



## First Presbyterian Church of Freeport, Texas Hurricane Emergency Plan

### I. Overview and Objectives:

This plan has been developed as a guideline to assist our leaders and our congregation in the preparation for approaching hurricanes and tropical storms; including our post storm actions. Preparation is the best protection against the dangers of a hurricane! The primary objectives are to secure and protect church records and property and assist one another in evacuation and recovery efforts as the united Body that God formed us to be in Christ.

### II. Plan Activation:

If a storm should enter the Gulf of Mexico, residents of Freeport and the entire gulf coast will be on high alert. Even if individuals do not plan to evacuate their homes, this plan **may be activated** by session members any time a storm approaches the gulf coast.

**The plan will be activated** immediately if local authorities issue an evacuation notice.

Even a category 1 hurricane can potentially pose great danger for our area. Therefore, we are in the mandatory evacuation zone for category 1 hurricanes. If authorities advise people to evacuate under a voluntary evacuation, it is best to initiate this plan immediately so members can also prepare their homes and leave as soon as possible to avoid traffic tie-ups.

**The chair of the Property Maintenance and Grounds Committee (PM&G)** will notify the church office when the plan has been activated and when emergency actions are called off. The church office will forward the notice by e-mail, as possible, and will contact other session members and essential church staff by telephone. **Session emergency contact information is:**

| <i>Position</i>           | <i>Name</i>        | <i>Work Phone</i>  | <i>Cell Phone</i>    | <i>Home Phone</i>  | <i>e-mail address</i>     |
|---------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|----------------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Moderator,<br>Pastor      | Tom<br>Sharon*     | 233-1916           | (713) 825-<br>7926 + | (713) 436-<br>3332 | pastor_fpcf@sbcglobal.net |
| Clerk,                    | Cathy<br>Bettoney* | (832) 667-<br>7142 | 824-1983             | 265-7630           | gbettoney@sbcglobal.net   |
| Treasurer,<br>Bereavement | Virginia<br>Long   |                    |                      | 285-2102           | vlong8@comcast.net        |
| Elder,<br>Nurture         | Pat<br>Allan       |                    | 236-8703             | 233-5689           | jpa1964@sbcglobal.net     |
| Elder,<br>Admin.          | Benny<br>Glover    | 239-2590           | 709-2042             |                    |                           |
| Elder                     | John<br>Lastovica  |                    |                      | 297-7356           | jlastovica@sbcglobal.net  |
| Elder,<br>PM&G            | Don<br>Porter      |                    | 236-6409             | 265-3662           | dporterjen@comcast.net    |
| Elder,<br>Outreach        | John<br>Seward     |                    | (281) 222-<br>6705   | 233-4076           | ijseward@classicnet.net   |
|                           |                    |                    |                      |                    |                           |

\* Emergency contact personnel for the New Covenant Presbytery Emergency Plan

+ Texting available

***Other emergency contact numbers:***

Church Office/Secretary: Phone: 233-2852 e-mail: sec\_fpcf@sbcglobal.net  
Donna Wilbanks

Choir Director: Phone: 233-4076 e-mail: ijseward@classicnet.net  
Charlotte Seward Cell: 417-3926

Custodian: Phone: 233-2426  
Connie Henslee

III. Review of Hurricane Readiness Plan:

The hurricane season runs from June 1<sup>st</sup> to December 1<sup>st</sup> of each year. The elder serving as chair of the Property Maintenance Committee will present the plan to session during the May meeting each year for review and refreshing. The chair will also make any changes arising from the meeting.

IV. Storm Readiness Plan:A. Initial notices:

- a. General notice: The **church secretary**, if on duty, will call each person on the emergency action plan list and confirm that their contact information is current. The church secretary, **or the session moderator** if the secretary is not on duty, will send out an e-mail to all session members and staff advising them that the hurricane emergency action plan has been activated. Each person is requested to confirm that they have received the notice.
- b. Committee activation: The **chair of each committee** is responsible for contacting personnel in their committees and activating their part of this plan.

B. Secure Church Information:

- a. Computer backup: The **church secretary** is to keep the main office computer backed up and will take the backup when evacuating. The **pastor** is to keep the pastor's computer backed up and secure the backup by taking it during an evacuation. The **secretary and pastor** are to advise the clerk of session that backups are secure. The **clerk** will attempt to secure the backups if the secretary and/or pastor are not able to do so.
- b. Session Minutes and Permanent Church Records: The **clerk of session** will secure all permanent church records. The clerk may seek help in securing these records from the secretary, pastor and/or treasurer if available to do so. Any permanent records removed from the building must be cleared with the clerk and shall be returned as soon as possible either to the church or to the clerk. The clerk shall ensure that all records are returned to the church as soon as it is safe to do so. The **pastor** is responsible for securing and returning any books and/or files from the pastor's office.
- c. Financial Information: The **treasurer** will coordinate with the church secretary, or the clerk of session in the secretary's absence, to insure that all church financial records have been secured.

