

Bishops' Statement on Hurricane Ian

October 2, 2022

Siblings in Christ,

We greet you in the name and with the love of Jesus Christ. By now we have all seen the devastating photos and videos from southwest Florida in the wake of Hurricane Ian. Our hearts aches for those who have suffered catastrophic loss in the aftermath of this vicious storm. While much of the state was affected by strong winds and flooding, the communities of Sanibel, Cape Coral and Fort Myers were especially hit hard. We urge you to join us in praying for these communities. While immediate disaster response is in process, recovery will take months and years.

Because Hurricane Ian shifted from its originally predicted path, some communities were unprepared and unable to evacuate in time. The last reported death toll was 76 but as recovery efforts continue, that number may rise. The Susquehanna Conference prays for those who lost their lives and for their grieving families.

We also pray for those who are desperately trying to contact their loved ones but have not yet been able to reach them. We pray for the well-being of those still seeking safety and hope they will soon be able to offer reassurance to their families.

We pray and give thanks for the first responders who are tirelessly working to rescue stranded victims, restore power and support survivors with food and shelter.

We pray for affected churches and the Florida Annual Conference, who shared on their Facebook page that they have received damage reports of varying levels from at least 100 churches in their conference. They are still assessing the full impact of the storm.

We pray for these communities in their recovery and above all, we pray that they will know the love of Jesus Christ in the midst of their trauma and suffering.

We encourage you that as you pray, you find ways to support those who are entering into the recovery phase after Hurricane Ian. Below you will find ways that you can be of assistance from the Susquehanna Conference.

Peace and blessings,

Bishop Cynthia Moore-Koikoi and Bishop Sandra Steiner Ball

How can you help the recovery efforts?

1. Pray for those affected by Hurricane Ian
2. [Donate to UMCOR](#). Do NOT self-deploy to Florida or collect items that have not been explicitly asked for.
3. Collect supplies and make cleaning kits. See the supply list and instructions [here](#). Contact our Disaster Response Coordinator, Doug Hoy - drc@susumc.org or call (717) 766-7441 or contact [Mission Central](#) with any questions.