

DRONE

Disaster Relief Operations News Edition

December 2020



Director's View

During our recent online Chaplain Training, the word “resilience” came to my

mind and has been stuck there like gooey wet ash on a personal property recovery volunteer’s boots.

As Disaster Relief Volunteers, our focus on resilience as the capacity to return to normal functions after a stressor becomes the foundation of our work whether it is through feeding, chaplaincy or cleanup and recovery.

We help others return to normal functions after a disaster by walking beside them, sharing their burdens, giving financial or physical assistance as well as offering emotional / spiritual care and prayer. Our chaplains learn some practical tools and suggestions that can assist with boosting the resilience of individuals.

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Naomi's Notes

Disaster Relief Chaplains have worked tirelessly throughout 2020 amid disasters of every

kind. No one anticipated the invisible disaster - COVID-19 - and yet, our disaster relief chaplains served faithfully adjusting to new rules, restrictions, and technology. Answering the COVID Prayerline in the middle of the night was not always easy or welcome, yet, our chaplains did exactly that. Some even took multiple shifts as they “deployed” for this unusual way of providing the compassion that so many needed.



As the year 2020 closes, RESILIENCE has been exercised by all of us as we have been impacted by the current pandemic.

Facing change, isolation, canceling family and social plans, adapting to new forms of working and communicating can all be stressors and most of us desire to return to some sense of normalcy.

As we would help someone after a fire destroyed their home let's consider some of the same steps to apply to our own resiliency.

1. Validate feelings and emotions. We are not alone and it is ok to feel bad, disappointed or isolated. Be honest and real.
2. Recall other times when we have come through a tough time and reflect on where our true strength comes from.
3. Take one day at a time and focus on the positive things that we can do. Structure and even making a list can be helpful.
4. Share concerns as well as small "wins" with others and realize that a new normal is possible.

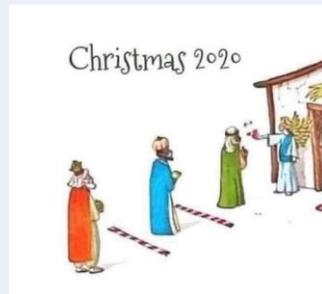
For California Southern Baptist Disaster Relief 2021 will bring new challenges as well as opportunities to respond in new ways which will no doubt evolve into a new normal.

The way we respond and train for mass feeding and chaplaincy has already changed and as we go into next year we will post updates along with trainings and events that will help our DR volunteers pivot to the "new normal."

Mike Bivins

The call to chaplains requires being available when the need is present, being accessible by email/phone/text, being approachable by a kind voice, building instant rapport, and being accountable to God who has commanded that we make disciples as we go and love others. It has been challenging to be a disaster relief chaplain in the year 2020.

Our chaplains made lemonade out of lemons as they used technology and more time at home to train and be better prepared for the hurt and disappointment that we all feel when facing disasters. Our chaplains clocked hundreds of hours of online training in 2020!

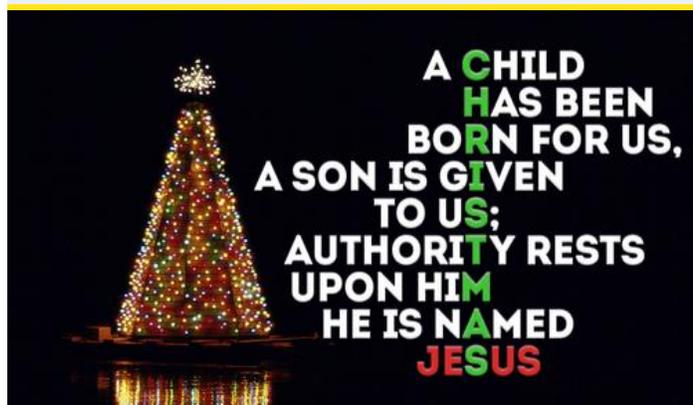


2020 has been challenging and we have learned to follow new guidelines for worship.

Good news! The Christmas message is still clear. God sent us His own son, Jesus, to be our salvation! While we socially distance at 6 feet, God draws near and embraces us with His love.

