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## From the Coordinator

*“I called out to the Lord, out of my distress, and he answered me; out of the belly of Sheol I cried, and you heard my voice.” — Jonah 2:1*



Dear Friend,

When disaster strikes, where do you turn for help? In this issue of *Multiply*, we're featuring stories of people bringing the love of God to others in times of crisis. In the Northeast, thousands of people whose lives were devastated by Hurricane Sandy last fall are still living in desperation, displaced and struggling with unimaginable

loss. Amid the chaos and destruction, PCA disaster relief volunteers are coordinated by MNA, serving in Atlantic City NJ, South River NJ, Allenwood NJ, and Coney Island NY, bringing the light of God's hope as they gut out and repair damaged homes and buildings and distribute critically needed supplies and equipment.

You'll also learn more about MNA SecondCareer, a program connecting workers and volunteers with opportunities in disaster relief and other ministries. In Joplin MO, SecondCareer teams have been helping to rebuild homes destroyed by tornadoes. Scott Herwig is hoping to organize another RV trip in Fall 2013 to continue the rebuilding process there.

Thank you for continuing to support these efforts through your prayers and donations. Please continue to pray for volunteers, church planters, and missions team workers across North America as they act as the hands and feet of Christ.

In His Name,  
Jim Bland, MNA Coordinator



# Mobile Relief in Joplin MO



Several states away, in May 2011 one of the deadliest tornadoes in recent American history struck the town of Joplin MO, killing nearly 160 people and flattening 7,000 homes and buildings, including fire departments, hospitals and schools. This devastation prompted MNA Disaster Response to join forces with MNA SecondCareer, which coordinates ministry for retirees and others changing careers.

“We have been standing with Christ the King Presbyterian since day one,” says Arklie. “MNA coordinated volunteers for initial cleanup and structure stabilization. Now volunteers are rebuilding homes from the ground up. During Fall 2012, five homes were



Ian Warren, an MNA Disaster Response Intern from North Texas Presbyterian, put college on hold for a semester to serve in Joplin.

built. MNA SecondCareer mobilized a large number of people who own RVs to come out this past summer and help.”

Second career relief workers traveling by RV make excellent first responders since they bring their own lodging and can stay for longer periods of time, bringing continuity to an otherwise chaotic situation. “This is a relatively new concept that makes a lot of sense. We want to see this ministry expand,” says MNA SecondCareer Director Gary Ogrosky.



Regional Reformed University Fellowship and other college students helped build new homes for Joplin residents who lost everything.

“Scott Herwig, an RVer from Maryland, helped facilitate church and Reformed University Fellowship groups working in the relief efforts in Joplin. Several RVers came to work during that time,” says Gary. “Since then, interest has continued to grow as more people find out about the need.”

In Joplin MO, just as throughout the Northeast region impacted by Hurricane Sandy, the rebuilding will go on for months, even years to come. We do not ask if there will be more storms. We only watch for when they will come. As they come, they offer ongoing opportunities for God’s people to serve as Christ’s ambassadors in word and deed.

For more information on how you might get involved or make a donation, visit [pcamna.org/disaster-response](http://pcamna.org/disaster-response) and [pcamna.org/second-career](http://pcamna.org/second-career).



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# Hope in the Wake of Devastation



Glen Pressley, MNA Disaster Response Specialist-South Atlantic Region (left), visits with an Atlantic City NJ homeowner and David Cohen, Executive Director of Hope for Atlantic City.

When Hurricane Sandy ravaged the coast of New York and New Jersey last October, the storm took over one hundred lives and left thousands homeless. Many went without power or heat for weeks and experienced food and gas shortages. MNA Disaster Response began setting up relief work immediately with PCA churches in Atlantic City NJ and New York City's Rockaway community. Amidst catastrophic destruction and loss, stories of hope came to light.

