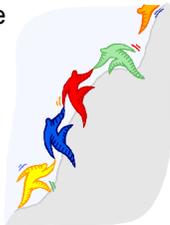


FAMILY HELPING FAMILY

Living in the Bay Area, the possibility of a major earthquake, a wide-scale fire, or other disaster is a daily reality. To ignore these risks would not be responsible on our part; however, we do not need to quake in fear. We can empower ourselves, our families, our parish community, and our neighbors, to be prepared and able to respond in crisis situations. Holy Cross is following the lead from other institutions to become prepared. Meeting with other organizations with similar concerns, we are preparing ourselves as well as all members of Holy Cross Church for survivability and self-care. Our plan is to eventually expand our knowledge and help to those who live near us. See inside for information on this ministry and where we hope it will lead us in the future.



Holy Cross Episcopal Church

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Holy Cross Episcopal Church

Together... Building the Body of Christ

Disaster

Intervention and

Rescue

Team



TEL: 510-889-7233

PEOPLE CARING FOR PEOPLE



In the past year, the D.I.R.T. Team has been exploring how best to prepare ourselves, as a parish, to survive the first crucial hours following a disaster.

All groups we have spoken to have recommended that every member of the family have a plan, have basic survival items in an easily accessible area, and know how to shut off potentially destructive services—water and gas—at our homes. In response to this call, we have targeted three areas of immediate action: signs with helpful information for what to do in certain emergencies; SKIP Bags, with helpful objects should we be trapped or alone and need to take care of injuries or call for help; and finally, a parish-wide plan for People Caring for People.

SIGNS

You may have noticed posters throughout the Church campus, including on the backs of the bathroom stalls, with information for different emergencies. One such sign has instructions for sheltering in place. There have also been signs for shutting off gas and water lines coming into your house. These signs have been collected from several sources, which we would be happy to share. They can be put on the insides of kitchen cabinet doors, in the laundry room, or could be filed in a notebook and kept in a handy spot where all family members can find them.

SKIP Bags

Beginning in Advent, 2008, the DIRT Team introduced our SKIP (Safety Kept in Place) Bag—a small plastic bag with a growing collection of helpful emergency items that can be

easily stored at home, in the office, or in the glove compartment of your car. The idea is to be able to easily locate these items and “skip through an emergency with a plan.” Initial items included:

- A Small Flashlight
- A Whistle
- Glow sticks
- Mylar energy blanket
- Large White Handkerchief
- 6 feet ribbon
- Tissues
- Sharpie Pen & Paper



We recommend having a good First Aid kit, a week’s worth of medications for each family member, a list of contact numbers for family, both inside California and out, a list of banking account numbers and some cash with your SKIP bag. In addition, plan to have enough food and water for your family and pets for a minimum of 72 hours. This is how long it may take for emergency services to reach everyone.

Why Lights and Whistles?

The lights are very small, but very bright. You will find that you are using them all the time. The whistles can be used as an attention-getter in case you find yourself in a bad situation. If you find yourself being followed, blow it to attract attention. If you fall and can’t get up, or you have an accident off the highway, you can attract attention to get help. Anytime you are in trouble the whistle and light can be used.

LED Flashlight and Whistle Signals

Both the light and the whistle can be used to answer questions during a rescue. The standard signals are:

- 1 YES
- 2 NO
- 3 HELP IS NEEDED



We hope this will be fun, we will all learn, and we will end up happily prepared.

FUTURE UNDERTAKINGS

As the DIRT Team develops our plans, we will be contacting all parishioners and developing a “Pod” system where members will know who lives near them and can develop a plan to support and help each other in those early hours when police and fire may be overwhelmed and unable to respond. Keep up-to-date with developments by reading *The Messenger*, our monthly news letter, and the Highlights in our Sunday Bulletin.

Eventually, after we have prepared ourselves at Holy Cross to take care of each other, we will also be working to prepare our Church to be a Disaster Response location. That will take more man-power, but we have the perfect location to be able to serve our community in a time of need. In the meantime, we will concentrate on getting ourselves prepared.

The DIRT Team meets on the third Sunday of most months at 6:00 PM in the Church Parish Hall. Meetings begin with a Holy Spirit Pot Luck dinner. All are welcome to join us as members of the team, or just to get occasionally involved.

Contact any member of the team or Bonnie in the church office at: 510-889-7233.

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