

—CREATE— CLIMATE JUSTICE

Congregational Asset Mapping Tool ***Climate & Environmental Justice Edition***

Congregations are fundamentally hubs of resources: the people who make up our membership, the infrastructure we build to serve our mission, the values we hold in common and our commitment to realize them in the world, and the relationships we have with one another and with our communities. Because of the inherent richness within our congregations, we have a hugely important role to play within the ecosystem of local organizing and justice-making.

This document is a tool intended to help congregational teams determine how to best leverage their human, infrastructural, spiritual, and financial assets to prevent, prepare for, and rapidly respond to the local impacts of climate change and disasters. We recommend going through the following asset map with a group of decision-makers who have authority to mobilize resources – in other words, with the people who have the power to say “yes” if and when these resources are needed for your organizing. In cases where you may need to consult others for permission, it is wise to have those conversations in advance of need arising so that you can say a nimble “yes” when the time comes.

Congregations can be wellsprings of significant resources in their communities, and the more authentic and mutual our relationships with our community partners, the more we can share the much-needed assets with partners who share the same values and goals.

SOLIDARITY VALUES FOR RESOURCE MOBILIZATION

Spend-Down Ethic

We are committed to moving resources as quickly and nimbly as possible, without hoarding or a scarcity mentality, with faith that our communities will continue to respond with abundance as needs arise.

Low Gatekeeping

We believe that communities most directly impacted by structural oppression and violence know best what they need to survive and thrive. We trust frontline communities' assessments of their own experiences, and will not create unnecessary barriers for accessing resources. When sharing our assets, we ground ourselves in the trust forged through real relationships, and we do not need to know all the details of how resources will be used in order to share generously.

Nimble Response

We will work to create a structure that allows us to be as quickly responsive as possible, matching needs with resources efficiently and expeditiously. We will endeavor to be clear about what resources we have to share, who has authorization to share them, and how people can request and access our resources.

Building the Movement Ecosphere

We believe that the exchange of material support can also be an important avenue for building relationships and our Movements for justice. We encourage communities--whether receiving or providing resources--to move beyond a transactional relationship toward trust, mutuality, and accountability.

CONGREGATIONAL ASSET MAPPING SURVEY

PHYSICAL INFRASTRUCTURE

- Is a staff member physically present at the congregation? Who & how frequently?
- What, if any, security is in place (cameras, alarm systems, in-person)? To what extent is your community reliant on police to respond to incidents or security issues? How does the congregation's relationship with police/armed security impact people of various identities and life experiences?
- Does your congregation have usable office space and equipment? Can printing and copying, sound recording, art making, etc. be done at your congregation?
- Do you have space to store, sort, or distribute supplies for community organizations?
- Can your parking lot and/or outside areas be used for community gatherings or events, as a place to distribute materials, or collect donations? Do you have accessibility equipment for outdoor gatherings (shaded areas and/or tents, portable seating, wheelchair-accessible paths, lighting and amplification, etc.)?
- Do you have a tent, tables, and chairs to create an accessible outdoor socially distanced space?
- Can you offer your congregation's parking lot or sheltered area (large tent, etc.) for community-based first aid care or COVID testing?
- Do you have a large indoor space where people can safely gather (adequate space for distancing, good air circulation, enforcement of COVID protocols)?
- Do you have a lot of refrigerator space for local perishable food donations? (collect and store until distribution).
- Does your congregation have an industrial kitchen that could be used to prepare and/or serve large quantities of food for a community event or need?
- Is your congregation located near sites where protests/rallies frequently occur? If so, could it function as a safe home-base for street medics, movement chaplains, water station, protesters, etc.?
- Is your congregation in a highly visible location where signs, protests, or alerts would be especially impactful? Do you have a wayside pulpit, flag pole, large space for hanging banners or signs?
- Do you have space to offer as a temporary shelter, cooling center, or triage center?

- Does your congregation have meeting spaces and/or offices that do NOT have windows, in which people can have private/closed meetings 1-1 or in small groups?
- Does your congregation have a private parsonage/apartment/living space that includes sleeping, bathing, and dining areas?
- Do you have an equipped childcare space and trained, vetted providers that you could make available during community events or emergencies?
- Does your congregation have back-up/alternative forms of power in the event the electrical grid fails?
- Does your congregation have access to water reserves (well, water tank, etc) in the event of water loss or contamination that can be shared with the community?
- Does your congregation have access to land that is currently or can be used as a community garden for food in the event of shortages or emergencies?
- Is your congregation easily accessible by public transportation?

