

May 8, 2008
Greetings,

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is issuing a special appeal through Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (PDA) in an effort to support recovery efforts as a result of the cyclone that has devastated Myanmar. An appeal card is being sent to every congregation in the next few days. In addition, PDA has committed \$100,000 from One Great Hour of Sharing and designated funds to provide emergency assistance to survivors of Myanmar. The appeal card is available to download online at www.pcusa.org/pda. A bulletin insert is being created and liturgical resources are being collected. These items will be accessible online and we encourage your churches to use them as they become available. Linda Valentine, Executive Director of the General Assembly Council stated, "The PC(USA) through its disaster relief agency seeks to accompany the people of Myanmar through this catastrophe. Our mission is to heal broken lives, as well as broken homes."

PDA is responding in Myanmar as a member of and in partnership with Action by Churches Together (ACT) International and Church World Service. Both entities have local partners in Myanmar and will have representatives to help in the provision of relief items to cyclone survivors. Valentine also commented, "We have trust in our partners to help us be the hands and feet of Christ during this difficult time."

Communication has been widely destroyed in the region, but attempts are being made to be in conversation with our partner churches in the area including the Presbyterian Church of Myanmar located in the northeast of Myanmar, our PC(USA) regional liaison located in Chiang Mai, Thailand, Christian Conference of Asia, and Myanmar Council of Churches.

The situation in Myanmar is dire. As of today, UN and Church World Services officials have reported that close to one million people are homeless and priority needs are for water purification tablets, plastic sheeting, basic medical kits, bed nets and food. Power and water supply have been disconnected, and the price of food has multiplied since the storm. Current estimates indicate tens of thousands of lives have been lost, with tens of thousands still missing.

Cyclone Nargis, packing winds up to 120 miles per hour, swept through the country on Saturday. A storm surge with waves up to 12 feet high washed inland causing widespread destruction. The low-lying Irrawaddy Delta region, the country's main agricultural area, suffered the most severe damage.

The full extent of the damage throughout the country has not yet been determined. An already marginal infrastructure has been further damaged resulting in poor communications and impassible roads. Power outages and scattered debris also hamper recovery efforts.

Our church's generous gifts will help us stand with our brothers and sisters in long term recovery efforts as their broken lives and communities begin to heal.

Gifts for this disaster can be designated to DR000145 –Myanmar/Burma.

Donations may be sent through normal mission giving channels. Gifts by credit card can be made by calling PresbyTel at (800) 872-3283 or online at <http://www.pcusa.org/pda/response/asia/myanmarburma-index.htm> . Gifts can also be made through your churches normal giving channels.

Checks payable to Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) can also be mailed directly to:

Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)
Central Receiving Services
Individual Remittance Processing
DR000145
P.O. Box 643700

Pittsburgh, PA 15264-3700

Or

Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)
Central Receiving Services
Church Remittance Processing
DR000145
P.O. Box 643678
Pittsburgh, PA 15264-3678

Please be in prayer for those most vulnerable and so adversely affected by this catastrophe.

Grace and Peace,
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(Donations can also be sent to Upper Ohio Valley Presbytery marked Myanmar/Burma DR000145; however, they will get to PDA quicker if you mail them directly to PCUSA Central Receiving Services.)