

## Superstorm Sandy – early response situation reports

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[Hurricane Sandy in Cuba and Haiti](#) – December 18, 2012

*"Post Hurricane Sandy: The Body of Christ,"* by Marie Zupka-Ludder, of the Presbytery of Long Island. Read how the Body of Christ worked together to share the hope of Christ in the days following the superstorm, including how several local congregations offered assistance and compassion in their communities.

[PDA continues to respond to Superstorm Sandy](#) – November 9, 2012

[List of churches damaged by Superstorm Sandy](#) – November 12, 2012

["Hurricane Sandy no Halloween treat - First word to describe the storm's damage: 'Historic'"](#) – Presbyterian News Service story by Jim Nedelka, November 1, 2012

[On All Saints Day, remember those affected by Superstorm Sandy](#) – October 30, 2012

[Continuing to monitor Superstorm Sandy](#), which struck in the Caribbean and is heading for the East Coast of the United States – October 29, 2012

[Hurricane Sandy initial report](#) – October 26, 2012

## **Situation Report Update - Hurricane Sandy in Cuba and Haiti December 18, 2012**

While most of the response to Hurricane Sandy has focused on the Northeastern United States, recovery efforts from Hurricane Sandy continue in Haiti and Cuba, two countries severely hit by the late October hurricane.

In Cuba, more than 188,000 homes were damaged, and the eastern city of Santiago de Cuba was particularly devastated.

In Haiti, Hurricane Sandy was viewed as far worse than Hurricane Isaac in August of this year, with devastating flooding, including in northwest Haiti, where PDA has supported the work of agricultural cooperatives. Of particular concern in Haiti is the pressure put on a country still recovering from the devastating January 2010 earthquake, with food security particularly threatened.

The situation in at least 60 of the 140 communes in Haiti is considered serious, and the food insecurity rate could be as high as 50 percent. Up to 2 million people are thought to be at risk of malnutrition as per the latest estimates.

### **PDA Response**

In Haiti, PDA has provided OGHS funds to support our mission partners in providing livelihood recovery, disaster risk reduction, cholera prevention, psychosocial services, shelter, and education. Specific attention is being paid to help with food security, particularly in areas impacted by the 2010 earthquake where people were in the process of recovery. Agricultural inputs of seeds, tools, livestock, etc. are being provided to 300 of the families most affected.

In Cuba, PDA has provided OGHS funds in support of the ACT Alliance appeal to assist with emergency family food packages and water provision as part of initial recovery efforts. Funds are also helping with shelter, which our long-time partner, the Cuban Council of Churches, identified as a key priority.

### **How you can help**

**Give.** Provide financial support to aid in recovery efforts. [Give online](#) or mail your gift referencing DR000187 to P.O. Box 643700, Pittsburgh, PA 15264-3700.

**Act.** [Make "Gift of the Heart" Kits](#) - clean up buckets, baby kits, hygiene kits and school kits to replenish the distribution sites, so that there will be kits to send when needed immediately following disasters. Kits used internationally are the baby kits, hygiene kits, and school kits.

**Pray.** Pray for families who are struggling after this and previous disasters, and that the response we share with our partners will bear evidence of God's faithfulness.

## **Situation report Update - Northeast (Sandy) November 9, 2012**

PDA has continued providing help and hope for the survivors of Superstorm Sandy over the past couple of weeks. Twenty-seven members of the National Response Team are working with mid-councils in New York and New Jersey helping them organize their response, assisting in the assessment of damages (both in the community and to Presbyterian churches), assessing potential sites to host volunteer work teams, and providing spiritual and emotional care for Presbyterian leaders.

The Committee Chairs of the three One Great Hour of Sharing programs have sent a joint letter to each NRT member thanking them and offering prayers for their service, and reminding them that the Presbyterian Hunger Program and the Self Development of People Committee are available to join the efforts of PDA in the long-term recovery of the area.

