

# A BRIDGE OF LOVE

# EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS



## **OPERATIONS MANUAL**

**PREPARED BY: Bridges of Love Ministry Society**

**SUPPORTED BY:**

**The Faith Emergency Preparedness Initiative Advisory Council**

**The Faith Emergency Preparedness Initiative Member Churches**

**April, 2011**

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS _____	i
TABLE OF CONTENTS _____	ii
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY _____	1
<b>BRIDGES OF LOVE MINISTRY SOCIETY _____</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Incorporation/Charitable Status _____</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Vision _____</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>History _____</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Accountability _____</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>SECTION 1 – FAITH EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS INITIATIVE _____</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>PURPOSE &amp; SCOPE _____</b>	<b>3</b>
Planning Assumptions and Considerations _____	3
Aim _____	3
Goal _____	3
Mission _____	3
Value Statement _____	3
Guiding Principles _____	3
<b>WHY A CHURCH RESPONSE _____</b>	<b>3</b>
Church Effectiveness _____	4
<b>PARTICIPANTS, ROLES AND STRATEGIES _____</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Faith Emergency Preparedness Initiative Advisory Council (FEPI AC) _____</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Calgary Emergency Management Agency (CEMA) _____</b>	<b>7</b>
Build Community Capacity and Resilience _____	7
<b>Coordination and Planning _____</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Volunteer Liability Insurance _____</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>FEPI OPERATION STRUCTURE _____</b>	<b>10</b>
Accountability _____	10
Interdenominational Cooperation _____	11
FEPI Coordination Centre _____	11
FEPI Quadrant Lead Churches _____	12
FEPI Sub-division Lead Church _____	12
FEPI Local Church Member _____	12
<b>SECTION 2 - BEST PRACTICES DURING AN EMERGENCY _____</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>SHELTER SERVICES _____</b>	<b>17</b>
Shelter Evacuees _____	17
<b>FOOD SERVICES _____</b>	<b>17</b>
Food Preparation _____	17
Serving of Meals _____	18
<b>MEDICAL SERVICES _____</b>	<b>18</b>

## FAITH EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS INITIATIVE OPERATIONS MANUAL

Advanced Medical Care	18
Basic Medical Care or first aid	18
Prescription Medication Service	18
Liability Insurance	18
Training and Expertise	18
<b>PERSONAL HYGIENCE SERVICES</b>	<b>18</b>
Discussion	19
<b>MENTAL HEALTH AND SPIRITUAL SUPPORT</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>PHYSICAL RECONSTRUCTION SERVICES</b>	<b>20</b>
Best Practices	20
<b>TRANSPORTATION MANAGEMENT AND SERVICES</b>	<b>21</b>
Non-emergency Transportation	21
<b>CHILDREN'S SERVICES</b>	<b>21</b>
Child Care Services	22
Child Care Safety Regulations	22
<b>CASE MANAGEMENT AND RELATED SERVICES</b>	<b>22</b>
Provide Information	22
Referral Services	23
Form and Application Assistance	23
Financial Relief	23
<b>CONCLUSION</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>RESOURCES</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>Appendix 1</b>	
Letter - Minister Toews (Minister Public Safety Canada)	
<b>Appendix 2</b>	
Bridges of Love Ministry Society/Faith Emergency Preparedness Initiative Brochures	
<b>Appendix 3</b>	
Faith Emergency Preparedness Initiative Advisory Council Members	
<b>Appendix 4</b>	
Church Resource Assessment Form	
<b>Appendix 5</b>	
Project Charter	
<b>Appendix 6</b>	
Terms of Reference	
<b>Appendix 7</b>	
FEPI Membership/ Servants with Abilities, Training (SWAT) Emergency Volunteer Brochures	
<b>Appendix 8</b>	
FEPI Church Membership Certificate	
<b>Appendix 9</b>	
FEPI Covenant of Understanding – Quadrant Lead/Member Churches	
<b>Appendix 10</b>	
Calgary Emergency Management Agency Service Agreement	

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Marg Pollon, March 14, 2011

Emergency Preparedness is just one of many tools to connect the church with the community. During an emergency; as churches reach out in love to care for their neighbours, Christ's character is observable to a watching world.

Traditionally, churches in larger centres have not been coordinated with the Municipal Emergency/Health Management Agencies. Uncontrolled mobilization and over response are common problems. When these situations occur, coordination of response is a crucial factor. Church members continue to arrive at emergency sites with well-meaning volunteers experiencing difficulty with physical access to disaster areas and associated activities. They are often blocked from delivering resources and services due to lack of proper credentials identifying them to serve in an official capacity.

To be effective with a church response it is, therefore, essential to be integrated into the Municipal Emergency Management Agencies framework with the activation 'triggers' clearly defined. **The benefits and means to a solution can be realized when responders and church facilities are identified and approved with volunteers coordinated and credentialed so when emergency tasks are undertaken they are done so with effectiveness.**

Disasters pose problems for resource management that are different from those in more routine emergency events. Disasters may require the use of resources (personnel & corporate, facilities, supplies, and equipment) from multiple organizations and jurisdictions; as well, may require the use of non-traditional resources.

***"When it comes to emergency management and emergency preparedness, we all have a role to play. Individual citizens and communities, academia, emergency first responders, the private sector, volunteer organizations, and all levels of government must work together to provide an effective and coordinated response to disaster."***<sup>1</sup>  
(Appendix 1)

In 2006, Dr. Tim Foggan invited Bridges of Love to help mobilize Canadian Churches to be ready to stand in the gap in the event of an Influenza Pandemic. Public Safety Canada later challenged Bridges of Love to develop a template to incorporate the Faith Community into the Emergency Management structure. After facilitating a Regional Faith Community Summit of Pandemic Preparedness and Response in Calgary in 2008, a committee formed from Summit Public/Faith and Private Sector participants. This group continues to meet as the Faith Emergency Preparedness Initiative Advisory Council.

A study which was particularly helpful for the production of this manual came from a report prepared by the Department of Homeland Security Science and Technology Directorate, **"Heralding Unheard Voices: The Role of Faith-Based Organizations and Non-Governmental Organizations during Disasters"**. The Homeland Security Institute project analyzed the role and impact made by Faith Based Organizations (FBOs) and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) during and after Hurricane Katrina and Hurricane Hugo. The report clearly acknowledged the positive role played by these organizations, not only during the disaster but also in the recovery phase. Greater understanding of the potential of these institutions during a major disaster was recognized and applauded to inspire governments to expand their capabilities, to offer greater coordination and integration.

Studies indicated FBOs and NGOs performed at least ten major services and 33 sub-functions. They anticipated FBOs to perform services such as spiritual counselling but other services provided were quite unexpected. FBOs and NGOs stepped in to fill the gaps when the geographic scales, intensities, and durations of Hurricane Katrina overwhelmed the existing disaster response resources.

They provided shelter, food, medical services, hygiene services, mental health and spiritual care, physical reconstruction, logistics management and services, transportation, children's services and care management. Lessons learned from their experiences will assist our city to be better prepared for, and thus more responsive to other disasters.

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<sup>1</sup> Vic Toews, PC, QC, MP, Minister Public Safety (Letter shared with permission)

### INTRODUCTION

The forces that are driving increased collaboration amongst non-profit volunteer organizations come from many sources. The major source is the decrease in the prominence of government in community life. Partnerships which pool resources are often the only way to achieve the critical mass to move forward.<sup>2</sup>

The Faith Emergency Preparedness Initiative Advisory Council recognized a requirement for a coordinated approach to emergencies and disasters that could occur causing a significant impact on communities in our province. Such disasters could have an overwhelming effect; adding increased pressure on the existing emergency/health systems making it difficult to maintain a sustained level of care.

Churches are especially well positioned to translate emergency preparedness plans into a meaningful response at the most local of levels. Two characteristics of churches, particularly, make this so: Church networks are broad (denominational and interdenominational networks span the country) and deep (the majority of churches have multiple community-based small groups); and Christian churches have built into them the double mandate of both loving God and caring for their neighbour.<sup>3</sup>

### BRIDGES OF LOVE MINISTRY SOCIETY

#### **Incorporation/Charitable Status**

Bridges of Love (Appendix 2) was incorporated as an Alberta Religious Society, June, 2004. Bridges of Love became a Registered Canadian Charitable Organization, August, 2007 and operates within the guidelines of the Canadian Revenue Agency.

