



May 14, 2008

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

Tornados in the United States, a cyclone in Myanmar, and an earthquake in China – all within the past few days and all with deadly and devastating outcomes. Thousands upon thousands of people have lost their lives. Literally millions have been affected directly and are at ongoing risk for diseases and other adversities in the aftermath.

To have one such disaster is overwhelming; to have so many in such a short period of time is beyond comprehension.

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is responding to these disasters in several ways by working with our overseas church partners, as well as presbyteries and congregations here at home, to offer immediate, on-the-ground help and make preparations for long-term assistance. You can find out more at www.pcusa.org/pda.

Please join us in prayer for the countless people affected by these disasters: those killed or injured and their families, those who await word on the missing, those left homeless, on-site rescue workers, medical personnel, chaplains and pastors, congregations, relief agencies, government officials, and so many more.

Explanations are impossible and words themselves seem so difficult to come by when such heart-wrenching tragedies happen. Yet, it is through the words of the Psalmist that we are reminded of the constant and abiding presence of God:

God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.
Therefore, we will not fear, though the earth should change,
though the mountains shake in the heart of the sea;
though its waters roar and foam,
though the mountains tremble with its tumult....

“Be still, and know that I am God....”

The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge. (*Ps. 46, selected*)

May the peace of our Lord Jesus Christ, which passes all understanding, be with you.

Cliff Kirkpatrick
Stated Clerk of the General Assembly

Linda Bryant Valentine
Executive Director, General Assembly Council