

NEWS FROM THE FIELD

“By faith Noah, being warned by God concerning events as yet unseen, in reverent fear constructed an ark for the saving of his household. By this he condemned the world and became an heir of the righteousness that comes by faith.” — Hebrews 11:7



Coordinating PCA Disaster Response in the US & Canada

Dear Partners in Ministry,

readiness noun: the quality or state of being ready

The 2023 Atlantic Hurricane Season began June 1. Take a look below to see what steps my team has taken to better prepare the Presbyterian Church in America for the certain coming storms, and to react quickly when they arrive. There you will get an insider look at the administrative and communications functions necessary to support this important work, recent regional training events, ways to connect with our regional staff, a report about the recent MS tornado response, and most of all...ways you can pray for us as hurricane season arrives. Thank you for your regular prayers, participation through volunteering, and financial support that allows us to keep undertaking this important ministry. We would love to help your congregation prepare to respond.

1 Readiness through Admin Support

MNA Disaster Response Facilitator, Sherry Lanier, coordinates a team of gifted administrative assistants that collectively keep the wheels turning for me and our regional staff members. This lovely team is responsible for all the administrative functions that are required for this ministry to keep moving forward. Volunteer recruitment and mobilization, recovery site support, scheduling, financial processing coordination, database management, intra and inter-agency communications, event planning, etc. The totality of their responsibilities is hard, even for me, to enumerate.

Sherry and I have been working together since 2005; the support she gives this ministry is the primary reason I am still in this role. She first began volunteering with MNA Disaster Response during the early days of the Katrina response. Her role was to setup a command center to facilitate the mobilization of volunteers to 13 work sites in AL, LA, and MS. She quickly realized the magnitude of her assignment and with zero delay recruited multiple waves of volunteers from PCA congregations in the Jackson MS metro area to staff the command center. She trained them to accurately communicate essential information to team leaders from faraway places that were preparing to travel to the Gulf Coast to assist in recovery efforts. For many teams this was their first foray to a disaster zone and had lots of questions. This response was the largest mobilization of PCA congregations in PCA history to respond to a single event.



Ann Bautista, Lisa Hellier, Lauren Ammons, Sherry Lanier

Since August 29, 2005, Sherry and our dedicated team have mobilized in excess of 170,000 PCA short-term missionaries to places of service, a likely record in the orthodox reformed world. Please join me in giving thanks for this team that provides so much support joyfully.

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Readiness through Good Communication

I am convinced this ministry is sustained only by God answering the prayers of His people. I make it a priority to remain in good contact with our support team members, like you, who pray for God's guidance and blessing. The only way that happens, on-time, is with the expert assistance of gifted volunteers, like **Amanda Schwartz**. Amanda and husband Andrew, both Marines, live in Bartonsville, PA with their four lovely children. They are members of Knowleton PCA of Columbia NJ, *established 1766*, one of the PCAs oldest congregations, where Andrew is an Elder and fills the pulpit regularly. We came in contact with Amanda years ago through MNA SecondCareer when we ourselves were looking for an expert in graphic design, technology, and mass-email facilitation. Amanda, in God's good providence, was the perfect person to assist us and is a vital volunteer member of our Admin Team. We give thanks for her and consider her an extremely important member of our team.



I've always heard that if you want sometime done, done on time, and done correctly you should assign it to the busiest person on your team. Yeah, that would be Amanda. She is a teacher, an accomplished musician, a professional artist (amandaschwartz.com-check it out), Andrew's perfect helpmate. Amanda is responsible for about a hundred other major jobs besides assisting MNA Disaster Response. Thank you Amanda for always coming in clutch to get our prayer letters and disaster response communications out on time, every time!

Want to know more about MNA SecondCareer? Go here <https://pcamna.org/ministry/mna-second-career> to learn about opportunities to serve, or are seeking assistance to fill a role in

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Readiness through Regional Staffing

MNA Disaster Response has a team of regional staff that assist churches and presbyteries prepare and respond to disaster events. These servants are local and either PCA Deacons or Elders. You can reach them through the contact information below. Please add them to your list of those you regularly pray for. Invite them to visit with your congregation and provide disaster readiness coaching and training.



