



**NORTON
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Church and Health Ministries

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US POSTAGE
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Louisville, KY
Permit No. 149

Health Ministries Connection is a publication of the Norton Healthcare Office of Church and Health Ministries.

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Health Ministries Connection

St. Stephen wins Barnabas Award

By Kathy Bryant, R.N., FCN

When disaster strikes, caring volunteers rally to help. This has been true through recent catastrophes – Hurricane Katrina, the earthquake in Haiti, the oil spill in the Gulf and locally with last year's flood. But who cares for those who come to care for others? They, too, need support and much of the same things they provide to victims, such as food and shelter.

Look to St. Stephen United Church of Christ. After the August 2009 flood, St. Stephen UCC hosted volunteers who came to help with relief efforts. For several weeks, the church housed and fed teams from the Christian Aid Ministries and the Christian Appalachian Project. St. Stephen UCC offered its Family Life Center and Fellowship Hall as an organizational hub and temporary home. Supported by the church, the teams were able to provide cleanup and repair to dozens of homes affected by the flood.

St. Stephen organized volunteers from the congregation and surrounding churches to provide food to the hardworking relief teams. Offering support and encouragement, as well as home-cooked meals, the church volunteers worked tirelessly to ensure that relief teams were comfortable during their stay.

“We were able to house and feed workers who cared more about ministering to others in distress than about their own comfort, wants or needs,” said church member Donna Schneider. “They blessed our lives and enabled us to see God through them.”

In recognition of its efforts, St. Stephen recently received a Barnabas Award at the annual meeting of the Indiana-Kentucky Conference of the UCC. The award, named in reference to the great encourager, Barnabas, from Acts 11:22-24, is given to churches annually to recognize mission efforts in UCC churches in the Indiana-Kentucky Conference.

“We were able to house and feed workers who cared more about ministering to others in distress than about their own comfort ...”

—Donna Schneider

St. Stephen continues its mission of hospitality. The church has installed a washer and dryer for work teams and plans to purchase additional cots to house more workers. The Indiana-Kentucky Conference of the UCC has made the church a designated site for summer mission groups. It will be housing work teams throughout the summer, showing hospitality to hospitable volunteers. As church council president Jenny Elmore said, the experience is “a wonderful opportunity for us to give back to others what we have been blessed with.”



Rev. Jim Harper,
St. Stephen United
Church of Christ

Jamie Rhodes photo

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Educational Insert

Emergency Grab-and-Go Kit

It's Not If, It's When: Disaster Preparedness for Faith Communities

Friday, Sept. 10, 2010
8 a.m. • Registration and continental breakfast/8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. • Program
Egan Leadership Center at Spalding University, First-floor Lectorium
901 S. Fourth St., Louisville, Ky.

Overview

During this seminar, participants will begin to draft personal and faith community preparedness plans while becoming familiar with denominational and community agencies in the Kentuckiana emergency response network.

Registration

Registration fee: \$25

Register by phone: (502) 629-1234 or (888) 4-U-NORTON/(888) 486-6786

Register online: NortonHealthcare.com/CHM

Seminar fee is refundable if cancellation is received by Sept. 3, 2010.

Continuing education

Approved by Kentucky Board of Nursing for 7.4 contact hours, expiration: December 2011, KBN # 4-0181-12-11-110. Participants must attend the entire course and complete the evaluation to receive contact hours. Kentucky Board of Nursing approval of an individual nursing continuing education provider does not constitute endorsement of program content. Sponsors reserve the right to substitute speakers with equivalent credentials.

Save the date! • Friday, Sept. 10, 2010

Resources for disaster preparedness

www.churchdisasterhelp.org

This site provides online training and other mental health resources for church leaders.

www.churchresponse.org

Download the Pandemic Influenza Church Preparedness Checklist and learn how to become prepared.

www.emergency.cdc.gov

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention emergency preparedness site, which includes information in more than 10 languages.

www.fema.gov/kids

Kids, parents and teachers can find games and disaster resources on the Federal Emergency Management Agency website.

www.nvoad.org

The National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster site is a forum for organizations to share resources to help disaster survivors.

www.ready.gov

This Federal Emergency Management Agency site has many tools to assist with preparing and planning for disasters.

Get rid of mold

If you are located in an area that has flooded, you probably know how important it is to remove mold. When returning to a home or other building that has been flooded, be aware that mold may be present, causing a health risk for your family.

www.cdc.gov/mold

Learn how to protect yourself from mold growth and how to recognize and safely clean mold.

Resources other than those provided by Norton Healthcare are listed solely as information and not as an endorsement by Norton Healthcare.

Preparing vulnerable individuals for disaster

By Pat Welsh, R.N., FCN

The horrific photos of vulnerable people struggling to survive after Hurricane Katrina are seared into our memories. Faith communities and neighborhood organizations play a key role in identifying and encouraging those most at risk during a disaster to create, practice and update personal preparedness plans. People with special needs may want to consider the following planning steps and questions.

Establish a personal support network

- Identify at least three people who are accustomed to your specific needs and will support you at home, work and school.
- Exchange keys with your support people and show them the location of your emergency health information and Grab-and-Go Kit (see insert).
- Select a contact person who lives about 100 miles outside the immediate area to act as a clearinghouse for information and telephone support.

When faced with an emergency ...

- Are you able to lift your Grab-and-Go Kit?
- Can you turn off your home's main gas line and electrical breakers?
- Do you have a planned evacuation route out of your home and city?
- If you have a service animal, what are its needs?
- Do you have a plan to address language and communication barriers?

