



Lutheran Disaster Response
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

Oregon Synod Assembly Report Region 1 Disaster Preparedness Project

Who actually thought as we met for a virtual Assembly in 2020 that we would be doing so again this year? Yet, here we are. We are blessed with technology and hearts longing to be together again – and so we shall be. Soon. Blessed be the Creator of all life!



In the year of COVID-19 my work has been to walk with you in disaster preparation and response. We've done a lot of response. The flooding of the Umatilla River in eastern Oregon brought hardship to families and businesses in both Oregon and Washington. A little over a year later the work continues with some 579 survivor families being served. Lutheran Disaster Response (LDR) is us, and Prs. Travis Larsen of Peace Lutheran in Pendleton, OR and Joel Ley of Christ Lutheran in Walla Walla, WA have been active with the Blue Mountain

Long-Term Recovery Group and Unmet Needs tables. LDR-US has invested \$10,000 to help pay a family case manager and consulted with us throughout the year. The work continues, but we are not alone. And, thanks in part to you, neither are the flood survivors.

In March 2020 the global pandemic locked our church and business doors, keeping us all home. No one knew what lay ahead. Lutheran Disaster Response was once again in our midst. Some \$125,000 was funneled through you and our five partner synods of Region 1. This money was intended for those impacted by COVID-19, being used for food cards, feeding programs and other assistance as you've seen fit. A new newsletter, the [Hammer and Dance](#), went into publication April of 2020. This Region 1 resource was created in response to needs encountered as we sought to navigate the COVID crisis. It has now matured into a congregational disaster preparedness newsletter. You can view it or subscribe at <https://www.region1beprepared.org/newsletters>

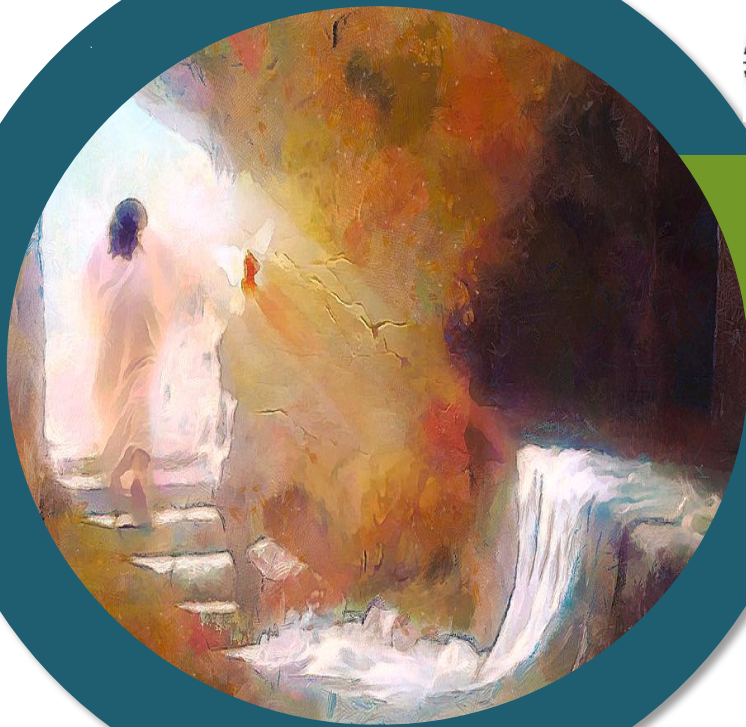
A wildfire season like no other took the homes of well over 4,000 families in Oregon and Washington this year. You have been there to help personally. Thank you! The Oregon Synod Disaster Team has worked with LDR-US, FEMA and the Oregon State VOAD (**V**oluntary **O**rganizations **A**ctive in **D**isaster) to serve survivors. We are now working with long-term recovery groups in 8 Oregon counties. LDR-US has once again provided training for local case managers and poured some \$30,000 into direct aid, supplementing your generosity for families in need. A special thanks to Jan Wierima, Charlene Larsen, and John Core for their disaster response leadership this year!

