

VOL. 1 | ISSUE 1

# Lasting Promise

MAGAZINE

TELL US YOUR  
LASTING  
PROMISE!

Big smiles,  
full bellies,  
bright future

HOW PLANNED  
GIVING IS  
TRANSFORMING  
LIVES



LUTHERAN WORLD RELIEF

# Lasting Promise

MAGAZINE

Volume 1, Issue 1 (2021)

## EDITOR-IN-CHIEF:

Emily Love Esworthy

## ON THE COVER:

Josephine Achola is a refugee from South Sudan living with her three children in the Palabek Refugee Settlement in Northern Uganda. Partners in Lasting Promise like you have helped her family to diversify their diets and increase their income through farming. She is pictured with a garden hoe she received during a tool distribution and training session. Read her story on page 3.

*(Cover photo by Jaky Lyell for LWR)*



## FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Friend,

Welcome to our very first edition of **Lasting Promise Magazine!**

I hope you'll see this magazine — and especially this first issue — as one big thank you note for the love you share with your neighbors in need through Lutheran World Relief.

Sometimes I look at our broken world and feel overwhelmed by the need. But then I am reminded that love never fails (1 Corinthians 13), and I am filled with hope again. That's because I also see God's love in action everywhere I turn, thanks to caring, big-hearted people like you.

I am deeply grateful for you, our **Partners in Lasting Promise**, who are intentional about creating a brighter future for people in need. Thank you for being a vessel of God's enduring love!

I hope that being a part of this special family of donors will be a blessing to you, just as you are — and will continue to be — a blessing to our neighbors around the world for generations to come. Thank you!

In Christ,

**AMBASSADOR  
DANIEL SPECKHARD**  
President and CEO

We want  
to hear  
from you!

We love learning about you, our **Partners in Lasting Promise**. Tell us about your family, your church, your work, your vision! How did you first learn about the mission of Lutheran World Relief? What has inspired you to leave a gift from your estate to care for your neighbors around the world, and what impact would you like to make in the future?

Please contact us at **LGRANT@LWR.ORG** or **410 230 2827** so we can set up a time to chat with you by phone or Zoom. (And, with your permission, we'd love to share your story in our publications to inspire others to become Partners in Lasting Promise too!)



# YOUR LOVE, FLOURISHING IN OTHERS

By Lee Grant, Planned Giving Manager

With nothing but the clothes on her back, Josephine Achola grabbed her three children and ran. Civil war had been raging in her home country of South Sudan for most of her life, but she'd finally reached her breaking point. A famine was coming. Josephine had already lost her husband to the war; she could not bear to watch her children starve.

They made the long journey on foot to the Palabek Refugee Settlement in neighboring northern Uganda. Here, they live with hundreds of other refugees just like them — hardworking families who have lost everything to the war, but

who hold firmly to the hope of a brighter future.

That future is possible because of the transformational gifts that you, our Partners in Lasting Promise, provide. Josephine has received seeds, tools and a small plot of land to grow crops, like sweet potatoes and okra, to feed her children and to sell at the market. For the first time, the kids have a chance to attend school regularly, with big smiles and full bellies. Finally, that brighter future is within reach.

By leaving a gift in your estate to help families like Josephine's, you are helping to break the cycle of

poverty, war and hunger for the next generation. You're ensuring that they'll not only have what they need to survive today, but also the tools and opportunities to thrive long into the future. What a beautiful footprint to leave on the world. Thank you! ○



I'd love to chat with you about how your generosity makes a lasting impact for neighbors in need. Please contact me at [LGRANT@LWR.ORG](mailto:LGRANT@LWR.ORG) or 410 230 2827.



Brad LaBriola for LWR

# LOVING GOD BY LOVING OUR NEIGHBORS

REFLECTIONS FROM A FORMER LWR BOARD MEMBER

**PAUL AND LOUISE EVENSON** have a unique perspective on the work of Lutheran World Relief — one that is best seen from 12,000 feet up. In 2014, in the midst of Louise's nine-year tenure on the Board of Directors, the couple traveled with Lutheran World Relief to an impoverished village high in the mountains of Peru. There, they met families who learned sustainable farming practices to increase their incomes.