## Urban Ministry in Atlantic City

New City Fellowship of Atlantic City, a PCA mission church led by Pastor Santo Garofalo, was already building a church through urban ministry. "Almost every house I'd been in had about 2 feet or more of water," says David Cohen, Executive Director for Hope for Atlantic City, a ministry established by New City Fellowship. "Flooding destroys drywall, plaster, flooring, and floor joists and promotes mold and other health issues."

The New City Fellowships of Chattanooga TN and St. Louis MO focus primarily on mercy ministry to the poor and disadvantaged.

New City Fellowship Atlantic City does the same. The multiethnic church meets for worship in the shadow of the casinos, and the church attracts congregants from all walks of life.

Together, New City Fellowship and Hope For Atlantic City serve some of the poorest and roughest neighborhoods in the nation — as Santo refers to it, "the 'hood on the beach." Urban Ministry Teams (UMTs), short term missions groups who serve for a week or more offering practical, hands-on help, are the key to the presence of the church.

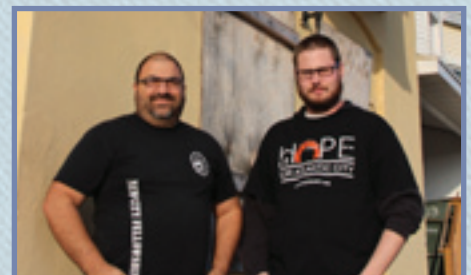
Early in 2012, Santo contacted MNA ShortTerm Missions and Disaster Response Facilitator Sherry Lanier, asking for help recruiting volunteers. "Through MNA's coordination last summer, more than 175 volunteers served in Atlantic City," says MNA ShortTerm Missions and Disaster Response Director Arklie Hooten.

"We are making payments on a bunk house in the city and have begun rehabbing it,"



says David, "which will house UMTs while they're working. It's located in the heart of the communities that we service." These teams are a familiar presence in the subsidized housing neighborhoods of Back Maryland and Buzby Village. UMTs help rehabilitate homes, hold backyard Bible clubs, and set up special food drives.

"We've even had opportunities to reach out to Muslims in the name of Jesus, along with



Pastor Santo Garofalo (left) of New City Fellowship-Atlantic City and David Cohen, Executive Director of Hope for Atlantic City NJ, in front of the Hope for Atlantic City bunk house that awaits renovation by MNA ShortTerm teams.

the unchurched and people of many faiths," says Santo. "One woman had to leave Back Maryland and move to a new house with extensive water damage and mold. We did what we could to make it safe and healthy. She called on Christmas to wish me Merry Christmas. I've never had a Muslim wish me Merry Christmas. Shows you how the

*"The opportunities to share the love of Jesus have been overwhelming." -Santo Garofalo, New City Fellowship-Atlantic City*



# tion

*What distinguishes us from many other responding groups is that we carry with us the realization that our lives were a disaster as a result of sin, but God redeems us, rebuilding our lives through Christ."*

*-MNA ShortTerm Missions and Disaster Response Facilitator Sherry Lanier*

love of God really breaks walls down."  
"During the summer of 2012, we also helped relaunch a local boys and girls club," says David, "serving over 100 community kids. We meet physical needs, develop relationships with people, and then address their deeper spiritual needs. It's a holistic ministry approach. For churches who want to gain experience in urban ministry, this



Pastor Garofalo (center) thanks John McCurdy (left), an elder and one of a team of eight from Trinity PCA in Harrisburg PA, and Trinity PCA Associate Pastor David Kertland (right).



can be good training for them."  
"The Lord uniquely positioned these ministries for the coming disaster, because they were already familiar with recruiting and hosting volunteer teams," observes Arklie. "Once the disaster hit, it was a natural step for them, and Atlantic City has become a great destination for relief teams." Says Santo, "Right after Sandy passed through, I got a phone call from Arklie offering help. The day that I was allowed back on the island, Arklie visited and helped us walk through the steps we would take to host teams."

