

# SPECIAL REPORTS



LUTHERAN  
WORLD RELIEF



The Aaigöz family's home in Kirikhan collapsed when the earthquake struck Türkiye. They now live in a tent and are grateful for your love and support as they rebuild.

## Your Caring Heart Reaches Neighbors in Crisis

The violent earthquake that struck on February 6 has killed tens of thousands of our neighbors in Türkiye (Turkey), and the death toll keeps rising. We've heard the heartbreaking stories of children who were saved from the quake's rubble only to learn that their parents had perished.

These children are now orphans — scared, alone and without the comforts of home.

The earthquake's devastation has uprooted the lives of many loving families who are now desperately trying to rebuild.

Thanks to the quick and generous support of so many of you, we were able to rush emergency aid to vulnerable and shocked earthquake survivors. Our swift response was critical because devastating aftershocks struck on February 20 and February 27, resulting in more casualties and destruction.

With your help, our ongoing response includes:

- Airlifting urgently needed supplies, like tents, tarps, winter clothing and solar lights.
- Coordinating with partners to distribute ready-to-eat food and hot meals, sleeping bags and sleeping mats.
- Shipping Lutheran World Relief Quilts, Baby Care Kits and Personal Care Kits.
- Meeting survivors on the front lines to share your love, prayers and support.
- Conducting needs assessments in affected areas.

At the time of this

**continued inside ...**

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## A MESSAGE FROM DANIEL



Our goal to end extreme poverty has been pushed backward for the first time in decades due to the ongoing global health and economic ramifications of the pandemic.

This made our *Love Thy Neighbor Christmas Match* more critical than ever. Thanks to you, we were able to fuel our efforts in Guatemala — helping suffering communities gain access to healthy food and clean water.

Then, a devastating earthquake struck Türkiye (Turkey), and you helped rush emergency supplies. With your ongoing support, together, we will be there for our suffering neighbors for the long haul to recovery.

There is so much work to do around the globe, but we take comfort in knowing our caring family hears God's call and is ready to lean in stronger than ever.

Thank you for your generosity.

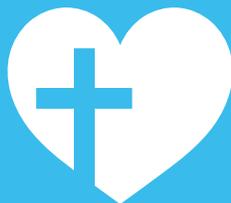
God bless you,

Ambassador Daniel Speckhard  
President and CEO

## Called to Love Our Neighbors

“God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.”

— Psalm 46:1 (NRSV)



Parents throughout Türkiye, like Nuray and İlhan Okur (center), worry about how to comfort and provide for their children in the quake's aftermath. İlhan shares, “It was worse for children. Because we are adults, at least we can protect ourselves. But the kids are psychologically devastated.”

## Neighbors in Crisis (continued)

report's production, our team members on the front lines are reporting that much of the population in Türkiye — children, families and seniors — are sheltering outside in tents while battling harsh temperatures that often fall below freezing. Hypothermia is a growing concern.



With you by our side, we will remain in Türkiye for the long haul and help with this shelter crisis. Along with our partners, we are helping to construct a container city with

500 homes near a hillside above the city of Kirikhan — one of the hardest-hit communities.

Each family's container will have two rooms: a bathroom with a flushing toilet, and a kitchen. Bathroom facilities are critical as civilians in tent-cities are sharing filthy porta-potties that are unsanitary and dangerous to public health. This new container city will also include 25 washing machines and clean running water.

Additionally, there will be a private garden area outside each container, so each family has an outdoor area to call their own. Larger designated play areas, where children can gather and play together, will also be created. Re-establishing some sort of normalcy for the little ones who are suffering is essential to helping to maintain good mental and physical health.

Thank you for rushing to the front lines with us during this life-shattering disaster and for remaining a loving neighbor as we support the recovery in Türkiye for years to come.

**Your love makes a real difference. ■**

### Caretakers in Life and Beyond



Throughout their lives, Neal and Lois Oppenheimer served God and others. Their giving spirit will live on through their generous legacy gift to Lutheran World Relief.

Neal and Lois Oppenheimer were guided by their Christian faith throughout their lives.

Neal worked for the former Montgomery Ward department store chain for more than 30 years. He was dedicated to his occupation. The couple's goddaughter, Jennifer Gutzwiller, recalls, "He was always on call and wanted to help if anything was wrong."

His giving spirit radiated beyond his work. "He was such a caretaker, always caring for people," Jennifer says. "He thought supporting charity was part of caretaking, and not just in the United States but around the world."

The Oppenheims had no children of their own and lived modestly. They dedicated their lives to their faith and serving others. They wanted their legacy of giving to carry on and were generous as they planned their estate.

Jennifer stayed by Neal's side as he navigated losing Lois and battling his own health issues. He passed away in 2019 and left a very generous gift to Lutheran World Relief in his will.

"He was a wonderful man," Jennifer shares. "He wanted to make sure everyone was taken care of, and I think that's what his gift is about." ■

### Your Love Grows Healthy Food and Shares Lasting Knowledge

Kimberly, a pint-sized girl with big dreams of becoming a doctor, was hungry and in danger of contracting a deadly disease from drinking tainted water.

Fortunately, your love and support empowered Kimberly's mother, Irma, to obtain the knowledge and resources she needed to filter and purify water before sharing it with her family.

"It has helped my children's health and the health of all of us," Irma shares.

Kimberly is no longer starving for nutrients. Thanks to your generosity, Irma is now part of a women's group in her village of Las Majada in Tacaná, Guatemala, where she learns better farming practices. She currently grows healthy vegetables, such as carrots, beets, radishes and herbs, to feed her family.

Irma now understands the importance of using filtered water to wash these vegetables to "prevent worms and other diseases."

Your support has transformed the lives of this family and so many others in this region, who now have access to clean water and fresh vegetables.

**Thank you.** ■

Empowered with newfound knowledge of efficient farm practices and safe food and water preparation, Irma Morales can now provide safe drinking water and healthy produce for her seven children and loving community.



Kimberly Morales can now enjoy healthy meals prepared by her mother to help her grow and thrive.

# YOUR LOVE AROUND THE WORLD

## Ukraine

Your urgent response provided families, seniors and vulnerable individuals with Personal Care Kits and warm blankets during a time when it was nearly impossible to find essential supplies. Your love is helping families rebuild while the violent war rages on in their homeland.

## Yemen

Your generosity is transforming the lives of Yemen farmers. After battling COVID-19, inflation from the war in Ukraine and civil unrest, their livelihoods were shattered. Thanks to your support, they now have training, seeds and tools necessary to treat their livestock for disease and gain the highest yields from their crops.

## Philippines

Your love has shined throughout the Philippines, providing access to two critical human essentials – clean water and healthy food. Thanks to you, tens of thousands of our neighbors gained access to basic water services, quality produce and enhanced sanitation services.

**Your caring gifts are transforming lives.**

LET YOUR LOVE FLOURISH, AND JOIN

## Partners in Lasting Promise

By leaving a share of your estate to Lutheran World Relief, your love can leave an enduring footprint into the future and create a better world for children around the world.

Planning your estate is easy when you use **FreeWill** our free, online will-writing service. From the comfort of your own home, you can turn your love for your most vulnerable neighbors into a lasting promise for the future.



Create your free and legally-binding will today at [LWR.ORG/FREEWILL](https://LWR.ORG/FREEWILL).



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Jake Lyell for LWR

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