

# Disaster Response Plan for the



*NEW YORK CONFERENCE UNITED  
CHURCH OF CHRIST*

2004

# **NEW YORK CONFERENCE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**

## **Disaster Response Plan**

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# **A DISASTER RESPONSE PLAN**

## **INTRODUCTION**

When we hear the word "disaster", it is common to think about floods, earthquakes, or hurricanes. Yes, these natural disasters are on the list, but so are human-made situations such as nuclear accidents, large-scale crashes, or the release of toxic fumes. Bomb threats, civil disturbances, uncontrolled riots or workplace violence can be a disaster also. One way to define a disaster would be "an event that seriously disrupts normal living patterns for a large number of people."

Disasters happen. People die. People lose their homes, jobs, and parts of their lives from which memories are made. As the church, what should we do? There is no doubt that disasters cause a great deal of human suffering. That fact alone calls us to respond. How we do that is what this document is about. Disasters impact people, institutions, and communities. Bringing relief, assistance, and restoration of what may have been previously "normal", calls for a commitment and dedication of a wide variety of societal forces. Faith-based organizations are uniquely qualified to respond to disasters.

The New York Conference of the United Church of Christ seeks to be an instrument of aid to those suffering from loss and an effective vehicle by which member churches can channel their individual and corporate responses. The following is a plan for disaster response for this church entity.

## **Mission Statement**

The New York Conference Disaster Response Ministry seeks to bring relief and assistance to all people who experience loss in times of disaster, whether or not officially declared by governmental agencies. Through the sharing of resources and commitment, members of the United Church of Christ become "God's servants in the service of humankind."

## **Theological Basis**

When disasters occur among those whom Jesus called our "neighbors", we have ample reason to assist them in their recovery.

In Luke 10:25-37, known as Jesus' Parable of the Good Samaritan, we read, "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength and with all your mind; and love your neighbor as yourself." When asked, "Who is my neighbor?" Jesus answered by telling the parable. Then Jesus asked who acted like a neighbor toward the unfortunate man. The man answered, "The one who was kind (to the victim). Jesus replied, "You go then and do the same."

In James 2:14-17 we are reminded that unless our faith includes acts of kindness to those who are in need, our faith is dead. Our call by God is to serve. Our service is a gift to all, regardless of race, religion, class, gender or political affiliation.

## **THE DISASTER RESPONSE MINISTRY (Structure and Authority)**

Disaster Response will be an active ministry of the New York Conference. The ministry will be a part of the Commission of the Global Church with the Wider Church Ministry of the Conference. A Disaster Response Coordinator will administer the ministry across the Conference. A trained Disaster Response Team, consisting of Regional Managers and the Conference Disaster Response Coordinator, will carry out the ongoing operation. (See chart below)

### **A. Local Coordinators**

The New York Conference encourages each local congregation or group of contiguous congregations to assess the disaster potential and community response resources and to prepare a plan of action and identify the persons who would carry out the plan.

### **B. Regional Managers**

Eight or more people (including Regional Conference Ministers) will be recruited and trained to serve as Regional Managers. One or more will commit to the task of going to a disaster site within the New York Conference or establish a credible contact in order to facilitate effective UCC relief efforts. This person's responsibilities will include obtaining factual understanding about the scope of the disaster, what and where help is needed, being a participant in any ecumenical relief efforts, the recruitment and coordination of volunteers, and administration of the distribution of supplies. The Regional Manager will establish a relationship with local relief agencies such as the Red Cross and Salvation Army.

### **C. Conference Disaster Response Coordinator**

This person will coordinate all efforts of disaster related work in the New York Conference. Responsibilities will include working with the Regional Managers on the Disaster Response Team, developing ecumenical relationships for cooperative work, and cataloging all resources that could be utilized hi time of disaster.

