

ISSUE 8

Lasting Promise

MAGAZINE

Yesterday

Today

80

years of loving
your neighbors

Yesterday... Today... Tomorrow...

Your love changes lives!



LUTHERAN WORLD RELIEF



Angelita Galina's land and income are more sustainable because of you.

WHO IS MY NEIGHBOR?

FOR 80 YEARS, YOUR LOVE HAS BEEN A LIFELINE. But with so much suffering, how do we decide where your compassion goes?

Jesus was asked in Luke 10:29, *Who is my neighbor?* We know his answer — **what's ours?**

MOST VULNERABLE

We focus on those who bear the greatest burden in crises — women, children and the elderly.

LOCAL INSIGHT

We are guided by local neighbors, partners and staff. This allows us to **walk with them, not for them**, and creates dignified, lasting solutions.

GREATEST IMPACT

We prioritize challenges that allow us to **address root issues**, in places where we can **make an impact strong enough to break the cycle of poverty**.

YOUR COMPASSION

None of this is possible without YOU. The transformation happening today, and the brighter futures tomorrow, is because of your love.

**Thank you for
loving your neighbors,
until we reach every one.**

Lasting Promise

MAGAZINE

Issue 8 (2025)

EDITOR:

Niki Clark

ON THE COVER:

For 80 years, from Jerusalem (left) to Türkiye (right), the love of compassionate supporters like you has served as Christ's hands and feet in our broken world. Read about the history of your life-changing generosity on page 8.



FROM THE PRESIDENT



Dear Friend,

Your forward-thinking compassion is truly a gift.

Since 1945, with astounding trust and faith, Lutherans have been investing in a better and brighter tomorrow for our neighbors in need. I am grateful for the gift of your trust every single day.

I am reminded in Jeremiah 17:7-8 (NRSV):

Blessed are those who trust in the Lord, whose trust is the Lord. They shall be like a tree planted by water, sending out its roots by the stream. It shall not fear when heat comes, and its leaves shall stay green; in the year of drought, it is not anxious, and it does not cease to bear fruit.

Recently this verse has been a source of constant comfort. As your love has been for 80 years for our suffering neighbors. Neighbors who experienced the horrific aftermath of World War II. Neighbors suffering the catastrophic famine in Ethiopia in the mid 1980s. Neighbors suffering at this very moment after the destruction of hurricanes Milton and Helene.

In the 80 years since Lutheran World Relief's founding, we have experienced countless situations that would by any definition break the human spirit. But because of faithful servants like you, we overcome. Your love provides a foresight that allows us to react immediately with a response that is anything but unprepared.

As Reverend Tim writes in his beautiful reflection on page 15, "Blessed are those who plant trees under whose shade they will never sit." For eight decades, the compassion of supporters like you has comforted and empowered our neighbors in their direst moments. Because of you, we will do the same for generations to come.

Thank You.

In Christ,

**AMBASSADOR
DANIEL SPECKHARD**
President and CEO

Dear **Partners in Lasting Promise**,

I could spend the next 80 years sharing my gratitude for the life-changing love that supporters like you share with our most vulnerable neighbors. **It still would not be sufficient.**

In preparing this issue for you, I was overwhelmed with how expansive your reach is. How many neighbors and communities are empowered and emboldened to provide for their families. And how supporters like you have been doing this Christian service for decades and will carry on this work for decades to come.

I'd love to share more stories of how the investment of friends like you enables radical and sustainable change for neighbors around the world. Please email or call me anytime.

In Humble Gratitude,

LEE GRANT
Planned Giving Manager
LGRANT@LWR.ORG
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80 YEARS OF YOUR COMPASSION

In 1945, our Lutheran forebearers joined together to be the Body of Christ in the world, responding boldly to the needs of our neighbors in Europe after World War II.

For 80 years, you have served our neighbors in their greatest hour of need. You go where no one else goes, and you stay as long as needed to minister to neighbors affected by poverty, hunger, sickness, violence and more.

TOP RIGHT: Following World War II, Lutheran World Relief distributed hot meals to refugee children. Your compassion reaches the most vulnerable in their darkest moments.

