Welcome

Thank you for choosing to be a part of Lutheran World Relief’s Mission Quilt Ministry, and for the work your group will be doing to assemble these gifts of warmth and comfort. Education is a key component in service. The purpose of this leader guide is to help your group learn about life in other parts of the world, to become aware of the needs of our brothers and sisters in different countries and discover how we can reach out in love to serve those in need. Together, you will explore themes of service, justice, mercy and accompaniment.

The activities in this guide are designed for middle school age and above. However, you may discover that some elements will work for younger groups and for intergenerational groups. Like with all curricula, you should make modifications that will work best for your context. When processing each activity with your group, consider ways you would expand on the questions or share your own reflection. This may help participants engage more fully in the conversation.

Before engaging in the activities in this leader guide, find and set up in advance a space to assemble the Mission Quilts. You can do this in any way that works best with the size of your group, and the number of Quilts you are planning to assemble. See notes on page 4 for suggestions about how to organize your quilting area.

Choosing your project and setting a goal

How many Mission Quilts should you plan to assemble? This will largely depend on the size of your group and how you decide to approach the project. If possible, ask for support and guidance from experienced quilters in your congregation or community who are comfortable sewing and may help guide participants through all the steps. Experienced LWR quilters will be a great asset to help you plan and set up your event, too. If you don’t have quilters in your congregation, reach out to other Lutheran churches in your area and invite their quilters and other members to join your group for part of your quilting day.

HERE ARE SOME SUGGESTIONS TO HELP YOU SET A GOAL FOR YOUR GROUP.

SMALL SCALE
Use fabric markers to decorate pre-cut fabric squares and pass them to your congregation’s quilting group for them to add to their Quilts. Be sure to check LWR’s guidelines on page 2 for the kinds of decorations that can be included on LWR Mission Quilts. This activity can be easily scaled to fit the time frame and number of people in your group.

MEDIUM SCALE
Using templates and LWR guidelines, cut, arrange and pin squares into rows for Quilt tops. Then, pass the fabric rows on to your congregation’s quilters for them to complete the tops and turn them into Quilts. Assign about four group members to each Quilt top. One top will take 45 – 60 minutes to prepare, depending on the size of your group.

LARGE SCALE
Coordinate with your congregation’s quilters to complete one or more Quilts from scratch. Follow the instructions on page 4. Divide the group by task (cutting squares, designing tops, sewing, tying the layers together), or estimate four group members per completed Quilt. Depending on the size of your group, allow about 2 ½ hours from start to finish to complete one Quilt.

What other goals have you set? Email us at lwr@lwr.org to share your goal and pictures from your quilting day!
Mission Quilt Assembly

Your careful adherence to the instructions in this guide will ensure that all LWR Mission Quilts are:

USEFUL: LWR works closely with our overseas partners to determine the best components of Mission Quilts: sturdy, warm and a common size of 60” x 80”. Your Quilts will do the most good possible when the guidelines on this page are carefully followed.

CONSISTENT: Consistency of Mission Quilt makeup helps our partners plan properly for distributing a shipment, and keeps international shipping processes cost-effective and efficient. Disparity in Quilt sizes or weights can cause costly delays.

FAIR: When all Mission Quilts fall within the guidelines, recipients are treated equally and fairly, which is especially important for those who have already experienced a great deal of injustice or tragedy.

FOR ALL MISSION QUILTS, PLEASE FOLLOW THESE GUIDELINES:

Please use high quality new or like new materials only. Sending top quality items shows the greatest care and respect for the dignity of the recipient. Quality items also withstand the harsh conditions that many people who receive these Quilts are facing.

Please do not add items or decorate items with any religious symbols or messages, or with your congregation’s name. LWR provides Mission Quilts based on need, regardless of religious creed. Religious references may be misinterpreted by the governments of the receiving countries, jeopardizing the delivery to the people who need the items most.

Please do not add items or decorate items with a U.S. flag, patriotic or military symbols, or references to the armed forces, including camouflage. LWR and our overseas partners have access to areas of the world others do not because we are impartial humanitarian organizations. If our intentions are misinterpreted as being politically motivated, our work, our partners and the people we assist could be endangered.

