



When Is a Quilt more than a Quilt?

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When Is a Quilt more than a Quilt?

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By Ruth Doty, Lutheran Congregational Services

When is a quilt more than a quilt?

When it is made with love and sent to children and families affected by disaster.

Even though Lutheran Congregational Services made few pleas for them this year, handmade quilts for Camp Noah and Lutheran World Relief (LWR) continued to pour into the agency.

This summer we shipped 270 quilts to various Camp Noah locations, including the camp our volunteers from Friedens, Oley, led in Prattville, AL. Leaders there reported how touched the children were that someone would make a quilt for each of them. They reached for their special quilt not only during story time, but also when they needed a touch of comfort.

How special it was to the children to take this piece of Camp Noah home at the end of the week! One mother, whose house had been destroyed by the tornado in February, reported that it was the first blanket they had received for their new home, which meant it was special for the entire family.

In mid-July, Cindy Johnson, director of the national Camp Noah program, asked if we could send quilts for three camps they were doing in Minnesota. Somehow we wrestled 150 quilts into six boxes, which DHL whisked out to Minneapolis. Cindy called to tell us about the joy the children expressed when they found out they could each take one for their very own.

LCS continues to collect and ship quilts for Camp Noah. In fact, 50 more arrived in early September. If we hear of children who



need these quilts before next summer, we will ship them out, knowing that more will come in.

We have found that quilts bring joy to many more people than the recipients.

First, those who make the quilts enjoy seeing what beauty can come out of a bunch of scraps. One member of St. Matthew's, Bethlehem, who is over 80 years old, makes at least one quilt per week, sometimes one per day.

Next, those who see the quilts smile in amazement and thanksgiving as they not only revel in the colors and patterns, but think about the loving touches that went into making the quilts and the bodies and spirits that will be warmed. Several churches we know spread their quilts on the backs of the pews for Sunday worship before shipping them off.

Then there are those who distribute the quilts and get to see the faces of the recipients. What joy they witness!

The quilt projects with which we have been involved are not limited to Camp Noah. Last November, San Martin Lutheran Church, Allentown, asked us to help them coordinate donations for the earthquake survivors in Peru. Gathering quilts to be distributed through Lutheran World Relief was a part of that response.

This past winter, Pr. Adeliz Mendez from San Martin and our own Carol Pertuit took one van full of large quilts to the LWR warehouse in Maryland. In early October, 2008, Dennis Ritter and Pr. Mendez had to stuff every nook and cranny of San Martin's van in order to get all of the remaining quilts to the warehouse.

While LCS is not presently collecting more quilts for LWR, we know there are a number of congregations that have been supporting this vital ministry for years and will continue to do so. Quilts sent to LWR provide not only warmth for sleep, but are also used as shelter and to wrap up belongings when a family needs to move.

How can you get involved? Just start cutting, sewing, and tying! Quilts for Camp Noah should be child to adolescent size, starting at approximately 3 ½' x 4' and ranging to 6'x5'. These can be brought to LCS.

Quilts for Lutheran World Relief are 60" x 80" and must follow LWR guidelines, which can be found at www.lwr.org/parish/quilts.asp. These should be shipped or taken to their headquarters outside Baltimore.

If your congregation is already involved in making and taking

quilts to LWR, please let us know so we can refer others to add to you who might have questions or want to pool resources for transportation.

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