

## Crisis Team Contact Information

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CART Crisis Team  
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North Texas Conference  
United Methodist Church

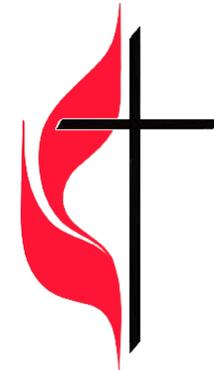
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**CART:**  
Congregational Assessment,  
Response and Transformation

**CRISIS RESPONSE TEAM**

NORTH TEXAS  
CONFERENCE OF THE  
UNITED METHODIST  
CHURCH



## **Purpose**

When a crisis of any kind occurs—loss of life, loss of property from accident or natural disaster, illegal activities, or sexual misconduct by a church leader—the church and congregation are thrown into severe distress that can go on for months. As additional information becomes available regarding the crisis, chaos can also develop. **The Center for Leadership Development of the North Texas Conference of the United Methodist Church** recognizes that long term negative effects can be avoided if the congregation is offered sensitive and competent assistance in getting through the crisis and its aftermath. Indeed, congregations can be assisted in growing spiritually and emerge stronger as they face the event together. To this end, the CART Crisis Team is invited by the Bishop or the District Superintendent to assist the congregation and promote the healing process.

## **What is the Response Team?**

A part of the North Texas Conference, the CART Crisis Team was designed to assist church congregations following an allegation of any kind of misconduct. Support is available for the aggrieved, the alleged offender, and the spouses and families of both. Most important, a congregation experiencing a crisis will be offered a Crisis Team to hold small group meetings to allow members of the congregation to process their feelings

about what has happened, thereby allowing healing to begin and ministry to continue.

## **Who serves on the Crisis Team?**

Each team consists of 5-12 volunteers, among them clergy, mental health professionals, and other qualified lay persons. All members are trained to listen with objective compassion, give support, and provide guidance during a time of crisis and loss. Each Crisis Team has a Response Team coordinator to lead their work with a congregation.

## **What can we expect when the Crisis Team comes?**

Initially, representatives from the Crisis Team will meet with the church's Staff/Parish Relations Committee (or another Team appointed by the Bishop) to explain the purpose of the Crisis Team and how it operates. They can also provide guidance regarding the nature and impact of the misconduct and discuss the dynamics of grief as it relates to the church during this process. If needed, the Crisis Team members can also explain the administrative and judicial process of the United Methodist Church, with its emphasis on presumption of innocence.

At the initial meeting, the Team Leader(s) will provide a listing and explanation of the services available to the church through the Crisis Team during the upheaval and its aftermath. Together, the Response Team and the PPRC (or appointed team

by the Bishop) will develop a plan of action and delegate responsibilities.

A typical plan might include a letter to the congregation explaining current actions and status of the case and inviting them to attend a special large and/or small group meeting. The focus of those meetings will be to state the nature of the allegations, talk about what the church and members may experience, allow participants to express their feelings about what has happened, and talk about what the church can do to remain a supportive and safe place for everyone. An appropriate level of transparency will be observed, protecting both the victim and the accused while also safeguarding the congregation from perceived danger. Through this process, congregations can expect the Response Team to be caring individuals who want to hear their concerns while helping them vent, cry, explore feelings, and devise ways to deal with a crisis while continuing the work of their church.

