



**Tom Hazelwood**

Assistant General Secretary for disaster response in the United States for the United Methodist Committee On Relief (UMCOR), General Board of Global Ministries, The United Methodist Church.

**STAFF BIOGRAPHY**

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To be effective disaster response workers, volunteers must be willing "to go down the roads where no one else goes, where it doesn't seem obvious," says the Rev. Tom Hazelwood. An ordained United Methodist minister and native of Arkansas, Mr. Hazelwood is executive secretary for disaster response in the United States for the United Methodist Committee On Relief (UMCOR). He has directed national disaster response for the agency since 1998.

Mr. Hazelwood's 13 years in Arkansas parishes burnished a commitment to the local church-- an important constituency of UMCOR in the mobilization of volunteers to assist with recovery efforts across the country. While serving as a pastor, Mr. Hazelwood "enjoyed organizing people." The work of a disaster specialist is "an extension of who I am and how I worked in the community," he said.

Educated at Henderson State University in Arkansas and Memphis Theological Seminary, Mr. Hazelwood works with annual conferences and a network of trained volunteers within The United Methodist Church to bring assistance to persons who are left devastated by US disasters. His goal is to help his constituencies know how to seek out and help the most vulnerable in their communities. He works closely with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), the American Red Cross and Church World Service, as well as other faith-based or voluntary organizations, to coordinate resources to those who are most in need after disaster.