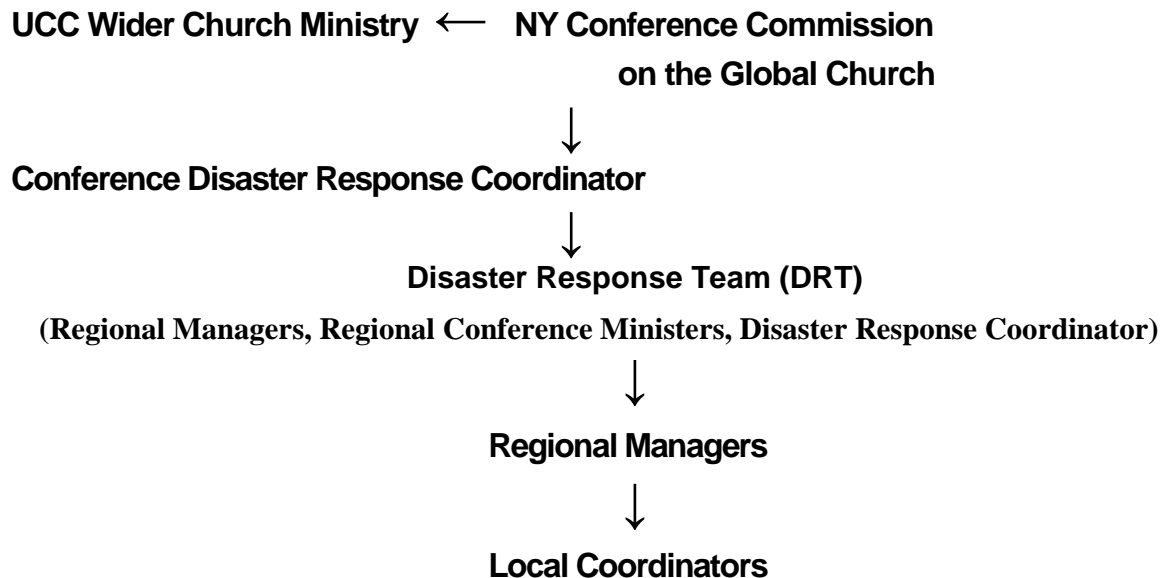
### **D. Disaster Response Team**

The Conference Disaster Response Coordinator and Regional Managers will constitute the Disaster Response Team (DRT). The responsibilities of the DRT are to develop the ministry of disaster response throughout the Conference and select one of the team to act as administrator for a particular disaster response effort. Developing the ministry includes widespread education, recruitment and training of Local Coordinators, and developing good communication efforts.

When any disaster event occurs within the New York Conference, a member of the DRT will visit the site or establish credible contact to determine the circumstances and where help is needed. These details will be reported to the Conference Coordinator who will take appropriate action to the extent possible. Funds might be required to purchase supplies, pastoral care for grief counseling, technical expertise or volunteer labor could be made available if needed. Having the resources from the Local Coordinators catalogued is crucial in developing an effective response.

By establishing this ministry, the New York Conference is making a commitment to be a vital and active member of the faith community of this state and to the New York State Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (NYVOAD). We commit to be partners with other members in this faith-based community and especially with the national setting of the United Church of Christ. Recognizing this, we will be prepared to respond when called by our partners and our denominational sisters and brothers.

### **ORGANIZATIONAL CHART**



### **DEVELOPING THE MINISTRY**

There are two phases in the development of the ministry for a Disaster Response Plan: 1) Education, Recruitment and Training and 2) Evaluation and Ongoing Planning.

The major objectives of a disaster response Education are:

- a. To develop a plan of awareness-building and preparedness among the members of local United Church of Christ congregations.
- b. To publish and distribute to every local church a manual which describes the New York Conference Emergency Disaster Response Plan.

The key aspect of the Conference Disaster Education Program is the **Recruitment and Training** of a Local Church Coordinator. This will be done by means of training workshops or a self-study training program. Coordinators will help church people learn the best ways to respond to disaster - as volunteers, participating in kit preparation, counseling, providing transportation, assisting with housing or food preparation.

The Evaluation and Ongoing Planning phase would take place within three months of a disaster. Conference Coordinators and Local Coordinators meet to determine the effectiveness of the response effort.

The evaluation should include, but is not limited to, the following:

#### **Initial Response**

- How did notification on all levels take place?
- What changes are needed to improve the response?
- Was communication adequate?