EACH MISSION QUILT SHOULD MEET THE FOLLOWING STANDARDS:

- **Sturdy:** Appropriate fabrics include cotton, cotton blends, twill, corduroy, polyester knits, fleece, upholstery and drapery fabrics (unlined and no fiberglass). Please ensure that there are no stains or holes before using in a Quilt. The three layers (top, warm filler and back) should be secured together with ties.
- **Warm:** Whether filled with batting, fleece or a used blanket, warmth matters. Even in climates we consider tropical, temperatures can drop considerably at night or during the rainy season. Vulnerable people such as children, the elderly or those who are ill are especially in need of warm bedding.
- **60” x 80”:** A consistent size helps us calculate how many Quilts are needed to serve different size families.

You will need the following supplies:

- Large pieces of fabric for backs (twin size flat sheets work well for this), cut to 64” x 84”
- Warm filler (batting, fleece, used blankets), cut to 60” x 80”
- Fabric for tops, either large pieces to use whole or pieces to cut into squares and sew together in a pattern. Twelve 21” squares or forty-eight 11” squares sewn together using a ½” seam allowance make a 60” x 80” top. If you decide to cut squares, you can make templates out of sturdy cardboard in 21” or 11” sizes to make it easy to mark and cut out the right size. **Note: We don’t recommend using squares much smaller than 11”, as they take longer to assemble and make a less sturdy top.**
- Crochet cord for tying in multiple colors
- Fabric scissors (several pairs)
- Pins
- Sticky notes and pens
- Flexible tape measure
- Needles with a large eye
- Sewing machine (one or more) and a confident operator
- Spools of thread (cotton-poly blend is good and strong)
- Fabric markers (if decorating squares)
- Masking tape
Packing Your Mission Quilts

• Pack completed Quilts in boxes. Label “Quilts” in LARGE, BLOCK LETTERS on the outside of each box, or attach a tracking label.

• Use strong cartons secured with packing tape, not to exceed 40 pounds.

• Do not use plastic or paper bags to pack donations.

Shipping Or Delivering Your Mission Quilts

Include the name and address of your congregation on each box, and label contents clearly.

• Deliver your boxes to an LWR Ingathering near you. Visit ingathering.lwr.org to find out if and when a truck might be coming to your neck of the woods to collect Quilts and Kits.

• You can also deliver or ship your boxes prepaid to one of LWR’s warehouses:

  Lutheran World Relief
  601 Main Street
  P0 Box 188
  New Windsor, MD 21776
  410.635.8795

  Lutheran World Relief
  398 East Richmond Street
  South St. Paul, MN 55075
  651.457.9009

Tracking your Mission Quilts

Want to know where in the world your Quilts go?
With LWR’s Quilt & Kit Tracker, you can find out! Follow the journey of your gifts of love as they make their way around the world.

1 LOG ON to the LWR Quilt & Kit Tracker and find your congregation.

2 PRINT out a special barcode to put on your boxes of Quilts & Kits.

3 TRACK your Quilts online as they travel overseas to people in need!

Visit lwr.org/tracker for printable instructions and a Quilt & Kit Tracker video tutorial!
Suggestions For Making Your Quilting Day Run Smoothly

• Begin your planning as early as you can!

• If possible, work with the quilting group in your congregation. They can provide guidance and expertise, and hopefully donate some time and enthusiasm by being present at the event to support the project. Check with other congregations in your area to see if they have quilting groups who may be interested in helping you. You can also join our LWR Quilters’ Facebook page (facebook.com/groups/lwrquilters) where you can ask questions and seek support and ideas from quilters across the country.

• Choose a location for the quilting activity that has plenty of space to spread out. If your group is planning to lay out tops and tie, make sure you have tables available that will allow enough space to lay the top out flat. Some quilting groups may have risers for the tables to make it easier on your backs as you work.

• Set up the assembly area before your event begins.

• On the day of the event, set up stations for various jobs, including:
  • Cutting Quilt squares
  • Decorating squares and/or designing Quilt tops
  • Pinning and tying Quilt layers
  • Sewing (those who bring sewing machines can offer demonstrations and hands-on lessons for those who want to learn how to sew)

• Plan on at least one quilter or adult leader per station to help guide each stage of the process.

• Estimate four group members working at each station at one time. If your group is large, set up multiple stations for cutting, designing and tying.

• Download a set of signs with specific instructions for each station. You can find the signs at lwr.org/resources.

We would love to share stories and pictures of your group assembling LWR Mission Quilts. Send your information to lwr@lwr.org.

