



REGION 1 HAMMER & DANCE

April 29, 2020

United for Ministry in the Days of COVID-19.

The Social Service Agencies
and Synods of Region 1.

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For the past four weeks I have shared a newsletter with the six Synods and two Social Service Agencies of Region 1. My goal has been to help provide information and perspective that might be helpful to Region 1 leaders. Now I know we're all moving from "reaction" mode to a more careful look down the road. It is an important shift to mark!

We, with the world, have demonstrated an amazing ability to do what needs to be done in the face of a global pandemic. We have "stayed at home," cared for one another, and embraced various technologies for worship, work and witness. And, we have paid a price to do so. It is not lost on us that this work has coincided with our annual Lenten journey.

Now we begin to turn a corner. Now it is Easter and we ask what the new world before us holds. We are invited into a new, COVID-19, normal. The invitation is anything but gentle, but it is an invitation that cannot be refused. To this end we now engage "The Hammer & the Dance."

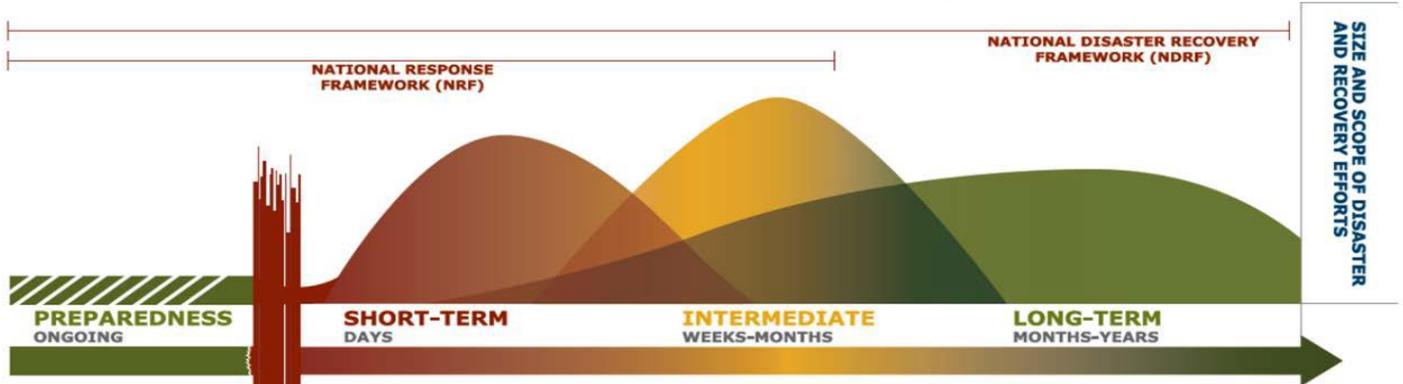
Dave Brauer-Rieke



HAMMER & DANCE

The return to a pre-COVID-19 world has been referred to as The Hammer & The Dance by Tomas Pueyo "*The Hammer*" refers to requirements for Social Distancing. "*The Dance*" is our attempt to come back together before either a vaccine or a treatment for the disease has been developed. In traditional worship Lutherans **Gather, Proclaim, Feast and Disperse**. When we cannot Gather or Feast, what does the dance of the faithful look like?

“Dance, Dance Wherever You May Be ...”



As we begin to ask what “recovery” or a “return to normal” looks like, we are blessed to have both experience and partners to learn from. This graph shows a typical recovery curve for natural disasters such as earthquakes or floods. Every situation is unique, of course, but generally there is a heroic, short-term response to a disaster, then an intermediate response, followed by a period of long-term recovery. Might this be a helpful framework for our congregations and ministries around the Region as we live through the age of the coronavirus?

PREPAREDNESS: Which congregations had Health Ministries, Parish Nurses or Disaster Response Teams in place prior to COVID-19? They may have been preparing their response to this pandemic as early as January or February. If so, that was a wonderful advantage for them. Whatever the “new normal” looks like, we will still be vulnerable to other kinds of disasters and challenge in the future. Mark preparedness as vital!

SHORT-TERM RESPONSES: What was our experience and COVID response in February and March? Before state mandated “Stay at home” orders, most congregations exerted new care around the “Passing of the Peace” and Holy Communion. “Stay at home” orders shut down communal worship and created a need to equip our staff members for work from home. We might consider mid-March through Easter Sunday something akin to a “Short-Term Response” window. Ministries addressed worship, social isolation, working from home and anxieties around looming financial concerns.

INTERMEDIATE RESPONSES: The week following Easter Sunday is usually down time. What has it felt like this year? **Might we consider this Easter a dividing line between our “Short-Term” and “Intermediate” response to COVID-19?** Certainly, we in the U.S. have begun to embrace the larger question of the economy. We feel the stress of a culture living in uncertainty and fear. What is our Word as an Easter People? In the world of Disaster Response there is the “Rule of Ten” which suggests our Intermediate response will take time, perhaps ten months for the one month of our Short-Term response. Thus, “The Hammer & the Dance.” What is our unique calling for the remainder of 2020?

