

Web-based resource provides prayers, information about gulf oil spill

*United Methodist General Board of Church & Society page
presents faithful response to tragedy, discussion and worship materials.*

WASHINGTON, D.C. — The United Methodist General Board of Church & Society (GBCS) has developed a Web-based resource that addresses the “slow-motion tragedy” of the oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico. “Gulf Coast Resources for Prayer and Action” is available at www.umc-gbcs.org/gulfcoast.

The resource offers diverse information intended to help you understand the tragedy that took 11 lives and is threatening shorelines and marine life, possibly as far away as the east coast of the United States.

Nearly half of all U.S. coastal wetlands — over 5 million acres — are located along the shores of the Gulf of Mexico. The oil and gas exploration industry employs 55,000 workers in the gulf. The consequences of the oil spill reach beyond that industry, however, to encompass fishing and recreational industries, not to mention adverse affects on wildlife and marine biology.

The page offers links to United Methodist positions on “Energy Policy” and “Environmental Justice for a Sustainable Future,” both from the 2008 *Book of Resolutions*.

There is also a link to the United Methodist Council of Bishop’s foundation document, *God’s Renewed Creation* (www.hopeandaction.org), which identified environmental degradation as a threat to the Earth that must be addressed.

Besides facts about the Gulf of Mexico and oil exploration, the website offers prayers for worship and resources appropriate for small group studies.

Links on the page go to sources, such as the Environmental Protection Agency, that are reporting on the oil spill clean-up effort. There is also a link to “Communities on the Horizon” <http://communitiesonthehorizon.org/>, a website developed specifically as a resource center for communities affected by the Deepwater Horizon drilling disaster. The website will be updated with additional voices from affected communities and action opportunities as the tragedy unfolds.