



Be Ready Sunday

Dear Religious Leader,

Your church family is cordially invited to join the State of Alaska this September in promoting National Preparedness Month in your community and beyond. National Preparedness Month is a nationwide effort meant to encourage Americans to take simple steps to prepare for emergencies in their homes, businesses, schools and churches. Faith-based organizations are encouraged to include preparedness materials in their bulletins and newsletters, post preparedness information on their websites, and speak to their congregation on the need to prepare.

Enclosed is a toolbox to help prepare your church and congregation. Take a few moments to review the list of preparedness goals. Learn how your church family can join the nation by preparing your house of worship and your congregation to respond and recover from a disaster or emergency.

BE INFORMED

The first goal in disaster preparedness is to get informed. Fostering awareness in your congregation about potential hazards and having a plan set in place can save time, resources, money, and most importantly lives.

Potential disasters in Alaska range from earthquakes, wild fires, severe weather, floods, and tsunamis to hazardous materials incidents, and possibly even a terrorist attack. Knowledge that these types of incidents can occur at any time, that these incidents can overwhelm a community including public safety and a city's critical infrastructure is important for organizations and individuals to have. People will need to help themselves. Knowledge is a powerful tool in faith and in the need to protect oneself and others from harm.

Once everyone knows the kinds of disasters or emergencies that can occur in their community, it is time to move forward with the creation of emergency supply kits for the home, car, workplace, school, and church. Map-out emergency fire escape and evacuation plans. Know how you will communicate and reunite with family. A little pre-planning today helps everyone gather strength to move forward and begin the road to recovery if a disaster should strike.

BE INVOLVED

Encourage your congregation to participate in community preparedness activities and citizen-based training programs to help their community be ready.

In 95% of all emergencies, bystanders or victims themselves are the first ones to provide emergency assistance or to perform a rescue. Refer your congregation to www.fema.gov or their local city website to find out more information on training and volunteer opportunities. No matter where your church members live there are opportunities for all to get informed, get prepared and be involved in preparedness!

The individual citizen is America's most valuable tool in the prevention of crime and terrorism. Help your and other communities around our state better prepare for any kind of disaster or emergency. Church family members will turn to their faith in times of need, for comfort and support. Start today; welcome the message of preparation into your house of worship.

BE READY

Prepare your congregation by sharing these scripture references.

BE READY SCRIPTURE PASSAGES

Isaiah 41: 17-20; 61:1-3

Psalms 9:9-10; 23: 4; 46, 55:22; 57:1; 100:5, 121

Matthew 5: 1-10; 25: 34-40

Luke 10:25-37

John 9:2, 10:1-10

Acts 5:32

Romans 8:31-39

1 John 3:17-18

FAITH-BASED READINESS

- Is your place of worship READY? If you have not already created an emergency response plan, see the *Steps for Developing a Plan for Your Church*. These steps will help you and your church leadership establish a baseline to better prepare for a disaster or emergency.
- The *Faith-Based Organization Disaster Preparedness Checklist* will help you complete a thorough evaluation of your church readiness.

The print ready handout can be copied to share with your congregation to learn the basics of preparedness and where to search for more information. There are many resources for information available.