#### **Vision**

Provide opportunities for the local church to be catalyst for change and engines of influence, reaching out with a greater concern for, and an irresistible influence on those in their community.

#### **History**

- October 2006, Dr. Tim Foggin invited Bridges of Love to mobilize Canadian Churches to be ready with a Christian response to an Influenza Pandemic.
- 2007 Public Safety Canada (Alberta) challenged Bridges of Love to develop a template which could be duplicated across Canada.
- May, 2008 Bridges of Love invited members of the Christian, Public and Private Sectors to participate in a Regional Faith Community Summit on Pandemic Preparedness and Response. Following this event many of those participants continued to meet forming the Regional Faith Community Emergency Preparedness Coalition. A Project Charter (Appendix 6) was developed for "The Faith Emergency Preparedness Initiative." (FEPI) to mobilize the Christian Community to be ready to stand in the gap in the event of a disaster. The Coalition changed its name to more closely represent its mandate to the Faith Emergency Preparedness Initiative Advisory Council. 23 Members meet twice a year building relationships of trust across the sectors. (Appendix 3)

#### **Accountability**

Marg Pollon, founding Director, of Bridges of Love Ministry, coordinator for the FEPI project seeks advice, council and direction from the FEPI Advisory Council on matters pertaining to the Faith Emergency Preparedness Initiative. Bridges of Love Ministry Society is governed by the By-laws of the Society, protected by the Directors of the Board.

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<sup>2</sup> Alberta Community Development; Working in Partnership – Recipes for Success

<sup>3</sup> Dr. Tim Foggin/Marg Pollon; Of Churches, Pandemics, and Emergency Preparedness Discussion Paper, 2006

## **SECTION 1 – FAITH EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS INITIATIVE**

### **PURPOSE & SCOPE**

#### Planning Assumptions and Considerations

Disasters pose problems for resource management that are different from those in emergencies. Significant emergency responses may require the use of resources (personnel, facilities, supplies, and equipment) from multiple organizations and jurisdictions as well, may require the use of non-traditional resources.<sup>4</sup>

#### Aim

To strengthen the emergency preparedness and response relationship between Faith Community Members and their Local Governments and, as a result, initiate the development of an atmosphere of cooperation and trust between these constituencies. Ultimately greater understanding, shared responsibilities, increased collaborative accountability and activities, will lead to an integrated action – orientated partnership.

#### Goal

To facilitate the development of an integrated network of local churches to complement and enhance the performance with existing secular emergency management organizations. As Faith Communities collaborate with a sharing of resources and expertise, the impact of disasters on individuals and communities, could be significantly reduced.

#### Mission

FEPI Mission to be prepared with a coordinated response; integrated with the Municipal Emergency Management Agency connecting the local church as a vital part of total community care.

#### Vision

To create a climate of mutual respect and understanding between the church and local governments and public sector where the spirit of agreement and common focus has become a foundation upon which to build.

#### Value Statement

To display the Lordship of Christ having the heart of servanthood as an integral part of our mandate as we care for the needs of others in our community through compassion, respect, confidentiality, sensitivity, responsibility, honesty, open communication and above all, love for one another.

#### Guiding Principles

It is recognized that Local Governments in Alberta are first responders to an emergency or disaster managing the disaster response within their jurisdiction, for its duration. FEPI adheres to existing Calgary Emergency Management arrangements, meaning that the management of the emergency will be controlled at the lowest level possible (i.e. individual, municipal, provincial, and federal).

### **WHY A CHURCH RESPONSE**

Disasters pose problems for resource management that are different from those in routine crisis events. Significant emergency responses may require the use of resources (personnel, facilities, supplies, and equipment) from multiple organizations and jurisdictions and may also require the use of non-traditional resources. Much of the emphasis of emergency planning in many communities has commonly been on the mobilization and reinforcement of resources. And, indeed, procedures for this purpose are important.

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<sup>4</sup> Faith Emergency Preparedness Initiative Advisory Council; Policy & Guidelines, 2007

## FAITH EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS INITIATIVE OPERATIONS MANUAL

Uncontrolled mobilization and over response are common problems in emergencies. When these situations occur, coordination of response is a critical and crucial factor.

A report compiled by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security after Hurricane Katrina, heralded the efforts by Faith-based organization (FBOs) and secular Non Governmental organizations (NGOs) who stepped in to fill the gaps when the geographic scales, intensities, and durations of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita overwhelmed the existing disaster response resources.

***“FBOs and NGOs undertook a surprisingly large varied and demanding set of activities with extraordinary effectiveness.”***

Through their study and research lessons were learned that will aid in making our city and country better prepared for, and thus more responsive to, such disasters. These lessons and recommendations include...

Governments are encouraged to:

- 1) Learn from FBO and FNO best practices
- 2) Address overlooked services such as routine transportation, children’s services and pop-up shelters in response and recovery planning.
- 3) Investigate inclusion of FBOs and NGOs, particularly local ones, in planning, coordination, integration, training, and exercises.
- 4) Resolve challenges with:
  - Access and credentialing
  - Long-term services
  - Waste management and sanitation
  - Reconsider the appropriate balance between government and non-government responsibilities and between local and higher levels, to provide good, quick and flexible response to disasters.<sup>5</sup>

As we address these recommendations together, we can seek to improve services and operational practices.

Many of the lessons learned and best practices from “Heralding Unheard Voices” have been utilized in this manual. The Homeland Institute have done an extensive study on what worked and where more work was needed to develop the best practices for integrating the Faith and NGO communities into Government Emergency Preparedness plans.

### **Church Effectiveness**

Churches have significant beneficial impact during an emergency and prove their effectiveness in providing disaster relief services due to three principle reasons.

- 1) The first involves their nature or raison d’etre. Their mission is “people” so are responsive to whatever people need.
- 2) Closeness to and familiarity with the communities they serve.
- 3) Unique resources and capabilities. Organizations have, or can gain access through networks, resources and capabilities directly applicable to the types of services need following a disaster.

Specific findings, grouped by the three areas, are...

### **Mission**

#### Exceptionally Strong Motivation

Christians serve because they know God has called His followers. This ‘calling’ makes congregation members responsive to people in need, and more persistent in the face of adversity, than they may have been otherwise.

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<sup>5</sup> U.S. Department of Homeland Security; “Heralding Unheard Voices” Final Report, 18 Dec. 2006

## FAITH EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS INITIATIVE OPERATIONS MANUAL

### Unity of Purpose

Church members are a disparate group with a broad range of racial, ethnic, and cultural differences, with unique religious characteristics. Despite these differences, churches can achieve a noteworthy cohesion and unity of purpose under trying circumstances. During times of stress, traditional barriers between denominations evaporate as they focus on God's agenda.

### **Local Focus**

#### Community

Churches who are already integrated into their community with trust already in place know their local neighbours—people, resources, organizations, etc.—enabling them to work more effectively than those who are unfamiliar with the terrain. Also, this identification with the local community imbues the church with dedication and steadfastness to serve its community in times of need.

#### Speed of Response

Local churches in the community are already on the scene or close by. The combination of local presence, independence from bureaucratic restraints, and smaller size enables the church to act quickly. Often commitment of resources can be based on quick and informal discussions with church boards and councils.

#### Standing capability

Many churches are already engaged with their communities providing day-to-day care for those in need before a disaster occurs. They are already involved in community services of some type and thus are able to adapt to the crisis conditions and surge their capacity to meet the increased demands.

#### Excess capacity

Churches that are designed for peak attendance over short periods have excess physical capacity at other times. Many have dining halls, basements, family life centers, or large meeting rooms that can serve as shelters. This excess physical capacity when coupled with the manpower available from volunteers to staff facilities proves a powerful force.

### **Unique Resources**

Beachhead. Local Churches who are associated with a Denominational Head are able to use the local entity as a beachhead—a starting point from which to serve the community. These beachheads often become local points of distribution for services and material provided by the National Office.

Small Scale. Local churches are readily available to evacuees, volunteers, and relief workers. These facilities enable evacuees to get back on their feet, and become more self-sufficient earlier, and leave the shelter better equipped due to the personal hygiene, quality feeding, personal mental and spiritual care and family needs offered during their stay. Smaller facilities and the community atmosphere they promote could contribute to greater psychological well-being.

