

Annual Report
Conference Disaster Response Coordinator (CDRC)
Illinois Conference
United Church of Christ

October 16, 2025

Beginning in January of 2025, my activities include monthly Zoom gatherings of our national DCRCs, except for the month of May, when I attended our national gathering in Cleveland, at our national church home.

Our virtual monthly gatherings are primarily for meeting any new coordinators and sharing information about new events or experiences and possible needs for multi-conference assistance. A short presentation by a member of one of our associated denominations or agencies is often included.

April 28-30, I attended our national CDRC gathering that was held at our national church offices in Cleveland.

Our meeting included, for the first time, a day with our UCC Emotional & Spiritual Response Chaplaincy Team, during which we learned more about what services each of us provides and how our different roles are integrated during an event.

This meeting also resulted in the creation of a team of the "old-timer" CDRCs (I am included in that team) who have served for longer periods of time and involved in a variety of disaster events. Our team's task is to share our experiences and knowledge with the considerable number of new coordinators who have little or no experience.

May 18 -22 I attended the annual conference of the National Volunteer Organizations Active in Disaster, where I represent the UCC on the Donations Committee. Additionally, I attended five (5) other workshops dealing with different aspects of response, such as formation of Long-Term Recovery Groups, Mass feeding, Volunteer management, Coordinating with local Emergency Managers, and The Role of Emotional & Spiritual Care. I greatly appreciate our Conference's financial support in this situation.

Our Conference has been most fortunate over the past year to have experienced no disaster events that required a major response. One local flooding event created the need for about 100 CWS Cleanup Buckets which we were able to supply from existing inventory in several local churches.

An issue that has arisen in recent weeks is the status of Church World Service. This past spring, their warehouse in New Windsor, Maryland was closed. The status of their other warehouse in Arkansas is not known, and my recent attempts to deliver a supply of kits to their collection warehouse in Elgin have had no response. I am aware that their offices in Elkhart, IN are still in operation. Due to the uncertainty around CWS' status, I am postponing a planned trip to the Little Rock, AR location at 'Ferncliff' until sometime next spring.

On the national scene, in August our national coordinator announced that there is now a church near Asheville, North Carolina that has created lodging facilities for about 16 volunteer workers. I will put a formal request for volunteers into "Faithful Fridays" by the end of October, and will prepare the necessary documents for registration. This program will very probably last for at least five (5) years, perhaps longer.

I will also promote the idea of a multi-church project of assembling CWS Cleanup Bucket Kits using the CWS-provided pallet of supplies. The pallet of supplies will create about thirty kits, and is available directly from CWS for about \$2100.

Finally, we continue to maintain our UCC participation in the Illinois VOAD and the Northeast Illinois COAD (Community Organizations Active in Disaster). As there are several new regional COADs across the state, I am seeking people who will volunteer to represent us on these newer organizations. A list of those COADs will be forthcoming.

Finally, as of this morning at 10:16 AM, our Conference was a registered participant in the Great Central U.S. ShakeOut earthquake exercise. I hope you participated!

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Roger Dart
CDRC
Illinois Conference