

# FAITH IN *action*



80 years of faithful service



## YOUR LOVE REACHES OUR NEIGHBORS:

FROM THE BEGINNING | THROUGHOUT THE YEARS | RIGHT HERE AT HOME



LUTHERAN WORLD RELIEF



## Dear Quilters & Kit Makers,

**Eighty years.** Your love and service have been a bedrock for so many global neighbors since **1945**. When Lutheran World Relief was in its early days, born out of the heartbreak of World War II, faithful Lutherans were there, sharing the compassion of Christ. Your hearts were there then, and they have grown exponentially over the decades. And as you'll see in these pages, it continues to grow, surrounding those who need it the most. **Thank you, thank you, thank you.**

With this issue of **Faith in Action**, I hope you see how powerful that love has been for those whose lives have been radically changed by it, including most recently following the hurricanes in the southeastern U.S.

While reflecting on your impact brings so much joy, I'm even more excited to see what's ahead.

Thank you for continuing the legacy of love that began 80 years ago ... until your love reaches every neighbor.

### Joy & Blessings,



*Martha Piedrasanta*

**MARTHA PIEDRASANTA**

Senior Manager,  
Quilt & Kit Ministry

**P.S.** As we celebrate 80 years, we'd love to see YOUR historical photos with LWR! Send them to [quiltsandkits@lwr.org](mailto:quiltsandkits@lwr.org).

## New!

### Order your Quilt & Kit shirt today!

Now you can wear your heart on your sleeve — or chest — literally! Show your pride of being an LWR Quilter and Kit Maker and order your t-shirt today. Orders close February 13!

Visit [lwr.org/order](http://lwr.org/order) or scan here to place your order!



## A foundation of faithful service



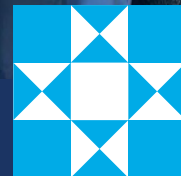
**The Good Samaritan Quilt Plaza** in front of LWR's Baltimore headquarters is a visual testament to the expansive quality of your love. The engraved and colorful bricks make a pattern called "Many Trips Around the World" and represent the distribution of millions of quilts.

### Want to learn more?

Visit [lwr.org/plaza](http://lwr.org/plaza) or use the enclosed envelope.







# IT TAKES A VILLAGE

**Above:** Just part of the nearly 70 people who make up the Quilt & Kit Ministry at Nazareth Lutheran Church in Cedar Falls, Iowa.

**Nazareth Evangelical Lutheran Church** in Cedar Falls, Iowa, knows a few things about quilting. After all, they had a head start on Lutheran World Relief.

Since 1871, the church has consistently had a group of quilters. After World War II, they were among the first to support the newly founded LWR, sharing their handiwork and God's love with their global neighbors.

With that sort of storied history, they've learned a lot about keeping a ministry alive. Number one? **It takes a village.**

Donna Kirschenmann is one of those villagers.

"It's like an iceberg or the roots of a tree," Donna says. "There's a lot more beneath the ground than above the ground."



Marathon Monday at Nazareth Lutheran

## A role for everyone

Nearly 70 people make up the team. Those who are home-bound make tops. Some dye sheets or gather supplies for Baby Care Kits. A group of men cut rope for the school bags. They include the larger congregation by designing tops in summer and then providing take-home bags for members to sew the rest of the year.



Tops for take-home bags



**"There are so many elements and such a large team of people who make it happen."**

*Donna Kirschenmann*

Each August, Nazareth Lutheran holds a Marathon Monday, when they pack Personal Care Kits and School Kits. This year, they packed 740 school bags.

"It's amazing how we in Iowa can help people we are never going to meet," Donna says. "To me, this is being the hands and feet of Christ. I hope people feel the love of Jesus when they get our kits and quilts."

Thank you to Nazareth Lutheran for their unparalleled love and dedication!

# YOUR LOVE THROUGH THE YEARS

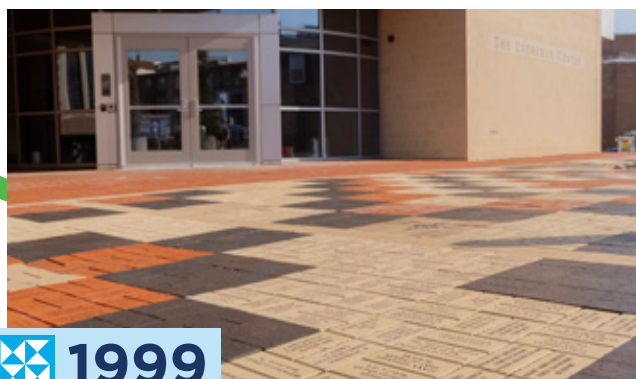
From the beginning of Lutheran World Relief in 1945, you have been a foundational rock through the Quilt & Kit Ministry. While the work is not yet done, thankfully your love is ever expansive and continues to grow. Journey with us through some of the highlights of the last eight decades — and 136 countries — of your Christian stewardship.



