

Presbytery of the Mississippi Valley

Mission to North America

**Deaconal Ministries
Subcommittee**

February 2025

Presbytery of the Mississippi Valley Mission to North America Committee

Mercy Ministry

The Presbytery of the Mississippi Valley's Mission to North America Committee (PMV MNA) oversees the coordination of mercy ministries within the bounds of presbytery and cooperates with the PCA's Disaster Response Ministry. As Acts 6 teaches that the most basic reason for the existence of deacons in the Church is to preserve and protect the Church's primary calling of the ministry of the Word and prayer by allowing the elders to minister the Word, publicly and privately, and intercede in prayer with and for the members of the Church, a Diaconal Ministries Subcommittee, made up of six deacons of PMV congregations and two regular members of the PMV MNA committee, serves to plan, promote, and resource mercy ministry.

Mission

Rooted in God's character, the Diaconal Ministries Subcommittee will train and organize PMV members to show compassion and provide practical assistance to those in need by not only providing material aid to those experiencing hardship, but also spiritual encouragement.

Vision

Having trained PMV members to respond to those experiencing hardship, in the aftermath of a natural or man-made disaster, the Diaconal Ministries Subcommittee will partner with local PCA churches to assist in marshalling volunteers and providing emergency relief kits, Sheds of HOPE kits, materials, tools, and supplies.

Strategies

1. Determine the Training Needs of PMV churches.
 - Diaconal Mercy Ministry
 - Disaster Relief
2. Train and Credential Disaster Relief Volunteers
 - Spiritual Encouragement/Care and Comfort
 - Basic Chainsaw

- Advanced Chainsaw
 - Clean up
 - Temporary Roofing
 - Flood Recovery
 - Skid Steer Use
 - Transporting Trailers
3. Maintain Database of Trained and Credentialed Individuals to Marshall during Disaster Event
 4. Maintain and Dispatch Disaster Relief Equipment Trailers
 5. Maintain the Sheds of HOPE Depot
 6. Build, Store, Deliver, and Erect Sheds of HOPE Kits
 7. Assemble, Store, and Deliver Flood Buckets, Hygiene Kits, and School Supply Kits
 8. Host Parent/Child(ren) Basic Tool Use Trainings in the Sheds of HOPE Depot

This training would serve to both encourage growth in family relationships and develop future volunteers in disaster relief efforts.
 9. Maintain Relationships with Deaconal Committees in Covenant and Grace Presbyteries.

Disaster Relief Principles

1. Understand the Situation.
 - The local church identifies and mobilizes the capabilities, skills, and resources of their church.
 - The local church establishes the objectives for the work of relief or rehabilitation.
 - The local church identifies the operational priorities.
2. Determine the Type of Intervention
 - Based upon the local church's assessment, the Deaconal Ministries Subcommittee determines if the necessary intervention is:
 - (1) Relief – The urgent and temporary provision of emergency aid to reduce immediate suffering from a natural or man-made crisis. The key feature is

the provider gives assistance to the person in need who is incapable of helping himself at that particular moment.

- ✓ Does a crisis exist that, if not addressed, will lead to serious, negative consequences?
- ✓ If a man-made crisis, what degree of personal responsibility led to the apparent crisis?
- ✓ What is the individual or church's capacity to be a steward of his/her/their own resources and abilities?
- ✓ Is the relief temporary? This means only during the time that the people are unable to help themselves so that we don't create dependence.

(2) Rehabilitation – The restoration of people to the positive elements of their pre-crisis conditions. The key feature is the provider works alongside the person in need as they participate in their own recovery.

- ✓ In order to keep the individual's dignity and need for reconciliation with Christ in mind, the intervention must ensure those being helped participate in the initial assessment of the situation and in the design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of the effort.
- ✓ We only respond to the situation when the needs of the affected population are unmet by family or locals due to their inability or unwillingness to help. Assistance should target those most vulnerable and needy.
- ✓ Those volunteers who provide this type of assistance should possess the necessary qualifications, attitudes, and experiences to plan and implement the required intervention.

3. Arrange for Intervention.

- The Deaconal Ministries Subcommittee will develop a course of action based upon the local church's assessment and the Subcommittee's determination of the type of intervention.
- The Deaconal Ministries Subcommittee will organize and route volunteers with the necessary qualifications, attitudes, and experiences based upon the type of intervention.