#### **Finances**

- How did the appeal for disaster funding take place?
- Was the flow of disaster-designated funds clear to all UCC instrumentalities?

#### **Material Resources**

- How successful was the appeal for materials?
- Was the information for the "flow" of material resources clear and adequate?  
(source, destination, transportation, storage, security access)

#### **Human Resources**

- Evaluate volunteer experiences (skills needed, leadership, work place conditions)

#### **Other Agencies**

- Evaluate experiences with other agencies such as NYVOAD (New York Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster with sub-VOADS for New York City), American Red Cross, SEMA (State Emergency Management Agency) Church World Service, and the UCC Wider Church Ministry.

The above information and evaluation should be prepared as a formal report by the Conference Disaster Response Coordinator and Local Coordinators where the disaster occurred.

## **RESPONSE OPERATIONS AND RESPONSIBILITY**

### ***A. Preparedness***

As the church, we are commissioned to be holistic in our approach to disaster response. This means helping to:

- **Educate** people about disasters and appropriate response
- **Prevent** human-caused technological/environmental disasters
- **Mitigate** or lessen dangers of disasters that may occur
- **Respond** to human need in a coordinated and cooperative way with other community response
- **Prepare** for disaster and recovery of survivors
- **Evaluate** the response

The New York Conference urges each local congregation to:

- Assess the disaster possibilities and community response resources and to prepare a plan of action for response (including working with other congregations)
- Adopt a disaster plan based on local needs and resources
- Designate one person to be trained and to act as the Local Church Disaster Response Coordinator
- Participate with the Conference in preparing and responding to disasters

The Conference, through activities of the Conference Disaster Response Coordinator and Team will:

- Work with the Local Church Disaster Response Coordinator
- Provide routine and ongoing training
- Provide educational and promotional materials concerning disaster preparedness and response
- Assist congregations, if requested, in assessing the risks of disaster in a community.

### ***B. Emergency***

When a disaster strikes a community, church members can respond best with appropriate material aid, financial contributions, and by offering volunteer services. Money is the most useful, portable and needed resource in any disaster. Unrestricted donations to the New York Conference, designated "Disaster Fund", allow for the best response to whatever human need arises. Donations may also be sent to the UCC Global Sharing of Resource Ministry Team or to Church World Service.

In any disaster persons are needed to contribute time, labor and skills. From debris removal to construction to casework, disaster response depends upon willing volunteers. Local Coordinators are encouraged to identify persons or groups who could respond to disasters. Youth or adult work crews for disaster response can be formed. Trained work crews can be formed to deal with material management, child care and other areas of need.

### ***C. Relief and Response***

The assigned Regional Manager becomes the Disaster Coordinator of a particular incident in cooperation with Local Coordinators. The Regional Manager will need to organize communications, resources to facilitate communication, and any secretarial or bookkeeping services. There will be a very large amount of telephone and email traffic. Developing local resources for feeding and housing of incoming volunteers will be important. Depending on the disaster, it will also be important to develop contacts with government, health and building officials.

Keeping notes on, or tape recording stories of victim's or survivors and what happened in the response experience is important. This information will be important for the Conference Disaster Response Team. Take photographs or videotapes of the damage and later progress. Be sensitive to the plight of the victims.

"Publicity" communication is an important part of relief assistance. T-shirts or caps for volunteers, labels affixed to "gift-of-the-heart" kits (see appendix) with labels such as "United Church of Christ, Disaster Relief Assistance, New York Conference" can bring awareness of the church's involvement in service.

Pastoral Care of those affected by the disaster is a very important component of any response to disaster by the church. The Disaster Response Team will work in cooperation with the Commission on the Global Church and the conference staff to identify and coordinate the work of qualified pastoral counselors, hi this way the DRT will seek to meet the spiritual and emotional needs of victims, their families as well as disaster response workers.

### ***D. Recovery***

Critical to recovery is an ecumenical and interfaith community response to the disaster. In cooperation and through coordinated efforts avoiding competition and duplication of services, the community is best served.

