



# FAITH IN *action*

A NEWSLETTER ESPECIALLY FOR LWR QUILTERS & KIT MAKERS

## QUILTS AND KITS RAMP UP REFUGEE CRISIS RESPONSE

*By Nate King, LWR's Program Assistant for Constituent Engagement*

**IN PAST ISSUES, WE HAVE SHARED STORIES ABOUT LWR'S WORK IN ASSISTING SYRIANS SUFFERING FROM VIOLENCE AND DISCORD IN THEIR HOMELAND.**

We've told you about the gift of School Kits for children in classrooms in Damascus, Syria. We've shared about the impact of Quilts and Kits for children and families in refugee camps in Lebanon and Jordan. Now, as many refugees have fled into Europe, we're excited to tell you that your Quilts and Kits are reaching Serbia.

For families finally arriving in Europe, their arrival means the end of a months-long journey with very few personal belongings. Your gifts of Quilts, Personal Care Kits, School Kits and Baby Care Kits are making their way into the hands of Syrian refugee families in Serbia. The need is incredible. Over the first seven months of 2015, the number of migrants and refugees applying for asylum in Serbia was nearly 250 percent ▶

*"LWR Kits provide refugees with items that are greatly needed but are unable to be purchased due to their cost."*

CARRIE TANEYHILL



Sawsan (right) and Beesan (left), ages 5 and 7, pause from playing at an LWR Quilt and Kit distribution in Jordan. The girls are cousins from Dara'a, a city in southwestern Syria. Beesan and her family have been in Jordan for nearly two years. During the fighting, Beesan was injured in the violence. As soon as she was hurt, her family left Syria and rode in a mobile health clinic across the border to Jordan so that Beesan could be treated for the injuries to her leg. Today, Beesan is doing much better. She is attending kindergarten and likes to spend time playing with her cousin Sawsan. (Loren Hyatt for LWR)



Lutheran World Relief is a ministry of U.S. Lutherans, serving communities living in poverty overseas.



Loren Hyatt for LWR

Youth group volunteers from the Orthodox Church of Hanina in Jordan pause from unloading a truck full of LWR Quilts and Kits for Syrian refugees in their community. Razan (center) said "this was my first time to see all of the people who need assistance from my community." When asked if she would volunteer to help again, she replied "Of course! I would come again and help. While it can be difficult, I am glad to come and help."

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greater than the number of people seeking asylum over the same period in 2014. About 15 percent of these refugees and migrants are preschool and school-age children. For a child arriving in a refugee camp, an LWR School Kit can mean the opportunity to attend school for the first time in many months.

LWR's Carrie Taneyhill manages the process for sending shipments of Mission Quilts and Kits overseas, and she emphasizes the importance of these materials in the response to the crisis.

"Since winter is coming, these Quilts will provide much needed warmth to refugees who have arrived with no possessions," says Carrie Taneyhill. "LWR Kits provide refugees with items that are greatly needed but are unable to be purchased due to their cost."

Since October 2012, LWR has shipped **more than \$7 million in Quilts and Kits** to Syrian refugees. Your dedication and time make these efforts possible, as you graciously craft and assemble gift after gift for a person you will never meet. ■

## INTRODUCING:



For more than 70 years, the warmth of Quilts and the contents of Kits have brought together Lutherans and their friends to help people around the world. These acts of service have the power to bring people together for fellowship and community.

LWR is excited to announce a new focus on Kits, as we seek to invite more and more of our neighbors and friends into this ministry. Through Project Promise: Build Kits of Care we'll invite even more people into this ministry of service to others.

We need YOU to spread the word about the opportunity to make Kits through Project Promise. Within LWR's Quilt & Kit Ministry, nothing is changing. We are simply lifting up the opportunity to make Kits through LWR in a fresh way to invite new people into the family of kit-makers. As you seek to introduce more people in your communities into this ministry, we hope you'll find that these new tools give you what you need to help your groups thrive!

These Kits mean so much to people who have lost everything in a disaster, or who have left everything they know to escape violence. Through Project Promise, we can reach many more people here in the United States to serve their neighbors and, in turn, impact more lives disrupted by poverty and disasters.



Brenda Kimaro for LWR

## READY TO SPREAD THE WORD ABOUT PROJECT PROMISE?

Visit [buildkitsofcare.org](http://buildkitsofcare.org)  
or call **800.597.5972** today to get  
information and resources to share  
with people in your community!



# A QUILTING MILESTONE IN NORTHWEST MICHIGAN

*By Nate King, LWR's Program Assistant for Constituent Engagement*

The quilters from Bethlehem Lutheran Church in Traverse City, Mich., quilted and donated their **12,000th Quilt** this October — a milestone in the journey of needlework the group has been dedicated to for nearly 40 years.