Getting Your Mission Quilts Delivered To Someone In Need

It costs LWR approximately $2.25 to send one Mission Quilt around the world to a person in need. By covering these costs, you strengthen your support of LWR in sending out over 400,000 Quilts each year — over 451,000 just in 2013! Encourage members to sponsor your Quilts at $2.25 each as a great way to get the rest of your congregation involved in your group’s work to assemble Quilts.

To send your congregation’s gifts for LWR’s Quilt & Kit Shipping Fund, log on to lwr.org/donate/shippingfund, call 800.597.5972 or mail a check to:

  Lutheran World Relief
  Quilt & Kit Shipping Fund
  PO Box 17061
  Baltimore, MD 21298-9832

  Specify Quilt & Kit Shipping Fund when making your gift.
It is important that your time together is more than merely assembling Quilts. There will be opportunities for discussion, Bible study, prayer, personal reflection and even a few fun games. May these activities be a blessing to your group, as you are a blessing to the people who will receive these Mission Quilts!

**This or That?**

**TIME:** 5-15 minutes

**PURPOSE:** To get to know one another and start to ask questions about the lives and needs of those who receive LWR Mission Quilts.

**MATERIALS**

Open space where the group can move freely. As an alternative version of the game, you can set up a line on the ground that provides a spectrum on which to answer the question.

LWR Mission Quilts deliver warmth and comfort to people around the world who have experienced a natural disaster or are living daily with the effects of extreme poverty. The need for warmth and comfort is one that everyone around the world can understand even if they’ve never lived through a typhoon or drought. Kick off your group’s time together by having them get to know a little bit more about one another, their likes and dislikes, and a little about the warmth and comfort they are going to be delivering to those in need around the world.

Gather your group in an area where people can freely move from one side of the room to the other. You will be offering a series of options to the group, such as “hot or cold?” and each person will signify their preference by moving to one side of the room or the other. After you ask each question have the group look around and see where everyone else is standing. Take time to ask a few people why they chose one option over the other. When you ask them to share also ask them to share their name, in case your group doesn’t all know each other. Some participants might have a hard time making up their minds and choose the middle of the room, which is okay and makes for more interesting discussion.

Below are a list of options you can use. As you ask the questions, point to the side of the room that those choosing that option should move towards. Feel free to make up your own, especially if there are any that might be specific to your group like local sports rivalries or vacation spots.

Do you prefer **hot weather** or **cold weather**?

Do you prefer snacks that are **sweet** or **salty**?

Would you rather **read the same book or listen to the same song** the rest of your life?

Would you be more excited to travel back in time to the **Old Testament** or the **New Testament**?

Would you rather be at the **beach** or the **mountains**?

Would you rather go to a **baseball game** (or another sport) or a **movie**?

Do you prefer to **give** or **receive** a gift?

Would you be more afraid to live through an **earthquake** or a **hurricane**?

If you had to choose one, would you rather be **hungry** or **thirsty**?

Which would you **rather** be; **too hot** or **too cold**?

Would you rather be the world’s greatest **doctor** or world’s greatest **athlete** at your favorite sport?

Would you rather have enough money to either give away **$100 every day** or know your family is secure for **three generations**?

For people who have just experienced a natural disaster, like a typhoon or hurricane, do you think it’s more important to first provide them **food and water or shelter and comfort** (like a Quilt)?

If you were a parent with several children but had only one Quilt for your family to sleep under at night, would you **sleep in the cold and let all your children sleep under the Quilt** or **attempt to share the Quilt with them** so you could get a good night sleep and be a better parent in the morning?

Process the activity using the following questions.

- What differences about our group did you discover? What did you learn about one another?
- What was the most difficult decision for you to make? Why was it difficult?
- Are options in our lives always this black and white (choose this option or that option)?
- How might you think about these questions differently if you lived in a part of the world impacted by extreme poverty, hunger or natural disaster?
- As followers of Jesus, how can we help others who have to make difficult decisions in their lives?
Activities

What’s it For?

TIME: 15 – 25 minutes

PURPOSE: To explore the need for and uses of LWR Mission Quilts around the world by role playing as Quilt recipients and working together as a team.

MATERIALS

One sturdy blanket or finished LWR Mission Quilt for every five participants.

Start the activity by breaking into smaller groups of no more than five members each. If you are working with a smaller group, adjust this size based on the size of your group. Have each group gather around their assigned blanket or Quilt. Introduce what your group will be doing today and how LWR Mission Quilts are used around the world.

