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FAITH IN *action*

QUILTS FOR OUR UKRAINIAN NEIGHBORS

THE VALUE OF A SCHOOLKIT




TO ORDER YOUR FREE PIN, GO TO LWR.ORG/QKPIN

This beautiful pin was created especially for you, our beloved quilters and kit makers. This pin symbolizes Christ's love spread by the work of your hearts and hands in making quilts and kits for some of the world's most vulnerable. It's a small token of appreciation for your faithful service.



OUR GIFT TO YOU: THE LWR QUILT & KIT AFFINITY PIN

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INGATHERINGS ARE HAPPENING THIS FALL!

MAKE PLANS NOW TO DELIVER YOUR QUILTS AND KITS

For current information about which Ingatherings are happening and when, visit lwr.org/Ingatherings.



Quick and easy access to LWR Quilt and Kit making information online!



Have you struggled with finding the information you need about making quilts and kits on our website? The struggle is over! Now all you need to do is go to lwr.org and look for the Quilts and Kits “quick links” on the very top of the home page. With one click you’ll be taken to a wealth of information on making quilts and kits, packing and sending them to us, and stories about where they’ve gone and the people who’ve received them. **CHECK IT OUT TODAY!**

DEAR QUILTERS & KIT MAKERS,

Thank you for sharing your time and talents. This ministry would not be possible without your support. Your partnership is greatly appreciated.

A new staff member has joined the Quilt & Kit Ministry. Please welcome Martha Piedrasanta to the team! She will be based at headquarters in Baltimore, MD, and she is excited about working to help our neighbors in need. Martha previously worked for LWR as a member of the International Programs team, so she fully understands the impact quilts and kits have on vulnerable communities.

The Bible teaches us in Matthew 22:37-39 (NIV) to “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.” This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: “Love your neighbor as yourself.”

We’ve experienced many challenges over the past two years, but your love has persisted.

Thank you so much for all you do! You have truly been a blessing to our neighbors in need around the globe.

Warm regards,

JANEL JOHNSON-MOMANYI

Quilt & Kit Ministry Manager

Quilter Spotlight: Audrey Fisher

Audrey Fisher grew up on a farm in Western Washington. She remembers always having an abundance of blueberries. “My father planted those once, 75 years ago. There’s not a lot of things that you plant once that produce for so long.”

You could say the same thing about Audrey. In her many decades of life — she celebrated 90 years this past June — she has produced more than 18,000 LWR Mission Quilts. In fact, she has been supporting neighbors in need through Lutheran World Relief since our founding in 1945. When her pastor learned about a new organization making bandages to send to those harmed in World War II, he asked his congregation for support. Audrey’s mother encouraged her to help because she had such good sewing skills.

Audrey began sewing at just 6 years old. She hasn’t stopped since. “It’s in my blood,” she said.



In 1979, she became the leader of her quilt group at First Lutheran Church in Bothell, Washington. The size of the group and numbers of quilts sewn have ebbed and flowed over the years. One year, in the early 1990s, they made nearly 700 quilts, which is still their annual record.

The group hosts quilt-a-thons when they need help in meeting their goal, bringing in quilters from outside the church. After the 2010 Haiti earthquake, the need for quilts was so great that Audrey held a special quilt-a-thon to make sure her church could meet the demand.

Quilting can be intimidating, especially for newbies who aren’t familiar with the more complicated methods. So, she keeps the patterns and stitches simple and does a lot of prep for those who join the group.

While she’s currently one of ten quilters at the church, as the group leader, her hands touch every single quilt. She cuts the backs and tops and makes holy sheets to make it easier for quilters, who then take the parts home and sew them together.

After all these years, Audrey has her system down pat — and so do many friends that lend their support. A friend at her church created a compression machine using car jacks, pipes and wood, allowing the group to flatten the quilts for better packing. And her group is so well-known in the community, that when a group member who collected fabric passed away, their relative reached out to Audrey and donated nine storage units packed with fabric, all 3x10 yard pieces.

QUILTERS TIP: Audrey’s quilting group ships their quilts in **banana boxes**, like the kind you find at grocery stores, which are stronger than regular cardboard boxes.