When the Evensons think about the impact their estate gift will make one day, they picture Daisy, the smiling 8-year-old girl who joyfully showed them how to grow potatoes.



“If I could share a message with the future beneficiaries of our gifts,” Louise muses, “I would say to the Daisys of the world: This gift is because you are remembered, and you are loved.”

Leaving an estate gift to support neighbors in need through Lutheran World Relief was a natural extension of the couple’s faith and worldview. Paul, who trained as a Lutheran pastor, says, “The core of the Christian message is summarized in how we treat our neighbors ... as an expression of our love of God. For me, LWR is one of the organizations that personifies that.”

Louise adds, “Being on the Board, I got to know the financials and details about how LWR works, as well as the mission. I got to see from the inside that the organization is authentic and accountable — that LWR lives its mission.”

Both Paul and Louise made philanthropy a part of their careers as well. For 30 years, Paul supported fundraising and planned giving at Lutheran universities, helping donors to align their giving with their core values and educating them on the tax benefits of their gifts.

Louise, after earning a Ph.D. and teaching at a university, spent 20 years in financial services. After retiring from the corporate world, she worked as a fundraiser for a Lutheran seminary.

To those considering whether they should leave a gift in their will to provide a better future for their neighbors, Louise would share her and Paul’s own philosophy: “If you have supported an organization for years and years with your cash gifts, that organization has become reliant on your support. A gift in your will or planned gift will mean that the cash flow continues when you’re no longer able to write your check or give your stock.”

Having retired from the LWR Board earlier this year, Louise now serves on the Global Ministries Committee at Ascension Lutheran Church near the couple’s home in Thousand Oaks, Calif., and leads the church’s LWR Kit-making ministry. Paul continues, on a part-time basis, to support fundraising for a Lutheran retreat center.

The Evensons say a focus on generosity in their faith, friendships and careers brings them happiness and a sense of belonging to the family of humanity. “The neighborhood gets smaller,” Paul explains. “You’re connected with people you’d otherwise never have any interaction with, and you’re helping to make a difference in their lives.”

He is thinking once again of Daisy, who — though thousands of miles and a mountaintop away — is as close to their hearts as if she lived next door. ○



*Eduardo Contreras, LWR Country Director for Peru, alongside Louise and Paul Evenson.*

# //FROMTHEARCHIVES



Photo by Ezra M. Smith. ELCA Archives photo

**CHICAGO, IL.** — A massive humanitarian crisis followed World War II, leaving 1 in 5 of the world's Lutherans homeless. In 1945, Lutherans in the United States mobilized to form Lutheran World Relief to help their neighbors in Europe. The outpouring of support was tremendous, and soon the mission expanded to send love all over the world, wherever needs were greatest.

In this photo, which appeared in the April 5, 1950, edition of *The Lutheran*, Dr. Clarence E. Krumbholz, secretary of Lutheran World Relief, and Lois Ann, the

daughter of LWR representative Clifford E. Dahlin, admire a display of 1,163 toy boxcars. Each one represents a load of farm commodities collected in 1949 for distribution to those in need.

For 75 years, caring Lutherans have shared God's love with their neighbors generously and joyfully. Thank you for carrying on this legacy — until your love reaches every neighbor! ○



# KITS BRING HOPE AND COMFORT DURING COVID

**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 feels 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 recently 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.

Thank you to all our quilters and kit makers who share God’s love with their neighbors! 

## A SPECIAL GIFT FOR OUR QUILTERS & KIT MAKERS

For 75 years, our quilters and kit makers have made sure neighbors in need feel God’s love wrapped around their shoulders. To say thank you, we created the LWR Quilt & Kit Affinity Pin as a special gift to you!