## **RESPONSE FOR A TECHNOLOGICAL DISASTER**

A technological disaster can be overwhelming for a local community. Traditional helping organizations and social service agencies may be unprepared or unable to assist. These disasters can be politically charged and can affect various parts of society in different ways. It is the church's mission to respond whenever a crisis - natural or technological - effects people's lives.

Church World Service and the United Church of Christ, a member of Church World Service, have created a Resource Unit on Technological Disasters. The purpose of the Resource Unit is to assist denominations, faith-based organizations, clergy and laity helping in our communities in dealing with technological disasters.

In a technological disaster, a committee assisted by the CWS-UCC Resource Unit for Technological Disaster will determine strategies around three aspects:

- 1. Listening**
- 2. Responding**
- 3. Organizing**

Convening a "Hearing", representatives from the state legislature, local governments and community organizations will be called upon to listen to those directly affected by the local technological disaster. Secondly, a chosen scribe will respond by listing the needs, feelings and findings that are discovered. Based on these needs, the local interfaith or community group will organize to determine its response, including priorities, resources and structure.

The manual/workbook, "**VOICES TO HOPE, EARS TO LISTEN**" and its companion resource, "**THE SILENT DISASTER: PEOPLE OF FAITH RESPOND**", shall be used by the committee working in the area of the technological disaster.

Soon after a major disaster occurs, a Church World Service Disaster Response and Recovery Liaison (DRRL) will become involved. Working together with other VOADS (Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster) can be a rich experience. With these organizations and with as many other organizations and other segments of the community represented, a local Interfaith Disaster Response Organization should be formed, if such a group does not already exist.

From this group an Unmet Needs Committee should be formed to monitor the process of addressing all the needs of every pocket of the community. Specific attention should be given to special needs populations, such as the undocumented, the elderly, the handicapped and the powerless of society.

Finally, these organizations need to look seriously at plans for future prevention and mitigation of the effects of disaster events.

## **FISCAL MATTERS**

Disasters have occurred and will occur in New York State. Funds for immediate disaster-related expenses need to be made available. A budget line in the New York Conference Wider Church Ministry account can hold conference funds, donations, and grant money.

There are multiple sources and uses of funds in disaster events. For the United Church of Christ typical sources of money would be:

- The Wider Church Ministry of the national setting of the United Church of Christ. When a conference minister reports fiscal needs, this office will forward funds to the requesting conference.
- Church World Service-Disaster Response Office may provide limited funding. This office makes funding available through written appeals from a Disaster Resource Consultant, and directs the funds to an ecumenical group in the region of the disaster. Church World Service gives up to \$5,000 for start up funds.
- Other conferences may send funds to the affected conference.
- Residual funds left over from previous disasters may be made available.
- Individuals and churches will often respond generously to the affected conference or directly to affected UCC churches. The New York Conference shall have a budget line for disaster response.

Publicity of a disaster will lead to response. When an appeal is made for funds, it is essential that clear instructions be given. For example the disaster should be named, the use of funds identified, how the check should be designated and where it should be sent, should be included. Being able to accept credit card donations by phone and email is also advisable.

The Disaster Response Team is the conference entity that would be most aware of financial and material needs. The protocol for all withdrawals of disaster expenses would be guided by an approval process that the DRT has established in conjunction with the Commission on the Global Church and the New York Conference Executive Council.

- Disaster recovery funds are donated to the Disaster Response Fund of the New York Conference to alleviate the suffering of families, individuals or groups/non profit organizations in a community or church affected by the disaster.
- The Disaster Response Team will determine specific limits for appeals from individuals, churches and non-UCC churches or non-faith based agencies, excluding businesses. These amounts may differ from disaster to disaster.
- Appeals for aid shall be directed to the disaster Response Team in the form of a request stating who is affected, the specific needs to be addressed, the monetary amount of the request and how it will be used.

- The Disaster Response Team will request funds from the Business Manager of the New York Conference.
- The Disaster Response Team will make regular, detailed reports on the funds expended for each disaster to the Business Manager and to the Executive Council.