Audrey has a bit of a ritual herself for her quilts. “Some people think it’s crazy,” she said, “but I like to talk to them. I wonder where you’re going, I wonder who’s going to get you. When I’m quilting, I’m not worrying about the problems of the world. I’m talking to my quilts and I’m talking to God. That’s my relaxation. And I just really enjoy doing it.”

Audrey likes thinking about how many people around the world have felt comforted and loved by her quilts. “Sewing is a talent that God gave me at an early age. And he tells us we are supposed to help other people. I’m giving warmth to a family somewhere, even if I don’t know where. It’s what I do.”

LEFT: Audrey (pictured second to the left) and her fellow quilters at a recent quilt-a-thon at First Lutheran Church in Bothell, Washington. The group brings in outside help to meet growing demands, especially after disasters like the Haiti Earthquake.

BELOW: Audrey lies in front of just a few of the more than 18,000 quilts she’s helped make.



ON THE COVER: Nadia Agarkova, 33, along with her two-year-old son Kyrylo, at the LWR quilt and kit distribution at the Morshyn sanatorium outside of Lviv, Ukraine, on May 31, 2022.

WRAPPING OUR UKRAINIAN NEIGHBORS

in love (and quilts)!

Your quilts provided tangible love to Kamins'ka Ludmyla and her 6-year-old son Svaitoslav Kaminskyj after fleeing violence in Donetsk, Ukraine.



YOUR LOVE IS BRINGING PHYSICAL COMFORT AND ESSENTIAL NEEDS TO THOSE WHO NEED IT MOST.

RIGHT: LWR staff distribute quilts and kits at a center for displaced Ukrainians.



Kamins'ka Ludmyla wraps her new quilt around her 6-year-old son Svaitoslav tightly, pulling him closer to her. Next to them on the night table sits a photo of Svaitoslav's father. He died six months earlier from COVID-19. She brought the photo with her from Donetsk, one of the few items they were able to retrieve before fleeing from the violence. "I feared for my child's life. I decided to leave rather than stay there," Kamins'ka recalls.

Kamins'ka and Svaitoslav found a place to stay at a sanatorium — a health facility turned housing center for internally displaced Ukrainians — in the west of the country. Lutheran World Relief recently held a quilt and kit distribution there, thanks to the love and support of donors like you. Residents like Kamins'ka received the gifts with joy and appreciation. They have so very little and such generosity makes her feel like the community is welcoming them with "open arms."

Since April, Lutheran World Relief has been continuously supporting six of these centers — sheltering families fleeing bombs, violence and uncertainty. In total, we are subsidizing the cost of emergency housing for more than 15,000 people. Most arrive with only the clothing on their backs, so providing these families with food and essential supplies like folding beds, pillows, heaters, laundry detergent and personal hygiene items is of the utmost importance. And since there's no place like home, we're bringing the quilts and kits that you so lovingly made to surround our neighbors in these centers with just some of the physical comforts only home can provide.

"The first days of the war were very difficult for all of us," said Luybov Biliska, the deputy director at the center. She said children were only interested in where their bomb shelters were located, fearing the violence at home had followed them. "If you

look at these people now, these are completely different faces. There is peace. There is a gleam in their eyes." Luybov credits your support for the center's ability to receive those fleeing and provide them with safe and warm living conditions.

YOUR QUILTS ARE A MINISTRY OF LOVE TO FAMILIES IN UKRAINE.

Still, Luybov said that when she asks residents how she can improve their stay, what they want, they all have the same answer. "They all want to go back home."

Until that's a safe option, your quilts will be with our neighbors in need, reminding them of God's loving presence in a world rife with suffering. ■



ABOVE: Oleksandra Kslinina (left) and Nadia Agarkova (right), 33, along with her 2-year-old son Kyrylo, received quilts and care kits after fleeing violence



THE VALUE OF A SCHOOL KIT

by Rev. Lisa Kipp

By U.S. standards, the value of a school kit is around \$20, but as I traveled the Southern Highlands of Tanzania recently, I saw time and again that the value of a school kit is priceless for our neighbors.