Today we will be working on LWR Mission Quilts. How many of you have made a quilt before? (Wait for responses) What do we typically use quilts for? (Wait for answers) Folks like us share LWR Mission Quilts with people in need around the world and provide that same warmth and comfort that you just described. But LWR Mission Quilts also provide so much more. Here are some other ways people have benefited from LWR Quilts.

As you share the following uses for the group ask them why someone who has been affected by poverty, or a natural disaster, or has had to leave their home because of war might need to be creative with how they use their Quilt.

• a market display, spread on the ground and piled with vegetables, and as a sack for transporting those goods to market; (The ability to market and sell a family’s crops can increase their food security, or their ability to access food beyond just what they can grow on their own.)

• a sunshade and a shawl (many of the places where LWR Quilts go can be very cold at night and very warm during the day. Quilts are a gift that address both of these needs.)

• a constant reminder that someone, far away, cares a lot (all children of God deserve the human dignity of knowing that someone cares deeply for them. A handmade Quilt is a wonderful witness to that.)

Now that we’ve learned a little more about how LWR Quilts can be used, we are going to try our best to put ourselves in the position of a Quilt recipient and put our own LWR Mission Quilts to the best use that we can.

You and the small group around you are away on an overnight camping trip. (Add your own context to this by referring to a specific location close by or that your group would be familiar with.) You travelled together to your camp site in one van while your supplies and personal belongings travelled in another van. Unfortunately your supply van ran out of gas 50 miles away from your camp site and won’t be reaching you until the next day. Even the van that dropped you off had to leave for the evening, and it’s going to be pretty cold tonight. All your group has is this Quilt in front of you that happened to be on your van. As a group think of the most creative, resourceful and even funny way that you could use this Quilt to keep your group safe and sound for the night. We will come back together in 10 minutes to share our ideas and we will decide as a group whose idea wins.

As the group leader you can decide on your own what other ground rules you want to give for this activity. Determine if you’d like to present prizes like “Most Creative”, “Funniest Use for a Quilt”, or “Least Likely Idea to Keep You Safe.” After 10 minutes have the groups return together and pitch their ideas to each other.

After the group is done presenting their ideas wrap up this activity by focusing on the Quilts as a gift.

In our scenario, the Quilt we had was with us just by chance. But these LWR Mission Quilts are created and given by someone who cares. Not only that, but those who make them give them away to someone they don’t even know and probably will never meet. As a small group, gather around your Quilt and take turns sharing one gift you have received that made a positive difference in your life. Was it a gift from someone you know? Was it an expected gift or a complete surprise? Was it a gift that someone made themselves? What difference do gifts make in our lives?

After each group has shared bring the whole group back together and ask if anything came up in their groups they’d like to share with everyone. You will return to this theme of gifts later in the Bible study.
LWR Trivia Game

TIME: 30-45 minutes

PURPOSE: To learn about the mission and ministry of Lutherans around the world through a fun game

MATERIALS: A digital copy of the LWR Trivia PowerPoint and set of questions (available at lwr.org/resources) and a method of scorekeeping (i.e. whiteboard/markers, large paper/markers), a pen or pencil and paper for each team.

HOW TO PLAY: Divide players into 2 teams. For larger groups, 3 teams is an option, but some rules may need adjustment as the youth leader sees fit. The following rules apply for 2-team play.

Determine which team will begin. The first team will choose a category and then a point value, and the leader will click that space on the PowerPoint.

Both teams have the opportunity to answer the question via a few options:

• Option A: Teams share a bell or buzzer and a youth leader will determine which team buzzes in first to answer.

• Option B: One spokesperson on each team will be the official “hand-raiser” and a leader will determine whose hand is raised first.

• Option C: Each team alternates answering questions. If the team who chooses the category and answers the question gives the wrong answer, the other team has the opportunity to answer and get the points.

The question will appear onscreen. A time limit to answer is optional.

Scoring the Game: In order to keep score, a selected person should make scores visible to all players either on a large piece of paper, a whiteboard, a chalkboard, etc. When a team answers a question correctly, the point value assigned to the question is added to their score. If the question is answered incorrectly, the point value assigned to the question is subtracted from their score.

Double Difference Maker: There are 2 Double Difference Maker questions hidden in the game. Only the player (or team) who selects the question may answer. The team must place a wager of points (the team may wager up to 200 points more or less than what they have). After the wager is placed and said aloud, the leader may click the link to the question. After the team answers, follow the link to the answer slide. Add or subtract points accordingly.

