

## File: Disaster Response

### **The Congregation's Role in Disaster Response:**

1. To be aware that: ACCESS/GRACE will serve as a resources link for the religious community in the event of a major disaster in Kent County. ACCESS/GRACE, working in partnership with the local CRWRC-DRS\*, will determine how best to respond to the disaster. Should the disaster require a long-term recovery effort, ACCESS/GRACE will coordinate that effort utilizing the expertise of the CRWRC-DRS. **For efficiency at that time, it is important for congregations to wait for further instructions about long-term recovery needs.**
  - a. **Soon after the disaster**, an announcement will be made to all media regarding the planned response. If the response indicates a long-term recovery effort, it will be announced that ACCESS/GRACE is convening an Interfaith Disaster Committee, which will choose a director for the cooperative local congregational response. This effort will take effect as emergency response agencies are completing their work in 3-4 weeks. In the meantime, **money may be donated** to Relief Funds, which will be announced. **Announcements about other needs, such as food, clothing, and volunteers, will follow only as needed.**
  - b. **When the Interfaith Disaster Committee is in place and has determined specific needs**, those needs will be announced to the media, denominational leadership, and individual congregations. Congregations will work with the director of the recovery effort to choose an appropriate area to provide support - - e.g. food, clothing, supplies, and volunteers. The community will also be encouraged to cooperate in this effort.
2. **To choose an additional role with the American Red Cross:**
  - a. Register the congregation facility as a shelter site **and/or**
  - b. Provide volunteers for emergency response. (The American Red Cross periodically provides training classes for volunteers to be ready for Red Cross emergency calls at any time, and will provide information to a congregation upon request.)
3. **To receive periodic information:** ACCESS and GRACE newsletters and . [www.accessofwestmichigan.org](http://www.accessofwestmichigan.org) or [www.graceoffice.org/cr](http://www.graceoffice.org/cr)

\* Christian Reformed World Relief Committee Disaster Response Services