Assistance by Homebound Communion Ministers

Objective: To help our more vulnerable members NOT be part of the post-disaster problem.

Background: Winter storms and their associated power outages are nearly a certainty. Good Shepherd already has an initiative to help our vulnerable members to be more self-reliant and comfortable during power outages that normally occur in the months of October through January.

Discussion: The most effective way for our vulnerable members to prepare for any disaster is to have them participate in the process. This can be best done if the preparations are personalized, individualized to the members' needs, resources, and capabilities. From your regular monthly contacts with these members; you are in a unique position to provide specific insight concerning their social and residential situations.

Our approach: Members of Good Shepherd are already planning on conducting visits to our vulnerable people to assist in their specific preparedness actions. We would like to perform these visits as a team. In a single visit, you serve communion; then, we assist the member with completing initial preparedness actions. To complete individualized efforts by October, these visits should be conducted in July, August, or September. We anticipate the preparation portion of the visit to be approximately 30 minutes. The multi-month window would allow coordination of specific visit dates and objectives among the ministers.

Summary: We see this individualized, team approach as a valuable contribution to assist members of our congregation to be better prepared in times of disaster.

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Individuals should cover their initial needs, not with a purchased commercial kit, but a personalized checklist considering shelter, warmth, food, drink, necessary medicines, contacts, finances, etc. With our immediate personal needs satisfied; we are now able to help others.

Realistically, what can your church do? Consider smaller elements of the larger preparedness environment. Use the complete problem solving approach: What?, Why? When?, Where?, Who?, and How? Every one of these six elements must be adequately addressed to be initially prepared to assist your members and neighbors.

Church as a post-disaster meeting place

Church as a temporary shelter

Basic food, warmth, sanitation, etc.

Guest registration

Fire drill during a service

Post-disaster communications

Individual members' preparedness education and actions

Church Emergency Operations Center (CEOC) functions and staffing

Functional backups

Family support / transportation

Stress management / spiritual support

Other areas of service