Final Challenge: Once all questions in the table have been answered, click the Final Challenge link on the bottom of the question choice slide. Players will be prompted to decide the point value they wish to wager for the final question. Record point values prior to beginning the question. Click the next link for an instructions about the final question, then click the link to proceed. The question slide is timed to automatically change after 2 minutes, so no clicking is required once the question is visible. When the slide changes automatically, instruct players to stop conversation and writing. Instruct players to publically reveal their answers, then click to the answer, where all possibilities are visible. The game is now finished; award prizes if desired.

A Short Guide to the Question Categories: Leaders may choose whether or not to give a short explanation of the categories before game play begins.

• In the Beginning: A bit about LWR’s history

• What’s in the name?: What is LWR? Some questions about who LWR is

• Global: Snapshots of LWR projects around the globe

• From the Ground Up: A category focusing primarily on LWR’s work in agriculture

• Faith In Action: Questions about LWR’s Quilt & Kit Ministry

• Poverty: Some questions about the facts of poverty

FAQ:

How will I know which questions I’ve already used?

After a link in the PowerPoint is clicked, it will turn green. This will indicate that the question has been used.

Why does the next question keep showing up?

Make sure you’re clicking the links themselves in the slides, instead of clicking elsewhere on the slide. Just a general click or keystroke will automatically advance you to the next slide.

What happens when all the links in the table have been clicked and questions have been answered?

Now it’s time for the FINAL CHALLENGE!

The PowerPoint game, and a list of the questions and answers are available at lwr.org/resources.
Pick Your Own Path: Haiti

**TIME:** 15-30 minutes

**INSTRUCTIONS:** Download the scenarios for this game at lwr.org/resources.

Your Quilts make a huge impact on a community that has recently experienced an earthquake or another natural disaster. From there Lutheran World Relief works with them as they transition from immediate relief to a place where they can thrive.

In this activity your group will jump into the story of a community in the country of Haiti that is recovering from the impacts of an earthquake. As a group you will get to make decisions about how to work with this community to reverse the impact of the disaster and bring hope and new life to everyone who lives there.

You may choose to do this all together or break up into smaller groups and compare the decisions you make. If you break up into smaller groups, make a copy of the story available online and assign one person to be the storyteller. Encourage groups to take time between their decisions, weigh out their options and come to a consensus as a group around their next step. At the end of this activity you’ll find “Talk About It!” questions to help your group process what they’ve experienced. There’s also information about how you and LWR actually responded to needs like this in Haiti after the devastating earthquake of January 12, 2010.

**PROCESS THE ACTIVITY**
- Which decisions were the most difficult for your group to make?
- Which outcomes were the most surprising?
- What connections did you see between the needs for education, food security and health in a community like Marie lives in? What would happen if you addressed one need but ignored the other?
- Even though they lived far from the center of the earthquake, Marie and her family were greatly affected. How did the earthquake make an impact on their lives, and how could we work together to make sure they are prepared for any future disasters?
- Share with your group the following story of how LWR responded in Haiti. What differences do you see between this and the story you were involved in? What lasting promise of hope and new life do you hear in this story that you’d share with others if they asked “Why do Christians do this kind of work in the world?”

**WHAT LWR DID IN HAITI.**

Stories like Marie and Jean’s were all too common after the Haiti earthquake in January 2010. While most news stories centered on people living in and around Port-au-Prince, many people in surrounding rural areas were affected by the migration of earthquake survivors and the proceeding cholera outbreak.

Haiti is a country that has long struggled with poverty. Lutheran World Relief has worked in Haiti since 1997 to help rural people improve their lives and incomes. In the wake of the earthquake, Lutheran World Relief worked with local partners to support rural communities in several ways:

- With cash-for-work programs that provide income to people for doing things like building toilets and working as medical monitors in communities of displaced people.
- With Quilts and Kits for families in affected communities. These tangible symbols of God’s love helped alleviate the financial burden on families to stay warm, healthy and in school (a critical tool for helping families break the cycle of poverty).
- With training on cholera. LWR’s local partners paired Quit and Kit distributions with a cholera training at local schools. While the communities participating in training had not yet experienced cholera, the information helped keep them safe.

Today, LWR continues to work in Haiti to improve the lives and incomes of rural people. In situations of emergency and disaster, your Quilt and Kit contributions can help LWR’s local partners reach out to communities with vital programs, trainings and services. In this way, your blessing multiplies!

