

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 develop relationships 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 first through our churches, and then through other trusted secular agencies. We bring in volunteers when requested to assist in recovery efforts.



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, 2019 our expenditures for domestic and foreign disaster relief and financial grants for called workers and members suffering from extreme medical and financial burdens was **\$760,492**.

In addition, **\$466,212** was designated for Humanitarian Aid projects for fiscal year 2019-2020 which assisted our world missionaries in building relationships to proclaim the Gospel.

Hurricane & Disaster Relief

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.

We provided disaster relief in a variety of situations including a grant to a congregation whose church was destroyed by a fire and tornado relief in South Dakota. Hurricane Relief was a major focus of our efforts this past year with expenditures totaling **\$489,843**.

Bahamas

Hurricane Dorian swept over the Bahamas and ravaged the islands and did extreme damage to the infrastructure. When WELS Christian Aid and Relief is not able to send volunteers into an area or there are no missionaries or pastors in the area to disperse aid or relief we partner with Direct Relief, a secular relief organization. Our gifts were used to help support 27 shipments of over 143 pallets of emergency medicines and medical supplies to local clinics, shelters, and hospitals.

Our Current Situation continued

Hurricane & Disaster Relief continued



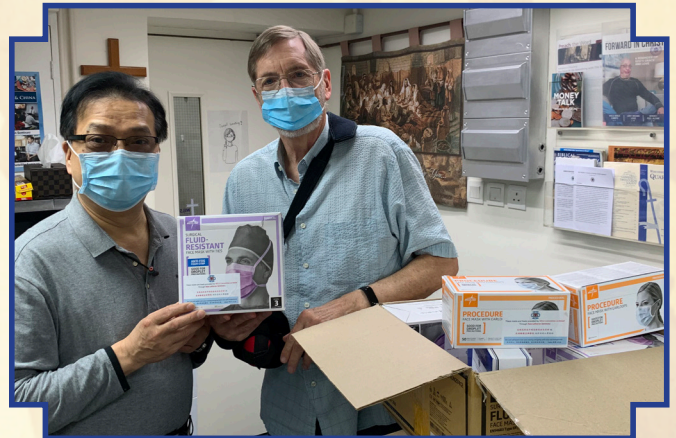
Panama City, Florida

Several volunteers attended the Dedication Service for Amazing Grace, Panama City, FL. Local news coverage told the story of the volunteers offering their time and talents to help those in need. [News report for Amazing Grace](#)

Over 300 volunteers including 40 students from Martin Luther College, assisted with repairs to the church, parsonage, member homes and homes in the community. In March of 2020 we brought in additional volunteers to drywall a member's home.

Coronavirus

We sent masks and financial assistance to South Asia for our brothers and sisters dealing with the Coronavirus. They also distributed masks and supplies to people in the community as part of an outreach effort. Assessment of financial needs related to the Coronavirus is ongoing.



General Relief Grants - Medical & Financial Emergencies



Our commission 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

Humanitarian Aid Projects - Fiscal Year 2019 – 2020

Christian Aid and Relief continues to work with the WELS Board for World Missions, WELS Board for Home Missions, our WELS Missionaries, and our sister congregations of the Confessional Evangelical Lutheran Conference around the world in funding humanitarian aid projects. At their June 2019 meeting, WELS Christian Aid and Relief approved **\$466,212** for humanitarian aid grants for FY 19-20. 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. Following is the list of projects approved for the 2019-2020 fiscal year.

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 & Ethiopia

Central African Medical Mission

Asia Pacific Rim – Thailand and Indonesia,

Europe – Russia, Albania, Bulgaria, Ukraine

South Asia

Latin America – Mexico, Haiti

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.

ETHIOPIA

Funds have been granted to provide a borehole for clean drinking water to a community in Ethiopia. The borehole will serve as a gathering point for community members that they might feel welcome at the church, get to know the pastor/health educators/members and become interested in worship, classes and other church events.