## DISASTER RESPONSE TEAM CONFERENCE AND REGIONAL COORDINATORS

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# **One Great Hour of Sharing: Educational Experiences for Church Groups**

**When Disaster Strikes  
The Uprooted Game Simulation  
Gifts of the Heart Kits for Church World Service**

**Developed by the Global Sharing of Resources Team  
Team Leader: Susan Sanders  
National Disaster Ministries: Florence Coppola  
Refugee Ministries: Mary Kuenning Gross, Naima Quarks-Burnley  
Volunteer Ministries: Katherine C. Ackley**

**The One Great Hour of Sharing Offering** helps people in need:

- Feed and support themselves and their families
- Learn new skills and trades
- Obtain better health care
- Find a safe refuge in order to start their lives again
- See hope in the face of disaster
- Survive and work toward a better life

The following education experiences are designed to give groups (ages 8 and older) an understanding of the needs of persons the OGHs offering helps to address, including disaster, displacement, and recovery from personal loss. Groups may wish to use one or more of these educational experiences in settings such as Sunday school, confirmation, mission interpretation workshops, and leadership retreats. Allow at least 15 minutes for each segment. If the group is over 24 people, divide the group into three smaller groups and have them rotate to each experience. After each group has experienced the sessions, gather for reflections and a closing prayer.

## **When Disaster Strikes**

**Goal:** To help participants learn what happens to their life when a disaster strikes, and what immediate steps to take following a disaster.

**Materials Needed:** pieces of wood; pieces of fabric (one set for each table of participants); envelopes; Action Checklist (see below); index cards; pictures of houses, cars, plates and cups, computer, pets (dogs or cats), money, newspapers, cell phone, regular phone, coffee pots(one set for each table of participants); toy tools (symbols of damage to home and tools needed for repairs); a world globe; a map of any town (real or fictitious); a weather forecast for next day. The map can be computer generated, purchased from a store or hand drawn. The weather forecast can be computer generated or cut from newspaper. Prepare one envelope for each table by placing in it the pictures and 10 index cards on which are printed in large block letters the Action Checklist sentences below, using one card per sentence.

***Church World Serve Action Checklist***

- Call 911 or "O" for operator to report disaster.
- Give required first aid to self, family members, and neighbors
- Locate close family members to assure their safety and whereabouts
- Contact church pastor or other church leaders
- Contact local chapter of American Red Cross
- Major Disaster: contact local or regional ministerial association
- Major Disaster: contact church World Service state or regional disaster volunteer
- Major Disaster: contact your conference disaster coordinator
- Major Disaster: contact regional or state council of churches, ecumenical or interfaith organizations
- Major Disaster: contact Church World Service Emergency Response Program Office.

**Room Arrangement:** two 6' or 8' tables in front of room where display materials are placed, including the world globe (United States and Puerto Rico facing participants). Round table and chairs for eight participants at each table. Display town map and weather forecast on wall.

**Participant Materials (one set on each table):** Place a small scrap of fabric, a small piece of wood, a toy tool and one envelope containing the pictures and Church World Service Action Checklist index cards on each table.

**Leader's Materials:** Church World Service Action Checklist; Leader's script outline (see below).

**Leader's Script Outline:** (Note: the workshop is intended to move rapidly through a scenario, talking about objects in the pictures, and sorting cards into correct order of action)

- ① Introduce self.
- ① Read scripture related to disaster and offer a prayer.
- ① Explain scenario: A small tornado hits Anywhere, USA. Many homes are damaged. It is the "morning after" and you are in your home. It has sustained some damage. Point out the items on the table including the wood, fabric and tools that symbolize the property damage and need for repairs. (Note: Remember that there may be some persons in the workshop who are survivors of a disaster. Mention that even though this experience is a simulation, we know that disasters are always serious and change people's lives forever.)
- ① Invite each group to work as a "family" unit.
- ① Ask the group to open the envelope and place pictures on the table. Ask them to quickly review the photos together as you describe each one using the script below. Keep your statements short and to the point, moving rapidly through the photos. The purpose is to give participants a quick glimpse of life following a disaster. Then ask the participants to find a photo that has some significance for them.