The meticulous records of quilter Jane Witkop have tracked the group's annual contributions to LWR and to other local organizations responding to emergencies. The quilters of Bethlehem recognize the importance of their contributions to their neighbors who live with so little.

The volunteers at Bethlehem give with a heart of impartiality. "There's no prequalification to get our help," said Tom Rockne, president of the church council. "It has nothing to do with administering them to other Lutherans or even Christians for that matter.

If there is a need, we're going to help to fill it."

A note in the church's October newsletter, *The Bethlehem Star*, reflects on the purpose of their ministry of quilting and this milestone. "What a reflection of our current Stewardship learning ... Claimed, Gathered, and Sent—and We are Church, We are Lutheran, We are Church Together ... for the sake of the world. Those around the world have specifically and emphatically felt the love of Bethlehem. Thanks to all who participate in this wonderful ministry."

On behalf of Lutheran World Relief, we send our deep gratitude to the quilters of Bethlehem Lutheran for their incredible contributions to the work of accompaniment and justice around the world. ■



LEFT: Tom Rockne, president of the church council, helps to stack boxes of quilts for Bethlehem Lutheran Church's latest shipment to Lutheran World Relief. CENTER: The group's leader, Sandra Osgood, shows off a closet filled with donated quilting supplies at Bethlehem Lutheran Church. RIGHT: Fay Miller inserts pushpin needles into a layer of fabric at Bethlehem Lutheran Church. (Traverse City Record-Eagle/Kyle Kaminski)



# HOW PERSONAL CARE KITS SPARK CREATIVITY IN PALESTINIAN YOUTH

Photo provided by ANERA

Halima Khalil Al Hajj Moussa, a 17-year-old Palestinian refugee living in Ein El Hilweh refugee camp in Lebanon, proudly displays her handiwork after embroidering a towel from an LWR Personal Care Kit.

*By Nate King, LWR's Program Assistant for Constituent Engagement*

Halima Khalil Al Hajj Moussa (pictured above) is a 17-year-old Palestinian refugee, living in Ein El Hilweh refugee camp in Lebanon. As a result of violence in Palestine, Halima is one of many young refugee girls displaced by instability in her homeland.

Throughout Lebanon, refugees have settled in a variety of housing types, ranging from rented apartments to informal settlements to refugee camps like Ein El Hilweh. Living sometimes 20 or more people to a room in dark, cramped spaces without heat or air conditioning, the refugees worry most about paying rent and providing meals for their families.

Through the generosity of quilters and kit-makers, LWR was able to partner with American Near East Refugee Aid (ANERA) to distribute Personal Care Kits to refugees living in Lebanon.

The contents of the Kits allowed many girls to have a few items of their own in the midst of difficult circumstances. “During ... hygiene promotion sessions at our center, we noticed that many young girls don’t have access to personal hygiene items and share towels with their family members,” said Almaza Al Chaaraoui, head of Women’s Program Center in Ein El Hilweh camp.

But beyond receiving these hygiene items, girls were able to use towels from the Personal Care Kits in embroidery training sessions to express their creativity. “We came up with the idea of embroidering the towels [in the Personal Care Kits] so the girls could personalize their towels and learn a new skill at the same time,” said Almaza.

Your gifts of Personal Care Kits not only provided needed hygiene supplies to refugees, but allowed these girls a chance to see the beauty that can be created by their own hands.

Sixteen-year-old Hiba couldn’t believe how lovely the decorated towels turned out, as she held her Personal Care Kit in one hand and needles and pins in the other. “Embroidery is part of our heritage and I believe we have a duty to preserve it,” she smiled with pride. “Having a personal towel with a Palestinian pattern is a constant reminder of who I am and where I come from.”

With the same care that you pack Personal Care Kits, these young women learned to stitch beautiful designs with care into their newly received towels. Thank you to all of the congregations who work so hard to extend these gifts of love to people like Hiba and Halima! ■



# FROM DAY ONE: GROWING IN FAITH (AND QUILTING) IN THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST

*By Nate King, LWR's Program Assistant for Constituent Engagement*

To plant a church is one thing. Starting a quilting ministry is another thing. But growing a mission church, along with a quilting ministry? That is quite a thing—something that Edna Schenk and the women of Lutheran Church of the Redeemer in Chimacum, Wash., can tell you about.