Support from Networks and National Organizations. Most local churches have national support networks to draw upon. Locally, informal networks such as councils and alliances enable local churches to coordinate activities and share resources within their community. Most are also linked to larger national denominations with access to resources such as donations, material, skilled relief workers, and volunteers well beyond what is available locally. Examples of national organizations are the Salvation Army, Catholic Relief Services, Lutheran Disaster Relief, and Mennonite Disaster Services – to name a few.

## FAITH EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS INITIATIVE OPERATIONS MANUAL

### Volunteerism

Church volunteers bring skills, energy, strength and compassion offering mental and spiritual care to evacuees as well as to caregivers and responders. They can assist with logistical services and physical reconstruction services. While some volunteers may have only limited training—others are highly skilled and prepared to respond to disasters asking nothing for their service. The church will respond to the needs of any person in need; regardless of age, status, religion, or ethnic persuasion. Churches who were involved with an emergency in their community acting as a Reception Centre reported a very positive experience. Congregation members appreciated the opportunity to serve during the emergency offering tangible activities putting their faith into action.

## **PARTICIPANTS, ROLES AND STRATEGIES**

### **Faith Emergency Preparedness Initiative Advisory Council (FEPI AC)**

#### Origin

A clear understanding of what local emergency/health agencies do, and how they work is an important first step in making valuable links between the community and its local government. In order to create a climate of mutual respect and understanding between the faith community and the local government emergency/health agencies, the FEPI Advisory Council was birthed in 2007 following Bridges of Love's event - The Regional Faith Emergency Community Summit on Pandemic Preparedness and Response. This very informative summit took place at Rocky Mountain College in May 2008. Speakers were selected from Alberta's Public Emergency and Health sectors as well as from the Private and Christian communities. This endeavor was a beginning to focus our efforts towards a common goal: to strengthen the well-being of our communities with an increased understanding of the goals of the other and how we can work together to implement healthy community principles.

Following the event, members from the summit continued to meet forming the Regional Faith Community Emergency Preparedness Coalition which later became known as the Faith Emergency Preparedness Initiative Advisory Council.

#### Common Mission

Once the relationship between faith community members and their local governments are strengthened, the sense of "us" vs. "them" will tend to fall away developing an atmosphere of cooperation and trust between the various sectors. Through greater understanding, the sharing of responsibilities, increased accountability and collaborative activities, "us" and "them" become integrated into "WE" resulting in safer and cared for communities.

#### Administration

Coordination provided by Marg Pollon, Founding Director of Bridges of Love Ministry. Duties include scheduling of meetings, forums and related events as well acting chairpersonship of the FEPI Advisory Council.

#### Stakeholders

The FEPI Advisory Council consists of members from the Christian, Public and Private sectors who act in an advisory capacity offering guidance and expertise. This facilitates adherence to the Emergency/Health Agencies policies and guidelines as well as to follow Christian principles and practices. Stakeholders collaborate, give direction and inspire others to join the movement.

Primary stakeholders are Christian communities located in the Alberta region.

Public Sector Partners Primary preparedness and response partners are identified as:

- Relative Municipal Emergency Management / Preparedness organizations
- Alberta Emergency Management Agency (AEMA)
- The relative provincial Health Authorities (HAs)
- Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC)

Potential resource organizations include; but are not limited to:

## FAITH EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS INITIATIVE OPERATIONS MANUAL

- Alberta NGO Council (NGO Council of Alberta)
- Other Private Sector and Non-Profit Organizations

### Calgary Emergency Management Agency (CEMA)

The Calgary Emergency Management Agency (CEMA) prepares for and responds to crisis situations that may impact Calgarians, their health, properties or livelihoods. Understanding that being prepared in a crisis situation leads to a stronger more resilient community, CEMA works with City departments, corporations and non-profit agencies increasing organizational capacity to be prepared, become less vulnerable and recover more quickly from a disaster.

#### Build Community Capacity and Resilience

CEMA's "2011 Looking Forward" identifies the necessity for an increase in community capacity and resilience. The Faith Emergency Preparedness Initiative provides a good fit with their current strategy to identify and engage community partners to monitor and prevent risk.

#### Municipal Activation Levels (CEMA)

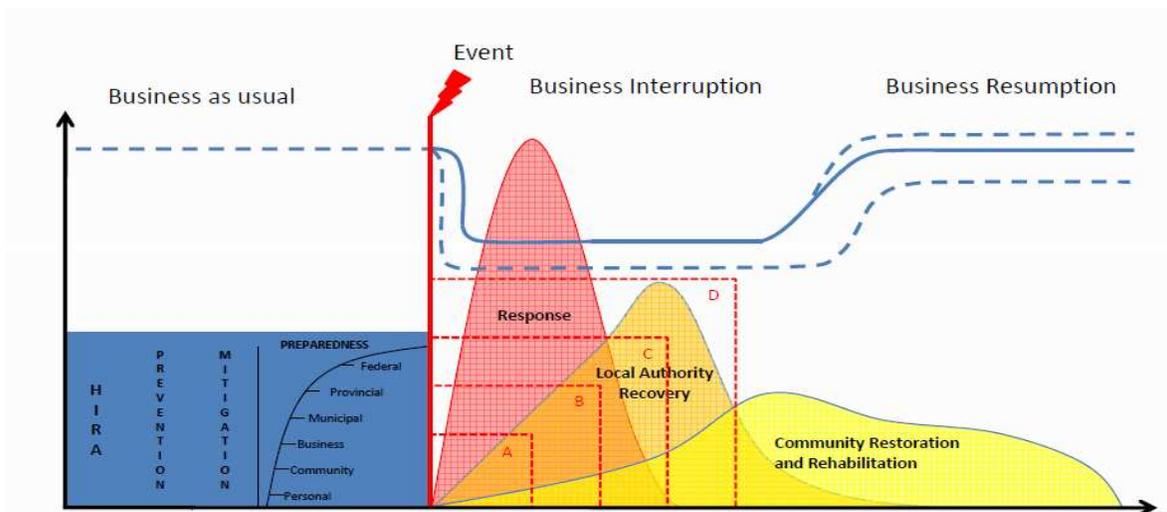
A; < 100 evacuees (i.e. house, small condo complex fire), Current agreement with Red Cross to assist evacuees with accessing supports such as food, clothing, lodging, counselling...)

B; > 100 evacuees in a temporary evacuation (no overnight lodging required) such as a gas leak or bomb threat – an information centre may be set up with food, counselling, Public Info Officer...

C; >100 evacuees affected for up to 72 hours; full activation of all DSS services with Reception Centre operating...

D; Large scale evacuation with potential of multiple Reception Centres up to and beyond 72 hours (and other triggers as outlined below as potentially requesting FEPI/BOL assistance)...

### CEMA COMPREHENSIVE EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT MODEL



SOURCE DOCUMENTS:  
*Community Disaster Recovery: A Guide for BC Local Authorities and First Nations* Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General, 2006  
*Federal Policy for Emergency Management* Public Safety Canada, 2009

CEMA's Comprehensive Emergency Management Model identifies areas where FEPI can assist during the community restoration and rehabilitation phase.

As per our Service Agreement, FEPI may be also activated during a "D" level response where the following triggers are indicated:

- Widespread evacuations involving very large numbers of evacuees (eg. Should the Airdrie train derailment have caused a 20,000 person evacuation?)

## FAITH EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS INITIATIVE OPERATIONS MANUAL

- Widespread “sheltering-in-place” events such as a pandemic, ice storms, or the weather event that Ontario is currently experiencing
- Activation of the Emergency Operations Centre and Recovery Operations Centre
- Declaration of a State of Local Emergency

DSS has indicated the FEPI Coordination Centre will be included in their communication so we can be kept up to date on emergencies underway in our city. The City’s mandate is to look after the emergency for the first three days after the emergency has occurred. After three days, the Alberta Emergency Management Agency, (AEMA) steps in.

The Red Cross takes care of emergencies fewer than 100 evacuees and the City covers anything greater than 100. FEPI will not interfere with the efforts of the Red Cross or CEMA and will wait until called upon for assistance.

