

## **Leadership in Time of Crisis (9/12)**

**Presenter: Bob Vandepol, MSW**

When tragedy strikes a community – whether at the level of nation, municipality, neighborhood, organization, church, workgroup, or family - all stakeholders immediately look to its leadership for direction. How leaders respond during the first hours of a crisis offers both tremendous opportunity and serious risk for the subsequent outcomes. That positive or negative response will echo throughout the organization's strata, as others take their cue from the charted direction. In retrospect, leaders often pinpoint a tragedy (violence, catastrophic accident, natural disaster, act of terrorism) as pivotal to the ongoing “self-concept” and productivity of their organization. Some identify how the incident launched a new sense of loyalty, community, and commitment to excellence. Others bemoan the event as triggering a collective negative image, increased conflict, and distrust of leadership. Whereas effective leadership manages these risks by addressing the psychological undercurrent beneath them, not all leaders have the training or expertise to do so. Christian mental health professionals and church leaders are uniquely qualified to deliver Christ’s wisdom and healing in these situations. It is important work and we must do it well.

### **Learning Objectives:**

**This workshop will help participants learn:**

- How tragedy impacts people and organizations
- A phase-sensitive approach to the “human element” in recovery from crises
- A recommended process for crisis communication that facilitates resiliency
- Specific psychological first aid skills to lead recovery for themselves, families, churches, businesses, and communities.

### **Format:**

The workshop will combine didactic and multi-media presentation, skill-building exercises, and facilitated problem-solving discussion.

Bob VandePol, MSW serves as President of Crisis Care Network, the nation’s largest provider of Critical Incident Response Services to the workplace.