

WELS Christian Aid and Relief

Our Calling

WELS Christian Aid and Relief serves as our synod's "ministry of compassion," bringing physical relief to victims of natural disasters in the form of cash grants, food, clothing, and medical supplies. Christian Aid and Relief also partners with WELS missionaries to support humanitarian aid projects to help build bridges to proclaim the gospel. The mission of Christian Aid and Relief is drawn from the Scriptural encouragement, **"Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers."** Galatians 6:10 Because of all that Christ has done for us, we are eager to reflect Christ's love and compassion to those in need. We seek to personalize our efforts by conducting careful assessments and distributing our funds through our churches and missions. We bring in volunteers when requested to assist in the recovery effort.



Our Current Situation

Christian Aid and Relief is not funded in the WELS budget, but by the special gifts of WELS members.

From January 1st to December 31st, 2017 our total expenditures for relief projects were \$559,854. \$405,221 was expended for domestic relief efforts and \$154,633 for foreign relief efforts. In addition, \$327,475 was designated for Humanitarian Aid projects for fiscal year 2017-2018 which assist our missionaries in building bridges to proclaim the Gospel.

General aide was provided to food pantries, inner city relief and general aid for called workers and congregational members suffering from extreme medical and financial burdens, totaling \$295,000.

Hurricane Relief was a major focus of our efforts this past year with grants totaling \$415,000 as of February 28.

Humanitarian Aid Projects

At their June 2017 meeting, WELS Christian Aid and Relief approved \$327,475 for humanitarian aid grants for FY 17-18. These projects help our missionaries reflect Christ's love to people in need, and also open doors to share the Gospel. Major items include health clinics, borehole drilling to provide clean water, support for a women's skill center, home based care for the chronically ill and dying, food assistance to the needy adult literacy classes, food and nutrition to orphans, medical equipment, and health clinics. Grants have increased recently to more home mission congregations especially welcoming new legal immigrants in cross cultural situations.

Home Missions receiving grants this year are:

Las Vegas, NV, Toronto, Canada, Texas, Boise, Idaho.

World mission fields receiving grants this year are:

Africa – Zambia, Malawi, Nigeria &
Central African Medical Mission
Asia Pacific Rim – Thailand and Indonesia,
Europe – Russia, Albania, Bulgaria, Ukraine
South Asia – Nepal, Pakistan, and India
Latin America – Mexico

Criteria for humanitarian aid project – A world or home mission project that meets a community need and opens doors to share the Gospel as part of the mission's outreach to their community.



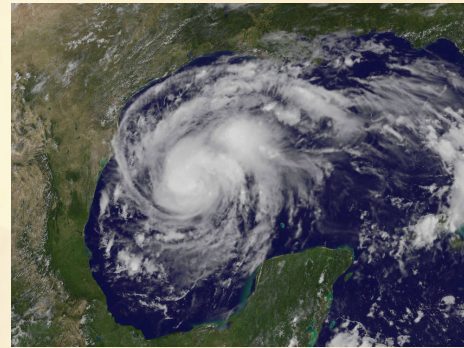
Medical and Financial Emergencies

Our committee also assists local congregations as they reach out to display Christian love and compassion to their members facing natural disasters, medical emergencies and financial crisis. Contact our chairman, Pastor Robert Hein to learn more about how we can match or even exceed your local efforts. This includes supporting congregational efforts to provide aid and relief to your community recovering from a natural disaster.

Our Current Situation continued

Hurricane & Diaster Relief Update

Christian Aid and Relief personalizes our efforts by working through our congregations and missions in the affected areas. We work through our pastors and synod and congregational leaders to make assessments and distribute aid. We bring in volunteers when requested to assist in the recovery effort.



Puerto Rico

Our liaison to Puerto Rico, Pastor Tim Satorius, keeps in contact with pastors and leaders of the Confessional Evangelical Lutheran Church of Puerto Rico. Pastor Satorius and a representative from Christian Aid and Relief made a personal assessment visit to Puerto Rico in October. One church there was completely destroyed, another was damaged, and several homes of members were damaged. Groceries were provided to families in need. We sent an immediate gift of \$5000 through Direct Relief to assist those in need. We also sent \$5000 to provide meals for people in the church and community suffering from this disaster. This enabled members of the national church to provide meals for 50 people a day for four weeks.