The Region 1 Disaster Preparedness Project is now one year old. It has been a busy year with more "response" than "preparation." The coming year, though, will be full of grace and opportunity. I look forward to working with you. Contact BePrepared@OregonSynod.org if you wish to join our congregational preparedness network.

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Region 1 Disaster Preparedness and Response
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ELCA REGION 1 HAMMER & DANCE

April 13, 2021

United for Ministry in the Days of COVID-19
Lutheran Social Service Agencies, Synods
and ELCA Church Members Together

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“He has risen, he has risen indeed. Alleluia!”

I hope you had a wonderful Easter. I did. Worship was still virtual, but there was beautiful music, a word of hope, sun, and familiar faces. We're getting there. Yes we are. We're getting there!

April and May are Synod Assembly months for most of us in Region 1. (Montana is the outlier meeting in June.) Between Easter, COVID vaccinations, the arrival of Spring and the fresh perspectives Assemblies bring I'm in a forward-looking kind of mood. I also have a new contract with Lutheran Disaster Response and am ready to kick our "Disaster Preparedness Project" into high gear. It's exciting.

Here, then, is to us – to our work, to possibilities, to the risen Lord Jesus Christ, to survivors of disasters in all places and times, and to those who wait to be told "It is well with your soul!"

Dave Brauer-Rieke



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We are ready for YOU!

May 22 Resurrection Lutheran in Portland, OR is holding a huge Disaster Preparedness drive-thru event. “No,” the church is not open yet. “No,” they don’t gather for face-to-face worship. “Yes,” they’re anxious to do so, but “Yes, Yes and Yes,” ministry continues. Nothing is standing in the way of ministry for Resurrection. They remain engaged, ready for action and on the move.

Resurrection is part of the Oregon Synod Disaster Preparedness Congregational Network. For a year plus they, and over a dozen other Oregon Synod congregations, have prayed together, imagined together, drawn names for free solar chargers together, and learned about disaster preparedness and response together. The network’s ministry is strong. Now it’s your turn.

The Oregon Synod network is beginning a transformation into a Region 1 wide network. From all over Alaska,

Washington, Montana, Oregon and Idaho we will be gathering together as congregations ready to develop disaster plans, build community, and learn how we can make a real difference for those around us. Here’s what we promise:

- Monthly events to walk with you through a step-by-step preparation curriculum.
- Pacific NW, Alaska and Montana specific disaster readiness awareness.
- New friends, broader horizons and a meaningful investment of your time and trust.
- Coaching. We’ll be available to your congregation between sessions if you have questions, ideas, or just need a little hand holding along the way.
- Connections with other vital ministries in your town, faith community and state.

Our question is “When?” We’re planning a curriculum that rotates through topics so that congregations can join, and finish, on their own schedule. It would be good to have the summer for planning and preparation. Does a Fall start sound right? Earlier? Please contact Region 1 Disaster Preparedness Project Manager Dave Brauer-Rieke at dave@climateimagination.com if you have thoughts on timing, questions or ideas.



Ride the Wave!

For only [\\$13,500 you too can be ready](#) for a Cascadia Subduction Zone tsunami. While not on the list of preparedness solutions Region 1 is pushing, where there's a will there's a way.

"It makes people uncomfortable to think about dying," says Long Beach, WA resident Jeanne Johnson, *"but I don't think about dying anymore. I think about having to get in here and locking the door!"*



Personal preparation for disaster is important. At the same time, you and your congregation may also feel a call to community action and a form of preparation that reaches out beyond your own needs.

Many of us are engaged in feeding ministries, or climate change and environmental work. You may be focused on anti-Racism efforts or Stephen Ministries, parish nursing or housing issues. Jeanne may too! No matter what your calling is, though, it likely overlaps with questions and opportunities for systemic disaster preparedness.

This year we in Region 1 we will be working together to explore and strengthen such basic ministers. Your voice, your passion and your commitment are valued and appreciated. Watch the [Hammer and Dance](#) as well as your own synod newsletters for training and cross talk events. Together we will ride the wave of possibilities!