Thank you for answering God’s call to love and serve your neighbor in need alongside Lutheran World Relief.
SCRIPTURE: 2nd Corinthians 1:3 – 11

OBJECTIVE:
For participants to connect their action of creating Quilts with the call for disciples of Jesus to comfort those who suffer.

AGES:
The plan below can be modified and adapted to be appropriate for participants age 12 and above. Adults and youth are encouraged to participate together in this Bible study!

RESOURCES:
• Markers or pens
• Large paper for making lists
• Bibles
• Quilts

PREPARATION:
To help set the stage for your Bible study you can place Quilts and blankets around the room. You can also place your large paper on the walls ahead of time. Have Bibles available for participants to use. If you have an intergenerational group you can encourage participants of different generations to share Bibles. This Bible study is written using the New Revised Standard Version.

Have participants open their Bibles to 2nd Corinthians 1:3-11. Choose a method best for your group to read the text together. A larger group can divide up into small groups to read it together and then come back together with the large group, or a smaller group can have several participants read portions of the reading out loud.

After your group has finished the reading, provide them with a little background on Paul’s second letter to the church in Corinth. Adapt the text below to best serve your group.

Before this letter, Paul’s relationship with the church in Corinth has been pretty rocky! Paul wrote an earlier letter to them that hurt their feelings and made many people there angry with him. Paul took their anger to heart and regretted what he originally wrote. When we join
the story in these verses Paul is recounting that hurt, stating how serious the hurt is on both sides, and then pointing toward God as the one who can console such deep hurt.

You might also want to point out to your group where Corinth was located in what is now Greece.

Now move your group into exploring the idea of “consolation” that Paul attributes to God. Many might be confused by this word since it has several meanings. Some participants might think of a consolation game played by the two teams that don’t make a championship game. Help your group define it as comfort that has been provided after a loss or disappointment. Ask the group, “Why do you think Paul and the church members in Corinth felt that they were in such need of consolation?”

The Greek word that is translated “consolation” is paraklesis (par-ak’-lay-sis) and in some versions of the Bible, like the English Standard Version, is translated “comfort.” When sharing this with your group you may need to provide some background on the Bible originally being written in Greek. Have a participant read verses 3-7 again, out loud, but replace “consolation,” or any version of that word, with “comfort.” Ask the group, “How does using the word comfort change the way you hear these verses?”

Ask the group, “Do you think what is causing Paul and the people in Corinth to need comforting is physical pain or emotional pain?” After your group discusses this question, introduce the first list you are going to make.

We are going to list things that happen in our lives that would cause us to seek out comfort from others and from God. After someone offers an example I want us to think about whether we’d be looking for physical comfort, like a hug or the sort of comfort a doctor can deliver, or emotional comfort, like kind words or reassurance by a friend.

As you make the list with your group, help them to see ways that even examples that might seem purely physical, like breaking a bone, would also require emotional comfort, like a friend spending time with us when we can’t do the same activities we typically do. While some events might require more physical comfort than emotional, most can call on us to offer and seek both.

After making this list go back to the reading and ask the group, “Where do we first see Paul mention God and comfort or consolation?” After participants point out Paul’s use of the title “God of all consolation,” to describe God, you can say, “Right, Paul addresses God with the name “God of consolation;” we could also say “God of all comfort.” So providing comfort must be a pretty important part of who God is. How do you see God providing comfort to us in our lives?”

Create a list with your group of ways that God is God of all comfort in their lives and the lives of their friends. After making your list explore with your group which of these examples are physical comforts and which are emotional. Just as with your previous list highlight how most examples of being comforted are not purely physical or emotional.

Continue saying, "Our God of all comfort knows that as his children we need both emotional and physical comfort, and gave his son Jesus Christ in full human, physical form for us to be in relationship with and from whom we receive comfort in all forms. At the end of our reading Paul makes clear to his friends in Corinth that it was only by relying on God who raises the dead that they could receive comfort from their hurt. God knows us so well that Jesus was not just a warm fuzzy feeling, but is incarnational, or in physical human form, so we could receive comfort from him and follow him by offering physical and emotional comfort to all God’s children.”

Turn to the Quilts or blankets laying in your room. Ask the group, “How do Quilts like those we are making provide both emotional comfort and physical comfort for those who receive them?” You can highlight their warmth, as well as their handmade nature which communicates to the person receiving them that someone around the world cares for them.