### Church Reception Sites/Holding Station

Churches are potential “non-traditional” sites for various forms of care. With a church being utilized as a Reception Centre for the Millrise Fire, we heard the positive out-come for both the city and the church. Due to this good experience, Bridges of Love has invited other churches to offer their facility as future Reception Sites. Twelve churches have offered to go through the DSS Lodging Team Assessment. One assessment has been completed to date and passed the criteria to be included as a Reception Site. Further assessments will be on-going.

Discussions continue with DSS and the Lodging Team, to further explore the possibility of churches being utilized as holding stations.

## **Coordination and Planning**

### Inclusive Emergency Management Planning

Faith Based Organizations and Non-government Organizations, with a few exceptions, have not been included in a majority of governments’ planning for disaster response and recovery. Being included in exercises and training events would make FEPI more effective in a crisis, and knowledge of what the Church Community has to offer in the way of resources, and man-power would assist CEMA offer greater and more extensive community care.

The Faith Emergency Preparedness Initiative opens the door for churches to be included in emergency plans. As we explore areas where we can assist and awareness of the potential of this initiative our hope is to see more opportunities for training, collaboration and cooperation across the various sectors.

## **Volunteer Liability Insurance**

Disaster Social Services has indicated CEMA is in the process of evaluating the Volunteer Liability Insurance issue. This is a very important topic which we must consider as we want to make sure FEPI volunteers (SWAT Teams) are adequately covered if there is a liability issue or an injury occurs.

We understand each jurisdiction has its own policies in this regard so this issue should be thoroughly investigated and secured in conjunction with the Service Agreement. There is an Act in Alberta called the Emergency Medical Aid Act which gives some protection to volunteers. In other Provinces it is called the “Good Samaritan’s Act.”

### EMERGENCY MEDICAL AID ACT

#### Chapter E-7

HER MAJESTY, by and with the advice and consent of the Legislative Assembly of Alberta, enacts as follows:

#### **Definitions**

##### **1** In this Act,

- (a) “physician” means a person who is a regulated member of the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Alberta;

## FAITH EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS INITIATIVE OPERATIONS MANUAL

- (b) “registered health discipline member” means a person who is registered under the *Health Disciplines Act* or a regulated member under Schedule 1, 10, 13, 18 or 25 to the *Health Professions Act*;
- (c) “registered nurse” means a person who is a registered nurse within the meaning of the *Health Professions Act*.

RSA 2000 cE-7 s1;RSA 2000 cH-7 ss146,147,155;  
2005 c13 s4(21);2008 c34 s18

### Protection from action

2 If, in respect of a person who is ill, injured or unconscious as the result of an accident or other emergency,

- (a) a physician, registered health discipline member, or registered nurse voluntarily and without expectation of compensation or reward renders emergency medical services or first aid assistance and the services or assistance are not rendered at a hospital or other place having adequate medical facilities and equipment, or
- (b) a person other than a person mentioned in clause (a) voluntarily renders emergency first aid assistance and that assistance is rendered at the immediate scene of the accident or emergency,

the physician, registered health discipline member, registered nurse or other person is not liable for damages for injuries to or the death of that person alleged to have been caused by an act or omission on his or her part in rendering the medical services or first aid assistance, unless it is established that the injuries or death were caused by gross negligence on his or her part.

FEPI OPERATION STRUCTURE

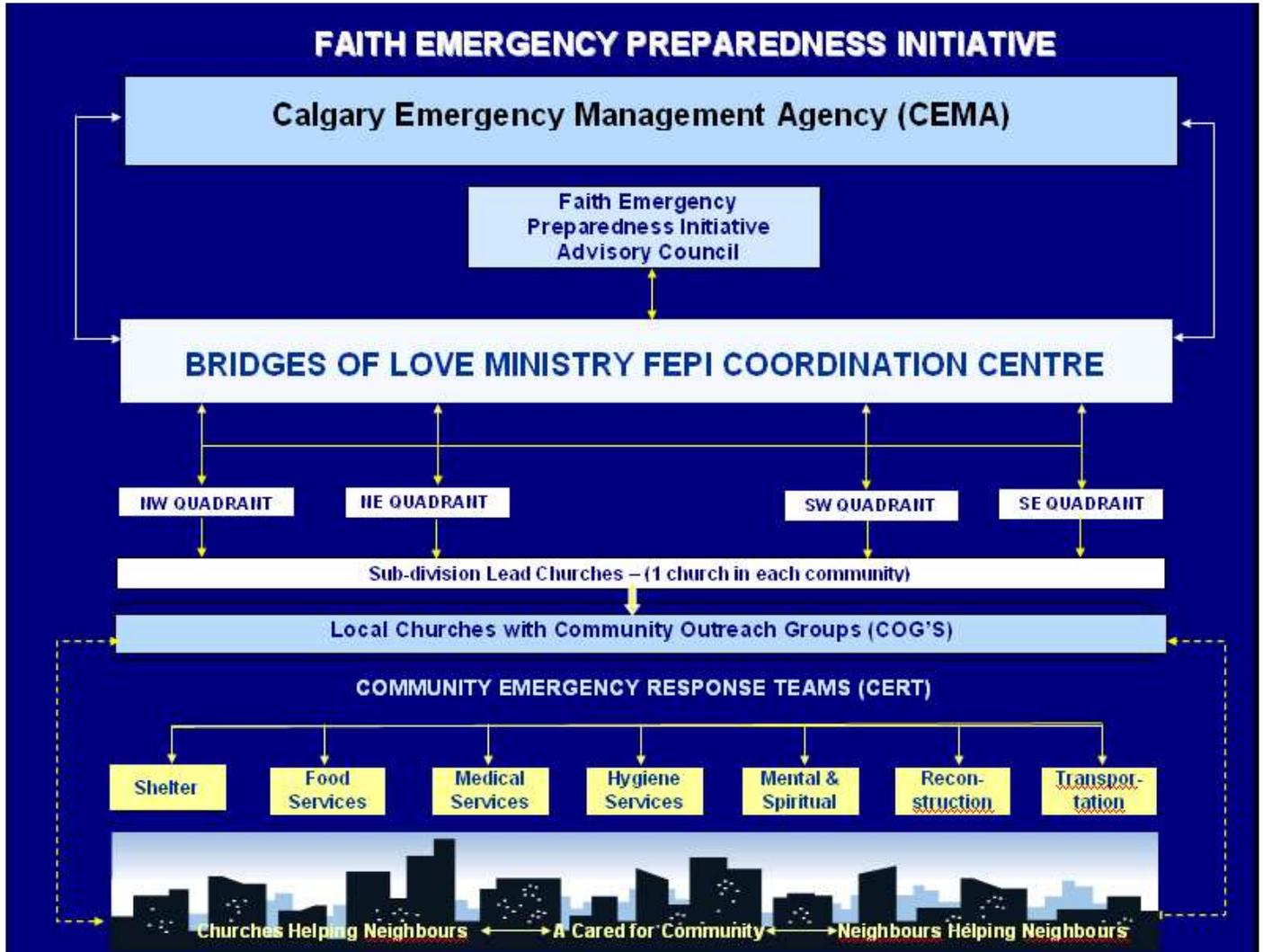


Figure 1

**Accountability**

Bridges of Love created a “Covenant of Understanding” for each of the Quadrant Lead Churches. In order to have a truly coordinated approach for the Faith Emergency Preparedness Initiative, we must have an agreed upon template to follow. This would facilitate uniformity within the structure so each would have clear direction on expectations and the appropriate protocol to follow.

As churches become more involved in the initiative, each church member could also commit to a set of guidelines and procedures which will be formulated as we grow.

### **Interdenominational Cooperation**

FEPI provides a network of churches ready to provide a coordinated response to a major disaster in the city of Calgary. As FEPI gains credibility and greater understanding in the community, we strive to have every church in the city engaged to offer total community care.

#### Interfaith Collaboration

As in every community, there will be individuals who belong to another faith or no faith at all. FEPI will develop relationships to understand the proper procedures to follow and people to contact to satisfy their faith requirement.

