

A Sea of Blue

April 25, 2018

Earthquakes, typhoons, gun violence, mudslides, forced migration, hurricanes, and fires: the litany of disasters is long, but so is the commitment of Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (PDA). Its crews of blue-shirted volunteers are prepared to respond quickly, bringing hope out of chaos.

And they stay longer. Did you know that we outlasted national relief organizations in the Gulf Coast, following Hurricane Katrina? As others pulled out, we remained committed to helping.

Others know that we're good. During Superstorm Sandy, the American Red Cross granted \$1.5 million dollars to PDA to support our local efforts because of our reputation for good stewardship and our sustainable approach.

As PDA rushes toward the chaos of disasters, it depends on thousands of volunteers. The ways to serve are almost as numerous as the types of disasters we face. Some are simple and require only a short time commitment; others require specialized training and a willingness to drop everything on a moment's notice.

I'm pleased to let you know that James Kirk, PDA's Associate for Disaster Response (U.S.), will join us on May 22, for a pre-Gathering workshop, focused on how you or your congregation might support the denomination's disaster relief ministries. The pre-Gathering workshop begins at 3 pm, at Crossroads Presbyterian Church, Mequon. All are invited, whether or not you plan to attend the full Presbytery Gathering, but you will need to register. Keep your eyes open for the registration announcement.

Consider for a moment these amazing statistics from Mission Mosaic: Year in Review 2017:

In 2017, because of your generous support, PDA was able to grant more than **\$4 million** across the globe; **support 7,136** work team volunteers who helped those affected by disaster; **deploy 418** National Response Team members who spent **2,122 days** in the field in **70 presbyteries**; **train 110** Presbyterian Women in disaster preparedness; **screen films in 6 festivals**; and through Church World Service, aided in the collection and distribution of **243,942 Gift of the Heart kits** and blankets. **THANK YOU!**

Your mission gifts to the denomination made this possible. I add my thanks as well! I hope you will join us for the May 22 pre-Gathering to learn how else you can be part of this life-giving ministry.