

SHARING

newsletter

Orphan Sponsorship Honors Pastor's Anniversary

By Kim Krull

When members of St. Paul Lutheran Church decided to honor their pastor on his 20th anniversary serving the Ashland, Ky., congregation, they knew the perfect gift – a 1001 Orphans sponsorship.

After reading in *The Lutheran Witness* about the opportunity to connect a Kenyan orphan with a caring congregation and family, Rev. Mark Kloha urged his church to sponsor a child through the program coordinated by LCMS World Relief and Human Care (WR-HC). At the same time, his congregation was looking for a special gift for its longest serving pastor.

"We decided [Pastor Kloha] was so passionate about this article that we would honor him with a surprise sponsorship," said Carol Bruce, a church council member.

Today, Kloha and St. Paul members are among those who have made possible sponsorships for 293 Kenyan orphans. But many more children await sponsors, according to Evangelical Lutheran Church in Kenya (ELCK) leaders. The ELCK has provided WR-HC with the names of more than 500 additional orphans.

The number "1001 simply means supporting 1,000 orphans and one more lost sheep – there's no limit [to the number of children] that we need to support," said Rev. David Chuchu, Diakonia Compassionate Ministry project coordinator for the ELCK.

When Chuchu and ELCK Bishop Rev. Walter Obare attended the September installation of former WR-HC Executive Director Rev. Matthew Harrison as the new LCMS president, they spoke of the longtime partnership between the ELCK and WR-HC. The partnership, they said, has helped many Kenyans, including orphans who have lost parents to the AIDS epidemic.

"I appreciate very much what WR-HC has done in responding to the needs of the vulner-



The 1001 Orphans program has connected nearly 300 Kenyan children such as the youngster pictured above with caring homes and congregations. Inset: Carol Bruce presents Rev. Mark Kloha a 1001 Orphans sponsorship from St. Paul Lutheran Church in honor of his 20th anniversary serving the Ashland, Ky., congregation.

able people in Kenya," said Chuchu, adding that the U.S. dollar goes a long way in the African country. Americans are surprised, he said, that \$400 (the cost of a 1001 Orphans sponsorship) can provide a young Kenyan with one year of home-based care, including food and both educational and spiritual support.

Pastor Kloha wanted his congregation to get involved with 1001 Orphans as an opportunity to lend a hand in another country through a program sponsored by the LCMS. "I'm always looking for a way to encourage our congregation to reach out beyond our own little sphere here in Ashland," he said. "I've seen TV commercials about children's programs, but I like to go through our church body. That way I know who is responsible for making sure the support actually gets to the children."

Along with WR-HC and the ELCK, Concordia Lutheran Ministries is a 1001 Orphans partner ministry.

To sponsor a child for one year through 1001 Orphans, send \$400 to:

LCMS World Relief and Human Care
P.O. Box 66861

St. Louis, MO 63166-6861

(Designate "1001 Orphans" on the check memo line.)

Sponsors receive information about "their" orphan and, if available, a picture. Donations in any amount also are encouraged to provide for general program support and to enable more sponsorships. To make a gift online or to learn more, visit www.lcms.org/1001.

Give God Glory...

... for the youth who participated in the Art4Haiti project at the LCMS National Youth Gathering in July. The teens decorated tiles that were affixed to crosses and sold at the event. The project raised \$5,000 for Haiti earthquake response efforts and will help make a big difference in the lives of families displaced or otherwise affected by the earthquake.

Also during the gathering, youth participated in LCMS World Relief and Human Care sponsored servant event activities. Thank you for your service!



The mission of the church through LCMS World Relief and Human Care is to reach out in mercy and compassion to those in need, motivated by Christ and His Gospel, according to the Lutheran confession of the faith.

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Rev. Matthew Harrison Ext. 1381
President, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod

Rev. John Fale Ext. 1388
Interim Executive Director

Hans Springer Ext. 1693
Associate Executive Director, Fund Development

Barbara Hoffmann Ext. 1386
Manager, Grant Administration

Al Dowbnia Ext. 1391
Director of Communication Services

How Your Gifts Support LCMS World Relief and Human Care

You can help make projects like these possible with your continuing or new gifts to "Where Needed Most." Please use the envelope provided in this issue to send your gift to help LCMS World Relief and Human Care continue to reach out with Christ's mercy around the world. (Note: Thanks to your generous gifts, this publication may occasionally feature projects that have been fully funded.)

