



ELCA World Hunger
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
 God's work. Our hands.



Reproducible Stories 2019

Use these stories in your Sunday bulletins, newsletters and other communications to highlight the lifesaving work made possible by gifts to ELCA World Hunger and Lutheran Disaster Response.

Visit ELCA.org/hunger/resources for these and additional stories.

Reproduce the piece below on the back of your favorite story or as a stand-alone update about ELCA World Hunger.

ELCA WORLD HUNGER

More than 820 million people in our world today are undernourished. As members of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, we are called to respond. Working with our neighbors in the United States and in more than 60 countries around the world, we start by listening and learning about how we can accompany them to help break the cycle of hunger and poverty – for good. From water wells to animal husbandry, microloans to health clinics, your gifts to ELCA World Hunger support innovative solutions that get at the root causes of hunger. And they don't stop there. We engage Lutherans in advocacy and hunger education to act and speak in ways that can make a difference. We rely on your gifts. ELCA World Hunger is funded solely by gifts from ELCA members and congregations such as yours. Thank you for making this work possible through learning, action, prayer and giving.

Give Today

Mail Make your check payable to "ELCA World Hunger." Place your gift in your congregation's offering plate or mail it to:
 ELCA, P.O. Box 1809
 Merrifield, VA 22116-8009

Online Give online with a credit card or become a Monthly Partner at ELCA.org/hunger/donate.

Phone 800-638-3522

A place to belong

BOSTON, MASS.
ELCA.org/hunger



Come rain or shine, or even snow, the East Boston Community Soup Kitchen opens each Tuesday without fail, serving up nutritious fare – with an extra helping of love – from the basement of Our Saviour’s Lutheran Church.

“Nothing stops us,” said lead volunteer Sandra Aleman-Nijjar. “I think only health will stop us, but God has been good. So as long as I have health and my team, then we’re here.”

Sandra and her team of volunteers offer weekly breakfast, lunch and dinner to more than a hundred guests, many of whom face the challenges of poverty and addiction. Guests can pick up hygiene kits or a set of clean clothes and can access social services. What makes this program special, however, is its attention to matters of the heart.

“This space is where we all come together and treat each other with love, with that respect and dignity that we all like to receive,” Sandra said. “We give that to everyone that walks through those doors.”

Eddie has been coming through the doors of Our Saviour’s since the soup kitchen started in September 2016. The

program, which receives funding from ELCA World Hunger, has been a game changer. From age 18, Eddie has lived on the street. “I had nowhere to go and [now] this is my home,” he said.

At the soup kitchen, Eddie feels respected as a whole person. And though he’s grateful for the food and resources he receives, he’s most appreciative of the people, connecting with fellow guests during circle time and valuing the support Sandra has given him. Since Eddie started coming to the soup kitchen, she and others have noticed a change in him.

“He feels loved, that someone cares,” she said of Eddie. “You can see it in [each of] them, that sense of belonging, that sense of acceptance. That someone cares about them, that someone is watching and looking out for their well-being.”

With your support, the East Boston Community Soup Kitchen and programs like it around the country can continue to welcome their neighbors.

WHF19

Your gifts to ELCA World Hunger support innovative solutions that fight hunger and poverty in more than 60 countries around the world, including the United States.

Will you help with your gift today?

YES! I would like to support ELCA World Hunger (WHG0038).

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A refugee finds healing

EGYPT
ELCA.org/hunger



At only 17, Dawit* has already faced a long and harrowing journey. He was born in Eritrea, and in 2017, he and his brother escaped lifelong military service by crossing into neighboring Sudan. On the border, they were intercepted by a group of traffickers. His brother escaped, but Dawit was held by the traffickers for almost nine months and regularly threatened and beaten while they demanded money.

Eventually Sudanese police raided the traffickers' camp and took Dawit to a hospital in Khartoum, where he found his brother again. During their initial journey to Sudan, Dawit had broken his leg while jumping out of a car; he had surgery on the leg in Khartoum, but it was too late to fully repair the damage, and he can no longer put any weight on the leg.

In 2018, Dawit arrived in Cairo, Egypt, and connected with St. Andrew's Refugee Services (StARS), which you support through your gifts to ELCA World Hunger. StARS assigned him a caseworker and started assisting Dawit with his needs. He received food and hygiene boxes, a

sleeping bag, clothes and medical care. His caseworker asked the UN Refugee Agency, which can facilitate access to basic services and protection, to expedite his registration. StARS also referred him to Médecins Sans Frontières (Doctors Without Borders), which now provides him with ongoing psychological care. Dawit continues to use the StARS Medical Access Program for his physical health needs.

