



2017 HURRICANES

ONE YEAR LATER



Lutheran Disaster Response
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

“I’m thankful for the help that I was given, and I will surely carry that on to help others as I can. ... I found I was capable of doing more than I thought I could.”

– Barbara, St. Croix



“They don’t just ‘talk the talk,’ they ‘walk the walk’ and are there for the long term to assist in any way in the stressful hurricane recovery process. They gave us hope with volunteers, supplies and resources to help us get back on our feet. Best disaster assistance organization ever! I am forever grateful.”

– Doreen*, Georgia



*Name has been changed



Thank you

In the second half of 2017, a rapid succession of hurricanes interrupted the lives of millions of our neighbors.

You and other Lutheran Disaster Response supporters responded with incredible generosity to these disasters. Combined, you gave nearly **\$15 million** to hurricane response efforts, showing your dedication to helping our neighbors.

Thanks to you, survivors of hurricanes in Texas, Georgia, Florida, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, Haiti and Cuba have been connected with life-changing support – from emergency relief supplies to emotional and spiritual care, as well as the repairing and rebuilding of their damaged homes. The damage caused by the 2017 hurricanes was so catastrophic and extensive that the recovery will take five to seven years or more. Lutheran Disaster Response is known for staying until long after the headlines change. Thanks to your support, Lutheran Disaster Response can accompany survivors of disasters until this response is complete.



POWERFUL PARTNERSHIPS

Lutheran Disaster Response works in partnership with congregations, synods, social service organizations and other partners in the United States and around the world. With their deep knowledge of local needs and how to address them, these partners help us work in ways that are relevant and effective for each community. Through these partnerships, we accompany survivors from the time a disaster strikes until communities are rebuilt.

For example, Lutheran Disaster Response has been allocated up to \$7.3 million through the National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (National VOAD) as part of a cooperative agreement with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to support the implementation of a disaster case-management delivery mechanism for survivors of Hurricane Harvey in Texas. Thanks to partnerships like these, donor dollars go further for disaster survivors.

This work is made possible by the Lutheran Disaster Response network. We are particularly grateful to:

- Lutheran Social Services of the Virgin Islands
- Lutheran Social Services of Puerto Rico
- Lutheran Services of Georgia
- Lutheran Services Florida
- Upbring (formerly Lutheran Social Services of the South)

EMERGENCY RELIEF

Lutheran Disaster Response facilitated the delivery of critical supplies during a time when infrastructure was not functioning, including:

- baby formula
- batteries
- bottled water
- car power inverters
- diapers
- flashlights
- generators
- satellite phones
- solar lamps
- solar-powered cellphone chargers
- toothpaste and other hygiene items
- pots, pans and other cookware
- blankets
- sleeping pads



Erick Coll, ACT

In Haiti, Lutheran Disaster Response, through local partners, accompanied farmers affected by Hurricane Irma with seeds (such as rice, corn, vegetables, plantains) and farming tools to help restore their farms, as well as supporting women by providing unconditional cash that helped them with activities such as small trade, buying food and paying school fees.



SHELTER

After the hurricanes, more than 4.9 million households in the United States registered for FEMA assistance to repair their homes. Lutheran Disaster Response is coordinating and supporting volunteer programs to help people rebuild their homes in Texas, Georgia, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

Lutheran Disaster Response is also supporting disaster case-management programs. Disaster case managers help survivors make personalized plans to find resources and services to rebuild and recover.



Erick Coll, ACT

In Haiti, Lutheran Disaster Response has supported the rebuilding of 17 homes, focusing on roofing to protect homes from rains.

At the 2018 ELCA Youth Gathering, Lutheran Disaster Response, in partnership with Lutheran Campus Ministries, sponsored “Building Homes, Relationships and Connections” through which youth built walls for two houses for survivors of Hurricane Harvey.





'I GIVE THANKS TO GOD FOR SENDING YOU ALL HERE'

Dennis, a 72-year-old retired Marine, lives in St. Croix, U.S. Virgin Islands, where Hurricane Maria struck causing widespread destruction, power outages, loss of cell reception and access to resources. The morning after the hurricane, Dennis went to check on his house.

