



2018

California wildfires

TWO YEARS LATER



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

Thank you

In 2018, multiple fires raged in California, devastating communities and almost wiping out the city of Paradise. That year became the most deadly and destructive year of wildfires in the state's history, with blazes including the Carr Fire, Camp Fire and Mendocino Complex Fire.

Thanks to your generosity, Lutheran Disaster Response has been able to help communities impacted by these fires with crucial support over the last two years – from emergency relief supplies to emotional and spiritual care. Even as new wildfires continue throughout the western United States, with your help Lutheran Disaster Response can continue to support survivors of these devastating disasters.

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

- **Sierra Pacific Synod**
- **Southwest California Synod**
- **Lutheran Social Services of Northern California**
- **Lutheran Social Services of Southern California**



The response

Lutheran Disaster Response provided wildfire survivors with such immediate needs as food, bedding, clothing, gas, personal care items, rent, and housing security deposits.

As the focus shifted from immediate relief to long-term recovery, your gifts helped provide survivors who'd lost their homes with new permanent housing. So far, more than 20 new homes have been built for people who lost their old ones to fire, with more in the works. Your support also allowed survivors to meet needs that were not met by other relief organizations; for example, providing those who'd lost their households with replacement items such as pots, pans, dishes, glassware and utensils.

Your gifts have also funded disaster case-management programs. Disaster case managers are specially trained experts who work with survivors to help them formulate an individual recovery plan and who connect them with existing resources.

Critically, your support has also provided emotional and spiritual care for people who were impacted by the fires. Lutheran Social Services of Northern California, for example, supported a program to train more than 80 people to lead groups on stress reduction and resiliency skills so that they might offer online classes to their friends and fellow congregants.

Thanks to you, we can support Californians all the way through their recovery.

“We’ve noticed that these small donation events have really helped our clients’ spirits. Knowing that people still care about them, when most have moved on, really helps their overall morale.”

—Staff member, Lutheran Social Services of Southern California



“Many charities and individuals sent donations to Paradise Lutheran Church after the fire, not the least of which were Lutheran Disaster [Response] and Northern CA Lutheran Social Services. This funding helped us through the recovery process until we were able to regroup. Now, even in the midst of this pandemic, our dedicated church community is fully supportive, and with the building of the new fourplex where the parsonage was, we are on track to financial stability once again.”

—Gwen, member, Paradise Lutheran Church

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Looking ahead

Lutheran Disaster Response has committed about **\$1 million** to the long-term recovery of 2018 wildfire survivors. For many survivors, the road to recovery is still long and challenging. Lutheran Disaster Response will continue to support recovery efforts in the foreseeable future.



Ways to support this ongoing response and others like it:

ONLINE

community.ELCA.org/uswildfires

BY MAIL

Make a check out to Lutheran Disaster Response, write "U.S. wildfires" on the memo line, 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.



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