"StARS has done a lot for me," Dawit said. "But most of all I like that people are nice to me here, and I can be with my friends and other people like me."

Through it all, Dawit has shown resilience and strength. You've been by his side. Thanks to you, he was able to access critical services that will help him build a brighter and safer future as he enters adulthood.

**Name has been changed.*

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"I have a future"

MALAWI
ELCA.org/hunger



Gustin was born and raised in Beni, a village in the Dowa district of Malawi, where he spent much of his life working as a pig farmer, village leader and community development volunteer. From sunup to sundown, he could be found out on the land – if not at his own farm, then at those of his neighbors. Volunteering his time, he would demonstrate new techniques and introduce new crop varieties to help others increase their yields and avoid the hungry season known to creep up on the community between harvests.

He was 57 when he got sick. The day started like any other, but working in the field, Gustin was overcome with muscle pain. Too weak to walk, he was helped by a fellow community volunteer, who hired a bicycle to bring them to the nearest clinic, 12 miles away. It was there that Gustin learned he was HIV-positive.

He returned home, fearing the worst but determined to fight. Thanks to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Malawi,

he knew where to turn for support. He met with a community health counselor whose training was provided by the ELCM and supported by your gifts to ELCA World Hunger. Gustin received access to treatment, health education, a listening ear and a companion for each long journey to the health clinic or hospital. His counselor walked with him to every clinic visit – 12 miles each way. You helped him get the medical care he needs.

Now 69, Gustin stands tall and strong, with a face of warmth and wisdom. He may work a little less in the field, but he has not reduced his commitment to helping others – not one bit. Now he's focused on health care, actively counseling others who live with HIV/AIDS. This work is especially important in a country where the disease affects 9.6% of people ages 15 to 49.

"If it wasn't for the church, I wouldn't be alive," Gustin said. "But now I know my life is not over, and I have a future."

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Mothers fight for their daughters' education

GUATEMALA
ELCA.org/hunger



“Will you take me with you?” As Pastor Karen Castillo prepared to leave Playito Cerro Alto, a secluded community along Guatemala’s Rio Chixoy, she felt the tug of a regular request from one of the village’s young girls. Pr. Karen knew the situation: If the girl stayed, she would likely be married soon and then pregnant, without the option of continuing her education. Yet Pr. Karen also knew the girl could not come with her to Guatemala City.

This girl’s situation is common among the indigenous, rural communities served by the Augustinian Lutheran Church of Guatemala (ILAG in Spanish). Families tend to be large, and due to poverty, cultural traditions and other factors, daughters are often given away for marriage early. At 12 to 14 years old, girls are matched with husbands who are at least twice their age and sometimes older.

However, with the church’s help and your support, the women in these communities are starting to speak up, calling for better futures for their daughters and granddaughters. The lack of educational opportunities for women and girls is a frequent concern Pr. Karen hears. Schools

are often far from people’s homes, and if instruction is available, boys are often given precedence.

With the urging of parents and leaders in these communities and the support of partners, including ELCA World Hunger, ILAG is providing the tools to break the cycle of poverty for this generation and many to come. Now Pr. Karen can say “yes” to some of the girls longing to complete their education before starting a family.

Opened in 2018 at the Augustinian Lutheran Center in Guatemala City, the MILAGRO (“miracle”) Women’s Education Center is a place for young women from these rural communities to continue their secondary education, faith formation and development of vocational and life skills – among them sewing, cooking, baking, artisanal handcrafts, carpentry, masonry, music and gardening – that will help them be financially independent in the future.

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Supporting recovery after California wildfires

CHICO, CALIF.
ELCA.org/disaster



In late 2018, wildfires raged across both northern and southern California, destroying thousands of homes and nearly wiping out the town of Paradise. Through your gifts to Lutheran Disaster Response, you are walking alongside Californians impacted by these devastating fires.

Lutheran Disaster Response is working with Lutheran Social Services of Southern California, Lutheran Social Services of Northern California and the ELCA synods in California to respond to the fires. Your gifts have already helped survivors with essentials like groceries. In the months to come, we will continue to work with our partners to address long-term needs, such as rebuilding homes, replacing lost property and providing emotional and spiritual care.

Lutheran Disaster Response also works alongside other organizations to fill unmet needs. In northern California, the furniture company Living Spaces worked with Faith Lutheran Church in Chico to enroll more than 200 survivors in a program to receive free mattresses.

When trucks from southern California arrived carrying the donated mattresses, the people of Faith Lutheran distributed them to evacuees who had secured a place to sleep. But the people of Faith didn't just deliver a bed; they offered a loving presence, an opportunity for prayer and a \$100 gift card from Lutheran Disaster Response and Lutheran Social Services of Northern California, so evacuees could buy sheets, a pillow and a blanket to go with their new mattress.

