

Neighbors in Christ,

Greetings my friends and family! I am sitting here in my office and reflecting on the Southwestern Minnesota Synod Assembly the wrapped up nearly two weeks ago. This year's meeting was more informational than anything, but there are a few things I would like to remind you of. Each week, we openly give our time, our talents, and our possessions to Christ through the offering and I wanted to highlight some of the wonderful gifts that are being manifested throughout the global Church. Your dollars are being stretched to help love and serve our all over the world.

ELCA World Hunger is a ministry of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America that creatively and courageously works toward a just world where all are fed and nourished. They share a comprehensive approach of a network of individuals, congregations, and companion churches that partner in more than 60 countries to help break the cycle of hunger and poverty – for good. Lutheran Disaster Response brings God's hope, healing, and renewal to people whose lives have been disrupted by disasters in the United States and around the world. When the dust settles and the headlines change, they stay to provide ongoing assistance to those in need.

The following are some of the many ministries that ELCA World Hunger and Lutheran Disaster Response take on with the financial gifts you offer:

*Agriculture* – Community gardens and agricultural programs help families grow food to nourish themselves and build safer, healthier communities for the long term. These are some of the ways ELCA World Hunger accompanies communities as we work to put an end to hunger – for good.

*Refugee Resettlement* – More than 65 million people have been forced to leave their homes due to war, conflict, and disaster. Helping newcomers resettle in a new country, through our congregational assistance and partnerships is one way ELCA World Hunger is pursuing a world of justice where all are fed.

*Health Care & Promotion* – Clinics and community health programs provide health education and medical assistance for people living in poverty and work to reduce the burden of HIV and AIDS, malaria, and water-borne diseases.

*Education & Training* – By removing barriers, children and adults can attend school and secure opportunities for their future. Programs like literacy training and vocational education also help teens secure jobs and increase their earning potential. (ELCA World Hunger, 2017)

Your weekly gifts go to where Christ's light is being illuminated, especially in the dark places. I thank you so much for what you give and hope that this simple message helps you see where those dollars eventually end up. You are indeed sharing the love we are all called to live into. See you in worship!

In HIS sake,

Rev. Erik Karlson

Pastor, Neighbors in Christ Parish