MORAVIAN DISASTER RESPONSE

Hurricane Harvey and Irma Response

Please share this information broadly and with individuals in congregations. The information below is an update on the current response of MDR as we monitor the beginning stages of recovery in Texas from Harvey, the anticipation of further damage from Hurricane Irma, and listen to the potential impact of Hurricanes Jose and Katia close behind.

NOTE: The BWM will be putting out a further update on Saturday afternoon so the most up to date information can be shared with congregations in worship this Sunday.

Additionally, the adapted liturgy for Intercession in a Time of Crisis can be found on the BWM Website (www.MoravianMission.org), or emailed by request to Justin@MoravianMission.org

Hurricane Irma

At the writing of this update, the Board of World Mission (BWM) has just received initial word from our partners in the Eastern West Indies province following the passing of Hurricane Irma. This province includes nearly 50 congregations on the islands of Antigua, Barbados, St. Croix, St. John, St. Kitts, St. Thomas, Tobago and Trinidad, with mission outreach to the islands of Tortola, St. Maarten, and Grenada.

Much of this area was in the direct path of the storm, and the BWM received some pictures of the damage on St. Thomas late Wednesday, September 6th from a Moravian family on that island. The BWM expects to hear from members of the churches in this province as soon as power, phone and internet service are returned. We ask for your prayers as we wait, hoping for the best possible news given the circumstances. There have been reports of very heavy damage from this Category 5 storm.

We are now monitoring the path of the storm, and have been in communication with the Moravian Churches in Haiti as well as Cuba to share our support, and be ready to answer any calls for aid after the passing of the storm. The Church in Cuba has decided to plan to go ahead with beginning Synod on Tuesday morning. Representatives of the BWM and the Armando Rusindo Mission Foundation (ARMF) will be traveling on Monday morning if flight schedules allow to be a part of that Synod. Two members of ARMF are already on the ground in Cuba, and traveled 12 hours overnight on a bus to head West to Havana to try and avoid the storm as much as possible. Prayers are requested for all those planning to travel to Synod, and for this event, the first as a Mission Province for the Moravian Church in Cuba.
Additionally, the BWM has been in contact with the Southern Province, and reached out to share our support and share our readiness to respond with congregations in Florida as we await further updates on the path of the storm.

**Hurricane Harvey**
The BWM is gaining traction on a plan for responding to Hurricane Harvey. This weekend a team from the Unity of the Brethren Church will be able to visit Port Arthur, Texas and assess the damage to the Good Shepherd Moravian Fellowship building, and how its member's homes were impacted as well. (This fellowship is actually a congregation of the Unity of the Brethren made up of predominantly Moravians who formerly lived in Nicaragua). This assessment will allow for the leadership to better communicate exact needs and a timeline on needing work teams. Plans are also being made to send an MDR trailer to this area in the near future, and to leave it for use during the ongoing work of rebuilding in Port Arthur. We anticipate the opportunity for work teams to join with our partners in the Unity of the Brethren in this rebuilding.

If you are feeling called to help respond, see avenues for donating and volunteering below.

**Make a Donation**
Donations to help support MDR as it partners in the recovery can be made online by going to [moravianmission.org/give](http://moravianmission.org/give). Please use the online giving form, and in comments designate the Donation for "Moravian Disaster Response".

Donations within the U.S. can also be sent directly to the Board of World Mission at the address below. In the memo line of any checks please write "Moravian Disaster Response".
Board of World Mission
PO Box 1245
Bethlehem, PA 18016

Canadian Churches may send donations to the following address in order to receive full tax credit for your donation and they will be sent along to the BWM:
Moravian Church in Canada
600 Acadia Drive SE
Calgary, AB T2J 0B8

NOTE: We are requesting funds be designated for general disaster response to allow the BWM to respond with the flexibility needed in this ongoing situation. All funds under this designation will be used for disaster response.

**Volunteer**
If you are interested in getting information on joining teams to help in the recovery and rebuilding efforts for this, or other disasters, use this link to enter your contact information, and the BWM will follow up with you regarding any specific opportunities to get involved.

Please contact the BWM with any questions.
Northern Province Office: 610.868.1732
Southern Province Office: 336.773.1732

Justin Rabbach
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APPENDIX

Please return to this page (http://moravianmission.org/mdr-hurricane-harvey-response/) to find the most recent updates on the MDR Responses to Hurricanes Harvey and Irma. Each dated link below will give a fuller update from that point in time. Note: The BWM is planning a Saturday afternoon (September 9th) with more specific information to share with congregations during worship this weekend.