Merry Christmas!

Naomi Paget, Director/Instructor,
CSBCDR Chaplain Program



The Newbie's in Town (Recounting My First DR Deployment)



After a three-and-a-half-hour drive from the Sacramento area, a mild nervousness overcame me as I arrived at the destination of my first Southern Baptist Disaster Relief (DR) deployment. Nestled just outside of Monterey, CA is the little town of Seaside where Lighthouse Baptist Church offered us the full use of their church for sleeping and, most importantly, cooking and assembling meals for a constantly changing number of fire evacuees.

No time was wasted as I followed a volunteer to the Sunday school room that would become my sleeping quarters for the next three nights. I grabbed my large bag from my Jeep, walked back to my room and proceeded to make my air mattress and sleeping bag bed. Fifteen minutes later I found myself in the church's kitchen with a frozen deer-in-the-headlights look on my face. All I could manage to say to the skilled kitchen staff was, "I am badged for cleanup and recovery not kitchen. I have no idea what to do in a kitchen." None of this phased them and they put me to work.

Within the next hour, I was in a diesel DR truck with turn-crank windows revealing its timeworn age. An experienced volunteer named Neils drove as we headed to the neighboring town of Salinas to help prepare meals with the Salvation Army. We passed a Starbucks—which I was in the mind to notice because of my lack of coffee consumption that day—and fields of artichoke and other crops animated with stooped over harvesters.

When we arrived, we were greeted with a huge smile of appreciation by one of the Salvation Army's leaders, and, just like my experience earlier that day, put right to work. For the next few hours, Neils, a small crew of other volunteers, and I were instructed on building chicken burritos and wrapping them "Chipotle style". After the burritos, Neils and I took charge of getting buttered bread sticks out of a box and arranging them on pans to prepare for baking. Within a few hours, the food was out for delivery and our work there came to an end...but not until we were escorted to the Chocolate Room. Yes, a chocolate room filled wall to wall with See's Candies, peanut brittle and a host of other delectable delights. Like a good Samaritan, Neils took a modest number of boxes for the DR kitchen crew, and we headed back to the church.

The 9:00 P.M. cutting and washing of the Romaine lettuce signaled the end of my first day, and each day after was filled with the same early start time, busy schedule, comradery, and purposeful work. We made three meals a day (sometimes as many as 150). Each meal was packed in a clam shell, boxed, and hand delivered to the evacuees staying in a nearby convention center.

While writing this in my Sunday school bedroom during a short eye-of-the-hurricane moment, I heard a seagull outside my window reminding me how near



I was to the coast line. It seemed odd that I was near the most beautiful sections of the Pacific Coast and I couldn't see it. I promised myself I'd stop by the beach and feel the sand between my toes on my way home, but I never did. I was tired—a good tired—but tired. A good tired because I could minister to those facing a life-changing crisis. A good tired because I saw God's people following His leading to give light to a broken and hurting world. But most gratifying to me personally was God using a "I have no idea what to do in a kitchen" person in the busiest kitchen I've ever seen. For it's true what Rick Yancey once said: "God doesn't call the equipped, son. God equips the called. And you have been called."

"Now may the God of peace, who through the blood of the eternal covenant brought back from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, equip you with everything good for doing his will, and may he work in us what is pleasing to him, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen"

Hebrews 13:20-21

Needless to say, I drove home with a huge smile on my face reminiscing about the awesome people I met and how quickly we became family. I also spent time thanking God for calling and equipping me for His service and sending me on this fantastic adventure. I'm eagerly anticipating many more adventures with my new DR family.

Shelley Camp-Telles

Considering a Year-End Gift?

A financial gift to CSBC Disaster Relief Ministries goes directly to support our relief efforts in the State of California.

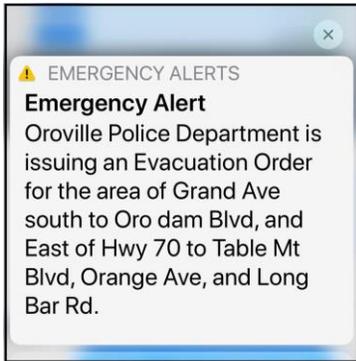
Thank you for continuing your support of Southern Baptist Disaster Relief Ministry!

