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SEND TO FRIEND



Lamplight

A Newsletter of the US Disaster Program



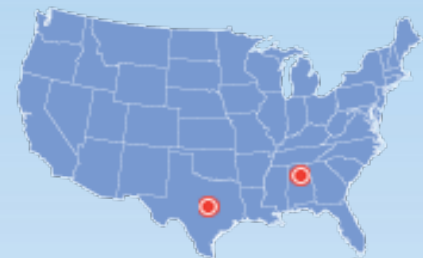
"Be dressed, ready for service and keep your lamps burning." – LUKE 12:35

Issue #10 | October, 2011

A Note from Katie

Around the country, our churches are responding to the needs of their vulnerable neighbors after disasters - whether in Minot, ND or Bastrop, TX or White River Junction, VT. At Episcopal Relief & Development, we will continue to support, strengthen and raise up these ministries. Please look through the [resource library](#) stories to see the powerful work being done in our communities.

Peace,
Katie



In this Issue:

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TEXAS
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News:

Preparedness Planning Guide is Now Online

Use this [Online Guide](#) to walk your congregation through the process of disaster preparedness planning.

Join "Ready to Serve"

Offer your services to your vulnerable neighbors after a disaster. [Sign up here](#) to be called upon to volunteer.

Building Up Our Resource Library

Federal Assistance: Helping Neighbors to Register

After a string of tornadoes swept through northern Alabama in April 2011, Madison County, a poor rural county in North Alabama, had

extensive damage. Many residents would be eligible for federal assistance if they filled out the right paper work quickly, before the deadline. "In the end, our county, though one of the lesser populated areas of the tornado devastation, was the top county in the state of Alabama for FEMA application filings," said the Rev. Kerry Holder-Joffrion. Holder-Joffrion works for the Madison County Interfaith Mission Service, and with fellow Episcopalian, Zara Renander, they started a Federal Form Brigade - a group of volunteers trained to help individuals with home loss or damage file for federal assistance. "Our point was to get people suffering from post traumatic shock and other consequences of the devastation as much help as possible, as quickly as possible," said Holder-Joffrion.



Photo by Mike Smith - Episcopal Relief & Development

For more information on the Federal Form Brigade, please see "[How To: Creating a Federal Form Brigade](#)" in our online resource library.

Texas Wildfires

On a hot, dry September night in a small Texas town, more than 60 people gathered at Calvary Episcopal Church. The most catastrophic fire in Texas history, the one that impacted Bastrop, had begun burning six days earlier on September 4. By September 12, more than 1,500 homes had been destroyed in a town with less than 8,000 residents. But on this night, despite the hazy, smoke-laden sky outside, in the parish hall the smell of rich sauce and cheese filled the air as lasagnas were pulled from the oven. The Rev. Lisa Hines, Rector of the church, knew intimately what her community was experiencing; she had lost her own home only days before to the fire. In the midst of the disaster she opened the doors of the big brick church on Main Street and invited the community in. Parishioners, many of whom had also lost their own homes, worked in the kitchen to feed the assembled crowd.



The Rev. Lisa Hines, Bastrop Mayor Terry Orr and Bishop Andrew Doyle. Photo: Carol Barnwell - Episcopal Diocese of Texas

Fires this season in Texas have burned millions of acres and left thousands of homes and businesses destroyed. The fires were exacerbated this year by

Use our [Online Resource Library](#) to find tools and stories about preparedness planning and response programming. Do you have a story to share? Please email Alison at ahare@er-d.org.

Volunteer Opportunities:

Diocese of Alabama

[Tornado](#) recovery

Diocese of Tennessee

Home rebuild program in [Nashville](#), please contact Denise O'Neil

Upcoming Trainings:

FALL

Series of local parish Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) and disaster preparedness trainings in the Diocese of Louisiana

NOVEMBER 7 - 9

Disaster preparedness training in the Diocese of West Texas

NOVEMBER 18 & 19

Parish-based disaster preparedness training with Johns Hopkins University in the Diocese of Easton

JANUARY 10-14 2012

Partners in Response training

JANUARY 28, 2012

Preparedness training at the Outreach Summit in the Diocese of Alabama

FEBRUARY 2012

Disaster preparedness and response training in the Diocese of Hawaii

MARCH 24, 2012

Disaster preparedness and response training in the Diocese of Upper South Carolina

Current Emergency Relief Projects:

Flood response

Diocese of Albany

Flood response

Diocese of Central New York
Binghamton, NY

Flood response

Diocese of Western Massachusetts
Williamstown, MA

the record-breaking heat and drought. Having experienced the devastating effects of Hurricane Ike just a few short years ago, the Episcopal Diocese of Texas was prepared to respond to this disaster. Over the last three years the diocese actively encouraged more than 150 parishes to create disaster preparedness plans. When the fires began to blaze around the state, congregations throughout Texas were already educated about disasters and prepared to help.

Even before the Texas fires had reached Bastrop, churches across Texas were supporting emergency responders, collecting and distributing cold drinks and "wet-wipes" to firefighters. The diocese was also in contact with parishes in impacted areas, staying abreast of their specific needs. "Clothing donations came first, which was great. But eventually it became clear that what people really needed was financial support," explained Luke Blount, Communications Specialist for the diocese. "We really want to be focusing on the needs on the ground, so we started encouraging donors to give money or gift cards to grocery stores and places like Home Depot."

"As time goes on needs will change," explained the Rev. Gill Keyworth, a diocesan disaster coordinator. "As the fires died out, people began requesting sieves to sift through the debris that was left of their home. Now people are turning toward the future and trying to envision what their lives will look like a couple of months or years down the road." Keyworth's fellow diocesan disaster coordinator, Archdeacon Russ Oechsel, went on to say that those who have lost their homes are facing a long process, possibly two to three years, before they can get back into homes. People will have to deal with insurance settlements, mortgage paperwork, and getting permits for new construction if the slab of their house cracked with the heat of the fire.

Read more [here!](#)

[HELP NOW!](#)

Current Disaster Recovery Projects:

The Episcopal Diocese of Alabama

Helping to provide long-term rebuilding and recovery assistance for the unmet needs of families affected by tornadoes in Birmingham, Tuscaloosa, Cullman, Sawyerville, Madison County and Dekalb County.

Metropolitan Ministries

Providing a "financial emergency room" to help with the unmet needs of people affected by the April 2011 tornadoes in Chattanooga, TN. They provide pastoral care, referrals and direct assistance.

The Episcopal Community Services of Louisiana (ECSLA)

Supporting oil spill-affected communities as they adapt to the financial, emotional and social changes caused by the oil spill through case management and supporting community resilience.

Jericho Road

A neighborhood-based home-building organization working to revitalize Central City, a New Orleans neighborhood recovering from Hurricane Katrina and decades of disinvestment. Jericho Road planted an urban fruit orchard in late November as part of its continuing Hurricane Katrina recovery efforts.

Episcopal Diocese of Tennessee

St. Luke's Community House is now a Restore the Dream Center site and serves the neighborhood of West Nashville by supporting home reconstruction, providing case management services and "care for the care-giver" trainings.

[HELP NOW!](#)



U.S. Disaster Program

Contact Us:

Add your name to the "Ready to Serve" volunteer and skills roster at volunteer@er-d.org

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kmears@er-d.org

Alison Hare, Preparedness
Coordinator

ahare@er-d.org



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