C. Secure Church Property:

- a. Church Infrastructure and Grounds: The **chair of Property Maintenance Committee (PM&G)** will activate members of the PMC to secure the church infrastructure prior to hurricane evacuation. Loose objects on the grounds will be secured, windows protected as prudent and necessary, and electrical systems shut down as necessary (i.e. HVAC units, PA system, throw main breaker!). The **chair of PM&G** will secure

- a copy of the church's insurance coverage and the contact information needed to file a claim after the storm. The *pastor and secretary* will turn off and/or unplug office equipment before evacuating the building.
- b. Church Sanctuary, Vestments, and Worship Supplies: The *chair of the Nurture Committee* will activate committee members to secure the church worship supplies such as candelabras, communion sets, banners, etc. The Nurture Committee should also evaluate if the kitchen's refrigerators should be emptied if a prolonged power outage or evacuation is anticipated.
- D. Church Member Preparation and Evacuation Assistance:
- a. Elderly and shut-in evacuation assistance: The city of Freeport has an emergency evacuation assistance plan. You can register for evacuation assistance by dialing 211. For more information and for evacuation details go online to [www.freeport.tx.us](http://www.freeport.tx.us) and look under the 211 logo on the home page.  
All members are encouraged to preregister if assistance is need during a storm evacuation. However, the *chair of the Outreach Committee* will activate their committee if an evacuation has been ordered to ensure that all elderly and/or shut-in members of our congregation have a means of evacuation.
- i. The committee will call all shut-ins and other members with mobility limitations to see if they or a neighbor might need assistance in evacuating.
- ii. If a ride is not available within the committee, the committee chair will contact the session and congregation members so a ride and evacuation accommodations can be arranged.
- iii. The committee will make sure the planned evacuation route of those contacted is the same as the currently recommended route. Local officials may close or block certain roads, requiring that a different evacuation route be taken.
- iv. The committee will get a contact number where shut-ins and elderly can be reached during and after evacuation so we can check on their wellbeing after the storm has passed.
- v. The committee will make sure they have the necessary supplies if they do not plan to evacuate and notify necessary authorities so they can monitor their wellbeing throughout the evacuation and can rescue them if necessary.
- b. Elderly and shut-in property preparations: As a lesser priority, and if time and resources permit, the Outreach Committee should see if the elderly and shut-ins need assistance with storm preparations for their personal property. Members of the Property Maintenance committee might be able to assist if time permits.
- V. Post Storm Recovery Plan:
- A. Post Storm Recovery Meeting: The moderator of session will contact key committee personnel to confirm their wellbeing and determine if they will be able to activate the post storm recovery plan. The moderator will call a meeting of the session when safe and practical to do so after a storm in which flooding, building damage or vandalism has taken place. The need for future meetings and recovery details will be determined at this time.
- B. Member Health and Wellbeing: The *pastor* will activate the *Bereavement Committee* once the storm has passed. They will see that all church members are contacted and determine if any special assistance is needed. (See Section VI). Church members' wellbeing will be reported to session along with any alternate contact information.

C. Church Property and Grounds Recovery:

- a. The ***chair of PM&G*** will evaluate the church infrastructure and property for damage after the storm has passed. The chair will take pictures, collect damage reports from other committees and document all known damage. The chair will send an e-mail and/or memo notifying session and the trustees of the damage assessment. ***The chair of PM&G, or a designated member of PM&G, will contact the church's insurance company as necessary and act as the liaison for claims adjustment.*** PM&G will also activate other members as necessary to secure church property in order to mitigate damages caused by the storm.
- b. Church Sanctuary, Vestments, and Worship Supplies: If flooding, building damage or vandalism has taken place the ***chair of the Nurture Committee (NC)*** will have the committee assess the damages related to the sanctuary, vestments and worship supplies. The Nurture committee will submit a report to the chair of the PM&G for insurance reporting as soon as possible. The ***chair of NC*** will determine if the building is suitable for worship services and advise session if alternative plans need to be made and/or any worship services canceled. The pastor and choir director should be notified directly.
- c. Church Organ, Pianos, and Music Supplies: If flooding, building damage or vandalism has taken place the ***choir director*** will assess damage to the church organ, pianos and music supplies. The choir director will submit a report to the chair of PM&G as soon as possible for insurance purposes. The choir director will get estimates for repairing or replacing the organ, pianos, music, robes, stoles, and hymnals and report this to the PM&G. The choir director will also oversee all repairs and replacements which might be needed.
- d. Permanent Member and Financial Records: If flooding, building damage or vandalism has taken place the ***clerk of session*** will evaluate the church's permanent member records and files and report any missing records to the session. Under these circumstances, ***the treasurer*** will evaluate the financial records and report any missing records to session.
- e. Office Supplies and Equipment: If flooding, building damage or vandalism has taken place the pastor and secretary will report any damage to the church office equipment and supplies to the ***chair of the Administrative Committee.*** The chair will make a report of loss or damage to all administrative equipment, supplies and records to the PM&G for insurance purposes.
- f. Classroom and Educational Material and Equipment: If flooding, building damage or vandalism has taken place the ***chair of the Outreach Committee*** will have their committee assess loss or damage to educational materials and equipment such as TVs, DVDs and players, VCRs and players, Bible study materials, library books and furnishings, children's education and nursery supplies and equipment, classroom furnishings, etc. A report of loss and damages is to be reported to the PM&G as soon as possible for insurance purposes.
- g. Fellowship Hall and Kitchen: If flooding, building damage or vandalism has taken place the ***chair of the Nurture Committee (NC)*** will have the committee assess any loss or damage related to the kitchen appliances and supplies and the Fellowship Hall furnishings and supplies. The Nurture committee will submit a report to the chair of the PM&G for insurance reporting as soon as possible.

VI. Prayer, Healing and Restoration:

There is work for all of us to do in the wake of a devastating storm. The *pastor* will activate *the Bereavement Committee* who will coordinate with members who are otherwise unable to help with physical repairs and restoration of the church to serve as our prayer and healing warriors. They will be asked to set up a prayer and communication vigilance. They will contact all our members and other possible storm victims to determine their wellbeing and assess their needs. They will establish a prayer vigilance for them and pass on any special needs to the *chair of the Outreach Committee*. The *chair of the Outreach committee* will communicate with other committees and members to determine if our congregation can aid in meeting these needs. If resources beyond our congregation's limits are needed the *chair of the Outreach Committee* will advise presbytery and seek additional resources as might be available.