



FAITH IN *action*

**NEIGHBORS IN
NEED ARE WAITING
FOR YOUR QUILTS
AND KITS!**

**WE ♥ KEY
LEADERS!**

FIA FALL 21-32K-0921

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:
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DEAR FRIENDS,

I pray that you and your family are safe and healthy as we head into this autumn season.

While some churches are open again and quilting groups are gathering, others are still worshipping through laptop screens. Whether you are back together quilting side by side, staying apart physically (but still close together in spirit), or straddling the two with a hybrid approach, one thing has remained steady throughout this global pandemic: your quilts and kits are loved and appreciated!

In this issue, we celebrate and recognize the valuable contributions made by our Key Leaders, who volunteer their time and energy to organize regional collections of quilts and kits around the country. We are so thankful for these incredible individuals, who are responsible for getting so many of your quilts and kits to the people who need them most.

And be sure to check out the **Connect Your Community** series, where we will share tips for inviting friends and family into this ministry — even if they don't assemble quilts and kits.

With Gratitude,

JANEL JOHNSON-MOMANYI
Quilt & Kit Ministry Manager

ON THE COVER: LWR was able to provide 29 quilts and 65 School Kits to the Erick Memorial Foundation for the Education and Rehabilitation of the Disabled orphanage in Morogoro, Tanzania.

BOTTOM RIGHT: Sunne Lutheran Church in Wilton, ND, has a robust LWR ministry making quilts, Personal Care Kits, Baby Care Kits and School Kits.

FAR RIGHT: Mileydi Tzul Luo, 4 years old, smiles after receiving her School Kit at a distribution event at her school in Guatemala. (Carrie Taneyhill for LWR)

CONNECT YOUR COMMUNITY

Your quilt and kit ministry is too important not to invite others to join! In this new series, we'll share ideas for involving others in your quilting and kit-making.



ABOVE: A team from Lutheran Social Services of Southern California, led by Key Leader Jim Pijloo, collect boxes of quilts and kits. The team coordinates collections at 15 churches!



TIP #1:

INVITE FRIENDS, FAMILY AND CHURCH MEMBERS TO TAKE A DRIVE!

Are there members in your congregation with pick-up trucks or large capacity vehicles that could carry several boxes? Or maybe a flatbed trailer? Transporting quilts and kits to an Ingathering — or to an LWR warehouse if one is within driving distance — offers a great opportunity for someone who isn't typically involved in making quilts and kits to be part of the ministry, and ensures your congregation's quilts and kits can get to LWR.

Someone who may not be able to participate directly in your quilting or kit-making project might gladly contribute their time and fuel to deliver your items to an Ingathering or LWR warehouse.

NEIGHBORS IN NEED ARE WAITING FOR YOUR QUILTS AND KITS!

Due to limited inventory in our warehouses, we have sent only a small number of quilts and kits in 2021. So far this year, quilts and kits have been shipped to nine countries and we have urgent requests from partners in many more.



THERE ARE MANY MORE URGENT REQUESTS FOR YOUR QUILTS AND KITS, INCLUDING:

- Vulnerable refugees and children escaping conflict in Jordan, Syria and Lebanon
- Orphans and the elderly in Tanzania
- Poor communities devastated by flooding in El Salvador
- Families displaced by conflict in Armenia
- Street children at risk of being drawn into gangs in Honduras
- Struggling school children in the Democratic Republic of Congo
- Impoverished families in South Sudan

Can you help us meet these needs? You can restock the warehouse shelves by delivering your completed quilts and kits to Lutheran World Relief this fall. Visit lwr.org/ingatherings to search for a local collection event, or consider shipping or delivering your items directly to one of our warehouses in South St. Paul, Minn., or New Windsor, Md.



INGATHERINGS ARE HAPPENING THIS FALL!

MAKE PLANS NOW TO DELIVER YOUR QUILTS AND KITS

For current information about which Ingatherings are happening, when and what special precautions are in place to protect everyone's health, visit lwr.org/ingatherings.



ABOVE: Ingathering organized by Key Leader Janice Hawkins. The Southeast Synodical Women's Organization takes the lead in organizing seven collection sites in Alabama, Georgia and Tennessee.

WE  **KEY**
LEADERS!

