of PA VOAD. However, in November 2021, I was elected as the Eastern Area lead for PAVOAD. I was also elected to serve as the chair of the Northeast PA VOAD. I also am consulting with the Susquehanna, Columbia, and Bradford counties' Community Organizations Active in Disaster. I also serve as the PAVOAD Communications Lead, producing periodic situation awareness updates.
- I meet monthly with my colleagues from the other Conferences and the national Global HOPE staff.
- In December I assisted virtually my colleague in the Indiana/Kentucky Conference in our response to the tornadoes. In specific I helped to write public messaging for the Donations Management Working Group of Kentucky VOAD.

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