"When I looked up, half the roof was gone," Dennis said. "And then the rains started to fall. For weeks." Because of the holes in his roof, the interior of Dennis' home had significant water damage.

Once he moved back into his home after staying with relatives, Dennis met an employee of the Lutheran Social Services of the Virgin Islands disaster response team. He told them about the damage to his home, and soon after they came for a visit.

"I was hoping to get help from FEMA. I wasn't expecting the Lutherans," Dennis said.

Now, Dennis is getting help to rebuild his home and his life thanks to your gifts to Lutheran Disaster Response.

"The house isn't done, but how it looks now is beyond my wildest expectations. I can't imagine what it will look like when it's finished," he said.

"I appreciate what you all have done for me. I give thanks to God for sending you all here."

GEORGIA RESIDENT RECEIVES NEW ROOF

Judy*, in her 70s, is a resident of Tybee Island, Ga. Her home was first damaged by Hurricane Matthew in October 2016. She was still waiting for the money from her insurance company to replace her roof when Hurricane Irma hit in August 2017. Hurricane Irma brought heavy rain and major flooding, and the interior of Judy's home and many of her possessions were ruined.

Before she could deal with repairing her home's interior, she needed to replace her roof. Judy hired a handyman who did a poor job. Inexperienced with this type of work, he left her with a leaking roof that was no better than before. While she had insurance money to cover the repairs to the interior, she didn't have the money to pay for another new roof. Lutheran Services of Georgia (LSG), supported by gifts to Lutheran Disaster Response, managed the construction of the new roof, securing supplies and overseeing the labor. LSG arranged for a team of volunteers to assist with the repairs along with LSG employees. When the roof was complete, Judy was able to proceed with the repairs to the interior.

"How can I thank the disaster organizations that helped me?" Judy asked. "How do you thank someone that kept you from being out on the street with nowhere to go?"

*Name has been changed





EMOTIONAL AND SPIRITUAL CARE

In the first five months after Hurricane Maria, the suicide rate in Puerto Rico spiked nearly 30 percent. A long period without necessities and a feeling of isolation left many without hope. Lutheran Disaster Response is working with local social ministry organizations, synods, congregations and other partners to address the emotional and spiritual needs of communities in Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands and Florida.

In the Caribbean Synod, Lutheran Disaster Response provided emergency salary support for pastors so they would be able to provide pastoral care to their congregations and communities. Other emotional and spiritual care needs were addressed through supporting a social worker in Puerto Rico and the FEMA-funded crisis counseling program for the U.S. Virgin Islands through Lutheran Social Services of the Virgin Islands.

In Texas, Lutheran Disaster Response sponsored a respite retreat for congregational leaders.

In Florida, Lutheran Disaster Response supported emotional and spiritual care through Lutheran Services Florida as it implemented the FEMA-funded crisis counseling program for 20 counties.



Thank you

Because of the generosity of donors like you, Lutheran Disaster Response is able to make long-term commitments to help communities recover from disasters. Based on the severity of the damages and the large number of impacted areas, Lutheran Disaster Response has committed an estimated \$15 million and other forms of support over the next five to seven years. Our efforts will include ongoing support to help survivors create their own recovery plans and secure much-needed resources, continued emotional and spiritual care for survivors and leaders in the response, volunteer coordination and intentional capacity building for our partners and affiliates on the ground.



Erick Coll, ACT

WAYS TO GIVE TO SUPPORT THIS ONGOING RESPONSE AND OTHERS LIKE IT:

ONLINE

ELCA.org/disaster

BY MAIL

Make a check out to Lutheran Disaster Response and send to:

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
ELCA Gift Processing Center
P.O. Box 1809
Merrifield, VA 22116-8009

BY PHONE

Call 800-638-3522 to make a donation with a credit card. Operators are ready to assist you Monday through Friday, 8 a.m.-5 p.m. Central time.



Lutheran Disaster Response
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.