



Women of the ELCA is the women's organization of the 4.8 million-member Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. This network of nearly 500,000 participants in 64 geographical areas (called synods) in the United States and the Caribbean exists for mutual support and bold action on participants faith in Jesus Christ.

Purpose Statement

As a community of women created in the image of God, called to discipleship in Jesus Christ, and empowered by the Holy Spirit, we commit ourselves to grow in faith, affirm our gifts, support one another in our callings, engage in ministry and action, and promote healing and wholeness in the church, the society, and the world.

Mission

Mobilizing women to act boldly on their faith in Jesus Christ.

W.E.L.C.A. Stewardship

Stewardship is more than giving a weekly sum in the offering plate. It is a way of life that involves caring and reaching out to other in love. It is sharing God's love for us with someone.

As women of the E.L.C.A. we strive to share the gifts God has given us through the many projects we do. These include health kits, school kits, scrap yarn afghans, prayer shawls, quilts, layettes and soft toys for children. Our stewardship also includes hospitality shown in coffee hours, Advent Teas, Mother-Daughter Dinners and conference assemblies.

We reach out to people around the world through Lutheran World Relief and the E.L.C.A.'s World Hunger Global Barnyard Program that provides training and animals to people in poor countries in order that they may earn a living and support their families.

In 2007 Lutheran World Relief shipped nearly 1500 tons of handmade quilts, school kits, health kits, sewing kits, layettes, and bars of new soap to poor countries. Included in the shipment were 452,870 quilts sewn and tied by thousands of Lutheran quilters throughout the United States - the most quilts distributed in a year since 1999.

Brenda Meier, director for parish and community engagement at LWR states: ***Over and over again we hear from our partner organizations and the recipients of quilts and kits how much they appreciate these gifts of love and the generosity of U.S. Lutherans. Any type of blanket could warm a person's body, but a handmade quilt also warms the soul and encourages the spirit.***

We encourage each of you to participate in our programs and to share the gifts that God has given you. Make stewardship part of your daily living!

Project Comfort Fund

Jesus promises that those who mourn shall be comforted. Among us are Lutherans living out this Beatitude, helping God's mercy come alive for those who mourn the loss of homes, land, and livelihood—especially after the devastation of disasters and wars. Lutheran parish groups share comfort in the form of quilts, soap, layettes and school, sewing, and health kits to send to far-away places.

Thanks to such faithful efforts, Lutheran World Relief (LWR) can respond quickly when material resources are needed overseas. The costs of sharing these blessings is a challenge. Each year, LWR must commit approximately \$1.6 million of its budget to the cost of processing and shipping material resources to our partners overseas. In the 1980s the U.S. government provided up to \$800,000 for ocean freight costs on such items. Today, government reimbursements have declined to less than \$100,000 annually.

Can LWR find funds to ship material resources overseas while sustaining current long-term development efforts in 35 countries? We believe we can, with your help. Support LWR's Project Comfort Fund to help cover the costs of processing and shipping material resources.

Last year LWR shared more \$10 million worth of clothing, kits, soap and quilts donated by Lutherans. The gifts of material resources weighed more than 1,600 tons! [Click here to download the 2006 Material Resources Distribution chart](#) to see where the items were shipped.

LWR's Project Comfort Fund is an opportunity to help, one item at a time. Pay for the shipment of a quilt, carton, or bale, and you help LWR "move mountains," sending comfort to where it is needed.

Some ways that your gifts can help move mountains:

LWR quilt: \$2

Box of soap (18lbs.): \$10

Carton of LWR school kits, sewing kits or layettes: \$44 (\$1.10 per kit)

Carton of LWR health kits: \$80 (\$2 per kit)

*Your gifts to the Project Comfort Fund for health kits also helps cover the cost of providing a tube of toothpaste with each kit we ship.

Make a donation to Project Comfort now or call 1-800-LWR-LWR-2 for a free Project Comfort Fund brochure.

Or, donate a brick to the Good Samaritan Quilt Plaza outside of LWR's headquarters in Baltimore to support the Project Comfort Fund.

LWR quilt pattern link is found below.

Health and Personal Care Kits

If you were suddenly left with nothing (your home was destroyed by fire, flood or other disaster) what would you need to carry out everyday activities? Here is a list of items that would make life a little easier.

Two washcloths

Two towels; hand and bath

One bar bath soap or bottle of shower gel

One bottle hair shampoo

One bottle hair conditioner

One toothbrush

One container of toothpaste
One package disposable razors
One comb or brush
One bottle of hand lotion
One nail-file or nail-clippers
Band-aids
Tissues (small packet or a box)

Please help us to reach out to others in need. Zion's W.E.L.C.A. will be collecting these items during the season of Lent. Place items in the boxes at the back of the sanctuary or assembly hall.

Prayer Shawls

Summer is a little hot to work on knitting and crocheting prayer shawls, but you can still do this if you find a cool air conditioned spot. The need for prayer shawls does not stop in the summer. Watch for new patterns at Zion's W.E.L.C.A. table or check out the pattern links below.

From the Prayer Shawl Ministry Website:

About the Shawls...

In 1998, Janet Bristow and Victoria Galo, two graduates of the 1997 Women's Leadership Institute at The Hartford Seminary in Hartford, Connecticut gave birth to a ministry as a result of their experience in this program of applied Feminist Spirituality under the direction of Professor Miriam Therese Winter, MMS. Compassion and the love of knitting/crocheting have been combined into a prayerful ministry and spiritual practice which reaches out to those in need of comfort and solace, as well as in celebration and joy. Many blessings are prayed into every shawl.

Whether they are called Prayer Shawls, Comfort Shawls, Peace Shawls, or Mantles, etc., the shawl maker begins with prayers and blessings for the recipient. The intentions are continued throughout the creation of the shawl. Upon completion, a final blessing is offered before the shawl is sent on its way. Some recipients have continued the kindness by making a shawl and passing it onto someone in need. Thus, the blessing ripples from person-to-person, with both the giver and receiver feeling the unconditional embrace of a sheltering, mothering God!

(*The shawls can also be crocheted, quilted, woven or machine knitted as well!)

Some uses for the shawl...

Shawls can be used for: undergoing medical procedures; as a comfort after a loss or in times of stress; during bereavement; prayer or meditation; commitment or marriage ceremonies; birthing, nursing a baby; bridal shower or wedding gift; leading ritual; first menses or croning rites of passage; during an illness and recovery; ministering to others; graduation, birthday, anniversary, ordination, holiday gifts; or just socializing...there are endless possibilities!

To make a shawl personal, the giver or the recipient may want to adorn the shawl with beads, shells, feathers and charms. A blessing or ritual maybe offered when the gift is presented.

<http://www.shawlministry.com/>



Soft Toys

This year our W.E.L.C.A. group would like to provide handmade soft toys for local children for Christmas. We need your help. Some patterns are available at our WELCA table in Zion's assembly hall. If you have a favorite pattern of your own, feel free to share it or make it for us to give away. Some examples might include; dolls, bears, animals, sports balls (soccer, football, softball) or pillows. Check out fabric stores for panels that have dolls or animals that can be cut out, sewn, and stuffed. If we start now, we should have a good number of toys to share by Christmas.



Soft Toy Patterns Wanted

Do you have a pattern for a child's toy that you would care to share with us? Some examples might include dolls, bears, animals, sports balls (soccer, football, softball) or pillows. Our W.E.L.C.A. group would like to make these for children for next Christmas. Contact Sandy Deems at 895-2905.

Pattern links are found below.