MIDDLE RIGHT: In July 2024, the largest children's hospital in Ukraine was hit during a deadly barrage of missile strikes. **Your love was on the front lines** distributing much needed kits and supplies **within hours.**

BOTTOM RIGHT: In Türkiye, you provided earthquake survivors with food and clean water, hygiene supplies and fully furnished container homes to house families like Erkan and Seyda Halal and their children.

IN TIMES OF CRISIS

Floods, earthquakes, war and other emergencies affect everyone, but it's the world's poorest who suffer most. That's why Lutheran World Relief is there to offer help and hope, wherever and whenever disaster strikes. Clean water. Nourishing food. Safe shelter. Emergency supplies. Time and again, you act quickly to rush aid where it's needed most.

This incredible outpouring of support for neighbors in crisis began in 1945 and has continued with each new generation of Lutherans.



YESTERDAY



TODAY



TOMORROW



ELCA Archives

YESTERDAY



TODAY



TOMORROW

FOR THE LONG TERM

Emergency relief is essential in a crisis, but you don't stop there.

The world's poorest families need lasting solutions, not just relief. By supporting farmers, creating job opportunities for youth and improving health and education, we can help break the cycle of poverty together.

Sustainable development takes time, but **love is patient**. And although this work rarely makes the news, **your impact truly transforms lives for generations**.

TOP LEFT: In 1962, displaced children in Jordan received School Kits. Educational resources and training, made possible through your love, have empowered teachers and students and helped pave the way to brighter futures.

MIDDLE LEFT: Mary and her children live in a displacement camp in South Sudan. Thanks to your support, they received emergency care plus the tools to stay healthy for the long term. With seeds and training, Mary now grows a variety of nutritious foods for her family in her own garden.

BOTTOM LEFT: Diseases like cholera claim millions of lives each year, particularly in areas without access to clean water. In Guatemala, health promoters transform communities by teaching safe hygiene practices and improving access to clean water. ○

WATCH 80 YEARS OF YOUR LOVE IN ACTION!

lwr.org/80





BREAKING THE CYCLE OF POVERTY

The vicious cycle of poverty keeps families in its grip for many reasons. Hunger. Drought. War.

Extreme weather. For our neighbors most in need, these factors often come in unison, like a terrible chorus of devastation.

Positive disruptions are strategic actions that create ripples that change lives today and into the **future**.

As Partners in Lasting Promise, your compassion enables these changes that truly break the cycle of poverty. Here are two ways that, together, we're providing complex, holistic and localized solutions for future generations.

AYOD, SOUTH SUDAN

AT A QUICK GLANCE, Gabriel and Nyalony look like any couple in love. Their daughter, Tethcoay, is a bright-eyed toddler. But then you notice Gabriel's crutch, his missing leg — the result of a landmine accident — and the barren surroundings of a displacement camp. There is an abundance of love among this family, but the tragedies have been abundant, too.

After his accident, Gabriel spent a decade recovering. The family later fled massive flooding that put most of the country under water, arriving at this camp with little except constant hunger.

While their story seemed fated, your kindness changes even the most likely of trajectories. A Lutheran World Relief health care worker recognized Tethcoay wasn't thriving because she lacked nutritious food to eat.

The health worker ensured the family received further care through seed packages. They were able to plant a home garden — including drought-resistant crops such as eggplants — providing them with nourishment and extra income. Your compassion employed Gabriel to help new arrivals.

Now, even at Tethcoay's young age, her parents dream of her education and future, something they didn't dare do before. **It seems possible now, thanks to supporters like you.** ○

HATAY, TÜRKİYE

BEING 17 is complicated enough, but try stepping into Dilan Cabiroğlu's shoes. It may just break your heart. Thankfully, your compassion intervenes when our neighbors suffer most.

