

**Questions and Answers from Presbyterian Disaster Assistance
Disaster Emotional and Spiritual Care Webinar
Human Caused Disasters, April 28 2026**

1. Thank you, John and Kathy! Q.: How can a person sign up to be part of the Disaster Response team?

Response: *At the moment, the best way for members of the PC(USA) who are interested in volunteering with PDA is to contact me at Kathryn.riley@pcusa.org for a conversation. More information about how to help with PDA's efforts can be found here:*

<https://pcusa.org/disaster-assistance/how-help/act> and here <https://pcusa.org/disaster-assistance/how-help/act/volunteer>

Specific details about volunteering with the National Response team can be found here: <https://pcusa.org/disaster-assistance/how-help/act/national-response-team>

2. Is it best to have intentional listening partners who are not family or friends?

Response: *It's common and probably helpful to have friends as an intentional listening partner, but we usually recommend it not be a close family member. It should be someone who knows us pretty well and whom we trust to keep everything confidential. Some people do have more of an acquaintance rather than a close friend as a listening partner. There is also variation in whether or not the intentional listening partner relationship is mutual. In my experience, it's usually mutual, but not always.*

3. Not a question but a comment: I find that people need time for someone to listen even when the situation occurred yesterday or several years ago. As a health educator and nurse, I find the majority of my patients/clients just need someone to listen for a while.

Response: *Absolutely, the need for someone to listen to us can last a long time, especially as time goes by and we find new meaning, insights and sometimes, questions about what we've experienced. And sometimes, we just need someone to listen again when grief and other strong emotions come to the surface again.*

4. I noticed your presenters did not mention the immigration crisis in the United States a disaster but I am aware that PDA and the PC (USA) do list the immigration crisis here in the United States a disaster and even have offered some grants that presbyteries and congregations can apply for-Can someone talk about it and how the disaster response is the same and different. Also, of course that this disaster is not taking place only in Minneapolis.

Response: *Yes, you are so right that we do consider the issues surrounding immigration to be a disaster- and PDA is offering grants and other assistance. Thank you for bringing up this very important issue of concern. For emotional and spiritual care needs, people can contact me at Kathryn.riley@pcusa.org. For questions about resources, including PDA grants, Omar Salinas- Chacon Omar.Salinas-Chacon@pcusa.org is the best person to contact. He is PDA's Mission Specialist for Migration Accompaniment Ministries. Here is a link to Omar's resource list, which is updated regularly: [here](#).*

https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fi/s88xc9p5fcdnrd75i2194/PCUSA-Immigration-Asylum-Refugee-Immigrant-Defense-Resources-English.docx?cloud_editor=word&dl=0&rlkey=53rrbmvr6xslajs8xx2ks79t

5. Last May a tornado came through, killing many and destroying a wide swath of property. Our church was active in both the clean-up and care for the people involved. . . Since that time I have been working on a disaster protocol for our church. You mentioned health care professionals in the area that were called upon, or could be called upon, to help. I wonder if you would care to share a list of people that could be added to our contacts in the event of another disaster.

Response:

*I have replied to this participant and will be sending a list of resources in his area. Also, PDA can provide congregations with Disaster Preparedness workshops and materials. All who are interested may contact me and I will get them connected with our Preparedness committee.
Kathy.riley@pcusa.org*