



A Call for Solidarity with Our Neighbors Impacted by Hurricane Irma

God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.

—Psalm 46:1 (NRSV)

The Pennsylvania Council of Churches grieves with our sisters and brothers who have suffered the loss of life, shelter, possessions and security in the wake of Hurricane Irma. We stand in solidarity with them, and call of people of faith from all traditions to hold them in prayer and to provide help through any of the many mechanisms available for doing so.

Hurricane Irma has brought catastrophic devastation to many Caribbean islands and much of the Florida peninsula. Its high winds and storm surges have caused and continue to cause the loss of human life and the lives of beloved pets and farm animals, anxiety over missing loved ones and animals, loss of income as places of employment have been destroyed or damaged, loss of homes, belongings, and cherished and irreplaceable possessions, and the loss of a sense of safety and security with an uncertain future.

We pray to a God that is faithful asking for comfort, peace, and healing to all who have lost family members and other loved ones, as well as those whose lives have been forever changed by the loss of home, property, and other impacts of this devastating storm. We pray to a God that is compassionate for protection of all who remain in danger, for strength for all first responders and relief workers who risk their own lives to save the lives of others, and for hope that those who are missing are brought to safety. We pray for God to give hope, courage, and strength to our neighbors in Antigua and Barbuda, St. Martin, St. Bartholomy, Anguilla, St. Kitts and Nevis, the Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico, the Dominican Republic, Haiti, Turks and Caicos and Florida as they begin to rebuild their lives and livelihoods.

We believe God weeps with those who mourn and comforts those who have lost every other sense of security and safety. May they find shelter under the wings of God's mercy. May they see in official and volunteer rescue workers glimpses of God's promise of renewed life and hope.

We urge members of Congress to be generous and united in offering needed relief aid. We encourage houses of worship and faith communities to be proactive in considering ways to offer hope and healing where natural disasters or other crises create immediate and ongoing needs.

We call on all people of faith and good will to stand with our neighbors who are suffering, and encourage all who are able to contribute to provide help and relief.

Rev. Elizabeth L. Bidgood Enders

The Rev. Elizabeth Bidgood Enders, President
Board of Directors, Pennsylvania Council of Churches

September 2017

Here are links to learn how you can help:

- [Faith-Based and Other Ways to Help Our Neighbors Affected by Hurricane Harvey & Irma](#)
- [National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster \(VOAD\) Provides Places to Help Those Affected by Harvey & Irma](#)
- [Contribute to Florida Organizations Offering Hurricane Irma Relief](#)