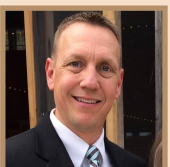
RE Mark Becker, MNA Disaster Response Specialist, South Central Region. Mark and wife Suzan live in Katy TX when they aren't on the road in their RV. Mark serves PCA churches and presbyteries in TX, OK, MO, AK, and LA. You can reach Mark at mbecker@pcanet.org or 225-456-4977



DE Andy Eisenbraun, MNA Disaster Response Specialist, Midwest. Andy and wife Holly live in Saint Louis, Missouri; he serves PCA congregations and presbyteries in the Midwest. You can reach Andy at aeisenbraun@pcanet.org or 314-667-4274



DE Marty Huddleston, MNA Disaster Response Specialist, Logistics. Marty and wife Beth live in Sevierville TN. Marty is responsible for the transportation of our equipment to and from recovery sites, and always seeking volunteers to assist him. Contact Marty at mhuddleston@pcanet.org or 865-776-5619



TE Steve Jessen, MNA Disaster Response Specialist, Carolinas. Steve and wife Julie live (temporarily) in an RV down by the river near Raleigh, North Carolina. Steve serves all PCA churches and presbyteries of the Carolinas. You can reach Steve at sjessen@pcanet.org or 704-674-0939



RE Mike Kennamer, MNA Disaster Response Specialist, TAG. Mile and wife Trisha live in Henagar AL. Mike serves all congregations in **TN**, **AL**, and **GA**, and is the MNA Charles H. Jones Disaster Response Center manager. You can reach Mike at mkennamer@pcanet.org or 256-899-6632



DE Rick Lenz, MNA Disaster Response Associate Specialist, South Central Region. Rick and wife Shirley live in Frisco TX and serves churches in TX, OK, MO, AK, and LA. Rick also manages the MNA John Browne Family Disaster Response Center. You can reach Rick at rlenz@pcanet.org or 817-701-9089



DE Keith Perry, MNA Disaster Response Specialist, Florida. Keith and wife Marianne live in Melbourne FL. Keith serves Florida PCA congregations and presbyteries and would like to talk with you about the Florida Depot Project. Contact Keith at kperry@pcanet.org or 321-431-7260



RE Evan Scroggs, MNA Disaster Response Specialist, Gulf Coast. Evan and wife Claire live in Baton Rouge, LA. Evan serves PCA churches and presbyteries in LA, and MS. Contact Evan at escroggs@pcanet.org or 225-241-8616.



DE Mark Willett, MNA Disaster Response Specialist, Mid-Atlantic. Mark and wife Evonne live in Hopewell, VA. Mark serves PCA congregations within James River, Heritage, Chesapeake, and Tidewater Presbyteries. Please pray regularly for Mark as he battles a severe case of encephalitis.

4 Readiness through Training

Training is typically underway almost every week somewhere. As an example, we conducted large skid steer training in Cantonment FL on March 31-April 1. MNA Disaster Response Specialists Mike Kennamer, Keith Perry, Steve Jessen, and Marty Huddleston hosted and tag-teamed the successful event at Pinewoods Presbyterian Church.

The MNA-owned T650 Bobcat loader shown here at the training weighs about 10,000 lbs. and is a seriously-amazing tool that can do the work of an entire team of volunteers effortlessly, rain or shine. We own an assortment of specialized attachments for the machine such as buckets, industrial grapples (shown in the picture), winches, etc. We require all operators to be trained and certified before operating the machine which typically takes two days with a combination of classroom and hands on instruction.



We would like to acquire another machine exactly like this one to dedicate for use in the South-Central region and place on standby at our Dallas Depot, ready to deploy to support volunteer teams responding within the region. However, acquiring a machine like this is no small undertaking. A similar machine costs about \$100,000 and a capable transport trailer is about \$15,000. Let me know if you would like to help MNA with this project.

"To keep one hand on the plow while wiping away tears with the other - this is the essence of living and laboring as a Christian." - Tim Challies

5 Readiness though **Sheds of HOPE** on standby

MNA Disaster Response kicked-in the turbo-boosters to supply recovery sites with **Sheds of HOPE**. On March 24, 22 people were killed when a EF-4 tornado slashed a 59 mile path across the Mississippi Delta. Silver City MS was one of the hardest-hit communities and located midway between Yahoo City and Belzoni, each where the PCA has a strong presence. An equipped MNA Disaster Response, in God's providence and without delay, mobilized our team and began transporting Sheds of Hope kits from our Rome GA warehouse. So far, **Presbytery of the MS Valley** teams, running on the Gospel-fuel of love-driven sacrifice, have constructed more than 35 sheds on survivor's properties, a yeoman's effort without question.



