

Quick Support Funding UCC's Typhoon Relief Effort

UCC article from November 13, 2013

People across the life of the United Church of Christ are quickly answering the call for help in the Philippines. And though the UCC Disaster Ministries team is expressing gratitude for the early donations that have come in to fund the \$250,000 appeal to support those devastated by Typhoon Haiyan, they understand that recovery assistance will be needed long term.



“The generous online giving of UCC members and friends so far is encouraging. We are hopeful most of our UCC congregations will also receive a special offering on behalf of those impacted by Typhoon Haiyan,” said Susan Sanders, minister for UCC’s Global Sharing of Resources. “This tragedy is massive, and relief, recovery and rebuilding will require a phenomenal outpouring of prayer, financial resources and accompaniment over several years.”

In the few days since the \$250,000 appeal was issued, UCC members and congregations have given \$67,267 through online gifts, with an average donation of \$100. But the amount of damage caused by one of the most destructive storms on record means the denomination will continue to raise much needed funds for long-term support of partner churches and organizations in the region.

Typhoon Haiyan (locally named Yolanda) made landfall in the Philippines on Friday, Nov. 8, and has displaced an estimated 4.5 million people. The official death toll stands at 1,700 people — though it’s expected to rise to as much as 10,000 as bodies are uncovered from the debris. The situation has left survivors in search of food, water and shelter, with some people looting supplies from grocery stores. Military and police forces from other countries, including U.S. Marines, have been deployed to try and maintain order in heavily-damaged places such as the city of Tacloban.

The UCC sent \$15,000 in grants immediately, funded by One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS), to the ACT Alliance and the United Church of Christ in the Philippines (UCCP) on Friday. Another \$15,000 was sent to the ACT Alliance this week, and \$20,000 will be issued to Church World Service (CWS) on Thursday to assist relief efforts. The money will fund

early response and recovery work of the UCCP, ACT Alliance and CWS to provide provisioning supplies, emergency shelter items, drinking water and money.

“Global Ministries is blessed to have a long and strong partnership with the United Church of Christ in the Philippines,” said the Rev. James Moos, executive minister of the UCC’s Wider Church Ministries. “One of our shared values is presence – manifesting God’s love by living in intentional, committed relationships. Walking together in this time of tragedy is a manifestation of our mutual values.”

The UCCP said it was finally able to survey some of the damage to its local churches, and has been in contact with a hospital it operates in Tacloban. The facility has halted services because medical equipment was destroyed and the pharmacy was looted.

“Tacloban is like a no-man’s land,” said Bishop Dulce Pia-Rose of the UCCP. “My heart sank upon seeing the dead bodies lying in the streets [that] were beginning to decompose, and the despair painted on the faces of hungry survivors that we met.”

“UCCP has its share of the brunt from Yolanda. Many of our churches in Samar and Leyte were destroyed, including the big church in Tacloban,” said the Rev. Levilou Amora, UCCP coordinator for the East Visayas. “Everything is in shambles.”

HOW YOU CAN HELP

1. Pray for the people impacted by Typhoon Haiyan, UCC partner organizations active in response efforts, and all humanitarian workers.
2. To assist people in recovering from this disaster, please make a gift payable to “St. Paul’s UCC” marked for “Typhoon Haiyan.”

or

Make a secure online donation through the UCC at http://www.ucc.org/disaster/philippines_typhoon_appeal.html. Please note “Typhoon Haiyan” in the Comments Box.



Thank you for your compassion and support.