Highlight the grace that Paul relies on in these verses, especially in verse 10 where Paul writes of the “hope that [God] will rescue us again.” Say, “In response to this grace, we are called and formed into disciples of Jesus, called to follow his lead, and part of that is delivering both emotional and physical comfort to our friends and neighbors and to those around the world.”

Conclude your Bible study by making a list of how you, as individuals and as a group, can provide comfort to others. Highlight whether it’s emotional or physical comfort, or both, and whether it’s with friends and neighbors close to you or around the world.

Close out your time by highlighting examples on your list that you’d like to take on yourself or as a group in the coming months, and then close in prayer over those ways you can continue to be disciples of the God of all comfort.

God of all comfort and consolation, thank you for the gift of your son Jesus Christ, whose presence among us is a comfort in all the ways that we need. Through his grace we pray that we can be a comfort to our neighbors in need around the world. We pray for these ways that we are a comfort to others ... For these and all other ways you would call us to be a comfort to your children around the world, we pray. AMEN!
Assemble your LWR Mission Quilts

TIME:
- Small scale – 20-30 minutes;
- Medium scale – 1 hour;
- Large scale – 2 ½ hours

Imagine the comfort that comes with a hug when someone is in a time of deepest need. Through a simple combination of fabric and thread, you can reach out to those with some of the greatest needs in the world, not wrapping them in your arms, but wrapping them in the work of your hands through an LWR Quilt.

Most often, recipients use their LWR Quilts to shield against the cold and rain, but their versatility also makes them useful as simple tents, floor coverings, or a wrap to hold a baby on his mother’s back.

Gathering around the table to assemble Quilts can be a great time to talk about faith and life. Enjoy this time together as a community working in the Kingdom of God!

Instruct the group about how the assembly will be conducted, dividing into smaller groups or assigning specific tasks as appropriate.

ASSEMBLY INSTRUCTIONS:

SUMMARY
1. Place a piece of fabric measuring 64’’ × 84’’ right side down on the table, followed by a filler measuring 60’’ × 80’’, and then another piece of fabric (or the pieced top), also measuring 60’’ × 80’’, right side up on top of the filler.
2. Tie the layers together using crochet or similar cord.
3. Bring the edges of the 64’’ × 84’’ piece over the top, pin and machine-stitch the edge, using a zigzag stitch if possible.

Matthew Phipps and Gisela Jones quilt at Our Savior Lutheran Church in Hanover, N.H.
USING STATIONS

Provide clear instructions for how many Quilts (or tops, or squares) your group will be making.

1 Cutting station: have participants count and cut the correct number of coordinating squares (twelve 21" or forty-eight 11") and pass them along to the design station all at one time.

2 Design station: One table can be decorating squares, if desired, and another can be working to lay out the pattern for the top. Using 21" squares, lay out a pattern of 3 across by 4 down. Using 11" squares, lay out a pattern of 6 across by 8 down. Pin the rows together and mark (row 1, row 2, row 3, etc.) with sticky notes. Pin the notes to the appropriate rows, and pass one completed top at a time to the sewing station.

3 Sewing station: sew squares into rows in the order passed on from the design table. Use a ½" seam allowance. Once the rows are complete, sew the rows together in the correct order (row 1 to row 2, row 2 to row 3, etc.).

4 Tying station: Place the 64" x 84" back piece on the table with the right (usually brighter) side against the table. Place the 60" x 80" filler centered on top. Place the completed top over the filler. Secure with pins, or use masking tape to tape the layers to the table to keep them from moving. Using the needles and crochet thread, tie through all three layers of the Quilt at 8-10" intervals. For 11" squares, it works perfectly to place one tie in the center of each square, or at each corner. For 21" squares, it helps to measure and mark a grid with pins at the places where each tie should be.

5 Tying station: The edge of the back will extend about 2" on all sides of the Quilt. Once the tying is complete, fold the edge in 1", in toward the top. Fold it again, so that the folded edge completely covers the raw edges of the top and filler, and pin in place. At the corners, fold one edge over the other; if you’d like, you can fold the outside corner under to miter the corner. Pass the pinned Quilt back to the sewing station.

6 Sewing station: Using a zig-zag stitch, sew right along the folded edge on top of the Quilt, catching some of the folded edge and some of the Quilt top, to secure it. Make sure to sew along the entire exposed fold at each corner, too.
Mission Quilts Service of Blessing

Invite several participants, preferably from various age groups, to take on leader roles in this litany.