### **FEPI Coordination Centre**

#### Scope of Service

With approval from the Board of Directors, and the FEPI Advisory Council, Bridges of Love took on the responsibility of FEPI Coordination Centre and is committed to this role for the start up phase. In that capacity, Bridges of Love acts as the coordinating and communication arm taking requests, disseminating information and tracking progress.

Since disasters can also include more personal catastrophes, such as a divorce or family illness, FEPI will also screen calls providing assistance for smaller needs in a community.

#### Communication

Communication difficulties are often hard to separate from coordination difficulties, and the greatest coordination difficulties are inter-organizational. Many of the communications problems are those related to inter-agency information sharing. Frequently, the means for communication exists, but for a number of reasons, persons are hesitant to communicate with others outside their own organization. Inter-organizational communication is fostered by those factors which promote trust in other organizations and familiarity with how they function. These include: informal contacts, joint planning and training, preplanned agreements for the division of disaster responsibilities, and the use of similar terminology, procedures, and performance criteria. Inter-organizational networks, common systems, and computer networks also contribute to effective communications.

Any form of preparedness plan must have an information system. A formalized data collection process and a monitoring system is essential in order to keep track of FEPI Churches, contact information, what services are being offered at each facility and what resources and expertise are available in each church.

A pre-established and clear communication plan that specifies, as in a phone tree, who calls whom, and with what message, would channel timely and relevant information in partnership with CEMA.

#### Availability

Bridges of Love will be on call 24/7 ready to respond to any calls which come in. (Blackberry Torch with contact information for each Quadrant Lead accessible for fast connections)

#### Staffing

It is necessary to have at least two individuals committed to cover 'call' for the Coordination Centre. In the start-up phase, until funding is in place, these positions will be filled by Bridges of Love's ED and volunteers who have been appropriately trained and offer the same commitment.

#### Responsibilities

Taking/screening calls, disseminating information and requests, and tracking the activities of those involved during a disaster.

The Coordination Centre will keep in close contact with CEMA giving updates and logging progress during the disaster and recovery phases as they require.

## FAITH EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS INITIATIVE OPERATIONS MANUAL

### Record Keeping

Accurate records will be kept for all FEPI activities to be determined and coordinated with CEMA.

### **FEPI Quadrant Lead Churches**

A committed group of church leaders in each quadrant has taken the role of Quadrant Lead.

QUADRANT	CHURCH	CONTACT/S
SW	Red Deer Lake United Church	Wayne McCune
NW	North West Family Church	Pastor Roy Holmquist
NE	Crossroads Community Church	Pastor Doug Schroeder
SE	Bonavista Evangelical Missionary Church	Bob & Lori Glass

### Activation

Following FEPI activation, a follow-up call will be made to the appropriate Quadrant Lead Church/es contact. The contact/s for each Quadrant will be responsible to be ready to take calls at all times.

Quadrant Leads will log the progress during and after the disaster tracking the activity of each church in their quadrant. This information is reported back to the Coordination Centre in order to keep CEMA updated on the progress.

### **FEPI Sub-division Lead Church**

During a major disaster, the Quadrant Lead Churches may be over-whelmed with increased activity, so the FEPI structure offers Sub-division Lead Churches as help during these times.

The Sub-division leads would work closely with the Quadrant Leads and take direction and be accountable to their Quadrant head. These churches may also be a member church having Community Out-reach Groups (SWAT Teams) who are ready to offer tangible help in their community during an emergency.

The Sub-division lead churches will build closer relationships with the churches in their community to build trust and increase awareness of FEPI and how to complement one another.

### **FEPI Local Church Member**

#### Building Trusting Relationships within the Community

To facilitate action for the Christian community to adequately meet the needs of its neighbours during an emergency, it is necessary to build trust within the community. Churches getting to know those in their community creating healthy relationships can be accomplished in a variety of ways such as: community barbeques, coaching youth sports, sitting on a municipal advisory committee or joining the community association.

#### Building Unity within the Church Community

Churches working cross-denominationally within the community are key for the success of FEPI. It is essential to develop intentional strategies in order to build these relationships. Since every community is different, with unique characteristics and dynamics, an approach that works with one community may not be successful when applied to another. This is an exciting opportunity for every community to work out their own plans. Sub-division Lead Church can play a role to bring other churches/stakeholders together developing a process for working together towards a self-defined goal.

## FAITH EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS INITIATIVE OPERATIONS MANUAL

### Calgary FEPI Churches

CHURCH	QUADRANT	MEMBERSHIP
Calgary Word of Faith Church	NE	
<b>Crossroads Community Church (NE Quadrant Lead)</b>	<b>NE</b>	<b>“Stoney Trail” Bridge Member</b>
Gateway International Church	NE	
New Beginnings Church	NE	“Peace Bridge” Member
Prince of Faith Lutheran Church	NE	“Stoney Trail” Bridge Member
Renfrew Baptist Church	NE	
St. John Lutheran Church	NE	
St. Thomas More Parish	NE	
Advent Lutheran Church	NW	
Bow Valley Christian Church	NW	
Brentview Baptist Church	NW	
Dalhousie Community Church	NW	
Good Shepherd Community Church	NW	
Harvest Hills Alliance Church	NW	
Maranatha Christian Reformed Church	NW	
Northmount Baptist Church	NW	
<b>North West Family Church (NW Quadrant Lead)</b>	<b>NW</b>	<b>“Peace” Bridge Member</b>
RockPointe Church (Bowridge Campus)	NW	“Centre Street” Bridge Member
RockPointe Church (Bears paw Campus)	NW	
St. Bernards Campus	NW	
The Salvation Army Berkshire Community Church	NW	
Thornhill Baptist Church	NW	
Varsity Presbyterian Church	NW	
Westbourne Baptist Church	NW	
All Saints Lutheran Church	SE	
<b>Bonavista Evangelical Missionary Church (SE Quadrant Lead)</b>	<b>SE</b>	<b>“Centre Street” Bridge Member</b>
Calgary World Harvest Church	SE	
Canyon Creek Christian Fellowship	SE	
Emmanuel Community Church	SE	“Peace” Bridge Member
First Alliance Church	SE	
Midpark Christian Assembly	SE	
New Life Community Church	SE	
St. Augustine’s Anglican Church	SE	
St. Luke’s Anglican Church	SE	
St. Paul’s Anglican Church	SE	
Trinity Baptist Church	SE	
Victory Outreach Church	SE	
Bethany Chapel	SW	
Covenant Christian Reformed Church	SW	
First Evangelical Free Church	SW	
Knox United Church	SW	
Lighthouse Church	SW	
Living Spirit United Church	SW	
New Hope Community Church	SW	
<b>Red Deer Lake United Church (SW Quadrant Lead)</b>	<b>SW</b>	<b>“Stoney Trail” Bridge Member</b>
South Calgary Community Church	SW	

### Membership

The strategic composition of its membership will target all Christian (Evangelical, Mainline and Catholic) Churches initially in the Calgary area. A three-tiered Membership is based on the size of the church congregation and the fee structure is based on the membership.

1. **Peace Bridge Member**, < 100 congregation members - \$101.00 per annum.
2. **Stoney Trail Bridge Member**, between 100 – 300 congregation members - \$201.00 per annum.
3. **Centre Street Bridge Member**, > 300 congregation members - \$301.00 per annum.

## FAITH EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS INITIATIVE OPERATIONS MANUAL

The purpose for a 3 – tiered Church Membership is:

- To have a net-work of local churches with a commitment to be coordinated with Bridges of Love's Faith Emergency Preparedness Initiative and integrated with the Municipal Emergency Management Agency.
- To provide a forum for the open and free flow of non-confidential information to aid in disaster planning and response and recovery efforts in each community.
- Develop an atmosphere of cooperation and trust between the Public/Private and Christian Sectors offering greater understanding, shared responsibilities, increased collaborative accountability and activities, which will lead to an orientated partnership giving greater strength and community resiliency.
- To encourage 'unity' within the various denominations to promote and develop cohesiveness and a spirit of teamwork.
- To maintain sustainability and credibility by providing a consistent yearly base of operational funding which will open doors for other funding possibilities.

A local church becomes a FEPI Member when they subscribe to the FEPI Covenant of Understanding and fill out the Church Resource Assessment Form. This information is for the exclusive use of the Faith Emergency Preparedness Initiative and will not be shared without prior consent of FEPI Member Churches.

