

PUERTO RICO AND PDA IN THE LOOP



Updates on PDA response in Puerto Rico since Hurricane María as of May 2018



Hurricane María

Last September, Hurricane María, a category 5 storm, devastated Puerto Rico, a U.S. territory with more than 3 million U.S. citizens.

Presbyterian Disaster Assistance has been walking along with leaders on the island since before the hurricane. This article provides information about the response PDA has had in PR since the catastrophic event took place.



OVERVIEW:

PDA has disbursed over \$1.5 million in grants

The Presbyterian Church USA presence in PR consists of:

- 1 Synod (Boriquen)
- 3 Presbyteries (San Juan, Noroeste and Suroeste)
- 74 Congregations
- A membership of approximate 6,000
- 1 Camp/Retreat Center (El Guacio)

WAYS TO HELP:

presbyterianmission.org/give-maria

To give by phone, call 800-872-3283

or by check to

Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

P.O. Box 643700

Pittsburgh, PA 15264-3700

memo: "DR000194-PR"

SUMMARY OF PDA RESPONSE IN PR

- Eight emergency grants to all three Presbyteries and the Synod were sent to help the communities affected by the hurricane.
- Church damage grants in the amount requested by the three presbyteries where approved by PDA to help with the repairs of churches affected by the hurricane.
- Conducted a PDA leadership solidarity visit in November of 2017 to churches in the three Presbyteries, Synod as well as the Seminario Evangelico de PR.
- Approved, upon endorsement of the Presbytery of San Juan endorsement, a grant to the Seminario Evangélico de PR for campus reconstruction efforts.
- Made grants to all three Presbyteries to hire a Presbytery Disaster Coordinator. A grant request from the Southwest presbytery is pending.
- Held a PDA Advisory Committee meeting in solidarity with the Puerto Rican PCUSA community.

- Approved a special grant to the Synod of Boriquen to provide help to the communities in the town of Vieques, a small island that is part of Puerto Rico.
- Provided two faith-leader training and a compassion fatigue training to people involved in community outreach.
- Approved two grants to two churches in the north and west of the island to do the necessary renovations to become volunteer host sites. They have already received various groups of volunteers.
- Standing with mainland Presbyteries who are supporting Puerto Rican evacuees that have arrived to the mainland.



- Developed a Volunteer Opportunity document for mainland churches and groups interested in volunteering in Puerto Rico. pcusa.org/pda/pr_ResponseHosting
- Awarded a grant to Camp El Guacio to help them recover and continue to help the town of San Sebastian after Hurricane Maria.
- Provided print and digital resources to the Presbyteries to help with disaster preparation, response and training.
- Funded a needs assessment by Seguridad Social de las Iglesias Dominicanas for Puerto Rico and the Caribbean.
- Hired three additional staff (one full time and two part time) to manage the hurricane response for the hurricane season of 2017 which includes Puerto Rico.



CONTINUING SUPPORT

- In collaboration with the three Presbyteries, PDA will provide a children's resilience overnight retreat at El Guacio Retreat Center.
- In coordination with the three Presbyteries, PDA will provide a faith-leader and family retreat in Mayaguez.
- Partnering with Presbyterian Hunger Program, Self Development of People and El Guacio Retreat Center for disaster mitigation in San Sebastian.
- Partnering with Solar Under the Sun and El Guacio Retreat Center to install solar panels at El Guacio.
- Partners with Long Term Recovery Groups through the Puerto Rico VOAD (Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster).
- Partnering with and connecting mainland churches and mid-councils to response and recovery efforts in Puerto Rico.
- Provide volunteer opportunities for interested groups during the long term recovery.