Furniture Drive a Blessing for Iowa Flood Victims

By Sarah Schafer

Despite losing all her possessions when her Des Moines, Iowa, home was flooded, one mother was able to make her daughter's birthday dreams come true thanks to caring Lutherans.

The woman hoped to purchase a bicycle for her daughter's birthday, but responding to the flood left her unable to afford one. She heard of a free event at Hope Lutheran Church, Des Moines. The church offered furniture, clothing, and other items Aug. 27-28 for families to replace their water-logged possessions. There were no bikes, but the church accepted requests. She filled out a "care card" asking for a bike.

Cheryl Ross, director of Children and Mission Ministries at Hope, said a church member saw the mother's request and went right home to pick up a bike for the girl. "It just amazes us how God provides," said Ross.

Iowans were pounded by heavy rains in August, which turned nearly a third of the state's counties into federal disaster areas. Hope's associate pastor, Rev. Peter Jurchen said the flooding left many with physical and spiritual needs, and the congregation decided "it was their duty as disciples of Jesus to help."

More than 200 members and nonmembers representing Grace and other area churches volunteered at the event. "No matter how old, or how young, we can find a way for each person to help," said Ross, who shared a story of an elderly man who handed out bags as people walked through the door.

"They collected and gave away tons of stuff," wrote Ellie Menz, IOWAY director with the LCMS Iowa West District. More than 1,300 people attended the event. "They had trucks, trailers and lots of muscle delivering the items to the families in need," said Menz.

"Praise to God that His people can rally around such an important cause and can extend a hand of compassion and hope in the name of Jesus, the one who had compassion for the broken on the cross and the hope of those who believe," wrote Jurchen.



Volunteers from Hope Lutheran Church and other Des Moines-area congregations load a couch and chairs to be delivered to residents whose furniture was destroyed by summer flooding.

However, the event "did not even begin to address the ongoing needs," wrote Jurchen. Families filled out 223 care cards – needs that could not be met at the free event. The church continues to collect furniture, calling families when an item comes in matching their request.

Ross says it could become a continuing ministry for the church, which is located in a low-income area of Des Moines.

On their wish list: dressers, a warehouse or some kind of storage, and a flat-bed trailer to help make furniture deliveries. To help, call Hope Lutheran Church at 515-265-2057.

Grants Aid Iowa Flood Victims

Hope Lutheran Church, Des Moines, received a \$9,375 grant from LCMS World Relief and Human Care (WR-HC), which allowed the church to help six families who were without a home for more than a month move into a new mobile home park. "For a while they didn't know where to go," said Hope's Cheryl Ross. The grant also allowed a member whose home had major flooding find transitional housing.

Memorial Lutheran Church and St. Paul Lutheran Church, both in Ames, Iowa, also received WR-HC disaster grants. St. Paul used an \$11,550 grant to clean its flooded basement and replace educational supplies and furniture. Memorial received a \$2,500 grant to aid two families with flooded mobile homes.

The grants, made possible by WR-HC donors, represent "mercy in action," said Rev. Carlos Hernandez, director of Districts and Congregations with WR-HC, who helped assess damages in Iowa. "This is a way people can see the church demonstrating mercy and not just talking about mercy."

Synod's New Emphasis Ensures Strong Biblical Foundation

While delegates at the 64th Regular Convention of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod approved dramatic changes that will impact the Synod's structure, a new threefold emphasis ensures that our church body's biblical foundation remains strong.

"As we've begun to look at how to put the restructuring together . . . we've been really looking hard at the Bible and how the New Testament life of the church works," Rev. Matthew Harrison said in an interview with *The Lutheran Witness* following his September installation as the new LCMS president.

As he assumed his new responsibilities, the former LCMS World Relief and Human Care executive director said he is approaching the mandated restructuring from a biblical viewpoint. "And so we've come up with a threefold emphasis of witness, mercy and life together," he said, referring to three important aspects of New Testament life:

- **Witness:** sharing the Gospel (1 John 5:7-8)
- **Mercy:** caring for people in need, both within and without the church (Mark 10:45)
- **Life Together:** living together in unity, including in doctrinal unity, love, peace and harmony (1 Cor. 1:9)

The three themes illustrate how the church lives and works together to proclaim the Gospel and to provide for brothers and sisters in Christ in our congregations, communities and throughout the world. Harrison says that in all we do, Christ is at the center. That will never change.

To learn more online about the new LCMS emphasis, visit www.lcms.org/emphasis.

