

OUR PURPOSE

WELS Christian Aid and Relief (CAR) serves as our synod's "ministry of compassion." Galatians 6:10 guides our ministry: "As we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers." In response to our Savior's mercy, and using the gifts generously supplied by his people, CAR seeks to do good by bringing physical relief to victims of natural disasters in the form of cash grants, food, clothing, medical supplies, and volunteer labor. WELS Christian Aid and Relief also partners with WELS Home and World Missions to support humanitarian aid projects, such as bore holes in Africa, food assistance in Ukraine, and school supplies for low-income families in Colorado and Texas. Such efforts help build relationships and provide opportunities to share the good news of Jesus. As faithful stewards of the resources entrusted to us, CAR conducts careful assessments and distributes funds first through our WELS congregations and missions.

DID YOU KNOW?



In addition to disaster relief and humanitarian aid projects, WELS Christian Aid and Relief also assists local WELS congregations as they help their members through major medical emergencies and financial crises. Perhaps you have a member dealing with overwhelming medical bills or an unexpected and oppressive financial challenge. This also includes supporting congregational efforts to provide aid and relief to your community recovering from a natural disaster. We are here to help! Contact CAR Director Dan Sims to find out how we can assist you in your local efforts.

CHRISTIAN AID AND RELIEF TEAM TRAINING

In mid-December 2020, the members of the CAR team met at Christ, Pewaukee, Wis., with Mr. Greg Schmill and Mr. Steve Granberg of Grace in Action to learn a system known as V/TO (Vision/Traction Organizer™). They focused on the various strengths of the team members, did a lot of brainstorming and goal-setting, and organized it all in the V/TO system. This helps to give CAR a clear direction for future ministry and a proven system for accomplishing our goals. Some highlights of future plans include: creation of a Disaster Relief Task Force to study, document, and systematize our disaster relief process; production of a "disaster devotional book" to share with those who have been through the trauma of a disaster; and implementation of onsite disaster training in the spring/summer of 2021. The CAR team (from left to right): Pastor Rich Warnecke, Pastor Bruce Marggraf, Pastor Bob Hein, Mr. Dennis Palmberg, Prof. Steve Vasold, Pastor Dan Sims (CAR director), and Mrs. Beth Zambo (CAR administrative assistant).



DISASTER RELIEF HIGHLIGHTS

WELS Christian Aid and Relief continues to offer financial assistance and volunteer help in areas hit hard by natural disasters. This past fiscal year, 2019–2020, \$682,685 in financial and disaster relief grants were dispersed. Here are some highlights.

Cedar Rapids: More than 100 volunteers assisted with repairs to the derecho-damaged church and parsonage of Good Shepherd, Cedar Rapids, Iowa. They also helped members and neighbors clean up tree damage after the storm.



Pandemic Relief: The pandemic is a problem, but it is also an opportunity to give help and hope. In that spirit, WELS Christian Aid and Relief and WELS Home Missions recently gave \$166,300 in matching grants to WELS mission congregations that presented plans for pandemic relief and outreach. These congregations are reaching out to their communities to help those who are hurting with food for the hungry, counseling services for those who are struggling with anxiety or depression, help with rent and utility bills for those who are out of work, and many other forms of support. As they help people with their physical and psychological needs, they will also be directing people to the One who fulfills their spiritual needs: Jesus Christ, our Savior and theirs. It is truly a wonderful opportunity to “do good to all people” (Galatians 6:10) and to share “the reason for the hope that [we] have” (1 Peter 3:15). WELS Christian Aid and

Relief is also offering similar pandemic relief grants to all WELS congregations. Churches can apply for a matching grant of up to \$2,500 to be used for physical, emotional, and spiritual relief in their communities.

HUMANITARIAN AID HIGHLIGHTS

WELS Christian Aid and Relief works with WELS Home and World Missions to support projects that meet community needs and create opportunities to share the gospel of Christ. Following are some of the ways the \$515,719 in humanitarian aid granted during 2020–2021 will assist in gospel outreach efforts.

Central Africa Medical Mission(CAMM): CAMM’s mission statement reads, “We provide Christ-centered healthcare supporting gospel ministry.” WELS Christian Aid and Relief supports the work of CAMM as it provides necessary medical care and nutrition through four clinics. Many who come to the clinics hear the good news of their Savior.

Malawi and Zambia: WELS Christian Aid and Relief supported the digging of ten boreholes in Malawi and five in Zambia. These boreholes provide safe, sustainable, and reliable drinking water for many. They also help to build bridges and open doors in the communities they serve so that our brothers and sisters in the Lutheran Church of Central Africa can share the living water of Jesus.

Others: WELS Christian Aid and Relief gave grants for food assistance, health clinics, and medical aid in Indonesia, Albania, Bulgaria, Russia, Mexico, Venezuela, Asia, and more.

LOOKING AHEAD: DISASTER RESPONSE TRAINING

WELS Christian Aid and Relief is working to enhance our disaster relief ministry in the years ahead, including developing a disaster training manual and conducting training meetings for our WELS congregations. We hope to train and equip coordinators and other volunteers in all 12 WELS districts to respond to disasters quickly, effectively, and compassionately.

To find more information, make a donation, or volunteer, please visit wels.net/relief.

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