Travel considerations

- Alert your support network of travel plans and ask that they notify you if they leave town.
- When you check in to a hotel, notify hotel staff of your need for assistance during an emergency.

By formulating personal emergency plans with vulnerable populations in your faith community and neighborhood before a disaster, you may expedite their physical and spiritual recovery after a disaster.

Preparing your pet for emergencies

By Kathy Bryant, R.N., FCN

For many people, pets are important members of the family. Preparing a plan for your furry friends can help make an emergency less stressful. Here are some things to consider regarding pet care during an emergency:

- Always keep a collar on your pet with tags that include contact and medical information. Consider microchipping your dog or cat and registering them with a recovery database. Review the information regularly and update it as needed.
- Assemble a pet emergency supply kit. Necessary items may include a three-day supply of food and water, medications, medical and vaccination records, veterinarian contact information, litter box items, extra collar and leash, and a pet carrier or cage. Consider packing favorite toys or comfort items. Keep items in plastic bags or waterproof containers.
- Keep photos of your pet handy. In case of separation, photos will aid in identification and proof of ownership.
- Include your local animal shelter's number in your list of emergency numbers.

The shelter might be able to provide information concerning pets during a disaster. If your pet is lost, it may have been brought to your local shelter.

- In an emergency, it may not be possible to keep your pet with you. For instance, evacuation shelters may not allow animals to stay. Have a plan for where you can take your pet – make a list of pet-friendly hotels; arrange for family, friends or neighbors to keep your pet; or consider boarding your pet with a reputable kennel or animal clinic.

Leave your pet at home only as a last resort. If you must do so, provide plenty of clean water and food, arrange for sanitation and leave contact information for where and how you can be reached. Place stickers on your windows and doors that state "Pet Inside" for rescue workers who might find your loved one.

With a little planning, emergencies will be less scary for people and pets alike.

Disaster planning for faith communities

By Pat Welsh, R.N., FCN

No one wants to imagine coping with a disaster such as a fire or tornado. However, the time to prepare your faith community for a disaster is before it occurs. As your church formulates its own disaster plan, prayerfully consider the following:

- Encourage members of your church to create and practice personal preparedness plans.
- Define your church's goals for disaster preparedness – before and after a disaster, community response, national and international involvement.
- Designate and train a church preparedness team to assess risks and respond to emergencies.
- Write a plan to ensure spiritual support and continuity of leadership for staff and members while the church is in the disaster recovery phase.
- Collect member emergency contact and health information, and store it in a secure, accessible place.
- Develop a churchwide emergency communication strategy; identify amateur radio operators.
- Identify, plan and practice assisting vulnerable members while at church or in their home during an emergency.

- Maintain church fire alarms, smoke detectors, fire extinguishers, exit lights, first-aid kits and flashlights.
- Select rooms on the church property that could be used for sheltering in place, and have plastic sheeting and Duct tape readily accessible.
- Stock a three-day supply of water and food.
- Evaluate actions the church can take to prevent falls, burglaries and intruder violence.
- Contact the church's insurance company to review and update information.
- Protect, store and back up the church's computer records and historical documents from fire, water and cyber security threats.
- Meet with neighboring businesses, residents and organizations to become familiar with and exchange emergency plans and contact information.
- Network with local public health and government agencies to update the latest disaster plan recommendations.

Organizing, educating, communicating and practicing a church disaster plan requires patience and diligence. A faith community cannot predict how, when or where a disaster may occur, but God is present throughout the journey. Please consider sharing with our office the evolution of your church's disaster preparedness plan.

For further information, call the Office of Church and Health Ministries at (502) 629-2700 and join us at "It's Not If, It's When: Disaster Preparedness for Faith Communities" on Sept. 10. See back page for details.



On a tough hill

By Rev. Terry Tatro, M.Div., BCC, chaplain, Norton Suburban Hospital

I had trained for months, secured a great bike and eagerly anticipated the culmination of all my preparation – The Ride to Conquer Cancer was upon me. It was much farther than I had ever ridden in my life – 82 miles of hill upon hill the first day and 75 miles of hill upon hill the second day. Plus, on day one we contended with wet roads. On day two, the wind demanded much greater effort to achieve similar results. This journey was designed to be a challenge and a metaphor for life.

Despite the strong showing on day one, day two proved more difficult for me than anticipated. Around mile 30, I started to experience notable fatigue, and the distance

between me and my team was widening. It occurred to me, "You may not be able to keep up ... You should probably accept that you are not going to make it with the team and that it is going to be a ridiculously long and lonely ride home." It was a sinking feeling.

Then I remembered a friend's prayer for me: "I will be praying for you on the ride this weekend. May it be a joyful celebration of your health and the difference you are making in so many lives. On a tough hill, know that you are especially carried in prayer at that moment."

That was a defining moment – a catalyst for courage, commitment and resolve. Hope was restored, and a sense of power outside

and within me connected to my situation. I peddled harder. A teammate hung back to provide a draft for me for the next few miles. I struggled yet made it to lunch to refuel and refill the water bottles. It was the turning point.

Perhaps today you are facing a tough hill – one far more difficult and serious than finishing a two-day endurance course. One that makes you pause and consider and doubt – a hill that will define your life. You may be losing ground despite working harder than ever. Whatever the tough hill is, know that you are being cared for by the God who made us, loves us and redeems us. Knowing that makes all the difference.