“The need is still out there.”

LWR Quilt and Kit collections — known as Ingatherings — are key to getting thousands of quilts and kits to LWR’s warehouses for processing, packing and shipping overseas. LWR Key Leaders, the committed volunteers that manage the details of the Ingatherings, are the unsung heroes of this ministry. We are so grateful for our 65 Key Leaders, who organize Ingatherings around the U.S.! Here, we are pleased to introduce you to six of these incredible people.

ALABAMA, GEORGIA AND TENNESSEE: JANICE HAWKINS

To say Janice Hawkins is an organized person is an understatement. A pharmacist by profession, Janice is used to managing lots of details and ensuring accuracy in everything she does, well-qualifying her to coordinate the seven Ingathering sites sponsored by the Synodical Women's Organization of the Southeast Synod of the ELCA.

Janice's first year at the helm of the Ingatherings was a bit challenging as she took on the duty just a month before the collections were to be held. “It was a little touch-and-go,” Janice says. “But by the second year, I had figured out what I needed to do and then perfected it throughout the years.”

The Ingatherings occur the weekend before Labor Day each year, and Janice has established a detailed timeline of the tasks to be completed before then. She's assisted by a team of site coordinators that oversee six of the seven collection sites, with Janice handling the metro Atlanta collection that takes place at her congregation, Trinity Lutheran Church in Lilburn, Georgia.

“Early in the year I contact the other site coordinators to start planning and verify that they will be able to assist,” Janice says. She notes that some years coordinators are not able to continue, so it's important to always have people in training who can step in.

The seven collection sites are spread across Alabama, Georgia and Tennessee, though Janice explains that congregations also come from Florida, South Carolina and West Virginia to

deliver their quilts and kits. In her organized timeline, Janice meets in July with the trucking company to review the locations and times of the collections and arrange for the drop-offs of all the trailers. A truck trailer is placed at each location, and then the loads are consolidated into two trucks that will carry the quilts and kits — gathered from nearly 80 churches — to LWR's warehouse in New Windsor, Md.

While Janice's organizational skills keep everything running smoothly, each of the site coordinators manages the local details in their unique way. For her own site in Lilburn, Janice implemented an online signup system so volunteers can conveniently choose a time to help at the collection. Every volunteer receives a reminder email two days ahead of the collection.

While many of the volunteers help with unloading the boxes as they arrive and loading them onto the truck — her recruitment motto is “Strong backs and willing hearts” — she also has tasks for those who can't lift heavy boxes, such as helping with check-in and collecting the reporting forms that each congregation is asked to complete and bring with their boxes.

And over the years Janice has upgraded the recordkeeping for the annual collections. When she first started as Key Leader nine years ago, all the documents were handwritten. Today, with some technical assistance from her son, she's moved everything to spreadsheets.

As Janice looks forward to retiring in 2022, she's eager to have more time to work on the Ingatherings. “It has become my passion,” she says, noting that she'll even be available to mentor others in establishing an Ingathering in their area if they don't have one already.

“So many more donations can come in with an Ingathering in the area,” she says. **“The need is still out there.”**

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA: JIM PIJLOO

Jim Pijloo was introduced to LWR just four years ago when he took a job with Lutheran Social Services of Southern California, where a colleague was responsible for coordinating the collection sites at 15 churches. Jim assisted that colleague

with organizing the collections in 2019, and when she left LSS the responsibility was passed on to him.

It wasn't necessarily a duty Jim was expecting to take on. Between his duties as Area Director for LSS and teaching graduate school part-time, Jim already had a lot of "spinning plates" to keep in the air. "Thank God not a single one dropped," Jim says of the days he also coordinated between the churches and the truckers who were delivering the truck trailers for the collections. Jim became a "makeshift dispatcher," sometimes taking early morning calls from truckers alerting him that a road accident or heavy traffic was going to delay their arrival at a church.

Jim took the challenges in stride, knowing that he could turn to LWR staff for assistance and, more importantly, rely on God to see things through. "This is God's work, God's purpose," Jim says. He gets choked up as he reflects on how God's hand was present throughout the collections. When something didn't go right, Jim says, "we would say, 'let's pray about this.'" Jim and others helping with the collections also prayed every time someone dropped off their items, and they prayed over all the truck drivers that were hauling the quilts and kits to the our warehouse.