COMMUNICATIONS & TECHNOLOGY

- What are your primary tools for communicating with your congregation? (social media, e-newsletter, mailings, slack or other internal communications channel, Facebook group, podcast, etc.) How many followers/subscribers does each platform have? What is the most effective way to communicate various kinds of messages to various constituencies within the congregation?
- Does your congregation have a Zoom account that you can use and/or that you can offer emerging local groups to use? Does your congregation have a large-capacity Zoom account that can host gatherings of 500+ people? Do you have in-house staff or volunteers who can provide Zoom support, tech hosting, chat moderation, etc.?
- Does your congregation have access to Facebook Live, YouTube, or another streaming service through which you can quickly post a video message?
- Does your congregation's wi-fi extend to outdoor sheltered areas? Is your internet service equipped to support large community gatherings?
- Does your congregation have a portable sound/speaker set-up that can be used to amplify speakers/announcements for community events or emergencies?
- Do you have a system in place for quickly mobilizing people to community support, direct action, and/or calling for donations in a short period of time?
- Do you have a phone/communications tree where members are set up to quickly pass information along to other members?

- Does key leadership have a protocol for secure messaging? (e.g., Signal, email encryption, etc.)
- Does key leadership have access to all members' contact information? Who has authorization to send a broad message through these various channels, and under what circumstances?
- Do you have a plan in place for checking up on members in the case of quickly escalating uprising, disruption, or violence?
- Do local media outlets frequently call your congregation for comment, and/or publish opinion pieces/letters to the editor from clergy or members?
- Do you host a 24-hour pastoral care line for members of your congregation? Who can access that line, what resources are provided, what kind of response time can be expected, and what training do people staffing the line have?

FINANCES

- How much money is in your discretionary fund? Is there a transparent process for members and non-members to ask for funding? What restrictions are in place? Do you have a way to transfer funds electronically to individuals and/or organizations? Can you give cash? Are there any requirements for documentation by those who access these funds? Will requests be kept confidential?
- What protocols exist to do rapid response fundraising? Do you have a clear way to track money raised for emergency purposes? How quickly can you raise funds and then turn around and pass them along to partners and/or individuals?
- Do you have a list of donors who could be quickly approached for emergency needs? Who has access to that list, and under what circumstances would you contact them?
- Do you have an endowment? How are decisions made about using funds, and who can authorize their use and for what purposes? How quickly can decisions be made and money be moved from the endowment? Is it possible to make a decision now about a pot of money from the endowment that could be tapped quickly or in case of emergency?
- Does your congregational budget include any line items specifically dedicated to emergent organizing or justice ministry needs?

VOLUNTEER BASE

- Do you have a map of where members live by address, zip code, ward/district/etc.?

- Have you done a recent survey of members to see what kinds of actions they might be willing to take? How many members could be quickly mobilized for various actions? (e.g., meal prep, transportation, supply triage, direct action, protests, etc)
- Do you have a system in place to help volunteers mobilize/recruit other congregants? (e.g. a phone or email tree, Slack channel, list-serv, etc.)
- Do potential volunteers know how you will contact them if they are needed? Do leaders know when and how to contact potential volunteers?
- Do you have a Climate/Environmental Justice or Green Sanctuary group? What skills, capacity, infrastructure, and resources do they have?
- Do you have volunteers who are connected to the Side With Love Action Center, Squads, Community of Praxis, or Green Sanctuary Team meetings?
- Do you have a cohort who has gone through Side With Love's It Starts With Faith: Organizing School?
- Do you have members who have gone through the Climate Resilience through Disaster Response & Community Care webinar series?
- How many members could be quickly mobilized for various actions and how do you track that information?

HUMAN RESOURCES

- Relationships with those who hold power locally (e.g., local or state elected officials, Higher Ed Institutions, interfaith groups, non-profits, police/sheriffs, etc.)
- Climate/Environmental Justice organizers & activists
- Youth organizers and activists
- Justice committee(s)/ organized groups
- Translators (including ASL)
- Visual artists
- Social media experts & communications professionals
- Song leaders & musicians
- Photographers & videographers
- Web design
- IT/Tech support
- Public relations/media liaisons/spokespeople with media training
- Fundraisers/Development specialists

- Travel agents
- Non-profit expertise & 501(c)3 compliance
- Pastoral/Spiritual care providers
- Trauma-informed counselors/therapists
- Organizers/canvassers
- Doctors, nurse practitioners, nurses, or other medical providers
- Movement chaplains
- Street medics
- Writers
- Engineers & electricians
- Lawyers & legal experts
- Notaries
- Educators/Teachers
- Childcare workers
- Drivers
- Cooks
- Gardeners
- Donors

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

- What community partners do you have existing relationships with? What forms of public organizing and resistance in support of climate, environmental, and/or utility justice are they moving that your congregation can amplify, participate in, and/or fundraise for?
- What organizations in your area are led by and represent people who are most directly impacted by climate change & crises? How does your congregation align with those organizations politically?
- What is your relationship with other faith communities and/or multifaith organizations in your area? Who are your allies, and where might you join forces to pool resources and influence to support urgent needs in the community?
- Do you have a relationship with a state-wide council or association of religious groups? A community-based congregational organizing affiliate (PICO, IAF, etc.)?

- Do you have collaborative relationships with other UU congregations in your area/cluster/region?