**Photos:**

- **House:** this is a picture of your house, however, it is now damaged; part of the roof is missing and some windows are broken. Point out tomorrow's weather forecast of thunderstorms and note that it is probable the roof won't be fixed by then.
- **Car:** this is a picture of your car, however, you can't go anywhere because trees and power lines are down.

- **Money:** you have some cash in the house but the stores are closed and, if they were open, you couldn't drive there because of the downed power lines.
- **Pet:** your pet needs to be fed. Do you have any pet food in the house?
- **Plate and cup:** there's a lot of broken dishes.
- **Coffee maker:** good thing you made a pot of coffee the night before, even though it's cold now!
- **Newspaper:** you have yesterday's paper to read. There will be no delivery today.
- **Phone:** doesn't work. No electricity, phone lines are down.
- **Cell phone:** lucky for you, if you have one!
- **Computer:** doesn't work, no electricity.
- **Pad of paper and pencil:** great for making lists of things to do and no electricity is required.

Ask each group to remove index cards from the envelope. Give them 3-5 minutes to put the sentences in the correct order. The index cards have the statements from the Church World Service Action Checklist. Review correct order with the whole group and use the annotations below to discuss.

**Call 911 or "O" for operator to report disaster.** Only works if you have a cell phone. You may need to go to a neighbor's house to find a phone.

**Give required first aid to yourself, family members, and neighbors.** Do you have a well-stocked first aid kit in your home? Do an inventory once a month and replace used items.

**Locate close family members to assure their safety and whereabouts.** Do you have a designated area to meet in case of disaster?

**Contact church pastor or other church leaders.** Does your church have a disaster plan? Are there designated people to call for assistance?

**Contact local chapter of American Red Cross.** Why? Because they can provide food and temporary shelter, if needed.

**Major Disaster:** contact local or regional ministerial association. May be able to help you find needed resources such as transportation, shelter, food, clothing.

**Major Disaster:** contact Church World Service state or regional disaster volunteer. Do an immediate assessment of needs and help organize the community.

**Major Disaster:** contact your conference disaster coordinator to provide assistance through the UCC conference and national office (i.e., spiritual support, financial support), when appropriate.

**Major Disaster:** contact regional or state council of churches, ecumenical or interfaith organizations to ask what kind of response is being organized in order to know where to offer help or how to ask for assistance.

**Major Disaster:** contact Church World Service Emergency Response Program Office. May send a disaster resource consultant to organize an interfaith response and help to make long-term recovery plans.

Respond to questions.

- Distribute additional resources such as Prepare to Care, and The Silent Disaster which are available from National Disaster Ministries (216-736-3211 or [coppolaf@ucc.org](mailto:coppolaf@ucc.org)).
- Close with prayer.

## The Uprooted Game Simulation

**Goal:** This interactive game, designed for ten to fifty participants, helps participants understand some of the realities faced by refugees and to heighten awareness and concern for resettlement of refugees in the United States through the United Church of Christ. Allow 15 minutes to play. You will need at least three persons to facilitate the game.

**Materials Needed:** "The Uprooted Game" is available from United Church of Christ Resources, Inc. (1-800-325-7061). Enlarge the game board using the copying machine enlarging function; five copies of the refugee stories, pictures and/or posters of refugees are available from the UCC Refugee Ministries office or your local Refugee Affiliate office; signs using the words and phrases relating to root causes of refugee flight, one for each word (see list below); signs with the names or pictures of items refugees would take with them, one for each word (see list below); an assortment of items for display (optional) such as blankets, buckets, soap, pots, photos, dolls, can and dried foods, bottled water; a large sign that says, "This is a Refugee Camp!" "You are a Refugee!"; copies of the closing prayer for participants.

**Items a refugee would take with them when given just moments to escape:**

baby, water, pots and pans, rice, blanket, bucket, money, shoes, coat, soap, food, matches, eating utensils, children, photos, ID, passport, first aid kit, hat, birth certificate, clothing, plastic, address book.

