

DISASTER RESPONSE COMMITTEE

Rev. Tom Mattick, Coordinator

As with many ministries during the pandemic, the disaster response activities were modified. Although there were hurricanes, floods, and wildfires; the Early Response Teams did not deploy as the conferences where incidents occurred determined it was not safe to receive teams. While teams from our conference did not deploy out of state, there were several other notable activities.

- Early in the pandemic, Polly Turner became aware of a desperate need on the Navajo Nation for personal protection equipment at the hospital in Shiprock, New Mexico. Thirty N-95 masks and 175 TyVek suits were donated from our supplies meeting a critical need.
- Since its inception, Rev. Tom Mattick has participated on the Conference COVID-19 Response Team developing guidelines and best practices for local churches.
- Polly Turner and Jo Robinson coordinated receiving and modifying bed sheets from the Hotel Coronado in San Diego, California. The surplus sheets were cut and hemmed to fit twin size beds and given to our outreach ministries with housing capabilities.
- In May, Billie Fidlin was notified of the availability of cloth masks available through UMCOR for extension ministries. ASU Campus Ministry, NAU Campus Ministry, U of A Campus Ministry, UMOM New Day Center, Justa Center, Wesley Community Centers, and TMM each received a case of 500 masks for distribution.
- In October, it was announced the UMCOR Depot West (United Methodist Committee on Relief) in Salt Lake City was closing effective December 31, 2020. All materials from the depot were relocated to other locations and warehouses. Mattick in collaboration with the Western Jurisdiction Disaster Response Coordinators and Bishops developed a plan for conference-based storage of disaster supplies with cross-conference distribution as needed in a disaster. This will require us to identify a location and storage facility within our conference to equip with relief supplies. We can still receive and send supplies to UMCOR.
- With in-person gathering for training limited by the pandemic, UMCOR developed an online module for recertifying ERTs. In November, Turner and Mattick co-taught the course recertifying seven persons from our conference and six from other conferences in the Western Jurisdiction.

As we look to 2021, the Disaster Response Committee will examine our needs for storing flood buckets, personal hygiene kits, fire buckets, and other supplies locally. We will remain ready to respond when called to service.