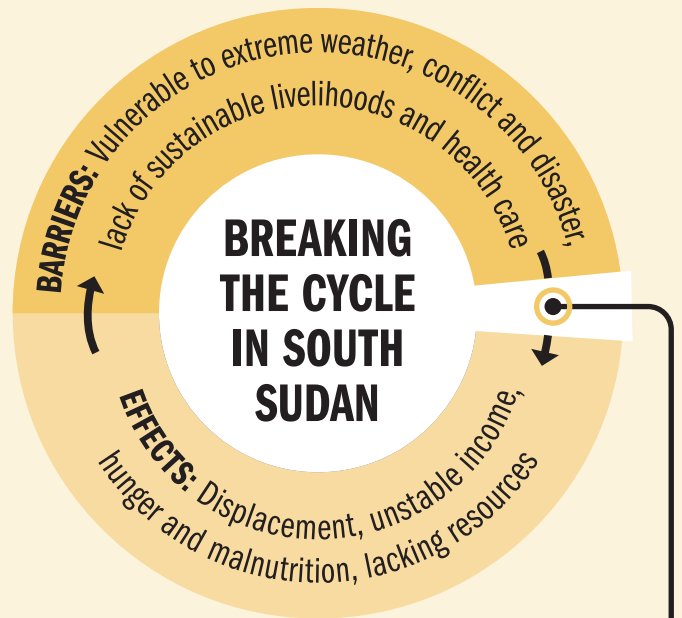
When the earthquake destroyed everything, Dilan's family was grateful to move into their container home, built with your support.

But the aftereffects of such a tragedy burrow deep, and her family struggled. Away from friends, Dilan became listless.

Then she discovered a kid-friendly center supported by your generosity that offers activities, classes, and counseling. The center provides transportation for those who live further away and all materials, even things like laptops and robotic kits.

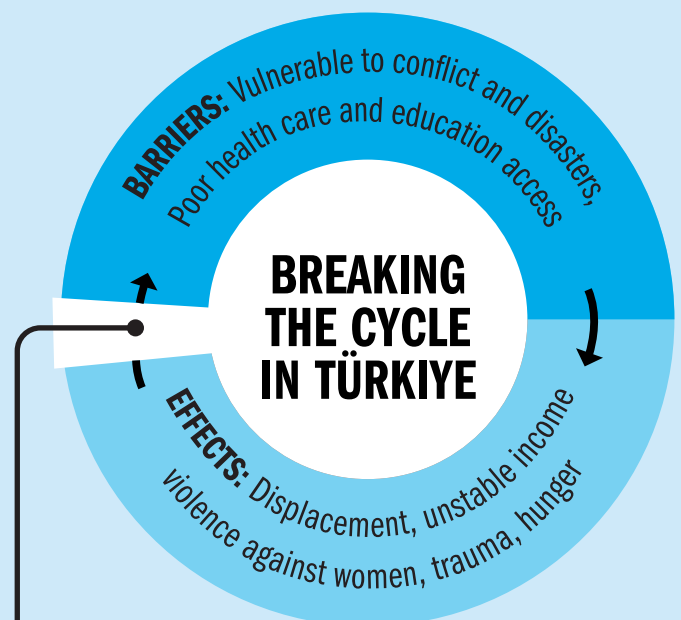
Now, Dilan has a whole new outlook. She's able to address her trauma and, inspired by the opportunities you've provided, dreams of being a nurse.

"If it wasn't for this place," she says, "I would still be experiencing the shock of the earthquake. Here, I learn new things and meet new people, my head is cleared, and I become more energetic. My day goes better." ○



POSITIVE DISRUPTIONS:

- Mobile clinics and nutrition centers
- Improved farming practices
- Job trainings and market access
- Supplies distributions



POSITIVE DISRUPTIONS:

- Health worker trainings
- Trauma-centered mental health centers
- Youth- and women- friendly spaces
- Entrepreneurship grants