One Great Hour of Sharing funds have been sent to help mid-councils as they help their congregations respond to the vast needs. Initial funds are helping with immediate needs, but we know that the response to the disaster will be huge and long-term; we trust that sufficient designated funds will be received that will enable us to serve all nine mid-councils that have been affected.

A list of churches that we know have been damaged is [available to download](#). We offer our prayers and support to these congregations. We are thankful that some Presbyterian churches have suffered little damage and have power and give thanks that many of these churches are serving as shelters, food banks and other relief locations.

In the coming weeks, PDA will continue to monitor the recovery effort in all of the 17 affected states and international countries that have been impacted by Sandy.

PDA thanks the many people who have shared their financial blessings, have made Gift-of-the-Heart kits, and have contacted the National Call Center to let us know you are willing to serve in the clean-up and rebuilding efforts when possible.

We want to urge people not to send unsolicited items like food and clothing, as many organizations do not have the extra personnel to receive, organize and distribute such donations. We also urge volunteers to not travel to the East Coast unless they are part of a solicited emergency volunteer group as this will put undue stress on communities already struggling with power loss, gasoline rationing, and displaced families. The PDA National Call Center will accept your calls indicating your interest and we will post volunteer work team opportunities as they become available.

***Hurricane Sandy no Halloween treat***  
***First word to describe the storm's damage: 'Historic'***  
***November 1, 2012***

Presbyterian News Service, Jim Nedelka, Special to Presbyterian News Service  
Sandy-Soaked New York City

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It is Halloween.

On the day after the night Hurricane Sandy arrived here as a rambunctious guest, New York City and much of the surrounding Tri-State area within at least a 90 mile radius was still recovering from the shock while beginning to assess the damage caused by the hazing it received from the massive storm.

Initial reports indicate that at least five Presbyterian churches here in Manhattan suffered moderate to heavy damage. Presbyterian Disaster Assistance National Response Teams are response teams are headed to the presbyteries of New York City, Long Island, Elizabeth, New Brunswick and Monmouth.

Middlesex (N.J.) Presbyterian Church in Elizabeth Presbtery -- pastored by General Assembly Moderator Neal Presa -- lost its roof .

The Stony Point Center just north of New York City — one of the PC(USA)'s national conference centers — is making space available for hurricane victims who need a place to stay.

Sandy didn't just ring our doorbells and run away, she yanked the doorbells off the houses. In too many cases, she also yanked our houses off their foundations, leaving them strewn in the middle of highways, byways and waterways, especially along the Jersey Shore — unfortunately located directly in the intersection of Sandy's cross-hairs.

In other cases, she simply huffed and puffed and blew the house down.

Or she burned them down.

On Breezy Point in NY City's borough of Queens, a stone's throw from JFK Airport, dawn revealed the skeletons and foundations of 111 burned-out homes, described as the City's "worst disaster for concentrated destruction."

Up and down the Jersey Shore the word was not "JWow," but simply "wow." Nearly a dozen fires erupted in the early-morning hours in Mantoloking. The iconic amusement park in Seaside Heights was more in the sea than on the heights. In Atlantic City, even if you passed "Go" and collected your 200 dollars, you'd have a tough time landing on the legendary Boardwalk as huge sections of it have been washed away.

President Obama toured the Shore Wednesday afternoon with Governor Chris Christie. If he didn't see them first-hand from his flyover in Marine One, he was certainly briefed about all the trees and boats and cars and downed power lines and dolls and walkers and wheelchairs and strollers and the rest of the spectrum of life's artifacts randomly stacked and scattered across the landscape.

If the Jersey Shore's troubadour, Bruce Springsteen, hadn't written "My City of Ruins" for 9/11 he most would most certainly have a reason to do so now.

Upstate in New York State's Westchester County, the beach at Rye Playland, the antique amusement park featured in the Tom Hanks' film "Big" looks like a giant's foot squashed it as the normally tranquil Long Island Sound roared ashore, trashing the boardwalk there, bending-back the fence atop the seawall at a 45-degree angle.