"I remember a trip to a quilt distribution in Niger. The quilts were in bales and when they were cut open, they started to grow. They expanded as if to take a breath, ready to offer warmth and love. I looked up, and all I could see was a large cloud of dust. In that cloud were hundreds of people — men, women and children — coming to get quilts. As soon as they got them, they would hold them to their chest, as if hugging it to their hearts. Isn't that what quilters are doing? Stitching us all together through their love."

*Kirk Betts,  
former LWR Board Member*

80 years of  
faithful service



 1999

The Good Samaritan Quilt Plaza is started at LWR Headquarters in Baltimore. Bricks are engraved with the names of loved ones and congregations. The bricks make a pattern called "Many Trips Around the World" and represent the distribution of millions of quilts and kits.



 2020

A massive explosion occurs in the Beirut port, considered one of the largest non-nuclear explosions in history. Sadly almost everything at the port was destroyed, yet all three containers of LWR Quilt & Kits are miraculously found safe.





 **1945**

Lutheran World Relief is founded following World War II. Within the first three months of 1946, 2,260 bales of clothing and bedding, plus 245 bags of shoes, were shipped to five countries in Europe. By March there were an estimated 20,000 bales of clothing, or 2 million pounds, available in the warehouse.



 **1962**

First kits begin. There have been many variations including Kiddie Kits (such as the Palestinian boys receiving these kits in Jordan, 1962), Health Kits and Clothing Kits. Today, LWR distributes four types: Personal Care Kits, Baby Care Kits, School Kits and Fabric Kits.



 **2005**

When Hurricane Katrina causes unfathomable devastation, LWR quilters and kit makers send aid to neighbors in their own backyard, a historic and singular distribution.



 **2019**

In Tanzania, **quilts are used to reduce stunting**. Energy used by small children staying warm often expends precious calories — calories they can't afford to spend. By having the warmth of quilts, children are growing stronger and taller.



 **2022**

When Russian troops invade **Ukraine** in February 2022, our amazing community bands together to mount the largest humanitarian response in Lutheran World Relief history.



 **TODAY**

The Quilt & Kit Ministry — our longest running program — expands to reach neighbors in need in the United States just as hurricanes Helene and Milton devastate the Southeast.

# YOUR EXPANSIVE LOVE: FAQS ON DOMESTIC DISTRIBUTIONS



Last fall, we shared that the LWR Quilt & Kit Ministry was expanding to reach neighbors in need in the United States. Our announcement seemed to be divinely timed because we made our first deliveries almost immediately, comforting our neighbors affected by hurricanes Helene and Milton in the Southeastern U.S.

While your faithful hearts have received the news with great rejoicing, we have gotten lots of questions as well. ***Please remember that when in doubt, all guidelines remain in place to allow maximum flexibility for reaching our neighbors in need at any given time and in any country.***

Here are some of the most frequently asked questions.

## **Why is this expansion happening now?**

Not only has the Quilt & Kit Ministry endured 80 years, but it has also grown considerably. With quilters and kit makers giving more than ever before, there is more opportunity to extend care and comfort abroad and at home.



## **Can individuals/groups designate quilts and kits to a particular U.S. partner, emergency or location?**

No. Quilt and kit shipments are based on need, and our international and domestic partners complete applications to request quilts and kits. This process — combined with the enduring generosity of our quilters and kit makers — has helped us effectively respond to where the needs are greatest.

## **What percentage of quilts and kits will be shipped domestically?**

While the percentage will fluctuate annually depending on need, we expect that more quilts and kits will continue to be shipped internationally simply because there is a larger combined population outside the U.S.

## **Does this mean patriotic and religious fabric can now be used in quilts?**

No. All guidelines will remain in place to allow maximum flexibility for reaching neighbors in need at any given time and in any country.

## **Can regular backpacks be used for School Kits distributed in the U.S.?**

No. As with quilts, all kit guidelines will remain in place to allow maximum flexibility for reaching neighbors in need at any given time and in any country.