Maria Tinda is a teacher at Isede Primary School. In February of this year, each of the 161 students in her school received a school kit. But the kits did more than simply provide students with needed pencils and notebooks. "Student attendance improved significantly," Maria told us, "including those students who were chronically absent and those who were just absent from time to time. The students came more regularly because they had the supplies they needed."

Better attendance also had a significant impact on the quality of education the students received. With students missing fewer days of learning, teachers were able to keep students moving through lessons at the same pace. And because students had the right supplies, they were able to complete their lessons. Even more, the school kits significantly improved the relationships between teachers and their students.



ABOVE: Thanks to your love, children in Tanzania and beyond receive LWR School Kits and have access to the supplies they need to continue their education.

RIGHT: Parents joyfully sing about the grace of Jesus as they celebrate during an LWR School Kit distribution at their child's school.

RIGHT: Maria Tinda, teacher at Isede Primary School, says that her job became easier after her students received LWR School Kits and had access to the supplies they needed.

BELOW: Attendance at Isede Primary School has improved dramatically since all students received an LWR School Kit.



"The teachers would send their students home for supplies and the students would think of that as a punishment. Having these school supplies has created a closeness between the students and teachers. Thank you for what you've done," Maria shared with us. "The impact it has brought is tremendous."

In a preschool classroom just a couple hours down the road, the value of a school kit deepened even more. One by one, I watched as 4- and 5-year-old boys and girls excitedly walked forward to receive a new school bag filled with supplies. To mark the special occasion, parents of the young children lined the walls of the classroom joyously singing and dancing as each child came forward. The moment was precious.

As I stood in the corner of the classroom with tears in my eyes thinking of all the generosity that made this moment possible, I realized what the parents were singing. "Neema ya Yesu," they sang in Swahili, which means "the grace of Jesus."

The school kits weren't just filled with supplies. They were filled with the grace of Jesus, made real to these families and preschoolers by the love of Lutherans from the United States.

Dear friends in Christ, with each kit you pack with love, you are sharing the grace of Jesus with our neighbors. It's a love that is so known that it overflows from the hearts of moms and dads in joyful song and dance. It's a love that is witnessed in the smiles

"Thank you for what you've done. The impact it has brought is tremendous."
-Maria Tinda

of preschoolers. It's a love that is reflected in strengthened relationships between students and teachers. It's a love that is priceless.

As the final students came forward to receive their new school kits, the parents began to sing a new song: "Let love persist."

Thank you for sharing this love with our neighbors around the world. May we continue to let that love persist ... until your love reaches every neighbor. ■



To learn how you can bring smiles to children around the world through an LWR School Kit, visit lwr.org/kits.



IS GOD CALLING YOU?

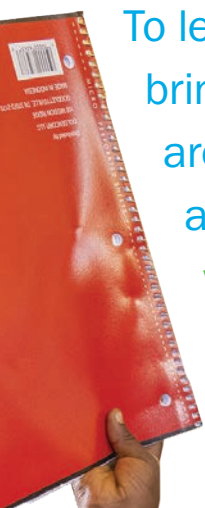
There are many areas where LWR Ingatherings are not happening, and some of our Key Leaders are looking for new people to whom they can pass on their duties. Do you feel called to step up? No experience or special qualifications are necessary. Just a heart to serve and a willingness to learn.

Key Leader Sandy Miller says, “God doesn’t call the qualified. God qualifies the called.” We are ready to assist you with resources and ideas, and connect you with other experienced Key Leaders like those featured here.

“It’s a lot of work ... and it’s so worth it. Pray, then do it!” encourages LWR Key Leader Mary Afsharirad, who heads up transportation logistics for the Texas collection sites.

To learn more about organizing an Ingathering near you, contact Janel Johnson-Momanyi, LWR Quilt & Kit Ministry Manager, at quiltsandkits@lwr.org. Or contact the Key Leader of your local Ingathering if you would like to volunteer with them.

LEFT: Epiphany Lutheran Church in Houston is one of three collection sites for the Texas Ingathering that takes place in November. Sandy Miller coordinates the Houston site.



To learn how you can bring **smiles** to children around the world through an LWR School Kit, visit lwr.org/kits.



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QUILT & KIT MINISTRY GUIDELINES:

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