

CRISIS COMMUNICATIONS -- VA UMC CONFERENCE July 2018

Hi all—

I want to reiterate that myself as well as our contract crisis communications consultant Paul Steidler are here to be of service to you and the local churches in your districts in matters of crisis situations from natural disasters to matters of concern inside the church.

A situation can be considered a crisis, no matter what is it, when it threatens the integrity or reputation of the organization.

No matter if one of your local churches thinks they have the situation under control, we **need** to be notified when a situation arises.

The sooner we know about the crisis, the more we can do to mitigate it. In times of crisis, time is an asset to us as it allows us to perform research on the situation and create a timeline of expectations and what information to release. When we get notified about a crisis in the 11th hour, it severely limits our abilities to help in the situation, and it leads to the potential of the crisis growing larger and more negative.

My contact information is listed below as well as my work cell phone number, should you need to share something that is happening or just to talk through a situation.

I really need the help of each one of you in sharing this with your local churches, so that they understand the importance of getting ahead of a crisis and notifying not only their district superintendent but me as well.

Attached to this email, I have added an update about our conference Twitter page as well as how to set up Google alerts, which can be helpful in monitoring crisis situations.

Thank you for all you do and for your leadership in our districts and our conference.

Maddie

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more on back page:

Other Important items:

- General note: If you have a Twitter account, please follow the conference page @VAUMC as well as district staff. Share this with local churches as well as reminding them of the conference Facebook page.
- Google alerts: should there be denominational news that you want to track or if you want to see coverage of a specific person or church, you can set up a Google alert to send you an email should a story pop up with set keywords that you have selected. For example, I have “Bishop Sharma Lewis” as a keyword in my alerts and during the ICE raids I was also tracking “Rising Hope Mission Church”.

To set up an alert:

1. Visit: <https://www.google.com/alerts>.
2. At the top of the page, you can enter a topic you want to follow in the search box.
3. To change your settings, click **Show options**. You can change:
 - a. How often you get notifications
 - b. The types of sites you’ll see
 - c. Your language
 - d. The part of the world you want info from
 - e. How many results you want to see
 - f. What accounts get the alert
4. Click **Create Alert**. You’ll get emails whenever we find matching search results.

For more information about Google alerts, visit

<https://support.google.com/websearch/answer/4815696?hl=en>.