## **Can individuals and congregations request quilts and kits be distributed in their community?**

To best facilitate coordination and quick access to quilts and kits, we are working with local Lutheran social service agencies. Please contact your nearest agency and follow their procedures for requesting assistance.

**Visit [lwr.org/expansion](https://lwr.org/expansion) to learn more!**



# WHERE DID YOUR LWR QUILTS AND KITS GO IN 2024?

TAKE A LOOK AT THE  
POWER OF YOUR  
LOVE THIS YEAR.

689,814 QUILTS & KITS  
IN 16 COUNTRIES



370,818  
QUILTS



140,117  
SCHOOL KITS



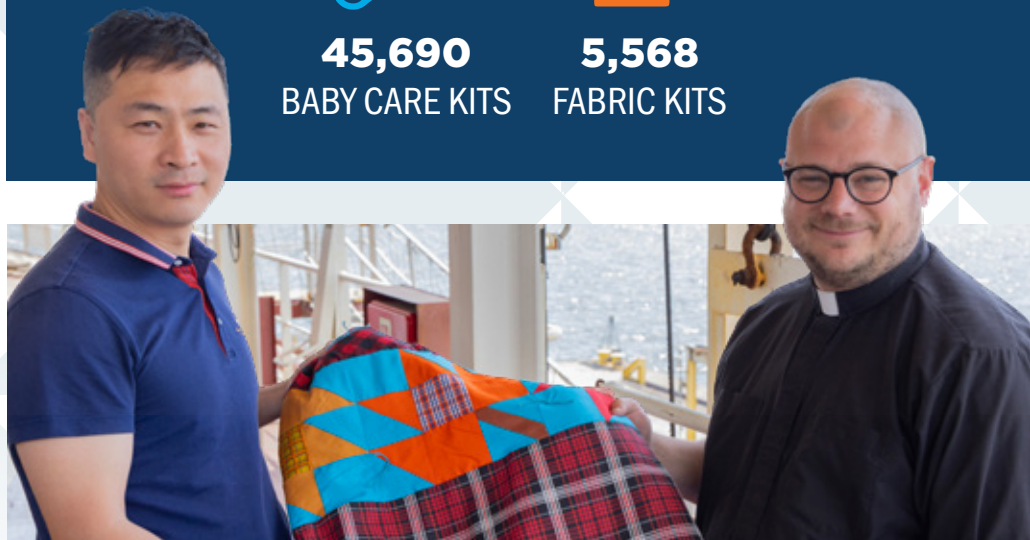
127,621  
PERSONAL CARE  
KITS



45,690  
BABY CARE KITS



5,568  
FABRIC KITS



**Above:** Quilts and Kits reached vulnerable neighbors, like displaced families in Türkiye and stranded seafarers in the Port of Baltimore.





**Above:** Best friends Mary Kamara and Maryah A Bangura go to school together in Sierra Leone. Your compassion reaches neighbors near and far, wherever there is need.

# WHO IS MY NEIGHBOR?



**LUKE 10:29-37 NRSV**

An expert in the law asks Jesus, “Who is my neighbor?”

Jesus responds by telling the Good Samaritan parable.

Interestingly, Jesus identifies the person helping, but doesn’t specify the person that was injured, robbed and left on the side of the road to die.

Our neighbor is anyone and everyone in need, no matter what. Our neighbor is whoever needs mercy, compassion and support. We are called to help.

True, we can’t help everyone, but Jesus isn’t calling us to do that. God places the need on our hearts, in front of us, and calls us to respond with sacrificial love: our time, talents and resources. Empowered by the Holy Spirit, we care deeply, go out of our way and act to help those we can.

All of you — wonderful Quilters and Kit Makers — embody this way of living and serving. For 80 years, you have put your faith in God into action by loving and serving our

neighbors, no matter how near or far. For 80 years, you have shopped for supplies, scoured thrift stores, hunted for bargains, spent countless hours sewing school bags, baby jackets, receiving blankets, making and tying quilts, and assembling all the kits.

For 80 years, your love for others has been life-changing.

Since 1945, your love has grown and expanded, reaching our neighbors whether they may be across the street or across the world. Thank you for sharing God’s abundant love and compassion. **Until your love reaches every neighbor.**



**LUTHERAN WORLD RELIEF**

## **LWR HEADQUARTERS:**

Lutheran World Relief

700 Light Street | Baltimore, MD 21230

Phone: 800.597.5972 | Email: [lwr@lwr.org](mailto:lwr@lwr.org)

## **QUILT & KIT MINISTRY GUIDELINES:**

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