**Root causes of refugee flight:** civil war, ethnic cleansing, population growth, land scarcity, disease, unsustainable development, environmental decline, ethnic disputes, political manipulation, illiteracy, water scarcity, decertification.

**Room Arrangement:** Hang the large sign that says, "This is a Refugee Camp! You are a Refugee!" on the door or at the entrance of your room. Display the signs with the words or pictures of the items listed. Hang these words or pictures randomly on the walls along with the pictures of the refugees. If you opt to use the actual items, they should be strewn about the room in a disorderly way. Place only a few chairs so that no more than a third of the participants can sit down.

**Instructions for Pre-Game Narrative:** The three organizers should divide up the speaking parts or identify three to four readers to read each of the life stories of real refugees and asylum seekers. You need a Narrator/Announcer and several readers. As people come into the room, greet them by saying, "This is a refugee camp, you are a refugee!" or "This is a refugee journey to hope. You are a refugee!" Once most of the people are assembled the Narrator begins.

**Narrator:** The mission of the UCC Refugee Ministries office is to involve, encourage, and accompany local churches and their members in the life transforming ministry of refugee resettlement as they journey toward an understanding of the plight of refugees and a compassionate response. Our donations to One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS) also help to support refugees overseas and those resettled in the United States.

This is a refugee's journey to hope. You are a refugee! Who is considered to be a refugee? It is a person who flees their country because they fear persecution due to their race, religion, nationality, political opinion or membership in a particular social group.

There are many causes that create refugees. Are there any volunteers to help us identify some of the root causes that create refugees that are listed on the walls? (*Pause to let the volunteers share with the group.*) These are some of the many forces that cause people to choose to flee their homes and face an uncertain future. One out of every fifty persons worldwide is a refugee or an international migrant.

There are 14 million refugees in the world and 21 million internally displaced persons. That means 35 million people are uprooted from their homes. The World Council of Churches prefers to use the terminology "uprooted people" to refer to people living in refugee-like situations. In 1997 the WCC called upon the global church to risk being with uprooted people and to recognize the rise in xenophobia that makes uprooted people more vulnerable.

Internal, armed conflict-civil war is the dominant contributor to populations movements. Since 1945, there have been over 130 wars. 23 million people have died due to fighting and 40 million have died due to war-related famine and illness. "With such deadly wars the world's refugees have good reason to flee," Hal Kane from "Forces That Create Refugees and Migrants" said. **(Say boldly) "Is anybody listening? Does anybody really care?"** Listen to the story of Rahim (taken from "The Uprooted Game").

**Reader #1:** Rahim converted from Islam to Christianity. His own family in Pakistan rejected him. He was beaten, imprisoned, tortured and his life was threatened. He escaped his country and made his way to the U.S. He now requests asylum in the U.S. and waits to discover if he will be deported or granted asylum and a new life.

**Narrator: Is anybody listening? Does anybody really care?** Listen to the story of Isaiah.

**Reader #2:** Isaiah was a human rights lawyer in Nigeria. He was saddened to see the rightfully elected President Abiola put in jail by the military in 1993 and replace by Gen. Abacha. He wrote letters to the editor in the newspaper objecting to the violation of democratic process. Isaiah was imprisoned and tortured for two weeks. He escaped his country and while in exile he continues to speak out and work for freedom in his homeland.

**Narrator: Is anybody listening? Does anybody really care?** Listen to the story of Yang.

**Reader #3:** Yang is a young Tibetan woman who was born in India. Her parents became refugees when China took over Tibet. She has been a refugee all of her life. She participated in demonstrations against the Chinese government when they visited India. She was arrested along with other students and put under house arrest. Thousands of other Tibetans are refugees in India, too. They long for justice.

**Narrator: Is anybody listening? Does anybody really care?** Listen to the story of Kemal.

**Reader #4:** Kemal, a young Bosnian Muslim man, missed four years of school during the war with the Serbs and Croatians in the former Yugoslavia. Soldiers entered his village

and the men escaped in the forest. He survived there for a month before he was captured. His cousin was shot, and Kemal was taken captive for six months in a concentration camp. The International Red Cross intervened and Kemal was resettled to the United States with a church in Minnesota.