In January 2018 President Mark Schroeder, World Mission Administrator Larry Schlomer, Director of Missions Operations Sean Young, and Pastor Tim Satorius made a personal visit to Puerto Rico to meet with national leaders and further discuss ways we can help. Christian Aid and Relief approved their proposal to engage a Spanish speaking WELS pastor for one year to serve as a consultant with the national leaders in developing a specific plan for recovery efforts and also strengthen our relationship with this National Church, assisting them with ministry enhancement and training workers. Pastor Larry Schlomer Sr. accepted this position. Specific rebuilding plans will be brought to Christian Aid and Relief for approval. Then we will recruit and organize volunteers to assist from our volunteer database.

Florida

Volunteers, with the help of our disaster relief trailers, assisted with the cleanup efforts in several affected communities. Those who have received assistance are most appreciative and wish to express their gratitude for a job well done. Pastors in the affected areas brought requests to us for immediate aid for their members through our District President Chuck Westra. This included generators and equipment, rental assistance while being displaced from home, and assistance with cost of repairs and replacement of furnishings. We assisted Abiding Grace, Covington, GA as their church suffered water damage from the storm and brought in volunteers to repair a roof at Calvary Lutheran Academy in Florida.



Our Current Situation continued

Hurricane & Diaster Relief Update

Texas

Volunteers from neighboring churches helped with the initial cleanup efforts in several affected areas. The equipment included in our disaster relief trailers was put to good use. We have been blessed with wonderful volunteers and a project coordinator who came in to help with rebuilding efforts. They did great work putting in countless hours repairing a parsonage and church at Christ our Savior, Angleton, TX, the school at Sienna Plantation Academy, and about 17 member homes in the Friendswood, TX area. The volunteers often express the joy they experience serving their Lord as they serve these people in their time of need. We have also received wonderful expressions of gratitude from the families we assisted. We also provided grants to replace furnishings and appliances to homes which were ruined by the flooding. Volunteers will complete a few more home repair projects in the Houston area in Spring 2018.



Antigua, Barbuda and Dominica

Assistance was provided to families displaced from Barbuda, who are staying with members and friends of our WELS mission, St. John, Antigua. 29 families received \$18,000 in immediate aid so far. Funds were also distributed to assist families in Dominica affected by the hurricane. Our liaison Pastor Tom Spiegelberg has visited Antigua and is helping us make further assessment of needs and opportunities.

We express our appreciataion to many volunteers, including from Builders for Christ, who have been a tremendous blessing to these recovery efforts.



A Look Ahead

Annually, Christian Aid and Relief reviews humanitarian aid grant requests forwarded to us from the Board for World Missions and Board for Home Missions. These projects help build bridges for proclaiming the Gospel to the people we serve in our mission fields.

WELS Christian Aid and Relief continues to look for ways to improve its communication to the members of our synod. “Lifeline” videos have been developed so that those who support our work can see firsthand how their gifts are being used. Our Web page www.welsnet/relief continues to offer timely information and a convenient way to donate online for Christian Aid and Relief projects. Members can also find us on Facebook at Christian Aid and Relief. Committee members and volunteers also make presentations to various groups to “tell our stories”, letting WELS members know about the needs and opportunities to help people through Christian Aid and Relief. DVD’s of Lifeline Videos and other written materials and photos are also available upon request. We are partnering with other WELS agencies, such as Kingdom Workers, Wisconsin Lutheran Child and Family Service, and the nurses association to coordinate volunteers to assist in relief efforts when appropriate.

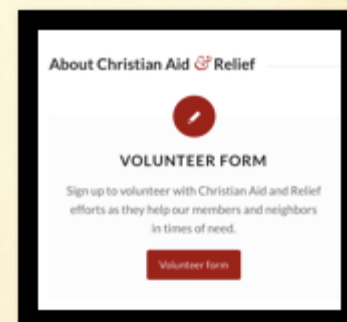


Action Items

- Pray for God to bless our ministry
- Visit wels.net/relief for more information, to view a Lifeline video, or to become a partner of this ministry
- Remember our ministry with special offerings
- Contact us to schedule a presentation for your church, school, or organization
- Follow us on Facebook, [fb.com/ WELSChristianAidAndRelief](https://www.facebook.com/WELSChristianAidAndRelief)
- Sign up to become a WELS Christian Aid & Relief volunteer at wels.net/relief.