Here in New York City, much of the area below 34<sup>th</sup> street — the neighborhood of Macy's and the Empire State Building — is still without power. In fact, all the area's power companies conservatively estimate that 90% of their customers lost power.

In lower Manhattan, Sandy short-circuited the Brooklyn-Battery Tunnel, filling it with more than ten feet of salt water, equal to the level of its access roads on both Manhattan and Brooklyn sides.

Sandy also drowned the City's 108 year-old subway system, filling many stations — to quote Joe Lhota, the head of the Metropolitan Transportation Authority — “to the ceiling.” Most ironically, pictures taken in the South Ferry station showed several inches of water on its mezzanine level, located easily twelve feet above the train platforms below.

The MTA restored limited transit bus service Tuesday evening and some commuter rail service today (Wednesday). But, while they are conducting test subway runs, it may not be until after Election Day before subway service is fully restored.

The same can be said for the Port Authority Trans-Hudson Trains which carry many from Newark, Hoboken and Jersey City into lower Manhattan.

On Broadway, many of the shows were planning to be back up and running for this evening's performances, but with no mass transit, most area schools were closed for the third-straight “storm day.”

In deference to safety concerns about the countless downed power lines, New Jersey and some other municipalities postponed trick-or-treating. Unable to spare police and other first responders from post-Sandy duties, New York City postponed the 39th annual civic Halloween Party.

Yet New York City Marathon officials were still optimistic they can successfully run the five-borough race this coming Sunday (Nov. 4).

There will be questions why the failed back-up generators at NYU-Langone Hospital were allowed to age-out of their usefulness, forcing officials to evacuate the facility. There will be questions about how to lessen the chances of the ironic situation of having to let houses burn down in the midst of a hurricane-force rainstorm. There will be questions about the logic of placing power generators in the basements and cellars of flood-prone buildings, even though many were situated above the highest-record floor stage. There will be questions about why duly-warned people refuse to evacuate flood-prone areas.

While there were reports of vandalism and price gouging by some merchants and taxi drivers, and while experts unravel the conundrum of how to safely dismantle the boom of a crane dangling some 75 stories above Carnegie Hall, the Governor of Connecticut, Dannel Molloy, and his counterparts — New York's Andrew Cuomo and New Jersey's Chris Christie — enthused about the clean-up effort. Each cited the unbowed spirit of their region's residents in pitching in to volunteer, whether at a shelter or in the cause of an elderly neighbor or were simply “there” for someone who has lost almost everything, the three men also paused to remember the more than 50 people including, sadly, some very young children who perished during the storm.

And yet, in Somerville, N.J. today, a hopeful new chapter begins as a mother suckles her newborn baby, born during the height of Sandy's fury.

To contribute to Hurricane Sandy relief through Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, [click here](#).

***Jim Nedelka, is a frequent contributor to the Presbyterian New Service, works for a major broadcast news organization in New York. A Ruling Elder, he is a member of New York's Jan Hus Presbyterian Church and Neighborhood House.***

## **On All Saints Day, remember those affected by Superstorm Sandy October 30, 2012**

"The church is catholic, universal, so are all her actions; all that she does belongs to all. These are the words of John Donne, a cleric and poet, written upon listening to the death knells that rang each day announcing how many had died of the plague in seventeenth-century London. On All Saints Day as we remember all the saints whose witness prompted our faith in Jesus Christ, let us also remember our brothers and sisters who have been impacted by the massive storm that hit the eastern United States and parts of the Caribbean.

Please pray for the millions of people who have been affected by this storm. Stand in the GAP for them.

There are ways you can help:

**Give.** [Provide financial support](#) to aid in recovery efforts. You can give \$10 now by texting PDA to 20222; mail your gift referencing DR000187 to P.O. Box 643700, Pittsburgh, PA 15264-3700; or give by credit card by calling PresbyTel at (800) 872-3283.

**Act.** Make "Gift of the Heart" kits - clean up buckets, baby kits, hygiene kits and school kits. More than 18,000 kits have already been sent.