Though another LSS colleague will take over for the 2021 collection, Jim is grateful to have been able to serve in this unique way. "We take for granted that we have a roof over our head, that we have food in the pantry," Jim says. **"Doing this puts things into perspective. It's a blessing to me."**

TEXAS: MARY AFSHARIRAD, DEBBIE MATTKE, SANDY MILLER AND PRISCELLA REID

In a state the size of Texas, it takes teamwork to pull off an LWR Ingathering. Debbie Mattke, Sandy Miller and Priscella Reid each coordinate a collection site, while Mary Afsharirad weaves everything together by scheduling the trucks and arranging delivery to LWR's warehouse in New Windsor, Md.

Mary estimates about 200 congregations bring their quilts and kits to one of the three collection sites, which take place at

RIGHT: Lutheran Social Services of Southern California coordinates collections at 15 churches.



“DOING THIS PUTS THINGS INTO PERSPECTIVE. IT’S A BLESSING TO ME.”



ABOVE: Ingathering at St. John in Marion, Texas, organized by Debbie Mattke (left). Debbie is the Vice President of the Southwestern Texas Synodical Women's Organization and organizing the ingathering is part of her duties in that role.

Messiah Lutheran Church in Plano, St. John Lutheran Church in Marion and Epiphany Lutheran Church in Houston. Historically, the Ingatherings took place the week after Easter but were moved to November in 2020.

Each member of this faithful team approaches their duties a bit differently, just as they also were called to the work of organizing the Ingatherings through different ways as well.

Mary, who is the master of logistics in coordinating trucks and trailers and warehouse deliveries, attended her first Ingathering about five years ago when she got involved in the Lutheran Women's Missionary League (LWML) group at her church, Faith Lutheran in Plano. "I was awe-struck as to the number of quilts and kits that were donated to fill two semi-trucks in just one of the three locations," Mary says. When Mary became the Mission Service Chair for the LWML Texas District, she was put in charge of coordinating the three Texas collection sites.

Priscella took over the coordination of the Plano site — which draws congregations from 6 or 7 hours away — four years ago when the previous organizer retired. Since then, Priscella has implemented ways to make the Ingathering easier for the

volunteers who are helping load the boxes of quilts and kits. Instead of using ladders to get into the trucks, which can be unstable, Priscella rents a set of portable stages of graduating heights and arranges them into wide, stable stairs at the back of the truck.

Having a collection site at her church, says Priscella, is a good witness to the community. She tells of a mother and daughter who just happened to be out for a walk on the day of the collection and noticed all the activity at the church. They inquired about what was going on and were so inspired by the effort they stayed and helped load the truck.

Debbie serves as the vice president of the Southwestern Texas Synodical Women's Organization and coordinates the Marion site as part of her duties. But she was involved in the Ingathering long before that. Now retired, Debbie used to take a day off from her job at Texas Lutheran University to volunteer when the university served as the collection site. "We are called through the gospel to do God's work," Debbie says.

Debbie keeps things flowing smoothly at the Marion collection — which takes place over two days — by asking churches to

call her ahead of time to let her know what time they'll arrive and how many boxes they are bringing. "I don't want to have folks all show up within several hours. It just makes it more manageable," she says. In past years the congregations, stretching from Austin to the southern border, have filled three semi-truck trailers with their boxes.

Sandy was initially invited to be a co-coordinator for the Houston collection site and then took the duties on herself. She gets help from her family (especially her husband Bob) as well as members of the congregation. The church's LWML group prepares food for the volunteers. "Without our volunteers, I don't know where we'd be," Sandy says. "God surrounds us with the most wonderful volunteers." At last year's event, volunteers even stayed until after dark to finish loading the second trailer.

Sandy also notes that, although organizing an Ingathering comes with its challenges, God is always reliable in helping her through them. **"We leave it in God's hands. Always."**

IMPORTANT CONTACT INFORMATION

LWR HEADQUARTERS:
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Baltimore, MD 21230 USA
Phone: 800.597.5972
Email: lwr@lwr.org

**LWR BROCHURES
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**QUILT & KIT MINISTRY
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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.