A HISTORY OF YOUR FAITHFUL *Love*

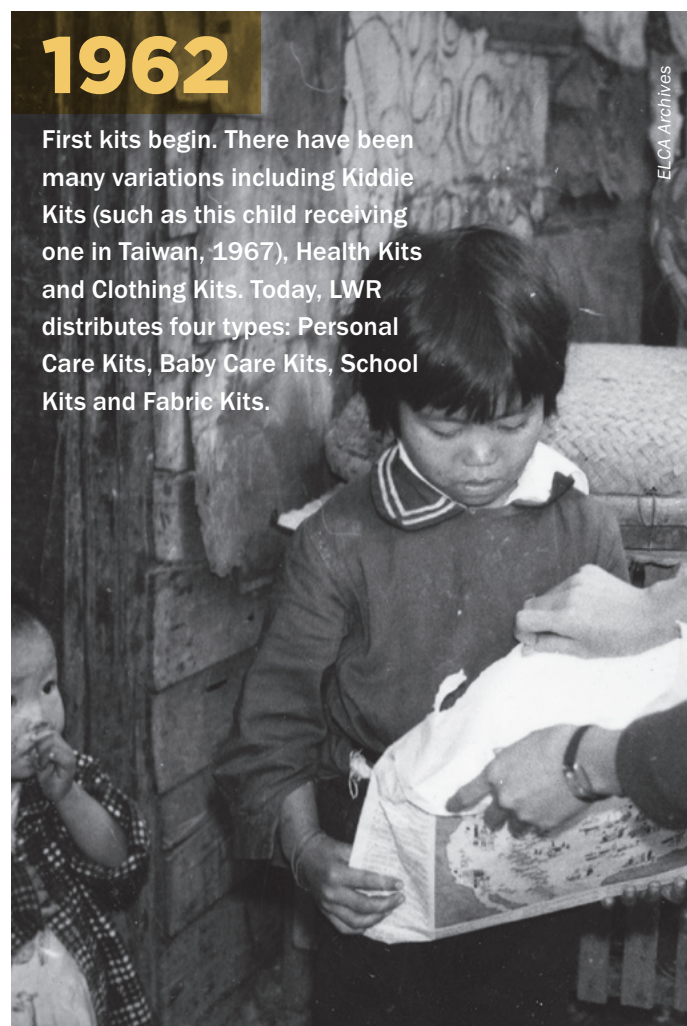
In 1945, World War II left an estimated one-fifth of the world's Lutherans homeless. Here in the United States, Lutheran churches in at least 20 states mobilized to help in Europe through a new agency called Lutheran World Relief.

Much has changed in 80 years. But your enduring devotion to our most vulnerable neighbors never has.

Your love was there in the early 1950s when Hong Kong, Korea and Bangladesh and much of Asia was mired in strife ... and during the 1970s and '80s, when civil wars and drought plagued Africa.

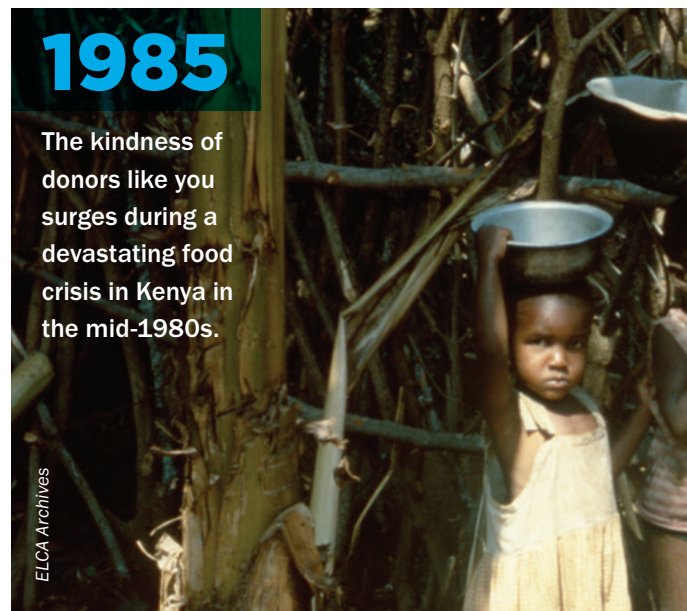
Today, Lutheran World Relief operates in East and West Africa, Latin America, Asia, Europe and the Middle East, helping some of the world's poorest communities build the resilience they need to thrive.

Journey with us through some of the highlights of the last eight decades — and **136 countries** — of your Christian stewardship. ○



1962

First kits begin. There have been many variations including Kiddie Kits (such as this child receiving one in Taiwan, 1967), Health Kits and Clothing Kits. Today, LWR distributes four types: Personal Care Kits, Baby Care Kits, School Kits and Fabric Kits.



1985

The kindness of donors like you surges during a devastating food crisis in Kenya in the mid-1980s.

◀ Lutheran World Relief is founded following World War II. Within months, 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.



2022

When Russian troops invaded Ukraine in February 2022, our amazing supporters band together to mount the largest humanitarian response in Lutheran World Relief history.

2005

“One thing they lost when their places were flooded and destroyed was the bedding, and in come these beautiful, brand-new quilts — it really fills a need.”

Hurricane Katrina causes unfathomable devastation, and faithful Lutherans step in with a historic and singular distribution of LWR Quilts & Kits.



