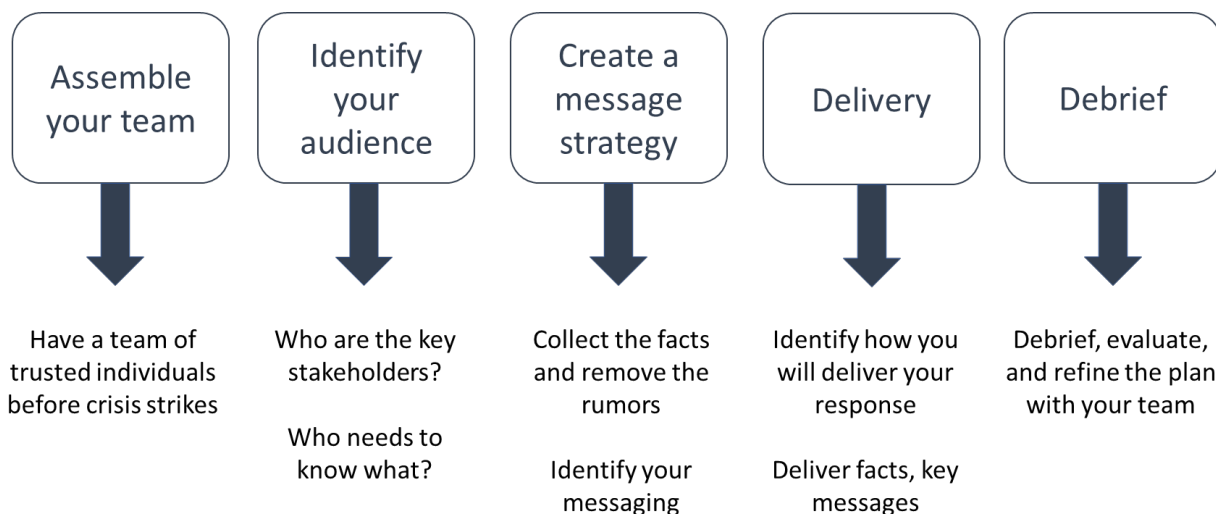


**Crisis Communication**  
NW Washington Synod / ELCA  
*Approved by Synod Council 3/21/2026*

**Initial Questions When a Crisis Emerges**

- Who is impacted by the situation?
- What is the worst-case scenario? Can we handle that?
- Do we need to call a lawyer?
- Do we need to reach out to the churchwide organization?
- Who on our team needs to be part of discussions/planning and execution?

**Crisis Communication Plan**



**Recommendations**

- Identify one spokesperson. Provide a clear, consistent voice. Bishop, Synod Vice President or other appointed spokesperson.
- Avoid rumors and nonstrategic remarks and actions.
- Offense not defense, whenever possible.

**Crisis Team Members may include:**

- Synod bishop or key synod office leader/s
- Synod Vice President or appointed council member
- Lawyer if/when needed

**Resources**

Be prepared for crises and potential outcomes. Helpful resources as you consider how community might be impacted by possible crisis circumstances available:

- DHS' Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency's [Protecting Houses of Worship resource page](#).
- [FEMA's Guide for Developing High-Quality Emergency Operations Plans for Houses of Worship](#)
- [LDR's Congregational Disaster Preparedness Guidebook](#)
- [Mitigating Attacks on Houses of Worship Security Guide - Spanish Translation | CISA](#) The [ELCA Risk Management](#) webpage