**Order your FREE pin at [lwr.org/qkpin](http://lwr.org/qkpin)**



# STRENGTH FOR TODAY, BRIGHT HOPE FOR TOMORROW

## HOW ESTATE GIFTS HELP NEIGHBORS IN NEED

Greg Brekke for LWR



### EL SALVADOR, GUATEMALA, HONDURAS, NICARAGUA

Weather phenomena like El Niño and La Niña are occurring with more frequency and intensity, causing harmful weather patterns in Central America. Huge storms (like back-to-back Hurricanes Eta and Iota in 2020) and heavy rainfall destroy crops and homes and can exacerbate plant diseases that destroy farmers' livelihoods.

**YOUR IMPACT:** Your support provides training on climate-resilient farming to reduce crop losses. Though we can't prevent natural disasters, the generosity of estate gifts allow us to respond quickly when disaster strikes — and to stay with communities longer to help them rebuild stronger.

Jake Lyell for LWR



### MALI, BURKINA FASO, NIGER

In West Africa, more than 3.5 million people have been forced from their homes due to escalating violence and a series of climate disasters like flooding and drought. Displacement camps often lack any support services, and families are going hungry.

**YOUR IMPACT:** Your love reaches neighbors in need with immediate food relief, as well as seeds and tools to help them start new farms to support themselves even in crisis. As climate change worsens, future estate gifts will allow us to provide longer term support to help farming communities adapt.

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Thank you for entrusting Lutheran World Relief to carry out your vision for a brighter future for your neighbors around the world! Here are some places where gifts in wills are helping families to overcome challenges — and how we're planning to build on this work through future planned gifts to create impact that lasts for generations to come.

## LEBANON

Lebanon is enduring crisis on crisis: first a economic downturn and labor market which was made worse by shutdowns of COVID-19, then the August 2020 explosion in Beirut. What's more, about 1 in 5 people living in Lebanon is a Syrian refugee, putting additional strain on limited resources.

**YOUR IMPACT:** In addition to providing food and kits, emergency food and other supplies. After the explosion, planned giving will help to support poor Lebanese families and refugees through agricultural training and other opportunities that provide long-term income.



## INDIA, NEPAL

Earlier this year, cases of COVID-19 spiked dramatically in South Asia, overwhelming hospitals and leading to thousands of preventable deaths. It may take years for health systems to recover.

**YOUR IMPACT:** At the height of the outbreak, our donors provided critical medical supplies, oxygen tanks and personal protective equipment to hard-hit hospitals, along with training for health workers on COVID-19 management and prevention. Work has already begun to support COVID vaccination campaigns in Nepal, and future gifts will expand vaccine readiness and delivery efforts both here and in several countries in Africa.

## YEMEN

Six years of civil war have left Yemen in ruins, and its people are living in the worst humanitarian crisis on the planet. Only about half of the health centers are functioning, and a terrible famine looms.

**YOUR IMPACT:** Current gifts are helping to provide clean water and waste management to help families stay healthy. Funds from planned giving will help us to bring stability and hope to this most challenging crisis.



*James and Margaret Aydelotte*

## “SHARING MORE” TO HELP THOSE WITH LESS

His children secure, retired pastor plans to help global neighbors

**REV. DR. JAMES AYDELOTTE** was a graduate student at Princeton Theological Seminary, studying on a fellowship at Cambridge University in England, when he met his wife Margaret.

“She was on faculty, and I was a lowly graduate student,” he remembers. “She outranked me.”

Nevertheless, the couple went on to enjoy a journey of marriage, teaching and sustained interest in the world for more than 50 years. Together, they started a study-abroad program in London for students attending the rural Missouri college where James taught, and they enjoyed introducing students to a different culture and a broader view of the world.

James, a Presbyterian minister, and Margaret, who was raised in the Church of England, found a shared church home in a Lutheran congregation near their first home in Missouri. James was even invited to serve as an interim pastor of a Lutheran congregation during the regular pastor’s illness.

“That’s when I learned I really like Lutherans,” he said. It is also where he discovered the work of Lutheran World Relief.