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.

TODAY

TOMORROW

Eighty years in, and we're just getting started. Your faithful stewardship means a brighter future for generations to come. Thank you!





CHANGING THE FUTURE OF GIRLS IN *Sierra Leone*

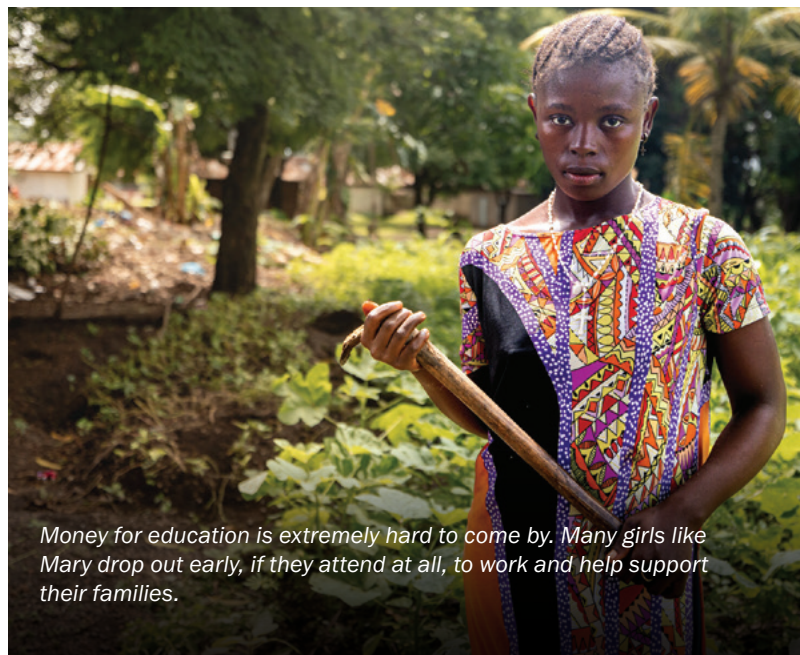
FIFTEEN YEARS is not a lot of life for the amount of tragedy that **Mary Karama** has overcome in her short time on earth.

Growing up in extreme poverty, at 12, she believed it when a young boy told her he could take care of her. At 13, she became pregnant. She dropped out of school, raising her child alone. She made ends meet by foraging for wood to sell.

Her mother died and her father remarried a kind woman named Yanki Selay. Then her father died less than a year later. Yanki took in Mary, but resources are tight. Her greatest dream is for her children to receive an education. It is Mary's dream too.

"Education is the key to success," Mary says. "I love education. I bow my head and pray in the morning, because I don't have anyone to assist me to come back to school."

Mary's story is tragic, but in her country of Sierra Leone — where one-third of children leave school by age 12, and young girls are trapped in a cycle of hardship and missed opportunity — it is not uncommon.



Money for education is extremely hard to come by. Many girls like Mary drop out early, if they attend at all, to work and help support their families.

“Education is the key to success.”

Mary’s prayers were answered. A woman named Ms. Wubay, upon learning Mary’s story, helped her to enroll in Munazamat Junior Secondary School.

Mary has convinced her child’s grandparents to care for him while she focuses on her education, but she visits him often. When she has extra money, which is rare, she pays to sit in private school lessons, since the public school she attends is only in the morning. She often has no lunch, or all the materials she needs.

Mary’s dreams are growing — she hopes for her sisters to gain an education and to create a brighter future for Sierra Leone — but the harsh reality is that it will be an uphill climb.

Because of compassionate friends like you, that road is getting a little easier. Through an LWR-supported program called **Wi De Ya** (“We Are Here”), schools in Sierra Leone are learning how to improve teacher and student attendance through technology and cash assistance, two of the largest barriers to education in the country.

While currently in 300 primary schools, the program aims to eventually expand to all 4,500 primary schools in the country. It’s already increasing both teacher and student attendance.

Today, Mary says education is her top priority. “My book is my husband,” she says. “My education will make my future better. I will hold my book tightly with my right hand.” ○

Mary and her friends study under the guidance of her teacher Sheku Foday Kamara.



Growing up in Sierra Leone



NEARLY HALF of women have never attended school. This figure rises to 69% among women from the poorest households.



