

**From an email sent on November 13, 2018**

THANK YOU to all the churches and individuals who have generously donated for the support of the hurricane relief efforts!

At this time, we as a district have sent over \$8,000 to Trinity Lutheran Church in Panama City FL. I am working with Pastor Ed Brashier, Disaster Response Coordinator for the Southern District and Kathy who is the head of the distribution of items at Trinity. Trinity is conducting a huge outreach to their community and beyond. (It's like Camp Restore after Katrina hit)

Some of the things that Kathy shared with me: (Remember that Hurricane Michael hit over a month ago)

- In one day last week, Trinity distributed items to 868 individuals. To date, 15,049 people have received help from the Trinity Center.
- A few schools are starting to have classes today, 11-12-18, on a limited basis. In the buildings where they can now have classes, some are operating on two shifts.
- Because of the damage done, both hospitals in Bay County are still able to only offer emergency care. All their patients were evacuated.
- Many homes and businesses still do not have power.
- Many gas stations are not in operation.
- Debris on the curbs are ten feet high in place
- Soldiers, helping with clean up, who served in Afghanistan said that Panama City looks like a war zone. They also volunteered with the Katrina relief and said that this is worse than Katrina.
- On our phone visit today, I was surprised to learn that now people are asking for tents that they can live in. Their homes have been condemned but they want to get a tent so they can put it on their property. The coordinator shared that yesterday she gave the last one out that she had and the recipient cried with joy and happiness to be able to get a tent.
- Also learned today from Pastor McComack, Trinity, which a tent city is developing in a neighboring church parking lot. Then to add insult to injury, it rained four inches yesterday along with a high wind and the tents did not fare too well.

\$8,000 of the money donated to IDW, was spent with Amazon Prime on specific items that Trinity's coordinator said they needed. The needs change so I send what she needs at the time. The first time I sent charcoal, matches, flashlights, etc. Last week, I sent deodorants, canned meat, 3,000 heavy-duty trash bags, 180 boxes of mac and cheese, instant oatmeal, peanut butter, jelly, juice, diapers, etc.

Money is being sent to Redemption Lutheran Church at Panama City. Redemption lost their church building. Orphan Grain Train brought them a portable chapel that they can use for 11 months.

I am also working with Calvary in Jacksonville NC. Money and many kitchen appliances have been sent to help two families who lost much in the hurricane. Also, I am sending toys made by Trinity, Algona to the children in these two families.

Good Shepherd is another congregation in Panama City that was hit hard. I will be checking with them to see how we can help.

If you wish to donate for the NC/FL Disaster Relief, make checks payable to Iowa District West--NC/FL Relief and send to:

Iowa District West  
409 Kenyon Rd Suite B  
Fort Dodge, IA 50501

Please pray for the people affected by the hurricanes and include prayers for the people involved with the CA fires. Thank you and God's Blessings, Ellie Menz 515-370-1159

**From an email sent on October 23, 2018**

Hi,

In a previous communication, I shared that we are reaching out, at this time, to two families with preschool age children who suffered major losses in Hurricane Florence. Following is information from Calvary Lutheran in Jacksonville NC:

Hi Ellie, for our two Preschool Families I spoke about, John (Name changed) attends our Pre-K program, although our program is 5 days per week, he attends only three due to the fact he is Autistic and receives speech on those other days. His home was destroyed. They were left with the belongings they took, a futon frame and a TV. His mother works at a local gym full time and their current living situation is not ideal. They have moved back to the Father's home while she waits for FEMA and enough to save up to for a down payment for another home and furnishings.

The second family has three children enrolled, twins in our three Preschool Programs and one in our 2-Year-Old Program. Their insurance denied any coverage to the damage to their home. There needs to be some roof repair, drywall, and insulation. To help them I would suggest possible gift cards to Lowes to buy needed items to repair.

I have requests from multiple neighborhoods for Drywall, laundry detergent, tape, mud, and screws. These neighborhoods have been flooded with little to no flood insurance. Most homes are gutted and ready for these items. Homeowners are trying slowly themselves to fix things. One of my husband's Marines currently live in one of those neighborhoods and currently live in a camper in their driveway with their two children. Their children recently just enrolled in our program. One in our 2-Year-old Class and the other in our Pre-K class. They are on scholarship as well.

Pastor Dart should be in contact with you in regards to the sheetrock! I spoke today more with John's mom about the losses in their home. They will be able to move back in, however, they do not have much to go with them. We have a twin mattress for him, but she is in need of a queen mattress, sheets/comforter, couch, small two-person table, dresser and pots/pans. She stated they did not have much, to begin with, and would not want to ask for more than what was ruined. Even with all their loss, she continued to speak about others. Any way we can get some help? We are going to try on our side as well!"

I, Ellie, visited with Jennifer on October 23 and learned more details about the situation. I ordered from Amazon and sent prime to Calvary Lutheran for each of the two families the following items: towel set, twin sheet set, toaster, dinnerware, cookware, silverware, kitchen towels, can opener, trash bags, coffee pot, mixer, plastic, and stainless steel bowls.

Jennifer shared that the children in the schools in their county are in dire need of school supplies. I ordered Amazon ordered 72 spiral notebooks and will send items that have been donated.

Now for an update on reaching out to Trinity Lutheran Church in Panama City, FL. On October 22, I sent by Amazon the following items that they said are most needed at this time. I sent charcoal, lighter fluid, matches, flashlights, batteries, diapers, baby formula, powdered milk, canned chicken, tuna, cleaning products, socks, and antibiotic cream.

This may be more than you wanted to know, but there you have the latest update. Thank you to those who have sent a donation for the purchase of items needed. If you wish to make a donation, please make the check payable to Iowa District West - NC/FL Disaster and send to:

Iowa District West  
409 Kenyon Rd. Suite B  
Fort Dodge, IA 50501

Thank you and God's blessings!

Ellie Menz  
[ellie@iowadistrictwest.org](mailto:ellie@iowadistrictwest.org)  
515-370-1159

**From an email sent on October 16, 2018**

Greetings to Iowa District West Members,

In response to the damage done by Hurricane Florence and Michael, I have been working to identify a way for us to best reach out to help those in need.

I have been in contact with Pastor Michael Meyer, LCMS Disaster Response Coordinator and with the Disaster Response Coordinators in the Southern and Southeast Districts.

At this point, the direction of our outreach will be to assist the outreach by Calvary Lutheran Church in Jacksonville NC. Pastor Jason Dart, who served his vicarage at Trinity Lutheran in Des Moines, is the pastor at Calvary. There are many needs but in order to narrow it down and make a difference, we are going to focus on the needs of two of the families. I will be receiving a list of specific needs for the family and photos. I will share those later but want to get this information to you as soon as possible.

In visiting with Pastor Ed Brashier, the Disaster Response Coordinator for the Southern District, he shared that as of October 16, Trinity Lutheran Church in Panama City will be the headquarters for that region at this time. They have no water and no electricity. He shared that it took him an hour to drive 10 miles to the church.

Trinity in Panama City gave him the following list of items that they need immediately: tarps, Gatorade, hand sanitizer, toilet paper, hygiene items, bleach, work boots and 5# bags of charcoal. He explained that the only way to cook anything is with charcoal since there is no gas or electricity.

I will order these items from Amazon and have them sent to the church.

If you wish to donate for the needs, please make your check to Iowa District West with 'FL/NC Disaster' in the memo and send to:

Iowa District West  
409 Kenyon Road, Suite B  
Fort Dodge, IA 50501

Questions? Please contact Ellie Menz at [ellie@iowadistrictwest.org](mailto:ellie@iowadistrictwest.org) or 515-370-1159.