

Lamplight

A Newsletter of the US Disaster Program



"Be dressed, ready for service and keep your lamps burning." – LUKE 12:35

A Note from the Team

Issue #34 | December 2015

Hi all!

A few weeks ago, Episcopal Relief & Development President Rob Radtke wrote a blog reminding us to "[Be Not Afraid](#)." We remember when the angel Gabriel appeared before Mary: "And the angel said to her, 'Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God,'" (Luke 1:30). During this Advent, we invite you to join us in celebrating preparedness in our homes and in our churches. Check out episcopalrelief.org/preparedness for tips and resources on how to begin!

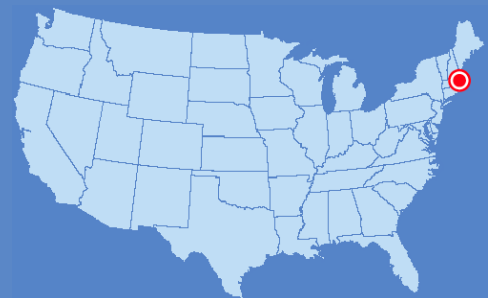
We wish you all happy Advent, a merry Christmas and a happy New Year!

In Peace,

Katie, Lura, Sara and Tamara

Success Stories: Creating Respite Space in a Winter Storm

During the 2014-2015 winter, the Boston area was pelted with a record-breaking 110" of snow, which crippled the public transportation system and kept people from attending work and school. The Rev. Sara Irwin of Waltham, MA, responded to the needs she was seeing in her community by opening the doors of her church, which provided a space for young families to burn some of their excess energy from being cooped



Join "Ready to Serve":
[Sign up here](#) to offer your services to your vulnerable neighbors after a disaster.

A Season of Resilience is our new 5-week curriculum designed to encourage preparedness. [Check it out!](#)

Episcopal Relief & Development-supported Projects:

Disaster Response:

Episcopal Diocese of Eastern Michigan

Due to lead contamination in the water system making city's water unusable, the Diocese of Eastern Michigan is supporting the residents of Flint, MI, by distributing water filters and gallons of water to those affected.

The Episcopal Church in Navajoland

up. [Read about her story here](#), and [read more about how she did it here!](#)

Sandy Recovery: Creating Space for the New Normal

By Lura Steele

On December 2nd, Keith Adams, the Sandy Recovery Coordinator for the Diocese of New Jersey, and I spent the day speaking with Hurricane Sandy-impacted clergy. The six priests and the deacon that we spoke to represented churches from across the diocese. In the three years since the storm made landfall, they had devoted thousands of hours to recovery.

It was striking that even though these clergy were from the same diocese and had responded to the same disaster, they all had radically different experiences. Each of these church leaders had rich and varied experiences with community outreach, donor education, volunteer management and building ecumenical partnerships all to meet the needs of their vulnerable neighbors.

Despite their varied ministries, all of the priests and deacons alluded to church transformation and rededication to mission after Sandy. Ministries such as [Calico Threads Thrift Store](#) and [St. Mark's Center for Community Renewal](#) continue to address the needs of people in their communities. Others mentioned ongoing pastoral care and deepening relationships with other faith leaders in their towns.

The Rev. Canon John Thompson Quartey described this common opportunity. "Pay attention," he said. "The resources that you need are right at your finger tips. God is at work. Find out how you can partner with God [...] God in the people around you. Don't be bashful and not accept people's time or talent. Everyone wants to do something; give them that space."

While there are people still actively recovering from Sandy, others have stabilized and are beginning to identify their "new normal." Keith will be the first to tell you that "recovery is not restoration." Demographics of the Diocese of New Jersey have changed. People have

Due to a dam burst near the Animas River causing the water supply to become contaminated, The Episcopal Church in Navajoland is responding to those affected by providing water to the community near Buff, UT, and to the farmers of the Navajo Nation near Upper Fruitland, NM.

Episcopal Diocese of Northern California

The Diocese of Northern California is responding to the needs of evacuees after deadly wildfires displaced thousands of people and burned hundreds of homes, through a gift card ministry, housing assistance and spiritual care for affected persons.

Episcopal Diocese of North Dakota

After two fires consumed thousands of acres of land in October 2015, the Diocese of North Dakota is responding to housing needs in Cannon Ball, ND, as well as replacing school supplies destroyed during the fire.

Episcopal Diocese of Southern Ohio

Due to flash flooding in July 2015 impacting more than 800 homes across the state, St. Peter's Episcopal Church and the Diocese of Southern Ohio are providing assistance in the rebuilding process for homes in Gallia County, Ohio, as well as providing spiritual and emotional care to impacted residents.

Disaster Recovery:

Episcopal Diocese of Arkansas

The Diocese of Arkansas is providing financial, emotional and spiritual aid by identifying and caring for underserved populations affected by the April 2014 tornadoes.

Episcopal Church in Connecticut

The Episcopal Church in Connecticut is supporting Ben's Lighthouse, a ministry of Trinity Episcopal Church in Newtown, to promote the long-term mental health of the community's children, youth and families and to nurture a culture of non-violence and caring.

Episcopal Diocese of Easton

The Diocese of Easton is hosting volunteer groups to repair homes damaged by Hurricane Sandy and construct new ones where existing homes cannot be repaired.

moved. Jobs are different. Our churches are adapting. It is heartening for me to know that these churches will continue to explore the new space that they have created through their Sandy ministries.

Episcopal Asset Map



The Asset Map is picking up steam! But the true success of the map depends on you.

As we prepare for the incarnation - God with us - let us share the good news about how we are bringing love, joy and peace to our neighbors and how our neighbors are transforming us.

Go to episcopalassetmap.org to share your stories. Invite others to join you for your Christmas service by updating your service times or invite them into the many ways you are engaging with your communities. We look forward to hearing from you!

Episcopal Diocese of New Jersey

The Diocese of New Jersey is aiding vulnerable individuals and communities by providing direct assistance, partnering with various long term recovery groups and working with parish-based programs following Hurricane Sandy.

Episcopal Diocese of Oklahoma

The Diocese of Oklahoma is working with congregations and long-term recovery groups around the state to meet the needs of vulnerable people following tornados in the spring of 2013.

Resources for Disaster Preparedness and Response:

Visit Episcopal Relief & Development's online [Resource Library](#) for numerous case studies and best practices in disaster response at the diocesan and congregational level.

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OUR EMAILS**

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