

BENSON MEMORIAL UNITED METHODIST CHURCH DISASTER PLAN

SEPTEMBER 2022

The Benson Memorial UMC Disaster Plan serves as a guide for planning, responding to and recovering from a disaster. A disaster is defined as an event that negatively affects life, property, livelihood or industry that could result in permanent changes to human societies, eco systems and environment.

1. PREPARATION

The Board of Trustees is responsible for the development of the Disaster Plan and an annual review and update. The Plan must be approved by Church Council.

The Pastor and Church Council are responsible for updating the congregation about their roles/ responsibilities in the Disaster Plan at least annually.

The Pastor, staff, and church leaders are responsible for staying up to date on the Disaster Plan.

Worship Committee is responsible for the training of Ushers to include:

- evacuation procedures of building occupants
- designating the location for family reunification
- accounting for building occupants after evacuation
- obtaining first aid supplies
- use of AED.

**AED is a RED rectangular box and is located on the right wall of the ADMINISTRATION BUILDING as you enter through the double doors off the Courtyard.

- Trustees are responsible for
- providing training for Pastor, staff and ushers on the use of fire extinguishers
- maintaining first aid supplies in each building
- annually determining who among staff and congregation have current CPR training or first aid training
- maintaining current and appropriate property and liability insurance (annual review)
- maintaining and monitoring, an emergency lighting system, smoke and fire alarm system, functioning fire extinguishers, emergency phone system and the AED device located in the Administration Building
- arranging and completing an annual fire marshal inspection
- clearly marking shut off valves and power disconnects
- securing and maintaining designated documents and digital files.

Finance Committee is responsible for securing maintenance of financial records.

Congregation and persons authorized to use the campus are responsible for understanding the initial steps for disaster response.

2. IMPLEMENTATION OF DISASTER PLAN

The Pastor or designee is responsible for determining if a church service or event should be cancelled and if there is an immediate danger to building occupants. The pastor should notify Fire and Rescue services, Chair of Church Council, Chair of Trustees, the District Office and Insurance Agency.

The congregation should be notified by email, text or social media should activities be cancelled.

Information to external media should be provided by the Pastor.

Ushers

Evacuation of buildings during a church service should be managed by the Ushers according to the established evacuation plan. This plan is posted by the exit doors on an orange card. See Attachment 1.

Trustees

At least one Trustee should be assisting the Ushers to evacuate the buildings, and obtain needed first aid supplies.

All victims

After evacuation of the buildings, evacuees should await instructions by the Pastor and/or emergency personnel.

** Please allow properly trained emergency personnel to provide needed treatment or execute a complicated rescue.

3. RECOVERY FROM DISASTER

The Pastor or designee should assess the victims/evacuees to determine their need for assistance immediately and in the foreseeable future and provide for those needs if feasible.

The Pastor should be in contact with the District Superintendent as soon as possible regarding the disaster.

Pastoral duties should resume as soon as possible.

The congregation should be provided periodic updates about the recovery efforts.

The Trustees are responsible for conducting an initial assessment of church buildings and property and communicate the findings to the District Response Coordinator and District Superintendent.

Trustees may need to locate usable meeting space while building repairs are made.

If needed, securing church property to prevent further damage should be accomplished as soon as possible. Photos of damage should be completed before repairs or cleaning is initiated.

All congregants/occupants are responsible for following the instructions of the Pastor and Ushers.

The Pastor and Trustees Chair are responsible for determining if a service or event should be canceled. Messaging to the congregation should be accomplished by email, church website, Facebook, and Twitter. The Pastor and Trustee Chair are responsible for notifying Emergency Services (911), Church Council Chair, District Office, and the Insurance Agency.

EVACUATION PLAN

* Note that this information is on the orange cards at each exit *

THREATENING WEATHER (Tornado Warning, Severe Storms with High Winds)

ADMINISTRATION BUILDING

All persons go to the lower center hallway and close all doors. Use mobile devices to determine when the threat is no longer in the area and it is safe to exit

FELLOWSHIP HALL

All persons take shelter in Room 101 (Overflow), restrooms and close all doors. Use personal mobile devices to determine when the threat is no longer in the area and it is safe to exit.

SANCTUARY BUILDING

All persons should proceed to the lower level and wait in the choir room. Accesses to the lower level are

- through the Sacristy behind the wooden cross and down the steps
- through the choir loft door and down the steps
- at the back of the Sanctuary exit the door to the Narthex toward the courtyard and turn left to the door leading down the stairs to the choir room area. *Use this option only if it is safe based on weather conditions!*

Persons with mobility issues should exit the Sanctuary and take refuge in the bathroom on the right side of the Narthex and close the door.

Use mobile devices to determine when the threat is no longer in the area and it is safe to exit.

FIRE OR BOMB THREAT IN ANY BUILDING

ALL persons should evacuate the building and proceed to the back parking lot nearest the upper playground.

ACTIVE SHOOTER

Quickly find a place to hide. Be prepared to defend yourself against the shooter as a last resort. Do not leave the building unless or until you are instructed to do so by Ushers, staff or local authorities.

Chair, Trustees

Date