



BAPTIST GENERAL CONVENTION OF VIRGINIA

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September 6, 2019

Dear BGCVA and VBSC Family,

Peace and Blessings in the name of Jesus Christ our Risen Savior!

President Gregory M. Howard and President Charles Whitfield would like for Baptist General Convention of Virginia (BGCVA) and the Virginia Baptist State Convention, Inc. (VBSC) to partner once again in our response to natural disasters. This single appeal to support our brothers and sisters in the Bahamas and along the southeast coast of America impacted by Dorian is critical. Our targeted interest is the churches, their pastors and members. We seek to raise funds that will enable and empower the religious communities, so that they will continue the great work of community building and faith formation in their beloved, Bahamas and along the southeast coast of America.

But for the grace of GOD, Dorian, Florence, Maria, and Matthew would have had us all standing in the need of prayer and support. Those suffering now are in dire need of our ongoing support. We have witnessed the slow response of our Nation to disasters in Haiti and Puerto Rico. These countries still need and welcome our support. Now, the citizens of Bahamas and America are waiting on us in word and in deed.

Our initial response will include a campaign for financial support from individuals, our churches, and the community at large. These funds will be coordinated with local ministries. We are inviting all of our pastors and churches, moderators and associations, Christians and ministries to join with us in this effort of service. Like our faith, your financial gifts unites us for greater service to those who are impacted by natural disasters. Your contributions will greatly enhance our collective witness.

Second, we will join our other faith partners and social agencies in developing service opportunities in the Bahamas and in America. Right now, the request for financial support to sustain day to day existence is paramount. Because many homes were destroyed, it is impossible for them to receive clothing and household goods at this time. We will work with our business partners to assist us in helping them to rebuild their homes, neighborhoods, communities and country.

Finally, we know that God honors unity and kingdom building. Therefore, we asked that you pray for our brothers and sisters in the Bahamas and in America. Let us work in love and grace in meeting the needs of those impacted by Dorian. Please remember in your prayers those who were harmed by other storms, violence, and accidents. The information listed below will provide for you a few facts for your appeal.

The complete scope of the impact on Grand Bahama or on Abaco Islands is still being evaluated in part of the Bahamas that was also hit by the enormous storm, Dorian.

Thus far twenty-four people have been reported dead across both sets of Bahama islands; it's possible that figure will rise. In America, four people have perished.

In the hardest hit area about 70,000 people live in Grand Bahama and in the Abacos. The UN estimates 61,000 of them will need food assistance.

The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies estimates 13,000 homes may have been severely damaged or destroyed across the Bahamas.

BGCVA Theme:

Reviving Our Roots, Prophetic Preaching & Our Missional Mandate ~ Luke 4:16-21

The AP reports that Grand Bahama's main hospital is "unusable" after being flooded.

While we are partnering in disaster relief service, we will still honor our existing financial accounting practices and systems. You may send your gifts as outlined below base on your affiliation or your preference. All gifts will be used to serve those who are in need because of this current disaster.

Donations to BGCVA's Disaster Relief Fund may be submitted directly online via the BGCVA website, by phone at 804-228-2421, by postal mail or in person at the convention office at 1214 West Graham Road, Suite 1, Richmond, VA 23220.

Donations to VBSC's Disaster Relief Fund may be submitted directly online via the VBSC website, by phone at 276-806-6840, by postal mail or in person at the convention office at 22 East Church Street, Suite 208, Martinsville, VA 24112.

Please include your contact information with your donation so we may send you a receipt and a final report of our combined efforts. We will be looking forward to hearing from you.

May GOD continue to bless you for all you do for the work of CHRIST!

For The Kingdom of Christ, We are,

Dr. Gregory M. Howard, President, Baptist General Convention of Virginia

The Reverend Charles Whitfield, President, Virginia Baptist State Convention, Inc.

Dr. Leo Whitaker, Executive Minister, Baptist General Convention of Virginia