1 in 3 MARRIES BEFORE ADULthood



For every additional year a girl can stay in school, her chances of getting pregnant **DROP BY 6%** — and her earning potential as an adult soars by 20%.



On average, educated girls are less likely to be abused or face discrimination. They marry later, are less likely to die in childbirth, raise healthier, better educated children and earn more to **CONTRIBUTE MORE TO THE ECONOMY.**



YOUR EXPANSIVE LOVE: HELPING OUR U.S. NEIGHBORS IN CRISIS

Linda Kinsinger distributing LWR Quilts & Kits in Asheville, North Carolina.

YOU MAY remember in the last issue of **Lasting Promise** we shared how **your love enables us to surround the hardest-to-reach**, even if that means serving those in our own backyard.

Since we've begun responding in the U.S, **the compassion of Lutherans has already reached some of the most devastating disasters.**

Hurricanes Helene and Milton decimated lives and homes in North Carolina and the southeastern U.S. Thanks to you, **help was on the way before the hurricanes even reached land** — and that support continues, as many families are still in need.

As forecasters tracked the paths of the storms, our warehouse team packed and shipped **10 truckloads of LWR Quilts & Kits — more than 60,000 quilts and 76,000 kits** — to locations in Florida, North Carolina, Tennessee, Louisiana and Mississippi in the storms' path.

When the pastor of St. Mark's Lutheran Church in Asheville, North Carolina, called LWR quilter Linda Kinsinger to help with a distribution for homeless veterans whose shelter flooded, she didn't hesitate to show up ... **even though she had no power or water at home.**

Residents of a recovery home that was badly damaged during Hurricane Helene received LWR Quilts & Kits just in time for the holidays. ►

"It's really heartwarming and fulfilling to see the work of the hands of so many people being used right here in North Carolina," Linda reflected.

Besides quilts and kits, **your generosity contributed \$500,000** for essential supplies like water and cleaning products and offered direct cash assistance **to help families with what they need most**, such as food, gas, clothing and medicine.

Because of your faithful foresight, when disaster strikes and neighbors are uprooted, we can respond immediately — **until your love reaches every neighbor.** ○

THANK YOU!





From providing new mothers with essential baby care supplies in Hong Kong (1963) to supporting mothers with healthy births in the Democratic Republic of Congo (2023), your love has always been there for our neighbors at their most defining moments.

//NEXTDOOR

Meet your neighbor **TANGIZA**.

As an assistant nurse at the Katembo Health Center in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Tangiza has seen hundreds of children in his community suffering from chronic malnutrition. It never gets easier — hearing the pleas of desperate mothers, seeing the defeat in listless, ill children. But Tangiza now has a growing confidence in his ability to address the overwhelming task ahead of him.

Because of your compassion, he can.

Since receiving training as part of a community-based nutrition initiative reaching some 14,000 health workers, Tangiza is teaching families how to stay healthy going forward and expanding his reach far beyond his community. He's even helping people grow home gardens!

Because of you, Tangiza and his fellow health workers are one step closer to breaking the vicious cycle of hunger in their communities.

THANK YOU!



‘BLESSED ARE THOSE WHO PLANT TREES’

I grew up in an older home without air conditioning. We had two large sets of bay windows in the living room and in summer, it would get quite warm when the sun beat through. An old oak tree in the backyard provided a fair amount of shade in that room, which helped on the hottest days.