LONG-TERM RESPONSES: What do you hear from your congregations or employees? What has been sacrificed, imagined, or created in just the past few months? Notice that the phases of recovery in this graph are not simply sequential. They overlap. **“Long-Term” recovery has already begun.** The seeds of a new tomorrow are already beginning to germinate. *“Behold, I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?”* says the Lord in Isaiah 43. We are finding our bearing. Walking anew the road to Emmaus, dare we let our hearts burn within us? - Dave Brauer-Rieke

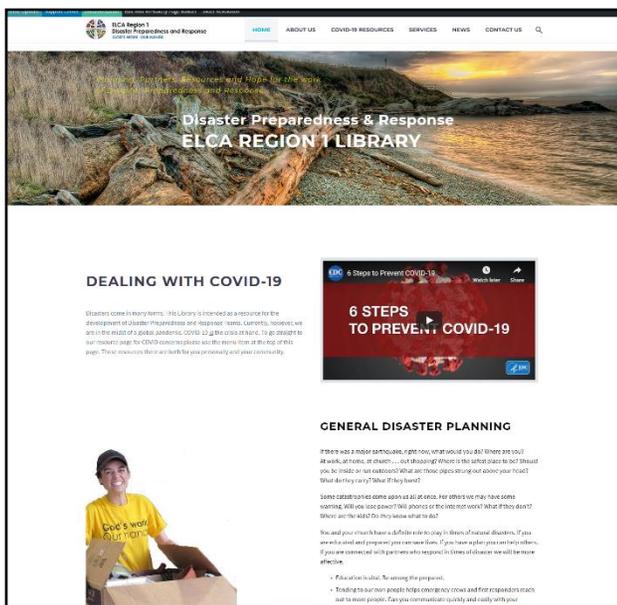
Dance Partners

Synods and Social Service Agencies have been collecting a wide variety of resources to help individuals and congregations navigate the current COVID crisis. Thank you! How do we now continue to support ministries as we move out of our short-term response into a time of ongoing adaptation and uncertainty? I suggest this is the question before us and that we think in terms of “Intermediate Responses.”

As one of Dave Brauer-Rieke's contracted goals with LDR he is creating a [Disaster Preparedness and Response Virtual Library](#). **This is being designed to augment, not replace your synod or agency website!** Unique to this resource will be materials and processes for COVID and Disaster Preparedness *teams*. [Region 1 BePrepared.org](#) goes live May 1, 2020 for communal development.



Part of what we all need is to hear from one another. Seeing faces, hearing stories, finding our experience reflected in the life of somebody halfway around the world, is healing and hopeful. Alaska has asked for just this – *“short, expert or personal, COVID focused, action-oriented, video shorts.”* Let's help create and collect some to support people through this time. Select videos will be at [Region 1 BePrepared.org](#) for your use. Contact Dave Brauer-Rieke at dave@climateimagination.com with questions, ideas, or resources to share. Thank you.



With prayerful concern we have monitored the impacts of COVID-19 on the world around us. Here are the latest impacts of the coronavirus in the states of Region 1. [Infection and death rates are current as of April 28, 2020.](#)

STATE	INFECTIONS APRIL 26	DEATHS APRIL 26	STATE ORDERS
ALASKA	349	7	Alaska – “Stay at home” in effect since March 28. Gov. Mike Dunleavy’s stay-at-home order remains in effect, but retail stores and nonessentials businesses including hair & nail salons, and restaurants (with restrictions) were allowed to begin reopening April 24.
WASHINGTON	14,059	792	Washington – March 23 “Stay at home” continues through at least May 4.
OREGON	2,385	99	Oregon - “Stay at home” in effect since March 23. Gov. Kate Brown’s office is crafting a draft plan to reopen Oregon . Plan to be finalized the week of May 4. Implementation date unknown.
IDAHO	1,810	60	Idaho – Stay at home set to expire April 30. Gov. Brad Little has outlined a tentative plan for reopening that would include 4 stages. The first phase would begin with houses of worship in early May. Reopening would continue with restaurants, gyms & salons later in the month.
MONTANA	451	15	Montana – Stay at home set to expire April 26. With restrictions, houses of worship could meet April 26 and retail stores April 27. Restaurants and bars can re-open May 4. Statewide school closure lifts May 7.

The Dance Begins

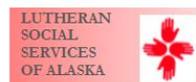
See Bp. Kristen Kuempel’s [“Lifted Shelter Letter”](#) for the NWIM Synod as Idaho churches are allowed to meet.

See Bp. Laurie Jungling’s [“Reopening Guide-lines”](#) for the Montana Synod as Montana churches are allowed to meet.