Each Church Member will be identified by a framed Membership Certificate with a seal for each year of participation. Bridges of Love Ministry is committed to support the FEPI Member Churches with training, education, on-going resources, integration with the Calgary Emergency Management Agency, and continuing development of the Faith Emergency Preparedness Initiative with Bridges of Love acting as the FEPI Coordination Centre and Communication hub.

Even though it is not mandatory to participate in the Faith Emergency Preparedness Initiative by being a 'Bridge' Member, it is encouraged to help support the work of Bridges of Love. It is a show of commitment which will give solid evidence the church is behind the initiative. This show of confidence will be beneficial as Bridges of Love garners financial support from other sources.

### NeighbourLink (NL)

NL's mandate is to care for the needs of the marginalized with resources coming from the local church. During an emergency, NL has agreed to be our contact to assist with those who often do not have a voice and fall between the cracks.

### Community Out-reach Groups (COG's) "The Shepherd's Staff"

We know it is the local response that will have the greatest impact on minimizing the effect of an emergency, and the greater the disaster, the greater the local response will have to be. The greater the need for help from outside resources, the fewer of them there will be to go around, making the local planning effort all the more important.

Most churches have small groups who meet regularly; whether weekly or bi-monthly. These groups have strong relationships of trust built with care and compassion built into their DNA. Some small groups already have 'service' as a component of their gatherings and are looking for opportunities to serve in some capacity.

Small groups are very well positioned at the local grass-roots community level, if mobilized, trained and ready to respond to the needs of their community. Task orientated Small Groups or "**Servants with Abilities & Training**" (SWAT) Teams can be mobilized when a request comes in to serve in their locality. Examples of areas where SWAT Teams could assist would include food services, child services, transportation, medical, etc.

A city crisis will require a response from people in a multitude of occupations and disciplines. Consequently, there will be a need to conduct the advance planning efforts to identify those individuals who already have specific talents, gifts, training, and education which could be utilized with little effort. A list of small group members with their specific gifts is an easy task to

## FAITH EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS INITIATIVE OPERATIONS MANUAL

under take. This is not only beneficial for an emergency setting but is a win-win for the church as stronger ties are built through getting to know one another a little more intimately.

Perhaps there are health workers such as doctors, nurses, who are already trained and current in their field. These individuals would be identified and cataloged with current contact information for easy and quick access during a disaster. There might be others with Red Cross Training, CPR, or other medical training. Or perhaps there are retired professionals who would be willing to have their names cataloged if their expertise is needed during a major event. Bridges of Love's intention is to develop a 'skill-set' volunteer registry to identify and catalogue FEPI SWAT Teams of Volunteers.

### Planning to Plan

The creation of an effective emergency plan begins with the formation of a group of individuals who will become responsible for a variety of tasks that build on each other to create the churches' strategy. The FEPI Foundation has been laid but there is still work to be done at the local level to ensure there is a strong commitment to follow through.

Planning for an emergency begins with setting up a planning committee in each church to oversee the Out-reach Community Groups, The FEPI structure is intended to be practical, logical and sequential. The result is intended to be understandable and useful yet adaptable as each church community will vary.

**Figure 1**

Organizational chart for a simple committee tasked with the responsibility to over-see the local response. As our structure develops the positions will be clearly defined and responsibilities documented. There is still work to be done to clearly define and expand the various responsibilities which perhaps in time could be a collaborated effort with CEMA and the Quadrant Lead Churches.

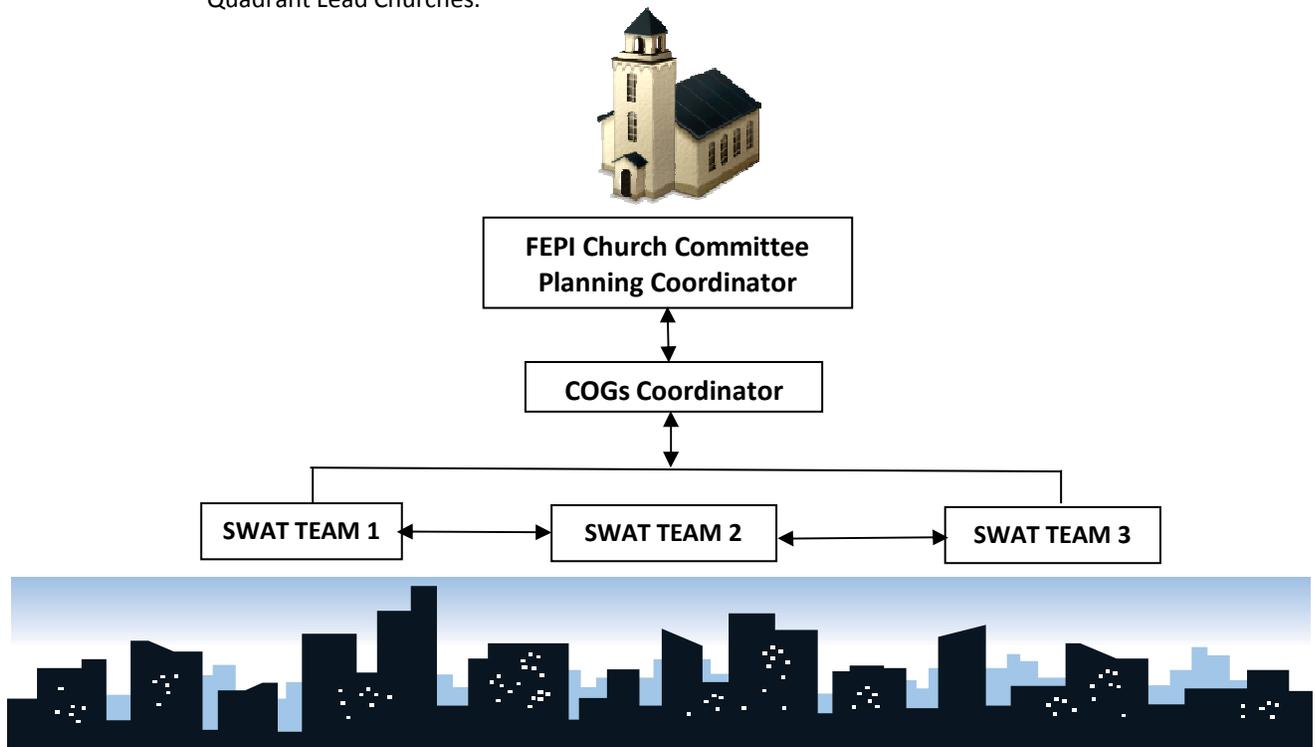


Figure 2

### FEPI Muster Station

Each FEPI Member Church will be designated as a “Muster Point” for their community. They will be receive a laminated poster to put in their church window.



Figure 3

### Mutual Assistance Groups (MAG's)

During times of crisis, ‘Mutual Assistance Groups’ could prove invaluable for community care. Who is our neighbour? Being a good neighbour and getting to know those around our home could assist during an emergency, large or small. Again, building relationships of trust are essential so when a need does arise, individuals are comfortable asking for help.



## **SECTION 2 - BEST PRACTICES DURING AN EMERGENCY**

(Portions Extracted from “Heralding Unheard Voices”)

### **SHELTER SERVICES**

#### **Shelter Evacuees**

Local churches utilized as evacuee shelters can provide: food, water, homes for families to allow for longer stays, provide transportation to medical treatment, and many other services needed during a disaster. Churches with affiliation with National relief infrastructures will have the advantage of access to supplies and support from their national organization.

Churches which are utilized as ‘shelters’ must be identified and coordinated with Disaster Social Services (DSS) and follow the protocol and direction of the lodging teams.

#### Records

It is essential to log daily reports keeping accurate records of all who stay in the church facility and what activities take place. Registering and tracking individual arrivals and departures is required to keep accurate account of those in the care of each facility.

#### Planning

Churches should plan beforehand whether they will be able to house evacuees, volunteers, relief workers, or all three.

#### Rules and Regulations

It is necessary to have rules and guidelines at an evacuee shelter and set clear guidelines, rules and expectations. These could include: zero tolerance for alcohol, drugs, or smoking, along with a lights-out curfew that could require evacuees to be in the shelter by a certain time each night.