For More Information Contact. Committee Members

Rev. Robert Hein, chairman and reporter
Staff Minister Tom Hering, secretary
Rev. Bruce Marggraf
Rev. Richard Warnecke
Mr. Steve Wright
Mrs. Elizabeth Zambo, administrative assistant



Humanitarian Aid Projects June 2017 – 2018

Christian Aid and Relief continues to partner with the WELS Board for World Missions, Board for Home Missions, WELS Missionaries, and our sister congregations of the Confessional Evangelical Lutheran Conference around the world in funding humanitarian aid projects which reflect Christ's love through acts of kindness to people in need and builds bridges to proclaim the good news of God's love through Jesus. Below is a list of humanitarian aid projects for FY 2017-18 totaling \$327,475. We praise God for all those who helped to fund these projects through their special gifts!

Albania

Christian Aid and Relief provides funding for Christmas and Easter food baskets for needy individuals in their congregation and in their neighborhoods. Invitations and information about the congregation are shared with the recipients of the baskets.

Bulgaria

Funding has been granted to provide packages with food products, along with Christian books and brochures, for visitors to major festival worship services. With the Lord's blessing this will help build bridges to share the gospel with more people and to maintain connections for ongoing ministry contact.



CAMM – Central African Medical Missions

The Central African Medical Missions in Malawi and Zambia receive funding from Christian Aid and Relief for medical supplies and nutritional supplements for infants. CAMM currently provides medical care at four clinics which also serve as LCCA churches. These humanitarian efforts help serve as a bridge for proclaiming the gospel.

India

Medical aid to India has been approved to provide supplies for government and private hospitals and health clinics. This includes basic necessities such as blood pressure cuffs and thermometers, hospital beds, baby warmers, and more sophisticated equipment such as an instrument to test for glaucoma. Funds have also been granted for the digging of approximately 20 fresh water wells. As with most of the humanitarian work in India, these projects may not open new doors directly for gospel “bridge building,” but they will help to ensure that the doors to India will remain open for WELS counselors living and working there. These kinds of projects are necessary for our presence in India to continue; it is excellent and necessary PR with the local medical community, government officials, and other influential people.

Humanitarian Aid Projects June 2017 – 2018 *continued*

Indonesia

Funding has been granted to assist congregations in Indonesia to hand out staple food items to needy households in their neighborhoods. In some cases, books and school supplies will be given to needy children. The hope and prayer is that caring and sharing will provide a bridge with these people by letting them know the location of the source of the aid and by strengthening the churches' reputation and communication among their neighbors.

Malawi

Funding by WELS Christian Aid and Relief for boreholes dug in Mayaka and Nagome are now functional for the people in these villages for drinking, cooking and cleaning. These two wells open the door for the gospel message to be shared by allowing permanent churches to be built. A vicar will be called with the well nearby to supply water for his family. Vacation Bible school and other programs can now be held knowing that there will be water for the children to drink. Water is such a basic human need and without it there is no life. What a blessing to be able to provide water and at the same time provide the living gospel message for the people of Malawi to drink so they may enjoy eternal life!



Mexico

Funding for the Costa Maya Ministries Education Center allows the mission in Mahahual to provide a place where the locals can come to hear the Word of God, receive a weekly meal and participate in Bible studies and other outreach opportunities.

Nigeria

Funds have been granted to Nigeria to help in the distribution of health care for people in great need, many of which are not members of the local church. The ability to offer care and provide humanitarian aid to Nigeria's unchurched will serve as a bridge for Christ the King and All Saints Lutheran Churches of Nigeria to invite villagers to church to hear the gospel. Funds will also be used to help offer pharmacy services and health education in rural areas demonstrating the loving care of Lutheran Christians. Aid will provide support for church members to visit rehab centers, hospitals, prisons, orphanages and health centers and to assist widows, widowers, and people with special needs.

Humanitarian Aid Projects June 2017 – 2018 *continued*

Nepal

Aid supplied to Nepal provides funding for health clinics. At each clinic, workers minister to the physical and spiritual needs of those who receive care. Christian literature is distributed. Clinics often lead to the formation of a Bible study group, and eventually have developed into local churches. Aid is provided to reach out to women in rural and remote areas to offer activities and sessions to improve basic skills. Offering these skills provides opportunities to share the gospel. Aid also provides textbooks for higher secondary level students in several districts in the Himalayan area near the Tibetan border. This opens doors for sharing the gospel in these areas and helps to train future leaders and teachers of the Christian church. Funds have also been granted to provide mosquito nets for victims of local flooding. These nets will protect people from mosquito-borne illnesses and even from snake bites. Providing these nets will provide opportunities to share the love and the hope they have through Christ.