Our Current Situation continued

Humanitarian Aid Projects - Fiscal Year 2019 – 2020

MALAWI

The Central African Medical Mission in Malawi receives funding from Christian Aid and Relief for medications and nutritional supplements. CAMM currently provides medical care at 4 clinics which also serve as LCCA churches. These humanitarian efforts help serve as a bridge for proclaiming the gospel as the workers communicate Christ's love and as they care for the physical needs of others. Funds have also been granted to provide new boreholes and repair or re-drill current boreholes in Malawi so people around numerous villages can receive clean water. Each pastor and congregation see a new borehole as meeting a physical need and as a bridge to the gospel.

NIGERIA

Funds have been granted to Nigeria to help provide medical assistance for people in great need, especially for the unchurched in the local villages. These efforts help demonstrate the loving care of Lutheran Christians. Aid will provide support for church members to visit widows, assist orphans with school needs, help the blind, crippled and aged who lack physical support. 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.

ZAMBIA

The Central African Medical Mission in Zambia is receiving funding for medications, clinic renovation and medical supplies that help support the mission of communicating Christ's love and sharing caring concern for the physical needs of others at the Lutheran Rural Mission Health Centre.



INDONESIA

Funding has been granted to assist congregations in Indonesia in handing out staple food items to needy households in their neighborhoods. The hope and prayer is that such 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' communication and harmony with the local community.

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. These efforts include VBS and ELS classes as well as follow up contacts after the classes conclude. Similar efforts in recent years have been blessed with the fruits of these labors including baptisms, church membership, and the support of village leaders.

Our Current Situation continued

Humanitarian Aid Projects - Fiscal Year 2019 – 2020

BULGARIA

Funding has been granted to provide medicine and packages with food products, along with Christian books and brochures, for visitors to major festival worship services (Christmas and Easter). 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.



RUSSIA

Funding has been granted to Russia to provide food, clothing, coal for winter, 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 emergency social services, children's shelters, house of invalids and veterans, and employment agencies. The government values this work and presence, which is very important as it helps keep our doors open for Bible classes, Christian counseling and distribution of Christian literature and books. These efforts provide additional connections to the local congregations as they reach out to the villages.

UKRAINE

Funding has been granted to provide food assistance for needy refugees and orphans who have been forced to leave their homes. Additional support in the form of heating fuel helps needy families, especially unchurched in the villages, who cannot heat their homes in the cold seasons of the year. This assistance, which is provided at churches, serves as a good Christian witness to many people and shows the love of God to many in great need. Some funding has also been approved to provide help to the very poor in the form of bus transportation to be able to attend outreach activities. This provides additional opportunities to share the love of God to those who join in worship, Bible studies and Sunday School. Christian love is also shared through a project to provide food and clothes to mothers and their needy children at church activities.

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, including providing Christian materials and a New Testament.

MEXICO

Christian Aid and Relief provides funding for a transportation and soup kitchen ministry. People come in contact with the church through the Friday soup kitchen, and many of them then begin to join in worship on Sundays.



HAITI

Christian Aid and Relief approved funding to help equip some orphanages with sewing machines at a community center at which people will receive training and time on sewing machines. Such neighborhood participation at the institute will provide many opportunities for proclaiming the gospel in the community.

Our Current Situation continued

Humanitarian Aid Projects - Fiscal Year 2019 – 2020

SOUTH ASIA

Funding was provided to locations in South Asia so provide medical equipment such as blood pressure cuffs, thermometers, hospital beds, baby warmers and glaucoma tests for hospitals. Funds have also been granted for a reverse osmosis plant and some borehole hand pumps to provide fresh water for thousands of people.

Some funding supports health clinics, where workers minister to the physical and spiritual needs of those who receive care. Aid is provided to reach out to women in rural and remote areas to offer sewing and knitting classes so they can help provide for their families, especially since their husbands are often working in other countries. Aid also provides textbooks and other educational needs for higher secondary level students. This opens doors to train future leaders and teachers. 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. Some funding supports sharing good news through technology and computer labs. Aid in the form of food and warm clothes is provided to widows and orphans, who are often treated unfairly and may even struggle to survive. Other funding will provide smokeless metal stoves for many villagers who suffer from severe respiratory problems due to wood fires in homes. This project helps to gain the goodwill of the people in the community. Aid will also provide nutrition packs for mothers and newborn babies, who must leave their homes for nearly two weeks after giving birth. These new mothers will gather to learn how to care for themselves and their baby and to receive much needed comfort. Aid supports workshops provided to farmers who learn how to provide food and income for their families through off-season farming methods.