#### Family Unity

Providing shelters preserves family unity by keeping families together. Family members can care for their own children which lessens the burden on church staff and volunteers.

### **FOOD SERVICES**

Immediately following a disaster there often is a lack of food and water. Not only do evacuees need food and water, but relief workers and volunteers serving during a disaster are in need of daily meals. Without this service, the response and recovery efforts will be slowed or stalled.

#### **Food Preparation**

#### Donated Food

Early in the response period, the church may rely on donated meals from restaurants if this is available in the area. Volunteers from partner churches could fill the void by preparing food at home and delivering it to the church shelter. If this is the case, special care should be taken in food preparation to be assured it is safe and handled according to the Food and Safety Guidelines. (See Appendix ... for Food Safety Regulations)

#### Commercial Kitchens

Many churches have commercial kitchen facilities which are ideal for large scale food preparation. Perhaps a church would have an experienced caterer in their midst which would direct kitchen operations, which would offer a more effective response to food preparation.

#### Evacuee Participation

Evacuees could also volunteer to cook for themselves so they would be less of a burden on the facility staff and volunteers. This scheme would decrease the need for volunteer labor and offer a meaningful role for the evacuee to raise morale.

## FAITH EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS INITIATIVE OPERATIONS MANUAL

### Partnering and Specialization

Church shelters could partner with other organizations that prepare meals. By out-sourcing some or all of the meal preparation responsibilities, the shelter could focus its resources and labour or other aspects of sheltering, while its partner could specialize in and gain economies in food preparation. It would be particularly effective in those cases where the churches know each other before the event and thus have understanding of each other's roles and capabilities.

### **Serving of Meals**

#### Significant Impact

Prepared meals using one or more of the approaches detailed above, served to shelter residents, resident and nonresident evacuees, and relief workers and volunteers will allow the work to carry forth with the essential nourishment.

## **MEDICAL SERVICES**

"Emergency Medical Services" could include 'personnel, facilities, and equipment required to ensure proper medical care for the sick and injured from the time of injury to the time of final disposition, including medical disposition within a hospital, temporary medical facility, or special care facility, release from site, or declared dead."

### **Advanced Medical Care**

Local doctors, nurses and dentists volunteering their services at their local church caring for evacuees requiring medical attention. Medical practitioners who are retired could also assist during these times when the medical teams are over-extended.

### **Basic Medical Care or first aid**

Basic Medical Care could be given by individuals who had prior training in basic medical care or first aid training. The professionals could be augmented by church staff and volunteers with some medical training.

### **Prescription Medication Service**

Assisting evacuees in getting prescription medications could be a valuable service to offer. The church would be required to reach an agreement with local pharmacies to help evacuees get prescriptions filled.

### **Liability Insurance**

It would be wise to check on liability insurance for doctors and nurses working outside their clinical setting to ensure they are covered.

### **Training and Expertise**

Training will only enhance the help from staff and volunteers in the church setting. A list of courses will be compiled to give direction for what training would be most beneficial. (Would appreciate your in-put)

#### Anticipate injuries

In an evacuation, people will arrive at the shelters with a wide range of injuries. It would, therefore, be advantageous for churches to know their volunteers or congregations well, particularly those with resource lists, to draw upon the right talents.

## **PERSONAL HYGIENE SERVICES**

Personal hygiene is a fundamental challenge following a disaster. Evacuees may be at risk from contaminated flood waters, debris and damaged buildings and probably have fled their homes without basic toiletry articles.

Shelter hygiene is closely linked to personal hygiene, so it is necessary to keep facilities clean. The challenge is that churches are not normally equipped to accommodate large numbers of people over long periods.

Food needs to be prepared in a clean, uncontaminated environment. Without the ability to clean and disinfect themselves, evacuees face disease and discomfort. It is also a factor in physical reconstruction services; relief

## FAITH EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS INITIATIVE OPERATIONS MANUAL

workers and volunteers need the means to remove and clean contaminated materials and waste from their bodies and clothing.

### Discussion

#### Smaller is better

Smaller facilities are able to create hospitable and hygienic conditions much easier than a large facility such as a Saddledome. Churches afford the opportunity to keep sanitary and comfortable living conditions at their facilities. Most stock pile cleaning solutions readily available during an emergency.

#### Toiletry Supplies

One activity which could be easily implemented in a 'Shepherd's Staff' small group setting is assembling small kits containing toiletries and basic medicines. These could be stored at the Quadrant Lead Churches or at each Sub-division Lead Church for easy access.

#### Toilet Facilities

When large numbers of people are using toilet facilities, it does not take long for cleanliness to diminish. Having adequate volunteers to monitor the sanitary conditions of the bathrooms is essential.

#### Showers

Many of the newer church facilities are incorporating showers for Inn from the Cold and for emergency situations. Having showers available during a disaster is a necessity especially for relief workers and volunteers.

Showers can be created in church baptisteries for evacuees where a longer term evacuation is necessary.

Mobile showering units are also available but may require partnering with a large organization that has such resources.

If these are not viable options, evacuees could be transported to other, more suitable shower facilities.

#### Laundry Services

Due to Inn from the Cold involvement, many churches have washers and dryers on site. Other options, however, include outsourcing laundry services, either to partner organizations or to individuals in the congregation. Evacuees could bag their dirty clothes and volunteers from various congregations could take the laundry home.

#### Schedules

Creating schedules for showers and laundry maximizes the capacity of limited facilities.

## MENTAL HEALTH AND SPIRITUAL SUPPORT

Mental Health Services involve "supporting various services impacting individuals who are dealing with the anxieties, stress, and trauma associated with a disaster, act of terrorism, and/or incident of mass criminal violence."

Spiritual Counseling is more difficult to define as a service, given the wide variety of traditions, denominations, beliefs, and methods of delivery among faith-based community.

### Discussion

#### Mental Health Services

Churches who have identified trained people in their congregations could offer mental health professionals to encourage psychological healing and recovery. Often what is needed, however, is just a caring person who will listen and put an arm of love around the hurting individual.

## FAITH EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS INITIATIVE OPERATIONS MANUAL

An option for churches during recovery is holding seminars on post-crisis trauma and providing information to communities and families on emotional recovery. (Bridges of Love has brochures available to any churches who wish to have some on hand)

### Spiritual Support Services

Churches offer a unique dimension to the relief efforts, one that is not normally addressed by government and secular organizations. Churches can play a major role in the psychological healing process.

In the aftermath of a disaster, victims need to be given hope for the future. Many people look to God during times of extreme crisis, so spiritual care is an important component of providing for those harmed by a disaster.

As mentioned previously, FEPI plans to gather contact information for other faiths so if a person of different faith requests another individual to counsel them, we can offer alternate help.

Offering spiritual support does not mean evangelizing. It means offering hope to those who have lost hope and showing love to those who need a lift. We must always be ready to share the hope that lies within us, however, if a hurting individual is seeking more.

### Care for the Care-givers

During an emergency, there is a great need to “provide for the providers” and to find a way to address the psychological health of care providers who may not be experienced in dealing with tragedy on a massive scale. It is important to take care of the volunteers by ensuring they take breaks and get enough sleep. Effectiveness will be lost if they become exhausted physically and mentally.

## PHYSICAL RECONSTRUCTION SERVICES

“Physical reconstruction” refers to a broad set of actions to reconstitute private physical property, such as individual homes and places of worship. It involves clearing debris and removing trees so that families may return to their homes to assess the damage or gather belongings.

Physical reconstruction is carried out in phases by organizations of varying size and specialization. Jobs which can be carried out by churches include clearing debris, home repair, mud removal and clean-up. For larger churches that have resources (such as tools, trucks, and warehouses), personnel with advanced vocational training, and a volunteer force that would enable them to tackle the larger physical reconstruction projects.

One effective strategy is to establish beachheads in the local community. Organizations could restore local places of worship first to provide a base from which to conduct neighbourhood projects.

Churches are known to continue with recovery efforts until the job is done. The local church often has the best information as to what is needed to be accomplished. It is important to have coordination of efforts with a central authority with comprehensive knowledge of the jobs that need completion.

### **Best Practices**

#### Specialization

National denominations have specialized in physical reconstruction services. Mennonite Disaster Services are one denomination who has specialized in this area so are well known and can be counted on to provide these services.

