

Grant Report for: The Lutheran Women's Missionary League

Disaster Response Trailers

Grant Award: \$80,000

Reporting Period: October, 2016 through March, 2017

Since receiving the grant money from the LWML, we have granted 26 Disaster Response Trailer Grants spread throughout 21 districts! We had originally planned on only being able to provide 20 grants, but after a group purchasing agreement and additional fundraising on our part, this wonderful partnership has resulted in 26 grants. Each participating organization provided roughly one-third of the funding toward the purchase of a trailer stocked with disaster response equipment and supplies. We received \$80,000 from the LWML which has multiplied into nearly \$270,000 for equipment.

At the time of this report, the trailers have been made and distributed to most of the organizations and they are completing the process of outfitting them with tools and organizing the insides of them for ease of use. These organizations have promised to maintain the equipment and use them: generally in Mercy work throughout the year and specifically for Disaster Response when the need arises.

Please see the attached spreadsheet for the list of 26 organizations and how our funds, and the funds of the organizations have been used to partner together in Disaster Response. Also attached is a list of equipment that every single trailer contains and a memorandum of understanding regarding the use of the equipment. Additional equipment is in each trailer but has been chosen/purchased at the discretion of each group to allow for greater customization to meet local needs. Appropriate reporting from the groups has already begun and we expect to receive them all in the coming months.

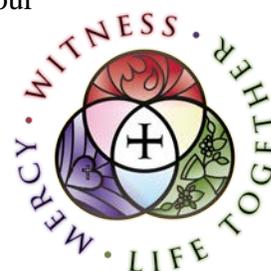
A reporter story was written concerning the awarding of the grants. It can be found at

<http://blogs.lcms.org/2016/grant-helps-provide-disaster-response-trailers>

Please see the attached Memorandum of Understanding letter that each organization received from us and signed their agreement.

God calls us to be His hands reaching out to bring peace and hope, relief and assistance to those who suffer the devastating effects of natural and man-made disasters. LMCS Disaster Response provides a ministry of presence before, during and after a disaster. This grant helped to build our partners' capacity to respond with Christian care to needs within the church and throughout our communities.

Through equipping volunteer congregations with Disaster Response Equipment Trailers, we increased the capacity of our districts and their congregations to respond in time of disaster and thus their ability to reach out with Christ's Mercy in the midst of disaster. The equipment trailers have already allowed groups to



quickly provide volunteers for debris clean-up after hurricanes, floods tornadoes, and other disasters. In this way, they aren't a burden on those affected, but rather are able to bring relief and comfort.

For example, there were recently a series of tornadoes that hit several communities in the Midwest. Grant recipients from St. John's Lutheran Church in Arnold deployed the new trailer and equipment to Perryville MO with roughly 20 volunteers to help and provide debris removal. Videos can be found at: <https://www.facebook.com/TheLCMS/videos/10154711261158580/> and <https://www.facebook.com/TheLCMS/videos/10154711261158580/>. Pictures from this volunteer event can be found at: <http://lcmsphoto.photoshelter.com/gallery/Tornadoes-tear-through-Perryville-Missouri/G0000Ud57074A0MU/C0000yVxdeys7TmY>.

Additionally, the very next week additional communities in Missouri were affected by a different set of storms and trailer grant recipient St. Paul's Lutheran in Concordia MO responded with their equipment and more volunteers. Both groups invited volunteers from other LCMS congregations to join them in their Merciful response.

Currently, there are over 14,000 individuals from across the LCMS who have received training as Lutheran Early Response Team volunteers and the number grows every month. The benefits of matching up these teams with regional and local trailers/equipment are numerous. Disaster Response volunteers throughout a district are now better prepared to quickly respond in time of disaster with the proper equipment available, in some cases, to the entire district. In turn, they are in a better position to speak the comforting truths of the Gospel to the individuals and families affected.