Rev. Dave Brauer-Rieke

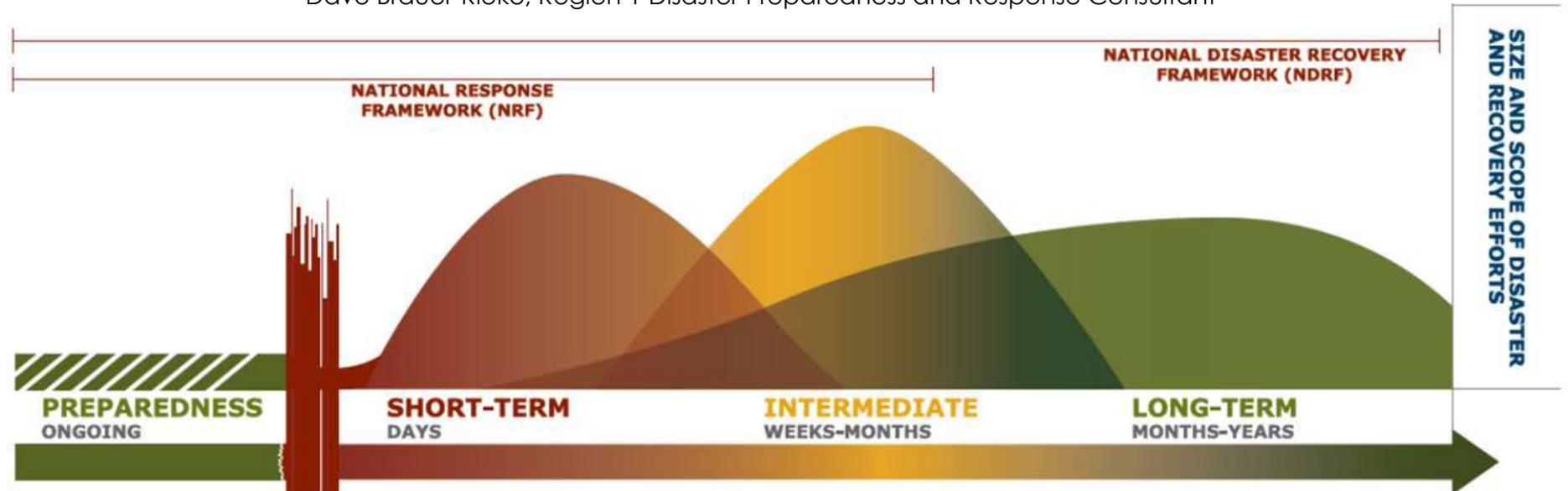
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In Collaboration with:



What might Congregational Recovery from the Coronavirus Crisis Look Like?

Dave Brauer-Rieke, Region 1 Disaster Preparedness and Response Consultant



Preparedness

January-February 2020

Congregations/Synods prepare for health emergencies in various ways - thru Parish Nurse programs, Health Ministries and Disaster Preparedness Teams.

Preparation must be ongoing. The next disaster will come too soon!

- In the early days of COVID-19 hand sanitation, social distancing and compliance with state regulations were discussed.
- “Passing of the Peace” and “Eucharistic Practices” reflected early CDC 3 or 6 foot social distancing and sanitation guidance.

DISASTER

Short-Term Responses

March-Easter Sunday (4/12) 2020

Congregations have adapted and achieved much in 2 months!

- **Congregations scramble to provide digital worship options under “Stay at home” orders.**
- **Church leaders engage in online and phone check-ins to fight social/spiritual isolation.**
- **Church & Synod councils begin to grapple with financial implications. Many apply for federal CARE Act provisions.**
- **Synod bishops and support teams begin regular rostered leader check-ins and support.**
- **Eucharistic fast called for.**
- **Breathe!**

Intermediate Responses

Mid-April-November 2020

(Timeline uncertain as progress of disease & easing of “stay to home” orders are unknown.)

- **Congregation and cluster cooperation intensifies.**
- **Core leadership re-forms around digital availability, benefits and new patterns.**
- **Sacramental/worship practices diversify. SAMs & LPAs step up.**
- **Creativity is unleashed.**
- **Partnerships strengthen.**
- **Re-engagement with core Spiritual foundations becomes key in moving forward.**
- **The Gospel finds a new voice in ongoing uncertainty.**

Long-Term Responses

Advent 2020 and on

(Advent-Christmas may serve as a pivot point for longer term adaptation.)

- **Pre-COVID challenges accelerate for fragile ministries, economies and families.**
- **Leadership reflects loss of elders due to aging, illness and digital dependence.**
- **Digital-centric practices energize new participation/function.**
- **The priesthood of all believers concept in re-engaged.**
- **Younger leaders, deacons, LPAs and SAMs step forward.**
- **Worship & Sacramental practices morph.**