#### Access First

Sending personnel to survey the job site before assigning an entire crew allows decision making to ensure the proper assignment of personnel and equipment.

#### Skilled Volunteers

The Church Community can draw on an abundance of volunteers, many of whom have basic construction skills.

## FAITH EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS INITIATIVE OPERATIONS MANUAL

### Beachheads

Repairing the local church can create a staging and coordination area for the community recovery effort and represent a visible icon for the community to rally around.

### **TRANSPORTATION MANAGEMENT AND SERVICES**

Evacuees need to find housing, find employment, and go to doctors' offices and to other service providers. They need to file claims and meet with case workers and visit the local school and enroll their children. Evacuees have to buy groceries and household supplies, and they do other things aimed at leading them back to a more normal life.

Volunteers and relief workers need transportation to and from worksites.

Evacuees need to be relocated.

While one may consider these needs "routine," they are essential to eliminating human suffering and lessening the economic impact of disaster: people need to return to as normal a life as the situation may allow. Routine transportation is a key component of that.

#### **Non-emergency Transportation**

The non-emergency routine movement of people over long periods so they may rebuild their lives is a very important service to provide. Many evacuees would not have personal vehicles, and often public transportation has been disrupted. Routine transportation is a key component to aid in helping people return to as regular life as the situation may allow.

#### Evacuee Shuttles

Providing daily transportation for evacuees to numerous places over the course of weeks and perhaps months, consumes a significant amount of time and resources. Churches would be advised to set up routine scheduled trips, to the sites most commonly visited such as doctors' offices, showering facilities, the hospital, and other locations at prearranged times.

#### Volunteer and Relief Worker Shuttles

Many volunteers aiding in a disaster will need daily routine transportation to and from worksites. These worksites might be considerable distance from wherever the volunteers and relief workers were stationed at night. Others might need transportation to a 'beachhead.' A place established in the ravaged area and used as a forward base of operations. Large-scale movement of volunteers can be done successfully using the churches own vehicles but personal insurance policies should be checked to be sure of adequate coverage.

#### "Shelter" means "transportation" too

Providing shelter may also mean providing transportation. The two go hand in hand so one should anticipate this service being included with shelter responsibilities.

#### Credentialing and Access

Access to and from the disaster area; transporting volunteers and relief workers, requires proper official credentials that identify them as having legitimate reason to be in the disaster area.

### **CHILDREN'S SERVICES**

Creating safe spaces for children is critically important after a crisis. Children have lost homes, pets, belongings and sometimes even family members and friends. Schools, child care centers and after-school programs provide services essential to a return to normalcy and, ultimately, recovery.

Churches' natural constituency includes children, as shown by nurseries, Sunday school rooms and youth centers. In addition many churches house day care centers and school in their facilities for the outside community. This prepared them to serve families during a crisis.

## FAITH EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS INITIATIVE OPERATIONS MANUAL

### Child Care Services

Children are a vulnerable population who could be further traumatized without proper care and attention. Like adults, children need basic services such as shelter, food, and medical care. However, when providing for children after disasters, some additional needs and considerations are worth noting. These could include:

#### Emotional trauma

The chaos of an evacuation; loss of friends, family, and pets; destruction of homes and property; removal from familiar surroundings; separation from community structure; and disruption to routine are examples of factors that may be particularly traumatic to children.

#### Physical Environment

Debris, fast-moving storm water, unsanitary conditions, crowded shelters, and unfamiliarity with their surroundings are special challenges children face. In the aftermath of a disaster, the world is a more dangerous place for children. The church can act as a safe haven for these vulnerable children but special care must be taken to ensure this atmosphere is available.

#### Shelter Environment

Unsupervised children in the unfamiliar environment of a temporary shelter are a challenge. Churches are advised to provide programs to occupy children and aid in the long-term recovery.

#### Parental Absences

Evacuees who are parents of children face a recovery challenge: who takes care of their children while they look for housing and employment, meet with case managers to apply for aid, return to their homes to salvage what little is left, and do the myriad of other tasks required to return their lives to something more than normal? Church volunteers caring for children would take a tremendous load off parents giving them peace of mind having their children cared for during this stressful time.

#### Child Care Safety Regulations

If possible, those who give personal care to children in our church facility should have the proper credentials to be involved in child care. This may not always be possible, depending on the severity of the disaster, but special consideration and caution should be taken. Those individuals, who are already involved in children's church programs, should be chosen first since they are already credentialed to be in that position.

### CASE MANAGEMENT AND RELATED SERVICES

Case Management Services can be defined as "an arrangement, coordination, and monitoring of services to meet the needs of individuals and families." Case management is formal assistance provided to individuals and families to gain them health and human services to which they are entitled. This involves trained case workers who are familiar with local, provincial and federal assistance programs.

Fundamentally, some aspects of case management come down to properly filling out forms or applications and getting them into the appropriate system.

This is an opportunity for 'SWAT' Team volunteers to help with case management and related services. The Salvation Army is already equipped to handle this area of service as function as a social service for the underprivileged in non-disaster periods.

#### Provide Information

Evacuees desperately need information in order to return their lives to normalcy. The Coordination Centre will provide reliable information to the responding churches that will pass it on to the evacuees. They also could have access to internet use, television and personal counseling sessions.

## FAITH EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS INITIATIVE OPERATIONS MANUAL

### Referral Services

Churches can act as service providers connecting evacuees with services and professions to address evacuees' needs. Often it is easiest to facilitate contact between evacuees and the government agencies by bringing a representative from the relevant service provider. into the church facility serving as a liaison between evacuees and social service agencies.

### Form and Application Assistance

An important step in the recovery process involves registration with government agencies, and other service providers for relief services. It is critical to register for aid quickly so church volunteers could assist with this process. Volunteers would need guidance from authorities in order to help their evacuees with accuracy.

### Financial Relief

Local congregations, organization partners, individual church donors, and denominational organizations have the capacity to offer financial assistance. Church leadership would benefit from deciding how to use funds before a disaster strikes. They might also benefit from establishing an agreement with a professional accountant to manage finances in the event of a disaster, which would resolve accountability issues.

## CONCLUSION

Historically, churches have played an important role in disaster relief and recovery and will continue to serve their communities. They have firsthand knowledge of the problems they live with and a personal stake in the success of their solutions. Local churches not only provide needed services but do so in an environment of care and mutual support. The missing piece, however, has been a lack of coordination and integration.

The data gathered in "Heralding Unheard Voices" reveals a particular role that the local church played in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. These faith groups and NGOS stepped-in to provide for "unmet needs." They saw what needed to be done and acted according to the needs of the people. We need to not only be prepared to protect our own but be ready to have an effective structure in place to reach those in our communities, who might need a helping hand. As we equip church members through education, encouragement, training and resources they will experience great satisfaction and fulfillment knowing they are ready to assist others in their community in the event of a disaster...large or small.

We believe the Faith Emergency Preparedness Initiative has the potential to augment government services and the services of others who respond to disasters by providing an extensive network of trained, coordinated, educated and equipped church volunteers. We welcome the opportunity to serve those in our community demonstrating *'living proof of a loving God.'* The Christian responsiveness is determined by a continuing exploration of the distinctive identity and purpose of the church called to love God and our neighbour.

As Vic Toews, Minister of Public Safety Canada stated in his recent letter to Bridges of Love ... "When it comes to emergency management and emergency preparedness, we ALL have a role to play."

## RESOURCES

[COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT: Working Together – A Resource Manual; Ontario Healthy Communities Coalition](#), May 2003.

[HERALDING UNHEARD VOICES – The Role of Faith-Based and non-Governmental Organizations During Disaster.](#); U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Final Report 2006

[HANDBOOK TO PRACTICAL DISASTER PREPAREDNESS FOR THE FAMILY](#); Dr. Arthur Bradley, 2010

[OF CHURCHES, PANDEMICS, AND EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS](#) – Reconnecting the Church with the Community in which it is found; Dr. Tim Foggin & Marg Pollon, 2006

[PANDEMIC INFLUENZA PLANNING – A Step-by-step Guide for Businesses and Local Governments](#); Vernon Dorisson, Outskirts Press, Inc. Denver Colorado, 2007.

[WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP – Recipes for Success](#); Alberta Community Development