



The Anglican Relief  
and Development Fund®

## *How does my parish get started?* ARDF National Disaster Network FAQs

***Q: How does my parish join the ARDF National Disaster Network (NDN)?***

A: To join ARDF's NDN, a parish needs a small group of interested individuals with a willingness to serve. There is something for everyone in disaster response!

***Q: How do I get started forming a disaster response team in my parish?***

A: To get started, a Parish Disaster Response Coordinator needs to be identified. You may find a Coordinator role description on ARDF's website [here](#) under *Documents for Coordinators*. Next, the Coordinator and team uses the Parish Disaster Response Survey to identify existing ministries and strengths in the parish. The Survey can also be used to inventory an individual's gifts in disaster response ministry. The Survey is found on ARDF's website [here](#) under *Resources for Churches*.

***Q: What if my congregation consists of primarily retired and older individuals?***

A: Disaster response offers retirees an opportunity to build parish ministry and serve during their retirement. In addition to debris removal and construction, there are many ways to serve including administration, childcare, Christian education, communications, food service, healthcare, hospitality, logistics, pet care, phone tree, photography, spiritual care, and training, to name a few.

As Bill Cober, Rector's Warden of Trinity Anglican Church, Lafayette, LA, stated when speaking about his former parish's response after Hurricane Katrina, "*You don't have to be a giant muscly man and swing a hammer or pour concrete to contribute. There's a way, you just need to search for it!*" You may hear Bill's two-minute testimony [here](#).

***Q: What is the best way to discern how my parish might serve in disaster response?***

A: Form a prayer team and ask for God's help in identifying an opportunity. It may be a ministry where God is already working in your parish or community. It may be a ministry opportunity that a parishioner has prayed about and now God is revealing this ministry in His perfect timing! Talk with friends, family members, and parishioners about who and what they know about disaster response ministry. The hardest part is getting started! Once you have accepted the invitation, keep your hearts and eyes open to those God puts in your path. He will provide!

***Q: I am a Parish Coordinator and I have a small team of interested parishioners. What can we do next?***

A: Start internally. With your small group of interested parishioners, ask if you, your team, and their families are prepared for a natural disaster? Is your parish prepared for a natural disaster? Individuals, families, and parishes should not consider disaster response unless you, too, are prepared. As individuals in ministry together, we must be prepared before we can help others.

Determine if your parish has developed and is maintaining an Emergency Action Plan (EAP). If not, consider having your disaster response ministry team create an EAP for your parish. EAP templates and examples may be found [here](#) under *Resources for Churches*.

Consider scheduling personal preparedness training for your parish, possibly by designating a month for safety. Invite local agencies to help, such as the local fire station or the Red Cross to help with first aid, CPR, and defibrillator use. Become familiar with local resources for

emergency preparedness such as the City and County Office of Emergency Management. The [Ready.gov](#) website, developed by Homeland Security, is an excellent resource about possible disasters and how to prepare for them. For more ideas and feedback on how to start internally, contact your ARDF NDN contact, shown below.

***Q: How does ARDF partner with parishes in disaster response?***

A: ARDF supports parishes with the resources needed to respond quickly and effectively to a disaster when their community needs it the most. ARDF's National Disaster Network is based on an adaptable model, enabling a parish to use ARDF's resources for the best use of God's gifts in their parish and community. ARDF does not direct a parish in disaster response, but acts as a resource, coming alongside a parish with time, talent, and treasure, relying on prayer and the Holy Spirit to reveal what is best.

Once a disaster response team is established, ARDF offers parishioners the opportunity to serve on disaster response trips with one of our Disaster Response Partners. These trips help to restore the homes and lives of disaster survivors, rebuilding structures, offering spiritual care, and sharing the hope of our Lord Jesus Christ. This past year, five disaster response trips have been sponsored. Two more trips are scheduled for November 2023. Anglicans, as well as those in other denominations, have served in LA, FL, and KY.

ARDF also offers partnering parishes the resources to supply and train a response team. An example is our "Hitch a Trailer & Go" grant program, offering parishes the opportunity to split the cost of a 16' cargo trailer with ARDF. Another example is partnering in the building of a disaster response supply warehouse, or the purchase of equipment to host disaster response teams.

Finally, if a natural disaster were to occur in your community, ARDF grants partnering dioceses the funding to support local response ministries. These funds are made possible through the generosity of our donors, and amounts vary based on the need, historically ranging from \$5000 to over \$300,000.

***Q: Where can I learn more about ARDF's National Disaster Network?***

A: Please explore ARDF's National Disaster Network webpage found [here](#). There are many resources including documents, videos, and disaster response coordinators you may review, download, watch, and contact! Please join our public National Disaster Network Facebook Group found [here](#). You may also reach Tommy Lamb, Director, ARDF National Disaster Network, at [tommy@ardf.org](mailto:tommy@ardf.org) or (281) 802-8378, mobile.