Pakistan

In Pakistan, funding has been granted to provide medical care for many families and assist with crippling debt. The kindness shown to those in desperate need opens doors to share the good news of the Great Physician of both body and soul. Funding has also been granted to train women in basic skills like knitting, stitching, and embroidery. Each session begins and ends with a gospel devotion. By learning these skills, women can then support themselves and be spared ill treatment in the public market place and work safely from home to receive income to support their families as well as mission work in Pakistan.

Funding has been provided to help toward the cost of medical procedures needed by many families without the means to pay. This kindness shown to folks in desperate life and death situations provides opportunities to share the best news of a Savior. Aid has also been granted for food distribution at Christmas and Easter in neighborhoods bordering Christian homes and schools.

Russia

Funding has been granted to Russia to provide food, clothing, hygiene items, school supplies, and medicine for the needy. These gifts will allow for the Law-Gospel pamphlets to be distributed and to invite people to Bible instruction classes. This will let the workers' light shine in the area and grow their reputation of helping those in need. Aid has also been granted to assist institutions such as hospitals, rehab centers, orphanages, and half-way houses. The government values this work and presence, which is very important as it opens the doors for Bible classes and Christian counseling. Through this ministry, Christian literature is left in public schools, rehab centers, and other institutions. These efforts provide additional connections to the local congregations as they reach out to the villages.

Thailand

We continue to support the efforts of medically trained volunteers who travel to Thailand to set up week long medical clinics in our village churches. As these clinics draw people from both local and neighboring villages, they provide the missionaries and other workers with a unique bridge for presenting the gospel and for creating good-will presence for our churches through such care and service. Eye glasses and hearing amplifiers are two of the many gifts that are shared with the people. These gifts not only open their eyes and ears to the world around them, but open their hearts to a clearer understanding of the love that Jesus has for them through the witnessing of the unconditional love of those providing for their needs. VBS and ELS classes are offered and follow up contacts are made after the classes conclude.

Humanitarian Aid Projects June 2017 – 2018 *continued*

Ukraine

Funding has been granted to provide food assistance for war refugees and help for orphans. This assistance serves as a good Christian witness to many people and shows the love of God to many in great need. It also provides for the opportunity to share the love of God to those who join in worship.

Zambia

Christian Aid and Relief provides funding for home-based care that bridges the physical and spiritual care of the chronically ill and dying. This grant will help prepare the Christians in this ministry to better meet the needs of the community through acts of sharing God's gracious gift of salvation as they help those with AIDS, TB, Malaria, and other chronic and terminal illnesses. Funds have also been granted to support a literacy program. A person who is able to read and write is well positioned to do God's work more efficiently, especially where evangelism is concerned. The Central African Medical Mission in Zambia receives funding for medical supplies and medicines that help support the mission of communicating Christ's love and sharing caring concern for the physical needs of others. Another project will help touch the lives of people with special needs by providing wheelchairs, showing them the passion, love and mercy that Christ has for all people. This work of compassion is performed so the gospel may reach those in need.

Las Vegas, Nevada

In the Las Vegas, NV, area funding has been granted to assist in African refugee/immigrant Outreach. As new African immigrants arrive in this area, congregation members can welcome them, provide a welcome gift (cooking pots, dinnerware, toiletries, soap...), assist them in getting settled into the community, help with English needs, provide rides, and further assist with counseling, ESL training, etc. The intent of this ministry is to assist the refugee immigrants as they transition to life in America, using this opportunity to proclaim to them the gospel of Jesus through personal witness, worship services and Bible classes.

Texas

Congregations in several Texas communities have created outreach events that assist underprivileged families of school age children with much needed school supplies. In conjunction with backpacks and the supplies that are given to the children, Bible stories and videos are shared. Food for all is always part of the days' event, along with games and prizes for the kids. Parents receive information about the church and the programs that are offered throughout the year. Through this effort the congregations seek to encourage families to become a part of their church family and join in Christian fellowship and worship on a regular basis.

Toronto

Funds have been granted to Hope Lutheran Church in Toronto, Ontario, as they coordinate a Welcome Project. This project enables the congregation to provide valuable humanitarian assistance to newcomers to their area. The assistance can take the form of food, rental help, and guidance with other matters pertaining to their transition into the area. This project helps Hope Lutheran show Christ's love to new refugees.

God our Savior wants all men to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth.

1 Timothy 2: 3,4