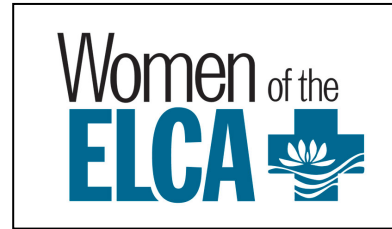


Women of the ELCA
Report to Southern Ohio Synod Council
September 12, 2020



Something near and dear to the hearts of many women of the Southern Ohio Synod is the Lutheran World Relief Quilt Ministry and Kits Ministry. As you know, Beirut experienced an explosion on August 4th, which devastated much of the city and the port. LWR had shipping containers stored in the port which were destroyed in the blast.

Following is an excerpt from the LWR website.

Quilts & Kits destroyed in the Beirut explosion

A tragic loss of supplies for vulnerable families (From the LWR website)

Your love is well-known in Lebanon, reaching poor Lebanese families and large populations of Syrian and Palestinian refugees as they struggle to overcome the country's ongoing economic crisis. Thank you for taking action to care for them in their time of need.

Unfortunately, this disaster created a setback for our programs.

The blast destroyed three of our 40-foot shipping containers, which were stored in the port and held more than **22,000 LWR Mission Quilts, 100 cartons of School Kits, 300 cartons of Personal Care Kits and 125 cartons of Baby Care Kits** that were being prepared for distribution. Now an estimated 24,550 men, women and children who were already in great need will not receive these essential supplies.

The total monetary value of this loss is more than \$623,000.

Yet the value of the time and love our quilters and kit-makers put into sewing, assembling and praying over these items is impossible to calculate. Though this loss is small compared to any loss of life, we are devastated that our neighbors who were already struggling — and who need these items now more than ever — will suffer even more without them.

"This loss could mean a more bitter winter for thousands of refugees," said Melanie Gibbons, LWR's deputy director for outreach and engagement. "Our quilts are made with love by those who painstakingly craft them, and they're deeply appreciated by the people in distress who receive them, both for the warmth and the message of care they provide."

Due to the pandemic many of those who participate in the quilt groups were quarantined and quilt making face-to-face was put on-hold for a time. However, some groups have come back together finding safe ways to continue their work. For this, we praise God and are thankful for their steadfastness.

With that being said, we are happy to say that: **As in past years, Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in Kettering will be hosting the in-gathering for the Quilts and Kits this year on Friday, October 2nd and Saturday, October 3rd from 9:00 am - 3:00 pm for both days.**

In addition, Central Conference will hold an in-gathering on Friday, October 2, 2020 at St.Luke Lutheran Church in Columbus.

Once the quilts and kits are collected here in Ohio, they are trucked to a warehouse in Baltimore, MD where they are bundled and prepared for shipment to various places in need throughout the world.

We rejoice in the blessing!

As our women's groups, Bible studies and circles begin to formulate their plans for fall, we encourage them to do so using social distancing or virtual gatherings and following the guideline set forth by the church councils of those units. Things may not look as they have in the past. 2020 is the year for change. Make it happen!

Go to **womenoftheelca.org** and re-familiarize yourself with the many resources available. Take advantage of simple things like Tuesday prayers at noon; an opportunity to join Lutheran women across the church every Tuesday at noon in prayer.

Be thinking of ways to celebrate a Thankoffering Sunday- whether in person or virtually. Design a Thankoffering container and make a conscious decision to look for things to be grateful for each and every day. Drop a few coins in the container and forward these Thankofferings on to churchwide.

We remember in our calling 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"

"Love one another as I have loved you" John 15:12

Respectfully submitted,
Susan Wyckoff, President
Women of the ELCA of the Southern Ohio Synod