PRAYER
Leader: As we begin this service of blessing, let us pray together. God of mercy and grace …

People: … the hope of your children turns to you and you open your hand in blessing. Fill us with good things so that we may respond to conflict and loss with comfort and grace. Through Jesus Christ, our redeemer and Lord. Amen.

SCRIPTURE READINGS
Comfort, O comfort my people, says your God. Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry to her that she has served her term, that her penalty is paid, that she has received from the Lord’s hand double for all her sins. A voice cries out: “In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain. Then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all people shall see it together, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken.”
– Isaiah 40:1-5

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and the God of all consolation, who consoles us in all our affliction with the consolation with which we ourselves are consoled by God. For just as the sufferings of Christ are abundant for us, so also our consolation is abundant through Christ.
– 2nd Corinthians 1:3-5

Then the righteous will answer him, “Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food, or thirsty and gave you something to drink? And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you, or naked and gave you clothing? And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?” And the king will answer them, “Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.” – Matthew 25: 37-40

SONG
Add singing that your group will enjoy to this blessing.

LITANY OF BLESSING
Use the petitions below and also have participants write their own in advance.

Leader: God of grace …
People: … we dedicate to you the gift of these Mission Quilts. May your Spirit go with these Quilts to communities where poverty and disaster persist.

Leader: God of mercy …
People: … we praise you for the hands that crafted these Quilts. Through the abilities you have given this community we offer these Quilts to bring comfort and hope in lives marked by need and uncertainty.

Leader: God of abundance …
People: … we give you thanks for all that you have given us to care for as stewards of your creation. In each stitch of these Quilts we see your promise. May your ever present love console hearts that hunger for comfort.

Leader: We send around the world with Godspeed these gifts of grace, mercy and abundance in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

People: AMEN!

SENDING
Leader: My friends, Jesus calls us to bring comfort to all in need!

People: Send us out to serve in his name! AMEN!
FLEECE TIED BLANKETS!

Want to engage your congregation in the mission of sharing warmth and comfort around the world but not quite sure they’re ready to tackle LWR Mission Quilts as laid out in this Leader Guide? Try Fleece Tied Blankets! Tied Blankets make a simple, straightforward project that is great for all skill levels and ages. Bright, colorful, sturdy and warm, Fleece Tied Blankets are a soft, cozy reminder that someone cares.

All of the games and activities found in this Leader Guide still apply if your group is doing Fleece Tied Blankets. We continue to need Quilts (they are our most requested item!) but if you’re looking for an easy, inter-generational service activity, consider LWR Fleece Tied Blankets. Here’s how!

MATERIALS:

- Two pieces of fleece 58” – 59” wide x 80” long*
- Ruler
- Chalk or fabric pen
- Sharp fabric scissors

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Place the first piece of fleece with the right side (with the brightest pattern or finish) DOWN. Layer the second piece on top of it, with the right side UP. Smooth the layers together so they lie flat. Edges and corners don’t need to match exactly.

2. Using the ruler and fabric pen, mark a line 3” – 3 ½” from the edge of the fabric all the way around.

3. Cut out a square at each corner and discard. Cut tabs from the edge of the fabric to the line, about 1” – 1 ½” apart, through both pieces of fleece.

4. Tie the top and bottom pieces of fleece together using the pairs of tabs you just cut. Use a secure double-knot, but don’t pull too tight and stretch or tear the fleece.

5. Check to be sure that the tabs do not exceed 2” in length; trim as necessary.

*IMPORTANT: Check out LWR’s fabric guidelines at lwr.org/getinvolved/assembly to ensure your gifts of love reach the hands that need them.
There are lots of great ways to fight poverty, injustice and human suffering with Lutheran World Relief. Join us on this mission of lasting promise.

**ECO-PALMS**
Use Eco-Palms for your congregation’s Palm Sunday celebration and protect the forest, local jobs and sustainable livelihoods for palm harvesting communities in Guatemala and Mexico.
lwr.org/palms

**LWR GIFTS**
LWR Gifts supply everyday necessities that help women and men build lives of independence, self-sufficiency, sustainable income and real hope.
lwrgifts.org

**FOODS RESOURCE BANK**
Organize a Growing Project in your community to support farmers overseas.
lwr.org/frb

**FAIR TRADE**
Delicious coffee, decadent chocolate — and thriving farmers. Your LWR Coffee and Chocolate Project purchases help coffee and cocoa farmers earn income, support their families and build stronger futures.
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**LWR RESOURCE CENTER**
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