[Click here to give online...](#)

Or send check with memo to DR Ministries to California Southern Baptist Convention
678 E. Shaw Avenue
Fresno, CA 93710



Location, Location, Location!



When we agree to deploy to a disaster, we need to remember that there is a high probability that the area we are serving will still contain dangers. Weather, mud slides, fires, burned trees, damaged structures and even human interaction can pose very real risks. As talked about in the October DRone, always remember your personal situational awareness, but also remember your leaders are thinking about your safety as well. First and foremost, we are a team.

Evacuation orders seem to be issued more frequently these days. While on deployment in Oroville we received three different evacuation orders that had to be monitored closely and evaluated to see if we needed to pull out of the area. It's of the utmost importance that your location is known by the leadership of the deployment and the information is accurate. Time spent looking for individuals in an emergency can be deadly.

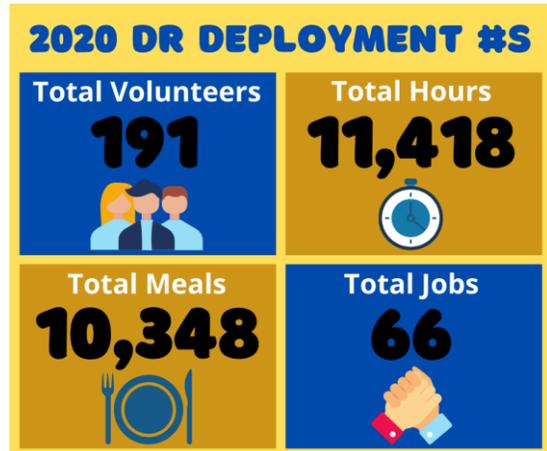
When you arrive on a deployment, you should receive the names and phone numbers for offsite leaders as well as your onsite Blue Cap, Administrative Assistant, and Chaplain. Always take note of these names and numbers and use them appropriately, onsite leaders first. If you are going to be somewhere other than your assigned location, let your Blue Cap know where and why.

After evening debrief, we are typically free to do as we wish until bedtime. If you are going to leave the property for a walk, store run, sightseeing, or anything else, it's imperative that you let your Blue Cap know that you are checking out. Remember that it's just as important to let them know when you return. Have fun, it's allowed, it really is. A word to the wise though, know how to get back in if you're locked out! It happens - don't ask me how I know. ;-)

Eric Nielsen

2020 DR Deployment Year End Summary

2020 DR Deployment Year End Numbers			
Deployment	Total Volunteers	Total Hours	Total Jobs/Meals
Bahamas	8	860.5	2
COVID 19 Prayer Line	44	3108	
TSA COVID-19 Feeding	11	320	594
Kern County Super Test Site	10	186.5	
Niland Fire Clean Up	10	650.25	7
Napa Feeding	5	84.5	
Asilomar Feeding	28	1707.75	6974
Creek Fire	13	347	
North Complex West Zone Feeding	14	646.25	1280
Texas/Louisiana Clean Up Hurricane Laura	6	586.5	16
North Complex West Zone PPR	35	2814.5	41
TSA Feeding Thanksgiving Diners	7	106	1500
TOTALS	191	11,418	
Total Meals Prepared			10,348
Total PPR/Clean Up Jobs			66



Have I Not Commanded You?

I've spent most of my life trying to blend in and not be noticed, especially if there was any chance of public speaking. Most of the time, the larger the group the easier the camouflage, but I'm finding lately that the harder I try to hide, the more God draws me out.

I was selected to be a part of the California clean up team sent to Louisiana to help clean up after Hurricane Laura devastated part of the Gulf Coast. For me, being the hands and feet of Jesus with work boots on my feet and gloves on my hands is much easier than sharing the Good News with my lips. God will use us where He sees fit, even when I feel my eyes are better than His.