"We believe God is in control of all things. One immediate good thing that came out of the storm is that we can move into a neighborhood and show Christ's love. We'd be neglectful if we didn't take advantage of that," says Arklie. Sherry adds, "If you take the Gospel out of this, it becomes purely social justice, and the meaning is lost. What distinguishes us from many other responding groups is that we carry with us the realization that our lives were a disaster as a result of sin, but God redeems us, rebuilding our lives through Christ."

Santo, whose own home did not have heat for a month after the storm, agrees. "I want to say this sensitively, but the storm has presented us with God-given opportunities. Many families were displaced. Some of them still don't know what's going to happen with their houses. The opportunities to share the love of Jesus have been overwhelming."

Sherry tells also of a Christian who lost all his possessions. "He realized how much of his life was wasted in accumulating stuff. He told us he is going to live differently now because of the lessons he's learned

The hurricane left thousands of houses in Atlantic City uninhabitable. "Many did not have insurance," Santo says, "so we have to clean out flooded crawl spaces, rip out wet insulation, remove and replace sheetrock, replace flooring, and remove spoiled furniture and appliances."



Mike Miller (center) and other volunteers from Christ Covenant, Matthews NC.





# PCA Churches Provide Supplies



Calvary's youth director Jaron Yeater assisted with damage assessments for volunteer teams.

Calvary Presbyterian in Allenwood NJ served as a redistribution center for critically needed supplies and equipment. "This church was not directly affected by the storm," reports Arklie, "but they realized they could help by getting supplies to the smaller communities."

New Hope Presbyterian in Vestal NY had spent the year since Hurricane Irene restoring their building that was flooded. They assisted with Sandy relief because of the help they received the year before. "They immediately loaded up supplies and sent them over to Rockaway," reports Arklie.



MNA Disaster Response Director Arklie Hooten, Ascension PCA Assistant Pastor Stephen Leung, and MNA Site Manager David Cook take a break at the volunteer host site in Rockaway NY.

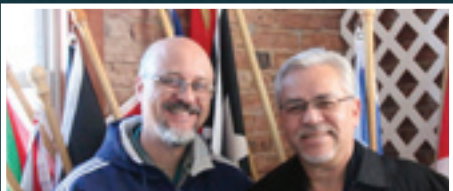
*"There were many moving moments, a mixture of sadness and joy, during Sandy's passing through Jersey. Yet none was as moving as the expression of our denomination's love through MNA Disaster Response in word and deed."*  
*-Renato Bernardes, Comunidade Crista Presbiteriana, Newark NJ*

# High-rises in Rockaway Beach & Coney Island

In hard-hit Rockaway Beach, Breezy Point, and Coney Island NY, MNA relief efforts are focused on the high-density subsidized housing that took the brunt of the storm. Park Slope Presbyterian in Brooklyn and Ascension PCA in Queens had been serving in these housing developments before the storm. "Fortunately, like New City Fellowship in Atlantic City, both churches were already used to receiving teams and they knew how to coordinate volunteers," says Arklie. "We were able to step alongside them, and both of these churches have become short term destinations for us."

# Church Building Flooded in South River NJ

Redentor PCA (Portuguese for "Redeemer") in South River NJ is part of the PCA's Portuguese Language Network and is training members for ministry leadership through MNA's LAMP program. A Portuguese language church led by Pastor Fernando Freitas, Redentor's members come from Brazil, Portugal, Venezuela, Puerto Rico, Peru and Ecuador. Unlike most other PCA churches in the area, Redentor owns a church building. Since they were not in a



Fernando Freitas (left), with Renato Bernardes, pastor of Comunidade Crista Presbiteriana in Newark NJ.

known flood zone, their insurance did not cover rising water.

"Their entire basement was flooded," says Arklie. "Classrooms, the heating and cooling system, furniture and appliances were destroyed, totaling about \$50,000. We sent the word out that they needed help. An electrician from Philly came over to repair their electrical panel."



Pastor Freitas describing the flood damage to the church building.

Redentor's power was restored a few days before Thanksgiving. But there is still a lot of work to be done. The home of one member family was flooded. Another lost their business to flood waters.