"As soon as I got the bed, I bought myself sheets and a comforter with the gift card," said Julia, who was staying with a friend. "That night was the first night since the fire that I slept for more than five hours. For the first time since the fire, I had something that was truly my own."

The road to recovery from the wildfires is expected to be a long one. Thank you for standing by survivors for as long as it takes.

WHF19

Your gifts to Lutheran Disaster Response help the church respond to the needs of people after a disaster strikes. Working in collaboration with other disaster response organizations and church entities enables the greatest stewardship of resources and maximum impact of response.

Will you help with your gift today?

YES! I would like to support Lutheran Disaster Response (DDG0060).

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Watermelon farming generates sustainable income

CAMBODIA
ELCA.org/hunger



Kay Peh and Nouv Vann live in Kampong Chhnang, a province in central Cambodia where 85% of people are farmers. The couple live on a plot of land they received through a social land concession, a government program intended to provide people with land on which to build homes and generate income through agriculture.

Often the land granted by the government is small, remote and not ready for farming. For Kay Peh and Nouv Vann, the first few years on their new land were difficult. The land was covered with stumps and thick bushes, which made it unsuitable for growing crops. However, in May 2015, supported by your gifts to ELCA World Hunger, the family and 524 others received help clearing their land so it could be used for growing crops to eat and sell at the market. They put up a fence, planted fruit trees and built a house. They were able to grow their first crop of watermelons and sell it for about \$75 U.S., their first income from the land. Gifts to ELCA World Hunger, which partners locally

with an organization called Life With Dignity, also helped in other ways.

Kay Peh and Nouv Vann received solar panels that generated electricity, enabling them to recharge a battery-powered lantern and flashlight. They also received six hens, a flock that has since multiplied to 30 chickens. They raise the chickens to sell during the dry seasons and support themselves. Five chickens will sell for about \$17.50 U.S. Along with watermelon, they now grow spinach, shallots, pumpkins and other vegetables.

A long-standing partner of ELCA World Hunger, LWD empowers rural communities such as Kay Peh's to reclaim their rights and engage in sustainable land management. Your gifts to ELCA World Hunger are brought together with the skills, capacity and resources of local communities to make transformative change.

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Young leaders turn passion into action to end hunger

DALLAS, TEXAS
ELCA.org/hunger



Rosa Orta is passionate about ending hunger. "We're all equal," she said. "It's not fair that only some of us get to eat while others starve."

Last year Rosa funneled her passion into Emanuel Community Center, a nonprofit supported by the congregation of Emanuel Lutheran Church in Dallas, Texas. Through a new partnership between ELCA World Hunger and the ELCA's Horizon Apprenticeship program, Rosa spent her summer working with her congregation to end hunger in Dallas.

For her, antihunger activism is personal.

"My family has always struggled with money since my dad left us at a really young age, but my mom still managed to take care of us," Rosa said. "If it wasn't for the government helping us with food stamps, I don't know what we would have done."

"Rosa appears to be shy and quiet," said Cindy Carroll, Emanuel's pastor, "but as she got involved more deeply in the life of the congregation as a Horizon apprentice, we learned that she is very smart, quick-witted and funny. Rosa always asks good questions, and she has also been very responsive and connected with the ELCA Horizon teachers and mentors, as well as people at the church. This speaks to her maturity and her values around

responsibility and taking things seriously." Rosa also helped connect the center's food pantry with the Domestic Hunger Grant program, funded by your gifts to ELCA World Hunger. Steve Good, president of the Emanuel Community Center board of directors, explained the pantry's philosophy.

"Feeding a person is not enough if that well-fed person lives in a world of danger and harm," Steve said. "So we are passionate about more than ending hunger. We want to help our community eliminate the obstacles to living healthy, fruitful and enjoyable lives."

The food pantry serves about 110 families a month, distributes 40 bags of food weekly to the people experiencing homelessness, and has other programs, including a community garden and a back-to-school carnival where school supplies are distributed. This partnership with the Horizon Apprenticeship program and Domestic Hunger Grants is supported by your gifts to ELCA World Hunger.

WHF19

Your gifts to ELCA World Hunger support innovative solutions that fight hunger and poverty in more than 60 countries around the world, including the United States.

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ELCA
P.O. Box 1809
Merrifield, VA 22116-8009

Online ELCA.org/hunger/donate

Phone 800-638-3522



ELCA World Hunger
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

Young leaders turn passion into action to end hunger

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