“I think their work around the world, particularly in developing countries, drew me in,” he said. “I have come to think that the so-called ‘first world’ doesn’t pay as much attention to the rest of the planet as it should, and I liked what LWR was doing about it.”



## Ensuring the good work continues

James and Margaret supported Lutheran World Relief regularly over the years and made the mutual decision to leave a lasting gift in their wills.

“Back when I served churches, I had an annual pitch to people to make a will, and I used to say, ‘If you don’t have a plan for what should happen with your assets, the local state does,’” James recalls.

Margaret’s death six years ago resulted in a compassionate contribution from her retirement earnings to care for neighbors in need.

“Our children are doing well, so we wanted to make sure our assets would be helpful to others,” James said. “LWR will need to work long after we’re gone, and they need the resources to do that.”

*“People are really in need. We just need to share more of what we have with people in need.”*



James is now remarried to a fellow pastor, Susan Denne. “Loneliness is all it’s cracked up to be,” he says, with the assurance that comes from experience. “We’re both pastors, but we have more than church to talk about when we’re at the breakfast table.”

Now retired in North Carolina, James remains interested in the world and finding ways to address suffering — knowing that his choice to make a generous, lasting gift will serve neighbors around the world for years to come.

“Suffering anywhere is going to affect everyone, everywhere,” he said. “People are really in need. We just need to share more of what we have with people in need.” ○

# MONTH BY MONTH, NEIGHBOR BY NEIGHBOR

Introducing **Faithful Neighbors**,  
our new monthly giving program



*By Karen Holbrook, Senior Associate, Monthly Giving & Stewardship*

**PUNAM MUSAHAR** didn't choose to be born poor, or to live on the floodplains of a large river on the outskirts of India. But Punam, her parents and her two siblings have no other choice.

Their little piece of land, on the fringes of society and on the edge of disaster, is the only place they can afford to live. While the soil is rich and fertile for growing food, the river is prone to sudden and catastrophic flooding — flooding that destroys their crops and sweeps away their livestock without warning.

Today their gardens are green with the promise of a plentiful harvest, but a single rush of water could mean a whole season of hunger for Punam and her family.

## HOW FAITHFUL NEIGHBORS MAKE THE DIFFERENCE

With their monthly gifts, **Faithful Neighbors** ensure hungry families like Punam's have enough to eat today, while also providing tools, training and ongoing support until the family can sustain themselves tomorrow and into the future.

Thanks to **Faithful Neighbors**, Punam's family learned new methods of flood-proof and off-season

farming that protect their crops from disaster, and they have established a way to receive warnings from villages upriver that a flood is coming so they can move their livestock to safety.

Hunger is no longer the constant, looming threat it once was, and now that Punam's family is stable, gifts from **Faithful Neighbors** will go on to help the next family... **until your love reaches every neighbor.** ○

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Become a **Faithful Neighbor**  
today so your love reaches  
further and stays longer.  
**JOIN TODAY** at **[lwr.org/monthly](https://lwr.org/monthly)**.

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If you have questions about monthly giving or the Faithful Neighbors program, I'd love to chat with you! Please contact me at  
**KHOLBROOK@LWR.ORG** or **410 230 2713**.

# Smart Ways to Help Neighbors in Need

While many **Partners in Lasting Promise** are allowing Lutheran World Relief to plan and invest in the future through a pledge in their will, others are providing for their neighbors through these less commonly used mechanisms that provide instant benefits, or benefits to their estate:



## REAL ESTATE

When you make a gift of real property you have owned for longer than one year, you obtain an income tax charitable deduction equal to the property's full fair market value. You also avoid capital gains tax on the appreciation of the property. You may also deed your home to a charity and remain living in it for the rest of your lifetime. You receive an immediate income tax charitable deduction for a portion of your home's value since the gift cannot be revoked.