Organize volunteer teams. There will be tremendous need for volunteer teams to help in the clean-up and recovery efforts — that will span multiple states — including many communities still recovering from Hurricanes Irene and Lee. Contact the PDA National Call Center at 866-732-6121 to let us know of your team's interest, skill level and future availability. We can then contact you when volunteer opportunities are identified.

**Pray.** Pray for families who lost homes and loved ones. Pray as they face power loss and other challenges brought on by further inclement weather. Pray for those seek to provide physical, emotional and spiritual comfort. Pray the hope of Christ will be evident in our response.

## **Superstorm Sandy - Situation report update October 29, 2012**

Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (PDA) continues to monitor Superstorm Sandy. Last week, PDA reached out to all mid-councils in the projected path of the storm to encourage them to be prepared, and to let them know that PDA is available for an immediate response upon request. The impact and needs will become more clear once the storm makes landfall on the U.S. East coast.

PDA has called members of the National Response Team (NRT) so they may be of service where needed. This includes an NRT member who will serve as a liaison to provide an interface between Presbyterian mid-councils and the American Red Cross. PDA has also been in touch with the Presbyterian Health Education and Welfare Association (PHEWA) to see if some of their members may be available to help with needs after the storm hits.

PDA is also aware that Hurricane Sandy has hit countries in the Caribbean. At least 69 people have died as a result of the storm in these countries, and thousands of homes have been damaged or destroyed. Especially hard hit once again is Haiti, where 52 people have died from the storm. Most of the deaths occurred in southern Haiti and in Port-au-Prince, where many Haitians are still living in temporary shelters as a result of the 2010 earthquake.



### **How you can help**

**Give.** Share your financial blessings by designating gifts to DR000148. Individuals may give through their local Presbyterian congregation, [online](#), or by mailing a check to Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) P.O. Box 643700 Pittsburgh, PA 15264-3700. You can also text PDA to 20222 to donate \$10.

### **Act.**

- Following storms in the United States, families face the daunting task of beginning to clean up. Find out how to prepare a Gift of the Heart Kit clean up bucket for response to U.S. disasters, or download a bulletin insert to share with your congregation.
- There may be a future need for volunteer work teams. Contact Eden at the PDA Call Center, (866) 732-6121, to register your interest.

**Pray.** Our best response is prayer.

***Holy God, You are our comfort and strength in times of sudden disaster, crisis, or chaos. By your Spirit, lift up those who have fallen, sustain those who work to rescue or rebuild, and surround us now with your grace and peace to face the challenges ahead. Grant us the assurance of your presence even in this time of uncertainty, and fill us with the hope of your new creation; through Jesus Christ, our rock and redeemer.***



## **Hurricane Sandy - Initial report October 26, 2012**

Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (PDA) has been closely watching the path and trajectory of Hurricane Sandy. This storm is large and unpredictable and may indeed blow itself out unexpectedly. However, predictions are that heavy rains and unpredictable winds may result in power outages and flooding rain in a broad area between New York in the Northeast to South Carolina and into the coastal areas to the south.

Though landfall in the Northeast is not expected until Monday or Tuesday, PDA has contacted mid-councils potentially in the path of Hurricane Sandy, encouraging them to activate their disaster response plans, to prepare congregations for this event and to connect with the other voluntary organizations active in disaster. Mid-councils on the periphery of the storm may also experience unexpectedly high levels of flooding.

PDA stands ready to immediately respond with One Great Hour of Sharing funds or with members of the National Response Team to mid-councils that experience the effects of the storm. We ask that you lift up in prayer communities that have already been impacted by Hurricane Sandy and those that may be impacted.

### **How you can help**

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### **Act.**

- Sign up to receive [PDA RIN \(Rapid Information Network\)](#) emails to be aware of current responses and urgent needs you can share with your congregation.
- Following storms in the United States, families face the daunting task of beginning to clean up. Find out how to prepare a Gift of the Heart Kit clean up bucket for response to U.S. disasters, or download a bulletin insert to share with your congregation.

**Pray.** Our best response is prayer.

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