



DISASTER MINISTRIES



MAINE CONFERENCE
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Winter Storms: Damage and Building Use

Contacting Tenants & Congregants

Designate someone (or an entire committee) to contact congregants and tenants if your building sustains damage and is rendered unusable. What happens if you displace tenants? Can you work on a plan with them now to insure a minimum of confusion later?

Worship Service

Consider where you will hold worship (and activities) if your space becomes unusable. Does anyone in your congregation own or manage a business that has enough space and parking? Could you do a combined service with another local church with both pastors co-leading worship? Would one of your local clergy association members allow you to use his/her church? Might you move the service day or time? Could you meet at a local restaurant, coffee shop, or civic organization hall? Would you drop off, mail or email bulletins, prayers, and sermons? Would you post print, audio, or video on your website or Facebook?

Service Provider Lists

Where is the list of your vendors including your plow person, plumber, electrician, and insurance agent? It's a smart idea to have more than one copy of a vendor list (and your insurance policy information) off-site somewhere. Who is responsible for calling vendors in the event of a building emergency? Do you have an emergency plan and a chain of command?

Insurance Claim

If your church sustains damage, call your insurance agent. Take pictures of the damage and any items that were destroyed. (Check with your agent to see if you must hold on to those items until an adjuster comes.)

Additional Info

If you start thinking about this now, you'll save yourself from scrambling down the road! God protected Noah by giving him advance warning of the flood. We, too, have that advance notice for we know that at some point, the snow will melt and all that water will go somewhere. God willing (and with your preparations and precautions), it won't be in your church basement! For expert advice about winter storms and flooding, visit the Federal Emergency Management website at [FEMA.gov](https://www.fema.gov).

For other helpful information about how your church can prepare for and respond to emergencies and disasters, please visit [Disaster Ministries - Maine Conference United Church of Christ \(maineucc.org\)](https://www.maineucc.org).

- Rev. Estelle Margarones, Maine Conference Disaster Coordinator