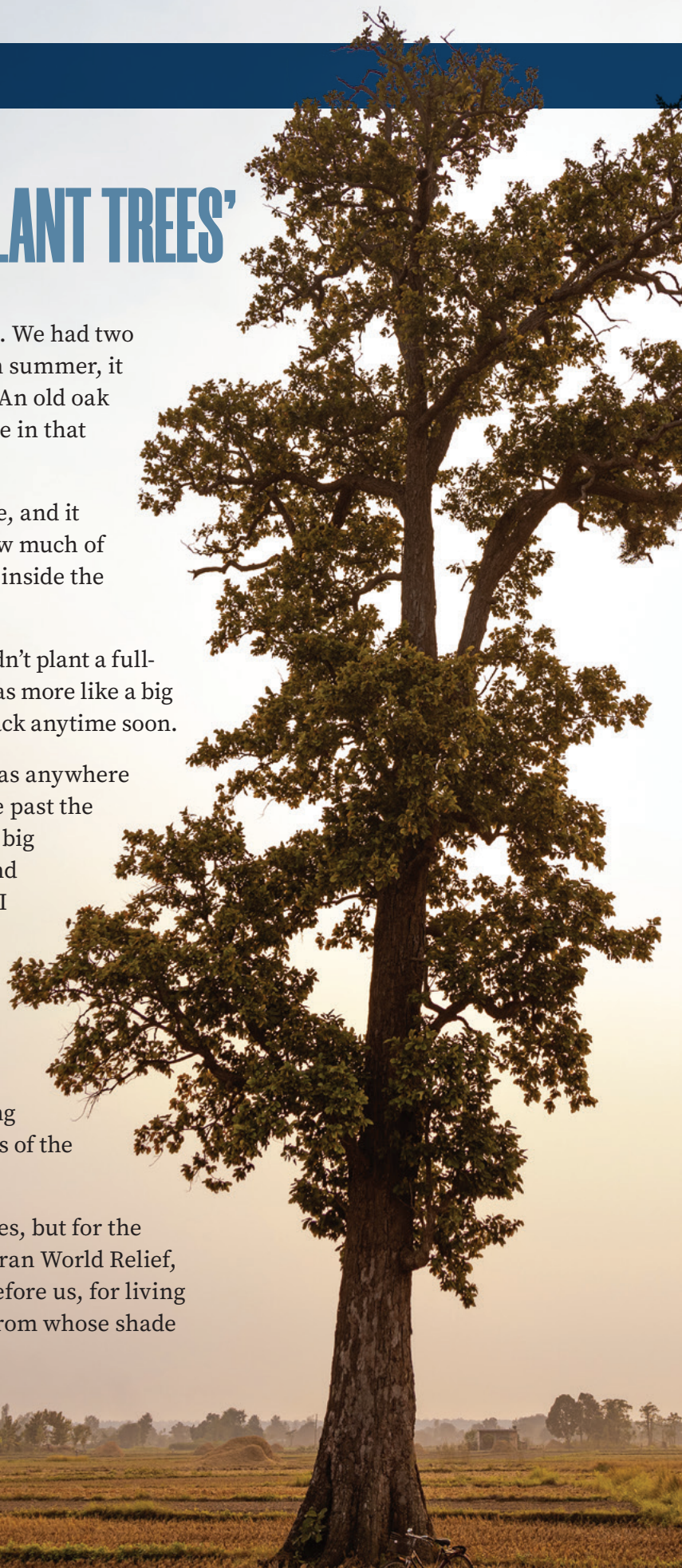
One summer, a tremendous storm damaged the tree, and it had to be cut down. It was only then we realized how much of a difference that oak tree made on the temperature inside the house during those summer months.

It didn't take long for us to plant a new tree. We couldn't plant a full-grown tree and instead we bought something that was more like a big stick with a few leaves. The shade was not coming back anytime soon.

My parents later moved, well before the new tree was anywhere close to mature. On a recent trip back home, I drove past the house. Twenty years later, the tree was no longer “a big stick” but was well on its way to being full grown and providing the type of shade I remember. I thought, I bet the people who live there now are grateful we planted that tree.

That tree makes me think of a quote, “Blessed are those who plant trees under whose shade they will never sit.” It makes me think of you, our Partners in Lasting Promise. You are giving a gift to others, acting in faith to help provide shade from the harsh realities of the world, for a neighbor you will never meet.

Our mission in the church is not to exist for ourselves, but for the sake of the world. As we celebrate 80 years of Lutheran World Relief, I am grateful to you, and all those who have gone before us, for living out your faith in this way — and for planting trees from whose shade others will benefit. — *Rev. Tim Krick* ○





**LUTHERAN
WORLD RELIEF**

Lasting Promise Magazine

LUTHERAN WORLD RELIEF

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BALTIMORE, MD 21230



Raise your hand for more exclusive content!

We try to pack as much impact into each issue of *Lasting Promise*, but the truth is your love can't be contained within these pages. There is a world of good you are creating, sustainable and generational change that we'd love to share with you.

For more information — whether it be videos sharing firsthand impact or simply a more in-depth conversation about how your investment truly brings about brighter futures — reach out. Email **Lee Grant** at **lgrant@lwr.org** or call **410 230 2827**.

Thank you for your partnership!



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