**Narrator:** All refugees fear persecution in their home countries, making them unable to return. You are a refugee! Your life is in danger! They are coming to get you! You must flee your home! Quickly, I need five (*this number could be greater or lesser depending on the size of your group*) volunteers to be heads of households! Heads of households please come up to the front immediately to receive your instructions! We must get out of here; we do not have much time!

Each head of household, get your family together. You have 30 seconds to gather your personal belongings and any supplies. Choose from the items listed on the wall and get in line!

**Instructions for Walking through the Game:** Families should line up to begin the path on the game floor and travel together the journey of the refugee through mountain passes, security checkpoints, burning villages, poisoned wells, landmines to the refugee camps and an uncertain future. One volunteer should check the items taken from the wall and make sure they have a birth certificate, ID or Passport. If they do not have any of these items or they have a multiple of these items (ask them to put multiples back), they must go to the end of the line. If they have proper ID, roll the dice and let them advance. After going through the checkpoint, they walk through the game as a family. When they arrive in the refugee camp, one of the volunteers should roll the dice to learn of the future of the family - an indefinite stay in the refugee camp, returning home after the war or resettlement to another country.

**Note:** The leader needs to encourage the "refugees" to move quickly as they leave their village. There is not much time. It's dangerous to remain there. Once everyone has moved through the game board, ask for a moment of silence, then read the scripture.

**Narrator:** "The sojourner has not lodged in the street. I have opened my doors to the wayfarer." (Job 31:32)

**All:** Open my eyes that they may see the deepest  
Needs of men and women: Move my hands that  
They may feed the hungry. Touch my heart that it  
May bring warmth to the despairing; Teach me the  
generosity that welcomes strangers

*Canaan Banana, Zimbabwe*

**Suggestions:** In order to stay within the fifteen minute time frame, you will probably only be able to read three of the four stories. If you have more time, read all four. If you want to further dramatize the families' journey, you can play a soundtrack of war sounds and flicker the lights. Please set out the brochures of the Refugee Resettlement Ministry: Welcoming Uprooted People.

### Gift of the Heart Kits

**Goal:** To assemble "Gift of the Heart" kits for Church World Service to be used as a vital part of recovery efforts after disaster, famine, war, and other crises around the world.

**Materials Needed:** Contents for kits (see attached list from Church World Service). Plastic gallon-sized ziplock bags for Health Kits. Prior to the session, invite participants to collect the items for one or more of the kits or provide an offering to purchase items. Often items can be purchased in larger quantities at discount stores.

**Room Arrangement:** In a large room arrange several 6' or 8' tables in a U-shape. Tape signs to the wall above the tables about 3' to 4' apart for each of the items in the kit you will be assembling. Place those items on the tables under the signs. Arrange an empty table in the center of the room where persons can place completed kits.

**Instructions:** Share with the group the purpose of this experience. Tell the stories of how kits sent to Honduras and Nicaragua were a vital part of the recovery effort following Hurricane Mitch. In Kosovo families faced an uncertain future and a harsh winter during the civil war. In Tucumcari, New Mexico, the eager minds of homeless children welcomed School Kits to start the school year. In Belle Valley, Ohio, 175 families displaced by floods were assisted with Health and Clean-up Kits.

Invite the group to move from table to table in an assembly line, picking up each item for a kit and wrapping it as described on the attached sheet. Place items in the plastic gallon ziplock bags. When all the kits are assembled, pack and send them to Church World Service using the instructions provided. Complete the following coupons and send with your check and kits.

Note: Kits are sent to New Windsor, MD and processing/shipping checks are sent to Elkhart, IN.

Complete and include with your shipment of Kits

Congregation/group:  
Contact person: \_\_\_  
Address:  
City/State/Zip:  
Phone No.

Indicate the amounts you wish to designate:

Processing/shipping:	\$_
Gift of the Heart Kit Purchase	\$_
Total	\$

Make checks payable to Church World Service and send to:  
Church World Service  
28606 Phillips Street  
Elkhart, IN 46515

**Notes:**