Ecumenical Advocacy Days

It's not too late to sign up for the Ecumenical Advocacy Days Annual Convention. Learn, Connect and Act with ELCA Lutherans and Christians from around the county. [Imagine God's Earth and People Restored.](#)

Worship Videos Now Available!

Sunday, April 18 worship videos are now available for local churches to access for streaming or downloading. A full worship video as well as individual component videos are [available here.](#)



It is kind of cool looking! <g>

Rise Up! – The Way of New Life

3rd Sunday of Easter, April 18, 2021 – [Luke 24:36b-48](#) **Know Fear**



“Why are you frightened, and why do doubts arise in your hearts?” The risen Jesus appears to his disciples. He greets them with “Peace,” and they are afraid. *“Why are you frightened?”* Indeed, why are we frightened? It's not that we shouldn't be afraid. It's just that we should know why we fear. Once we know we can reconnect to the root – where perfect love drives out fear.



4th Sunday of Easter, April 25, 2021 – [John 10:11-18](#) **Stand Firm**

“I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.” Might there be fear when the wolf endangers the fold? Of course there is! Jesus says the hired hand runs away because he doesn't care. The shepherd cares, and once again perfect love drives fear away. The sheep survive. We live!



5th Sunday of Easter, May 2, 2021 – [John 15:1-8](#) – **Hold On**

“Abide in me as I abide in you.” Once again with the fear. (We're on a roll!) “Abide in.” Stay connected.” “Root firmly in love.” Vines get pruned. There's a reason for that. When our lives get pruned it can hurt and offend. Yet, if the roots are strong – if we abide in Jesus as Jesus holds on to us – all will be well.



6th Sunday of Easter, May 9, 2021 – [John 15:9-17](#) – **Stay Rooted**

“I have said these things to you so that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be complete.” And how do we abide in love? Jesus instructs us to *“keep the commandments.”* Don't assume, though, that Jesus means the “Ten Commandments” as if the commandments were a concise guide for life. Not at all.

The commandments are a system, a safety net, a covenant to assure the health and wellbeing of all people. The commandments are God's loving embrace around the weak and marginalized. *“This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you.”* says Jesus. Yep, that's the deal!!





You're being watched

March 23 twenty-two Region 1 bishops, synodical VOAD representatives, VPs, DEMs and disaster preparedness leaders convened a meeting around the topic, **“What have we learned from COVID-19?”** It was an engaging 90 minutes!

- In the upper left-hand corner of the board are 7 notes which might be summarized by **“A smaller synod.”** The general theme here is a *greater connectivity* that we have developed virtually. How will we discern what to do virtually and what to do face to face in the months to come?
- Below this cluster are 4 notes which do not cluster well, but in some ways support the same theme.
- To the center-top of the board are 4 notes articulating gains in **“Systemic Resiliency”**. This is amazing! **How is it that crises and the need for rapid adaptation increases resiliency?** I would suggest this question for consideration by your synod council or staff.
- In the upper right-hand corner are another 4 notes around the theme of **“Collaboration.”** Certainly, greater collaboration leads to greater resiliency. **Where is this collaboration happening? To whom can it be further extended? How do we nurture it?**
- Below Superman's confident profile is a cluster of 9 notes which seem to shout out **“Adaptability”** and **“Nimbleness.”** Sub-themes here have to do with the ability to identify needs quickly, clarify priorities and pivot smoothly.

We know the past year has been challenging for all of us. It has been hard on families and children unable to attend school in person. Many of us have lost jobs. Congregations have struggled valiantly to keep worship vital and available – and add to that the thousands of people who lost their homes to wildfire this last fall. Sometimes it is easy to miss new growth and the great work you've done.



[The group did a virtual Jamboard exercise.](#) Dave Brauer-Rieke summarize their observations in his report back from the meeting. (Left column.) You may be surprised by their insights. Your courage, growth and leaning have not been lost on leadership.

Now is indeed the time to turn our back out to those around us. We know the need for disaster preparation. Let's pursue it! Resiliency has been growing among us, even in the midst of confusion. Let's grab it! The Region 1 Disaster Preparedness Project is just getting started. You are a vital part of our future!

[Subscribe the Hammer and Dance now to get connected.](#)