Each morning of a deployment starts with a devotional and each evening ends with another. After the Monday evening devotional was shared, the gentleman that delivered it said "don't be afraid to share a devotional. There isn't a more forgiving and accepting crowd than the one you'll find in Disaster Relief." This may be true, but the hands still didn't fly into the air to fill the next day's slots.

I was awake for hours that first night. I felt called, or maybe even commanded, to write and deliver a devotional, but was I afraid? A life verse I carry with me is Joshua 1:9 "Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous, do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go." I knew this was the focus verse God wanted me to work on, and I did try.



Each day while working I'd tell myself that I'd volunteer to do one of the next day's two devotionals. When volunteers were requested for the following day, my hands quickly found my pockets or they were conveniently tucked between the seat cushion and my butt. "Tomorrow, I'll do it tomorrow," I'd tell myself. Tuesday became Wednesday as I justified to myself that I'd volunteer for the last day's devotional. Friday came and I had spent the week being strong and courageous with a chainsaw, but I cowered when it came to the devotional. There was no request for the Saturday morning slot and that meant I was off the hook. God was going to have to wait for His Joshua devotional.

If I wasn't 100% sure what God wanted from me on Monday, it was made clear on Saturday morning as our Blue Cap delivered our final devotion. A tear rolled down my cheek as she read a passage from the Book of Joshua. She read and expounded on the first few verses of Joshua 1 including verse 9. I now had no choice, I had to step up and lose my camouflage. I stood and explained this very story to the members of our team along with some of the words I had been working on. I guess this was the plan all along. God got the Joshua Devotional and He also made me step out of my comfort zone to prove what was said at the beginning of the week. "Don't be afraid to share a devotional. There isn't a more forgiving and accepting crowd than the one you'll find in Disaster Relief."

Eric Nielsen

Valued Partnerships

The partnership that Southern Baptist Disaster Relief nationally has with Home Depot and Lowe's continues to provide huge benefits for SBDR. This past year SBDR National received over \$250,000 in rebates from Home Depot alone. The Steering Committee oversees the disbursement of these funds to State Conventions upon request for development and deployment.



All of our California SBDR expenses for our September deployment in response to Hurricane Laura were paid for out of the Home Depot funds.

All volunteers and church members can help contribute by registering their personal credit cards with Home Depot and Lowe's and at the end of the year Southern Baptist Disaster National will receive roughly a 5% rebate of total purchases.



See the [linked documents](#) for details and instructions and register your cards soon.

DR Calendar

*Operational Stress First Aid (OSFA)

January 20, 2021 Online 8 am - 4 pm

There are limited spaces for this training open to DR Chaplains and Volunteers with specific criteria. Priority will be given to DR Chaplains who have never taken the OSFA class. Please email Laura Johnson at ljohnson@csbc.com by **January 10th** if you want to take this training.

Courses Sponsored by K-LOVE, taught by Naomi Paget: [Registration/Info Website](#)

*Meets requirement for NAMB DR Chaplain Endorsement



Help with DRone!

DRone newsletter is for us all, and benefits from your input and perspectives. We need your stories, your photos and your experiences.

Please send your stories, articles, thoughts, suggestions and PHOTOS to Laura Johnson, ljohnson@csbc.com. This is a team effort! Won't you join with us?!



Disaster Relief Contributions

are gratefully accepted and help underwrite CSBC's current or future response to hurricanes, tornadoes, floods, etc., in California, nearby states or mission partnership countries.

DONATE NOW



Response services include the preparation of hot meals for disaster victims who are without basic utility services, recovery assistance to victims without insurance resources, cleanup of homes, and transportation for volunteers to affected areas.

Please share this newsletter with your friends and churches - help spread the word about CSBC Disaster Relief work in California!



DRone is a monthly publication of California Southern Baptist Convention Disaster Relief to inform and encourage DR team members and friends as we serve together to bring help, hope and healing to a hurting world during a time of crisis. Questions/comments about DRone should be directed to Laura Johnson, ljohnson@csbc.com, 916-693-3428.

Please [sign up here](#) to receive this newsletter in your inbox.

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