

Sent: Tuesday, March 15, 2011 1:36 PM
To: 'swtccclergy@umcswtx.org'
Cc: 'swtxchurchoffices@umcswtx.org'
Subject: Japan Crisis

Dear sisters and brothers,

As you know, a series of tragic events has unfolded over the past few days in Japan. The massive 9.0-magnitude earthquake that struck Japan on March 11 and the accompanying tsunami resulted in the death of at least 2,800 people and possibly more than 10,000. Damage to the country's nuclear power plants jeopardizes the safety of hundreds of thousands more. Japanese Prime Minister Naoto Kan called the disaster the worst crisis Japan has faced in 65 years.

In times of immense loss and grief, we are reminded once again that God's grace is sufficient. While it does not offer us immunity from tragedy, it sustains us with healing and hope.

At such times, the church is called to be a healing presence among those facing heartbreaking circumstances. I am confident that the people of The United Methodist Church will respond to the call with prayers and generous support for the victims of this catastrophe.

I ask that you join with me in prayer for the deceased and their families; the injured; the search and rescue workers; the survivors who are without water, food or heat; those who have been evacuated from their homes as the nuclear threat worsens; and all who have been affected.

When disaster strikes, we are especially grateful for the valuable ministry that the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR) provides with the help and support of United Methodists and others. I hope that all United Methodist churches will consider taking a special offering designated for Pacific Emergency, UMCOR Advance #3021317, to provide financial resources to respond to the needs resulting from the disaster.

Working with its partners, the United Church of Christ in Japan, the Korean Christian Church, Church World Service, Global Medic, the National Christian Council, and the Asian Rural Institute, UMCOR is currently focused on working to assess the damage to determine how best to provide assistance and will then respond accordingly.

May we join together in opening our hearts to those suffering in the midst of devastation.

Yours in Christ,
Larry M. Goodpaster, President
The Council of Bishops
The United Methodist Church

Grace and Peace,
Marta Rose
Communications & Archives
United Methodist Church
Southwest Texas Conference
16400 Huebner Rd
San Antonio TX 78248
(210) 408-4500
(888) 349-4191