

God's Love IN ACTION

HELP FEED FAMILIES IN DANGER

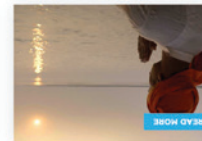
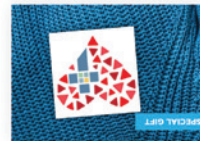
LENT RESOURCES INSIDE: MAKE PERSONAL CARE KITS



Visit lwr.org/congregations today.

- Videos to download and share with your congregation
- Publicity tools that make it easy for you to share stories in your church's newsletter, bulletin or on social media
- Creative ways to engage your congregation in hands-on ministry

Created specifically for pastors and church leaders like you, this resource hub includes:



Receive up-to-date resources each month to assist you as you inspire your congregation to share God's love with your neighbors around the world.

**SIGN UP FOR OUR
CONGREGATIONAL
LEADER EMAIL LIST.**



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DEAR PARTNER IN MINISTRY,

Happy New Year! Thank you for your continued commitment to sharing the Good News of Jesus with your congregation and your neighbors around the world.



When it comes to supporting mission partners, we know you have many worthy organizations from which to choose. As you make decisions this year about how you want to make a difference in the world, I hope you will share your congregation's generosity with your neighbors through Lutheran World Relief.

Our neighbors like Elizabeth and her children desperately need your love. They live in one of the hardest to reach areas in the world's newest country — South Sudan. Lutheran World Relief operates the only health centers in their region. **That's because when others leave, we stay behind.**

We are committed to reaching Elizabeth and so many others like her because we envision a future where all people, in every corner of the world can live full, dignified lives. **But we can't reach our neighbors without the kindness of congregations like yours.**

Please don't hesitate to reach out with questions about how your congregation can become more involved in our ministry. We have a great team of pastors and staff ready to help connect your congregation with our work around the world.

In Christ's love,



**AMBASSADOR
DANIEL SPECKHARD**
President and CEO

A SEASON OF HOPE

LENT

SHARE GOD'S LOVE WITH YOUR NEIGHBORS THIS LENT

Lent may be a time of waiting, but it need not be one of inaction. By making Personal Care Kits, your congregation can deliver tangible hope to our neighbors in need around the world.

Go to lwr.org/lent to access all the information and resources you need for your congregation's **Personal Care Kit drive**.

You'll also find **a new video** to share with your congregation showing how your generosity is making a difference and spreading hope in the world.

Our neighbors in crisis need as many Personal Care Kits as your church can send.

How many Personal Care Kits will your congregation make?



Clemence Elijah for LWR

HELP FEED FAMILIES IN DANGER

For years Elizabeth Nyalam Gai, her husband and their five children managed to dodge the ongoing violence in South Sudan, keeping a low profile and scraping by as best they could. But one day a rebel militia arrived on their doorstep and killed Elizabeth's husband, just because they could — shattering the family's peace and security in an instant.

Elizabeth knew her only choice was to grab her children and run.

HUNGER BECAME THEIR GREATEST ENEMY

For seven months, Elizabeth and her children hid in the bush from soldiers and wild animals, surviving on whatever twigs, berries and bushmeat they could find. Most days, it wasn't much.

“When [my husband] was killed, life was terrible and we went hungry,” Elizabeth recalls. “When we were hungry we would just lie down, because we had no energy.”

While her children slept, she kept watch — worrying every moment that the soldiers would find them, or that her children would starve.

TO TRULY START OVER, THEY NEED FOOD

Elizabeth and her children eventually stumbled upon a displacement camp about 300 miles from the home they left behind. They arrived weak, starving and at the mercy of the strangers living there.

“When you're a displaced person, you leave without bringing anything,” Elizabeth explains. “We have no utensils, blankets, tarps, nothing.”

Until she regains her strength and can collect what she needs to start a garden, Elizabeth is relying on the kindness of others living in the camp — families just like hers who fled their homes with nothing — to keep her family fed and help her obtain basic supplies for survival.

YOUR CONGREGATION CAN HELP FAMILIES LIKE ELIZABETH'S

Elizabeth's story is harrowing, but she's not the only mother struggling to feed her children and keep them safe in the face of



Sean Hawkey for LWR

extreme adversity. **Your congregation's generosity will provide emergency food for families in crisis as well as longer-term efforts to support sustainable livelihoods and farming.**

Please join us in loving our neighbors as Christ did by feeding the hungry and caring for their needs.