Funding has been granted to assist school children with education costs, including uniforms, books, supplies, etc. so that these young people can be built up to become future leaders. Funds were also approved to provide medical care for many families and assist with crippling debt. Funding has also been granted to train women in basic skills like knitting, stitching and embroidery. 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. Funding has been provided to help toward the cost of medical procedures needed by many families without the means to pay. Aid has also been granted for food distribution selected times during the year.



Our Current Situation continued

Humanitarian Aid Projects - Fiscal Year 2019 – 2020

LAS VEGAS

In the Las Vegas area funding has been granted to assist in African refugee/immigrant outreach through The Joseph Project. 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 and transition to life in America, using this opportunity to proclaim to them the gospel of Jesus through personal witness, worship services and Bible classes, children's Bible programs, food pantry/Bible study ministry, and personal follow up.



TORONTO

Funds have been granted to Hope Lutheran Church in Toronto, Ontario, as they provide 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, transportation costs, medical help, etc. all which assist immigrants' transition into the area.

TEXAS

Several community efforts have received funding which will assist congregations in providing backpacks filled with school supplies for children in surrounding neighborhoods. Another project provides meals for low income seniors. This has helped establish relationships with these residents resulting in church visitation and Bible study attendance. These efforts assist in building relationships with area families and provide opportunities to share the gospel.

COLORADO

Funds were granted to assist a congregation with a school supply drive to help families in their community that struggle to meet the expenses of school start up. The school supply giveaway established and strengthened connections with local families and built a positive impression of the church, whose ultimate goal is to share the good news of Jesus with their diverse community.



*God our Savior wants all people to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth.
1 Timothy 2:3&4*

A Look Ahead

Disaster Relief

We look forward to working with our new Director of WELS Christian Aid and Relief, Pastor Dan Sims, who accepted his call from the Synodical Council. He will begin his work among us in June 2020. As we enhance our disaster relief ministry, our action plans include the following:

- **Communicate to WELS membership our plans to enhance our disaster relief ministry**
- **Develop a written disaster training manual**
- **Develop materials to promote a ministry of compassion among our WELS congregations**
- **Develop disaster relief training meetings for congregations**
- **Train and equip district coordinators and WELS members to prepare for, assess, and oversee local disaster response**

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 synod. We want congregations to know we are available to assist them in their local efforts to help members facing an extreme medical or financial crisis, or to reach out to assist their community in a time of disaster. “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 or to volunteer for our recovery efforts. Members can also find us on Facebook at Christian Aid and Relief. Commission members and volunteers also make presentations to various groups to “tell our stories”, letting WELS members know about the 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.

Action Plan

- 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 - <https://www.facebook.com/WELSChristianAidAndRelief/>
- Sign up to become a WELS Christian Aid & Relief volunteer at wels.net/volunteer
- Donate to WELS Christian Aid & Relief - wels.net/CARgift



VOLUNTEER FORM

Sign up to volunteer with Christian Aid and Relief efforts as they help our members and neighbors in times of need.

[Volunteer form](#)



SUPPORT THESE MINISTRIES

WELS Christian Aid & Relief provides resources for individuals and congregations nationwide. Consider supporting these ministries with your prayers and gifts.

Thanks

We thank the Lord for moving the hearts of WELS members to show how much they care with their prayers and gifts of love. We also thank our volunteers who donated their time and talents to our relief efforts.

We thank Tom Hering for his faithful service to our commission for the past 12 years, especially serving as secretary and leading us through our annual review of humanitarian aid projects. We welcome Steve Vasold as a new member to our commission July 1, 2020.

Rev. Robert Hein, chairman & reporter
(robert.hein@wels.net)
Staff Minister Tom Hering, secretary
Rev. Bruce Marggraf
Rev. Richard Warnecke
Mr. Dennis Palmberg
Mrs. Elizabeth Zambo, administrative assistant