## LIFE INSURANCE

Once the security of loved ones is no longer needed, your life insurance policy can be redirected to help support neighbors in need around the world. Assigning Lutheran World Relief ownership of your policy can provide an income tax charitable deduction and reduce your future estate tax liability. ○



## RETIREMENT PLAN ASSETS

A gift of retirement plan assets can be a wise decision. If you transfer yours to Lutheran World Relief, you can save income taxes for heirs. You can also pass these assets directly to a tax-exempt deferred giving plan, such as a charitable remainder trust. You designate who will receive income for life from the trust, and after their lifetime the remaining balance can be designated to charity.



## CHARITABLE GIFT ANNUITIES

A charitable gift annuity is an opportunity to make a gift and receive a tax deduction and yearly income for life. It is an irrevocable contractual agreement between a supporter and a charity. You may designate a beneficiary of these payments, and if you fund your annuity with appreciated property, rather than cash, you can also reduce capital gains tax consequences.



## CHARITABLE REMAINDER TRUSTS

With a charitable remainder trust, you can receive income each year for the rest of your life from assets you give to the trust you create, and you also get an immediate tax deduction. Your income can be either variable or a fixed amount. After your lifetime, the balance in the trust goes to the charities of your choice.

*For a non-committal conversation about planned giving, please contact our Planned Giving Manager or one of our Donor Advisors at Lutheran World Relief at 800 597 5972. As estate laws differ from state to state, it is very important that you seek competent financial or legal counsel before finalizing your estate plans.*

A young boy, Sem Nzabake, is the central figure of the image. He is a Black child with short, dark hair, looking directly at the camera with a wide, joyful smile that shows his teeth. He is holding a white plate with a decorative blue floral pattern. On the plate is a serving of red beans in a reddish-brown sauce, topped with several halved cherry tomatoes. The background is slightly out of focus, showing what appears to be a rustic, possibly mud-brick wall and some colorful fabrics. The overall mood is one of hope and well-being.

# ESTATE GIFTS MAKE AN ENORMOUS DIFFERENCE!

Five-year-old Sem Nzabake's family suffered a life of extreme poverty in Uganda, living in a small mud shack and sleeping on the floor with very little to eat each day. But now, he eats three nourishing meals a day and lives with his family in a new brick house with solar-powered lighting.

Because of compassionate Partners in Lasting Promise, like you, his parents learned to grow more and better coffee and vanilla. Their yields have more than tripled, which means they are able to earn much more income.

**Gifts in wills and other planned giving currently provide **NEARLY 20%** of Lutheran World Relief's service delivery to neighbors in the most forsaken areas of the world — creating brighter futures for neighbors Sem and his family.**

## // REFLECTION

# “HERE AM I; SEND ME.”



*“Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, “Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?” And I said, “Here am I; send me!” — Isaiah 6:8 (NRSV)*

The world is full of need; there is no shortage of poverty, disaster, war or disease to go around.

The good news is **love conquers all**. And no matter our human limitations, despite our feeble arms and our weak knees, **love never fails**.

Saying yes, rolling up our sleeves and letting God use us — imperfect vessels though we may be — to carry God’s love to the hungry, the sick and the poor is how we do our part to further God’s reign on earth.

For generations to come, your generosity will bring hope and transformation to our world in ways that only love — only God — can make possible.

Thank you for sharing God’s love with your neighbors in need as a **Partner in Lasting Promise**.

**Until your love reaches every neighbor.**

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace:

where there is hatred, let me sow love;

where there is injury, pardon;

where there is doubt, faith;

where there is despair, hope;

where there is darkness, light;

where there is sadness, joy.

O divine Master, grant that  
I may not so much seek

to be consoled as to console,

to be understood as to understand,

to be loved as to love.

For it is in giving that we receive,  
it is in pardoning that we are pardoned,  
and it is in dying that we are born  
to eternal life.

*Amen.*

— Peace Prayer of Saint Francis



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**Lasting Promise Magazine**

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Your purchase helps to ensure their coffee farm in Uganda is profitable, their children are fed and their village school is funded.



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