



Dear ISC Friends,

As we are mindful of the loss of lives, injuries, and property damages resulting from Friday night's tornadoes and severe weather that struck several Midwest states, including the Amazon Warehouse in Edwardsville, Illinois, our prayers, care, and concern go out to all those affected. Many of you have already reached out to the Conference with the question, ***"How can we help?"*** Please know our

UCC Disaster Ministries staff and Conference Disaster Response Coordinators are in contact with FEMA, Emergency Management personnel, and faith-based organizations working in those areas. Immediate needs are housing, food and meals, personal care, and spiritual support.

The UCC Disaster Ministries stands ready to offer information and emergency financial assistance. *"Recovery needs, both short- and long-term, will be massive, with damage estimates in the billions of dollars. What's the best way to help now? Send money,"* UCC Disaster Response and Recovery Minister Lesli Remaly said, *"For a storm this size, money makes good sense as we know long-term recovery and rebuilding will be necessary."*

Donations through your local church to the UCC Disasters Ministries can be made by sending checks to the Illinois South Conference. (Please make sure to note that these donations are for the UCC Disaster Ministries relief effort.)

Individual financial donations can be made via PayPal through the Conference [website](#) or directly to the UCC Disaster [Ministries](#).

Your financial donations will be used to provide housing, food and meals, and family needs for those who have been affected by the storms.

FEMA is working with its federal, state, and local partners as well as governmental agencies to support the needs of areas affected by the tornado outbreak. In addition to a Kentucky FEMA Integration Team member, two FEMA Incident Management Assistance Teams are in Kentucky to assist with federal coordination efforts. An Incident Support Base is being established at Fort Campbell, Kentucky, to rapidly deploy personnel and supplies as needed.

This includes:

- Urban Search and Rescue (US&R) team Indiana Task Force-1 assists local response and a 10-person team deployed to the Kentucky Emergency Operations Center in Frankfort.
- Fifty-two generators, 30,000 meals, 45,000 liters of water, cots, blankets, infant toddler kits, and medical equipment and supplies.

- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers temporary power and planning and response teams are on alert.
- A Mobile Emergency Response Support has deployed to Kentucky, which includes two Mobile Emergency Operations Vehicles with emergency communications capabilities for federal resources.
- Additional staging teams and damage assessment staff are being mobilized and prepared to deploy, if needed, to any of the affected areas.
- Eleven shelters are open in Kentucky. Three are open in Tennessee.
- FEMA is in contact with state emergency management officials as tornado damage reports come in from Arkansas, Illinois, Kentucky, Missouri, and Tennessee.

American Red Cross - With more volunteers and supplies moving into the affected areas in the coming days, the Red Cross is working around the clock with partners to make sure everyone has a safe place to stay, emotional support, and comfort in the face of one of the most devastating tornado outbreaks in years. Saturday night, there were at least eight emergency shelters open in Kentucky, where about 190 people sought safe refuge. Shelters are also open in Tennessee.

American Red Cross volunteers are helping to assess the damage in affected communities as areas become accessible to help determine how many families were affected and what types of help they may need in the coming days and weeks. **YOU CAN HELP** now by scheduling an appointment to give blood or platelets, visit the Red Cross [website](#), or call 1-800-RED CROSS.

I will continue to offer updates from the UCC Disaster Ministries as I receive them. If you would like to contact me, I can be reached via email at pjj48@hotmail.com or by phone at 618-318-0083.

Thank you for your continued prayers and offers of support.

Sincerely,

Priscilla Self
Disaster Response Coordinator of the Illinois South Conference