Until your love reaches every neighbor.



Visit lwr.org/congregations for a powerful video and publicity tools to share Elizabeth's story or to make your congregation's gift online. You can also mail your gift using the enclosed envelope.

COLORADO CONGREGATION SHOWS GOD'S LOVE TO GLOBAL NEIGHBORS

by Brenda Meier Kimaro

From their humble beginnings as a 21-member congregation worshipping in the chapel of a nursing home, Redeemer Lutheran Church in Fort Collins, Colo., has grown into a thriving congregation with a global strategy reaching to each major area of the world.

"Our congregation has always been an outreach-oriented congregation in showing love and offering help to our neighbors—whether they are local neighbors or global neighbors," says Pastor Tim Runtsch, Redeemer's lead pastor and member of Lutheran World Relief's board of directors.

Lutheran World Relief has long been a part of that global outreach, beginning when two longtime LWR employees—Pastor Gene and Annabell Thiemann—retired to Colorado and joined Redeemer. "They helped us plug into LWR in a big way," says Pastor Tim. With the Thiemann's encouragement, the congregation became avid supporters of LWR, financially and making quilts after Annabell started a quilting group.

"Our church from the very beginning has been a congregation that supports acts of love. Early on as a church of 21—half of which were children—we gave in small ways and we just kept on growing it," Pastor Tim explains.

Now, as a congregation of 3,300 with two worship sites, Redeemer continues to support LWR in expressing God's love around the globe to people in their greatest times of need.

Redeemer gives about \$30,000 annually to LWR and also responds generously in the wake of natural disasters. The congregation's most recent gift supported LWR's disaster





response to Haiti's August 14 earthquake. The congregation generously gave \$7,000 to provide earthquake survivors emergency food, clean water, hygiene kits and medical care.

“When the Haiti disaster happened, our folks reached into their pockets and gave,” says Pastor Tim. “It’s part of our DNA at Redeemer, and who we are. It’s what we do as people of God and followers of Jesus.”

Last year Redeemer gave \$11,490 to help LWR respond to back-to-back Hurricanes Eta and Iota in Central America with emergency food and hygiene supplies.

The congregation also has members who have left legacy gifts to LWR in their wills, and the quilting ministry has expanded to two groups—one daytime and one evening—that make several hundred quilts a year. **“It’s an honor to be a part of what God is doing through LWR,” says Pastor Tim. ■**

- **ABOVE:** As lead pastor of Redeemer Lutheran in Fort Collins, CO. and member of LWR’s board of directors, Pastor Tim Runtsch is dedicated to the mission of Lutheran World Relief.
- **RIGHT ABOVE:** Roseziana Bernard with four of her seven children in the remnants of their home in Haiti following a 7.2 magnitude earthquake that rocked the region in August.
- **RIGHT BELOW:** Waglile Dorcy holds her sons at St. Antoine Hospital in Jeremie, Haiti, after they were both injured in the August 14 earthquake.



PERSONAL CARE KITS BRING HOPE AND COMFORT DURING COVID



• **ABOVE:** Sabina Sevilla receives a Personal Care Kit in San José, Honduras.

Sabina Sevilla has lived with constant abdominal pain for over a year, but she says her appointment with a doctor for tests was canceled due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Her village in San Jose, Honduras, was hit hard by an outbreak of the virus several months ago, and she was terrified due to her age and limited access to medical care. She felt trapped by the virus on one side and her pain on the other. “I’m afraid if I even try to travel to the doctor, I’ll get coronavirus,” she said.

Her village received a delivery of Personal Care Kits from Lutheran World Relief, assembled with love by our generous supporters, to help families like Sabina’s have access to soap and supplies for handwashing and general hygiene. Local health officials hope the kits will help to curb another outbreak, but Sabina says just the thought of having the kit brings her comfort. “It means so much to have this,” she says, holding the items close. ■

INVITE YOUR CONGREGATION TO MAKE PERSONAL CARE KITS

Visit lwr.org/lent for resources and more info.