Edna moved to Washington from Canada in 1978. She met and married her husband Glen during that same year. Glen was a civil service employee at the naval base on Vancouver Island. The newlyweds “settled in and began to look for a church.” The Schenks helped to plant a church in Chimacum, which came to be known as Lutheran Church of the Redeemer. Beginning with the first Sunday in Advent in 1985, worship services were held in the Chimacum High School commons. “We made collapsible furnishings so we could store [them] from Sunday to Sunday. For nine years, we set up [and] tore down,” said Schenk.

During this time, the women’s group at the church became increasingly active in mission work—almost as soon as the church was established, a quilting group formed. “The very first quilt was sewn in January 1985,” said Schenk. Without a permanent space, the group, Lutheran Women in Mission (LWM), held meetings and did all of their quilting in members’ homes until new plans began to form.

After nine years filled with worship services, baptisms and even the ordination of a new pastor in the Chimacum High commons, Schenk says “it became evident that we needed to have our own place.” The quilting group was vocal in discussions about the

plans for the new church space, insisting on a large basement space for quilting. A new church building was eventually completed – and sure enough, a dedicated space for quilting was included.



*Photo courtesy of Edna Schenk*

Last September, Lutheran Church of the Redeemer celebrated 30 years of ministry, with an active quilting ministry during the church’s entire history. A snapshot of LWM’s work over from 1985 to 2014 is impressive. In 30 years, the congregation has assembled and lovingly donated:

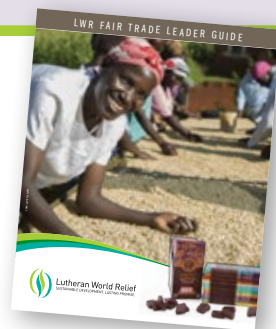
- **707 Fabric Kits**
- **3,879 Baby Care Kits**
- **6,906 School Kits**
- **6,774 Quilts**

On behalf of Lutheran World Relief, we send our heartfelt thanks to the quilters of LWM in Chimacum for their dedication in working to end poverty, injustice and human suffering around the world! ■

## PLANNING A FAIR TRADE SALE? LET US HELP!

The LWR Fair Trade Leader Guide features step-by-step instructions on how to plan and carry out a Fair Trade sale. It also features the stories of the people whose lives you’ll improve by purchasing LWR Fair Trade.

**Visit [lwr.org/fairtrade](http://lwr.org/fairtrade) to get your copy today!**



# ORGANIZED & EMPOWERED

## CONGREGATION'S FOCUS ON ORGANIZATION MAKES BASKETS OF PROMISE CAMPAIGN A SUCCESS

By Nikki Massie, LWR's Staff Writer

For Mount Zion Lutheran Church, in York, Pennsylvania, organization was the key to success for their very first Baskets of Promise Lenten campaign, in 2014.

"We've done lots of collections before and we have a pretty solid system," says Megan McClinton, Mount Zion's Minister of Music & Education.

The campaign was a joint effort between the congregation's outreach and education committees and involved servants of all ages.

To promote the campaign, the congregation put announcements in the church bulletin, and they also set up a display to both raise awareness and help keep the project organized.

"We put up a poster board on an easel and on it we had little cards for each item we needed to make our kits. Folks took cards for whatever items they wanted to donate and then brought those items back," says Megan.

When it came time for assembly, it was all hands on deck! The assembly was held during Sunday School hour, with teens and adults forming an assembly line to make Kits and the little ones transporting completed Kits to a table nearby. Megan says everyone really got into it, "The kids loved it; the adults loved it. It was a really fun activity to do," says Megan.

The congregation set a goal to make 50 Personal Care Kits, but ended up making close to 100. By using the card system, they were able to control the inventory of Kit items, making sure they didn't end up with too much of one thing and not enough of another.



Mount Zion Lutheran Church took part in LWR's Baskets of Promise Lenten Campaign and made Personal Care Kits. Here, Micah holds a completed kit.

In fact, Megan highly recommends this system to other congregations doing Baskets of Promise for the first time. For her congregation, it was a system they already knew, so people knew just what to do when they saw the cards

But most of all, Megan says, Baskets of Promise was a good activity to connect faith and works within her congregation during Lent. "Our congregation is made up of very generous people. We love to help and to give, whether it's local or global. It's part of our faith and part of who we are as a congregation." ■

### Important Contact Information

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#### QUILT & KIT MINISTRY GUIDELINES:

[lwr.org/kits](http://lwr.org/kits)

#### LWR BROCHURES AND VIDEOS:

800.597.5972  
[lwr.org/resources](http://lwr.org/resources)

#### LWR WAREHOUSES:

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#### Lutheran World Relief Warehouse

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