Mercy is a hallmark of the church. Throughout history, Christians have been known by the world around them as a generous people, as a people whose good works are motivated by their faith in God, who has prepared those works for His people (Eph. 4:20). Disasters, while terrible, are a time when the church can take a moment to truly care for the greatest treasures of this world—people. Generally, those who benefit most from this type of volunteering which we seek to uphold are those who would most struggle after a terrible natural disaster – in particular the elderly and single parent families. As they are assisted by these volunteers, they are directed to local congregations, altars, pulpits, and fonts, where they can receive the forgiveness of sins – care for the soul, even while they receive care for the body.

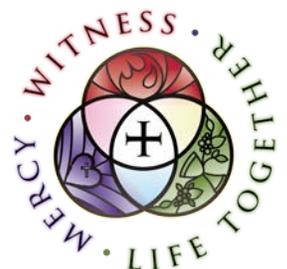
Additionally, while the intent of this equipment is for use in disaster response, it is certainly being used at other times. Our disaster volunteers are encouraged to maintain their training in 'down-times' by putting their equipment and training to good use, aiding those in their congregation and community who need assistance with maintaining their homes. Hence, they are provided with additional opportunities to act and speak of the love of Christ which motivates them in their love for others. They are also being used in their communities at large to raise awareness and highlight potential needs that might.

Attached are two renderings of the artwork that will be on the side and rear of every single trailer, boldly proclaiming who we are and the partnership that has made this particular kind of response possible. Also attached are actual pictures from a few of the already completed trailers.

Finally, here is a link to the check presentation: <http://www.lwml.org/thanks/2012/03/check-presentation-disaster-response-trailers>.

IMPACT Story

St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Concordia, MO used their Disaster Response Trailer in March to help the community of Smithville located 75 miles away. Kent Kunkel, a trained LERT volunteer, described the impact of the trailer for their team.



After receiving the call for assistance, they were preparing to just take the chain saws but at the last minute decided to take the trailer just in case. *“We ended up using all kinds of different tools which were in the trailer. Two volunteers used the chainsaws while the others had access to all the tools to help out in other needed ways such as crowbars to pull walls. It was then that the full impact of having a ready-to-go trailer could make such a difference and we were glad we pulled it along.”* Kent went on, *“Sometimes, however, the most impact we can have in this type of situation is to just stop and listen, for them to know we’re there and that we care.”* One homeowner, overwhelmed by the complete loss of his home was deeply moved by their assistance, *“I don’t know what I would have done had you not shown up.”*

Kunkel stated they see other opportunities to use the Disaster Response Trailer as an outreach in their community. Tools could be used for home repairs, handicapped ramps, and yard work. ***“The trailer could be pulled to the site and be a billboard to let others know the Lutheran Church is there for them.”***



“In Partnership with Lutheran Women’s Missionary League”
Scenes from Perryville, MO (March, 2017)

In March, there were a series of tornados throughout the Midwest touching down in three (3) communities with LCMS congregations that were affected (Perryville, MO, Ottawa, IL and Washburn, IL). A total of twelve (12) families of Immanuel Lutheran Church, Perryville, MO had their homes either severely damaged or completely destroyed. One of the Disaster Response Trailer recipients, St. John’s Lutheran Church (Arnold, MO) brought their equipped trailers and trained LERT volunteers. St. John’s had recently received their trailer, so new it didn’t even have the customized signage applied to the exterior panels.

A little more than ten months earlier, on April 21, 2016, Sally Handrick, Chairman of the Mission Grants Committee for the Lutheran Women’s Missionary League, presented a check to Rev. Kevin Robson, LCMS Chief Mission Officer for the Disaster Response Trailer Grant. Sally’s husband, Rev. Thomas Handrick, Sr. is the Senior Pastor at Immanuel Lutheran Church in Perryville.

Isn’t it amazing to see how God brings His people together in Witness, Mercy and Life Together?



This report has been compiled by Mary Hamilton, LCMS Grants Coordinator with the above information provided by Michael Meyer, Manager Disaster Response.