"For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven." — Ecclesiastes 3:1

PCA TEs Bob Penny (African Bible College) and Richard Wiman (First PCA Belzoni), REs Todd Barrett (Madison Heights PCA), and Bob Bailey (First PCA Yazoo City) have been working non-stop to facilitate the response through leadership, organization, volunteer coordination, resource development, and prayer focus. It has been a joy to work with these servants to marshal relief to impacted families in the Delta.



MNADR Staff, Sherry Lanier and Mike Kennamer in Silver City MS

MNA has furnished approximately 65 Sheds of Hope in the last few months to recovery sites in KY, MS, NC, and TN. Having Sheds of Hope ready to deploy is a best practice. The 2023 Atlantic Hurricane Season is here; please pray we will be successful in raising the funds necessary to replace the shed kits that we recently deployed. The cost for each shed kit is nearly \$2,000 each. If you would like to help us: slanier@pcanet.org



Prayer Makes Us Ready (a personal note from Arklie)

“And I heard the voice of the Lord saying, “Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?” Then I said, “Here I am! Send me.” — Isaiah 6:8

I have included an ole-school prayer card for you with this prayer letter. Would you please keep it as a reminder to pray for me in the weeks and years ahead, should the Lord tarry? I’m an ole-school missionary and still like to send prayer letters in the mail. If you receive my updates electronically but would like to receive the USPS version just let me know. Please pray for me when you hear of weather-related events happening across North America. When a disaster occurs it is highly likely that your MNA Disaster Response team is already responding or at the very least already in contact with PCA congregations that are closest to the event, and extending an offer to assist as soon as rescue workers clear the area.

Ways you can pray for MNA Disaster Response this summer :

- The 2023 Atlantic Hurricane Season is here. Pray for families, congregations, presbyteries, and communities that should be making last minute preparations. Pray for those in the likely paths, especially. And please pray for MNA Disaster Response, that our service to the King will be acceptable. *“As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God’s varied grace” — 1 Peter 4:10* and *“...that my service for Jerusalem may be acceptable to the saints.” — Romans 15:31*
- Pray for good health for our team. Especially pray for Mark Willett, MNA Disaster Response Specialist Mid-Atlantic. Mark is battling encephalitis. *Matthew 6:10*
- Pray for our equipment. Once I asked a pastor to pray for a mission team I was leading that was heading to Mexico to build a church, and for the trailer that was hauling our tools and equipment. He said that in his entire ministry he had never once prayed for equipment to hold together and thought my request was quite odd. I thought him saying that was quite odd! I know lots of pastors who, especially in the early days of the pandemic, were praying that their Zoom computers, cameras, microphones and other electronic equipment would hold together during Sunday worship. *“And He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together” — Colossians 1:17*
- Pray for a continued robust mobilization of God’s people to places of service. *“The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest.” — Matthew 9:37-38*
- Pray for the PCA General Assembly which meets in Memphis June 12-16. A truck load of MNA Disaster Response Staff will be there. Come see us in the exhibit hall. *“And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works.” — Hebrews 10:24*
- I have a new supervisor! TE Dr Murray Lee, MNA Executive Coordinator joined MNA last September. He is no stranger to MNA since he served on the Permanent Committee for 9 years, many years as Chairman. Pray for him, and for MNA Disaster Response as he becomes more intimately acquainted with our team and learns how he can support our vital mission to the PCA, a stated goal. He has already visited with many of our staff and toured the Rome Warehouse and Dallas Depot.



Serving you with my whole heart,

Arklie

Arklie Hooten
MNA ShortTerm Missions & Disaster Response Director
Mission to North America / Presbyterian Church in America

Thank you for partnering with us by supporting the following ministries :

Arklie's Personal Support Fund Disaster Response Mobilization Fund Warehouse Operations

If you would like to mail your gift, please mark your gift for MNA Disaster Response and mail to:
Mission to North America PO Box 890233. Charlotte, NC 28289-0233

“We must work the works of Him who sent Me as long as it is day; night is coming when no one can work.” — John 9:4