

# Of Storm and Spirit

## Keeping the Faith During Wicked Weather

Every church is committed to doing the utmost to keep watch over its entire flock. Given the increased frequency and severity of extreme weather events in recent years, storms can bring widespread devastation and privation to the congregation of even the most diligent shepherd.

These tragic incidents prompt many spiritual leaders to re-examine their ministry. Questions such as, “Did I do enough?” and “What could I have done differently?” echo loudly when preparing for the pulpit after your church is rocked by rain, wind and hail of biblical proportions.

Rather than waiting for the hour of darkness, here are a few words of wisdom to develop a more proactive pastorship.

### Calm the Chaos

For those in the path of a major incoming storm, terror can quickly take hold. During these times, maintaining communications with your spiritual community can ease their stress. In particular, when under a severe weather watch with stay-at-home or shelter-in-place directives, many people will be concerned for the well-being of their fellow worshippers. A user-friendly [mass notification system](#) (MNS) provides a dependable means to alert your entire congregation, as well as two-way messaging to check on everyone.

The ability to send and receive information calmly and efficiently depends not only on the technology, but also on parishioners devoting time to regular practice. The best time to start is well before a storm strikes. A mass notification system is a convenient way to send group communications, even for day-to-day applications. Community announcements, worship schedules and tithing reminders can all be sent with just a few clicks on any handheld device. By building parishioners’ familiarity with the platform in advance, ministers can use it to provide a sense of comfort and continuity during a severe weather emergency.

## Lean-in Locally

When severe weather strikes close to home, we all become our brother's keeper. In the aftermath, what feels like a small response can make a significant difference for people suffering utilities outages, lack of access to potable water, loss of clothing or displacement from their homes. Church members who were spared can provide immediate relief to their affected brethren by preparing and delivering meals and checking on seniors and disabled persons. Specific skills will be in high demand, such as first aid, emergency repairs and assistance navigating the insurance process.

A [church messaging system](#) can be used to organize these efforts. Faith leaders can easily identify needs within their communities, put out a call for volunteers with applicable skills and equipment, and create contact groups to coordinate the efforts. From your mouth to God's ear, communications technology can help spiritual leaders rally their community in bold, practical ways.

## Extend Your Reach

In early fall of 2022, news around the country was dominated by images and accounts from [Hurricane Ian](#). Viewers were horrified by the conditions wrought from Cuba, through the Caribbean, to Florida and into South Carolina. Motivation to lend timely, practical support was significant. And although media coverage has declined, many communities are still recovering and in need of aid.

If your congregation is feeling the Good Samaritan call, there are many resources to funnel your efforts, nationally and even internationally. You might start with a poll to determine what everyone is willing to give. Funds? Non-perishable food? Clothing and home goods? Volunteer time and/or specific skills? A survey can easily be created and administered to your members via the church messaging system.



Depending on your parishioners' capabilities, there are numerous faith-based organizations dedicated to disaster relief. To ensure your efforts go toward the greatest good, spend some time researching a potential partner before making a monetary contribution or committing volunteers. You might even be surprised to find your particular denomination has a longstanding charitable works program that your congregation can join. By reaching out and establishing a relationship in advance, your church will be well-positioned to help those in need when the time comes.

You've always prayed together. When severe weather threatens to tear your house of worship asunder, today's technology can help you stay together. [One Call Now](#) provides voice, text and email notification services to faith-based organizations nationwide, so you can communicate effectively with your congregation.

[Learn more about how technology can help you keep your parishioners safe and informed during severe weather.](#)

### About OnSolve One Call Now

OnSolve® One Call Now®, one of OnSolve's market-leading critical communications products, enables groups and organizations of all sizes and types to quickly, securely and reliably distribute critical information to large numbers of people on virtually any device and network. OnSolve sends billions of alerts annually and has provided proven support to both the public and private sectors. OnSolve delivers critical event management solutions that give our customers the ability to proactively keep everyone informed, instill confidence, foster teamwork, mitigate disruptions, improve operational outcomes, protect assets and save lives. Visit [www.onsolve.com](http://www.onsolve.com).

