

**mna disaster response**



## **MNA Disaster Response CD Manual Overview and Contents of the Manual July 2007**

**Arklie Hooten**, MNA ShortTerm Missions and Disaster Response Director  
Email: [ahooten@pcanet.org](mailto:ahooten@pcanet.org)  
Cell: 678-294-3011

**To schedule your church for short term mission trips, contact:**  
**Kaamilya McCullough**, MNA ShortTerm Missions and Disaster Response  
Administrative Assistant  
Email: [kmccullough@pcanet.org](mailto:kmccullough@pcanet.org)  
Office: 678-825-1243 Cell: 678-294-3012

Presbyterian Church in America  
**Mission to North America (MNA)**  
1700 N. Brown Road, Suite 101 Lawrenceville, GA 30043-8143  
Phone: (678) 825 - 1200 Fax: (678) 825-1201  
Email: [mnadisasterresponse@pcanet.org](mailto:mnadisasterresponse@pcanet.org)

## **MNA: Serving the Church to Advance God's Kingdom**

## Introduction

Mission to North America (MNA) serves the Presbyterian Church in America (PCA), coordinating PCA church extension ministries in North America. As assigned by the General Assembly, MNA serves as the PCA agency for the coordination of Disaster Response in North America. This CD Manual provides guidance to the denomination in case of disaster(s). It is offered for the use of presbyteries, churches, missions teams, and individual members.

This is a planning manual to be used in the training, preparation, and implementation of disaster relief. The content of this manual was assembled by Disaster Response Key Leaders (DRKL) working with MNA staff. It has been prepared for PCA churches to assist in preparing for their own disaster response. Please use this information freely and distribute it as widely as possible.

This is considered a working document so that “Lessons Learned” from each disaster event should find their way into it. We acknowledge that not every disaster will be the same and that there is a wealth of knowledge from many other organizations, agencies, governments, and individuals that we anticipate will be added to this published guidance in the future.

## In Gratitude

This CD Manual is produced and distributed with thanks to Almighty God who protects and preserves us in the midst of trouble. We give thanks to the Lord for the compassion and mercy exhibited by His people in the aftermath of the disasters of 2004 and 2005. From the Lord comes deliverance from death. Quite often when something terrible happens, we know it could have been worse. God is always a God of mercy.

In the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, the Lord raised up many volunteers and leaders all across the PCA who took action to help their own congregations and communities and to serve others from all across North America. Churches immediately gave money, organized teams, offered temporary staff, and sent help. We give thanks to God for all of these expressions of love, mercy and compassion on the part of the people of the Presbyterian Church in America. It is a wonderful testimony of God’s grace among us to see the evidence of PCA work in the areas that have been most severely affected. Not only did this provide immense resources for those directly affected by Katrina, but this great mobilization provided the foundation for a new and more decentralized coordination of Disaster Response. May the Lord be praised for the faithful response of His people.

## God's Power through Prayer

Every disaster is God's call to His people to minister in Jesus' name, offering opportunities to serve God's people and for God to work through us to advance the Gospel. We have a clear mandate to: *bring good news to the poor; bind up the brokenhearted; proclaim freedom for captives and release from darkness to prisoners; and proclaim the year of the Lord's favor and the day of vengeance of our God, to comfort all who mourn.* In Christ, according to Isaiah 61, Luke 4, John 13, and many other texts, we are vessels through whom the Holy Spirit brings life.

Therefore, we wish to emphasize that all work of the Church of the Lord Jesus Christ is a spiritual work, even – perhaps especially – the very physical work of providing disaster relief. It is to be done in humble dependence on the power of God Himself, and that power is accessed through faith and prayer. At the beginning, through it all, and at the end, our greatest resource is prayer. When we seek deliverance from disaster, we should pray; when we seek safety we should pray; when we seek help we should pray; when we seek money we should pray; when we seek volunteers we should pray; when we need wisdom to know what to do we should pray; when we have trouble in dealing with agencies or personalities we should pray.

We will plan and prepare; we will work and act; we will sacrifice and risk; and we will do it in the power and in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

## All Kinds of Disasters

The multiple hurricanes of 2004 initiated a new era of forecast heightened hurricane activity. This, along with the unprecedented 2005 devastation brought by Hurricane Katrina, has focused our Disaster Response concerns primarily on hurricanes. In fact, since most of our PCA experience with major mobilization of disaster response in North America has been related to hurricanes, the material in the CD Manual is born of that experience.

All kinds of disasters strike constantly across North America. Just as the major disasters offer opportunity for ministry, so do the local disasters that are more limited in scope. Our hope and prayer is that our PCA experience with hurricane relief will encourage and equip us in responding to other disasters. Furthermore, our hope is that we will begin to serve our own communities more effectively during times of need. We offer this CD Manual as a resource in addressing all kinds of disasters.

## A Word about Funding

PCA churches and individuals have established a pattern of giving generously to the survivors of disasters. When MNA appeals for such funds, 100% of the disaster designated gifts go to their intended purpose. This means that MNA takes no administrative fees from gifts given for relief in a particular disaster. Our administrative overhead is funded by the Partnership Share/Askings giving of the churches. Please understand, however, that only MNA administrative costs are covered by church Askings giving. Disaster Response Director Arklie Hooten and other staff members working in the field are supported almost entirely by gifts designated for their support. Please consider giving generously to support their crucial work, as they coordinate work in behalf of the entire PCA.

## A Work in Progress

This CD Manual is a “work in progress,” a collection of the experience and lessons learned by those who are leading in Hurricane Katrina relief work. Please add your questions, comments and additions to the content; our goal is to have a working document that grows constantly. MNA ShortTerm Missions Director Arklie Hooten is coordinating this collective effort. Please communicate with Arklie at [ahooten@pcanet.org](mailto:ahooten@pcanet.org).

## Contents of the MNA Disaster Response CD Manual

The CD Manual includes the following, each in a separate file on the CD, in this order. For the content of each section, go to the CD:

1. **This READ ME FIRST article, including Introduction and CD Contents**
2. Open Letter from MNA Coordinator Jim Bland
3. Disaster Response Ministry in Your Church Word File Manual: addresses the basics of how to begin a Disaster Response ministry in your congregation.
4. Disaster Response Ministry in Your Church Power Point: same content as the Item 3. Word File Manual, in Power Point format for promotional and training purposes.
5. Psychological and Spiritual First Aid Manual: this group of articles provides guidance for spiritual ministry and basic emotional support for disaster survivors. Included also is some limited information on addressing these issues for the care givers.
6. Disaster Planning and Training Manual: presents the basics of the PCA wide Disaster Response system coordinated by MNA. This is helpful for a church or network of churches who wish to build a Disaster Response ministry that includes several or more teams.
7. Disaster Response Site Manager Manual: presents the basics for Team Leaders and for Site Manager leadership and coordination. This is helpful for a church or network of churches who wish to work with MNA to provide key leadership and coordination of the work in a particular disaster area.