Immediately below is a link to download a prayer resource adapted from the Moravian Book of Worship’s Liturgy “Intercession in a Time of Crisis”, available for personal use or in a group or worship setting.


Update on the devastation caused by Hurricane Irma, September 07, 2017 and September 08, 2017 by Rev. Dr. Cortroy Jarvis, Chairman of the PEC of the Moravian Church, Eastern West Indies Province


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MORAVIAN DISASTER RESPONSE
Hurricanes and Earthquake Damage Update and Response

Please share this information broadly and with individuals in congregations.

There is quite a lot happening at MDR. We are doing our best to monitor situations on several fronts. The update below will focus on the reports coming into the BWM from our partners and congregations. We realize the impact is much broader than areas where Moravian Churches are located, but cannot fit all of the information currently being covered by 24 news cycles into this update. Please do be in touch if you have any specific questions not addressed here by email Justin@MoravianMission.org.

As we begin disbursing funds to some areas, and still wait for the full impact in others, we thank the many generous donors who have given already, and provide information below on how to direct financial gifts.

**Hurricane Irma & Jose**

**Eastern West Indies Province**

The BWM has received a letter from Cortroy Jarvis, Chairman of the EWI Province, providing an update on the situation so far in terms of the damage to the Leeward Islands, as well as the British and U.S. Virgin Islands. I encourage you to read the whole letter, posted on the BWM website, but the largest impact to Moravian areas appears to be on St. Thomas and St. Maarten. Additionally, the provincial office on Antigua is preparing to act as emergency housing for at least 4 families of the many, many people who have been evacuated from Barbuda, where a great majority of homes and structures have experienced damage.

The EWI Province has already allocated $5,000 for the rebuilding efforts in Barbuda, and the BWM is planning at least a matching amount from MDR funds to be sent to the EWI province to have ready and accessible in these early stages as specific needs become apparent.

Finally, this is just a summary of the damage caused by Hurricane Irma in this region. Several of the islands already hit, are still in the path of Hurricane Jose passing through late Saturday. Please be in prayer for this region as it hopes to move on to the recovery stage following a very emotional and stressful week.
Cuba

As of writing this update BWM has heard from Armando Rusindo Mission Foundation (ARMF) members currently in Cuba. Earlier this week they traveled more than 12 hours west by bus to try an avoid the area most deeply impacted by the storm. They are currently in Havana, and report the start of light rain about three hours before the storm was expected to pass through this area. Cuba was hit early Saturday near Camaguey where there are Moravian churches, but no report has yet been received by the BWM as to the impact in this area. Assuming airports are open, and circumstances allow, further representatives of the BWM and ARMF will be traveling on Monday to join in the upcoming Synod of the Cuban Moravian Church, its first as a Mission Province of the Moravian Unity.

Florida

At least one congregation has cancelled all weekend activity including worship as members seek shelter from the storm. The BWM was in touch with congregations in the potential path of the storm, and as of writing are waiting for further updates later this weekend and early next week.

Hurricane Harvey

A delegation from the Unity of the Brethren (UOB) was able to visit with the Good Shepherd Moravian Fellowship in Port Arthur, Texas. They have assessed the severe flooding experienced by the church building, as well identifying 7 families of the congregation who have either experienced severe damage to their homes, or lost their homes completely. Additionally there are 4 homes of church members of the Unity of the Brethren Church in Crosby, Texas that have been damaged, and 2 more homes from the Westheimer congregation in west Houston.

The BWM spoke with representatives of the UOB on Saturday morning, and will be sending an initial round of funding to support this work. The first stage over the next few weeks will include arranging temporary housing for the individuals still in emergency shelters. The next phase will include work teams assisting with the rebuilding of the damaged and destroyed homes. The UOB has communicated they anticipate this to be at least a year long process, but do not yet have a start date when they will be ready to receive teams. The timeline will be dependent on finding temporary housing, and completing assessments of the overall need. The BWM is collecting names of those interested, and will share further information with those who have demonstrated interest when a timeline is put in place. A first step for the BWM will likely include dispatching one MDR trailer to be on site for use by both UOB and Moravian work teams.

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