

WELS CONNECTION CLOSE-UP

May 2019



Providing help in the community

Providing aid after disasters is just one aspect of the work of WELS Christian Aid and Relief. The organization also provides funding for humanitarian aid projects that reflect Christ's love to people in need. While many of these projects are for missions and sister churches overseas, several home mission churches in the United States and Canada take advantage of this opportunity to provide help in their communities.

Several congregations in Texas and in Colorado provide backpacks and school supplies for community families. Our Savior, San Antonio, Texas, is located between two schools in which about 73 percent of the children are from economically disadvantaged families. Last fall, the congregation invited community families to the church for its "Load Up for Learning" program. There they enjoyed a free breakfast and picked up backpacks filled with supplies for their school-age children.

"The Lord blessed us with an overwhelming response, and we distributed 100 backpacks within the first hour of our event. . . .

Approximately 15 families that attended this year's event continue to connect with our pastor and our church family," says Sara Sutton, coordinator of the event. "Through events like these, we are striving to share the love of Jesus with our community and build bridges with our neighbors so we may share the gospel."

Hope, Toronto, Ontario, Canada, offers a "Welcome We-Care" package to immigrants who stop at the church looking for help or attend one of the congregation's outreach events. The church also maintains a small food bank and provides additional help as needed. Members follow up with these new contacts and continue to show Christ's love.

Rev. Mark Henrich, pastor at Hope, describes his church as a "congregation of immigrants," with members representing about 25 different countries. "Hope has a heart that especially beats for newcomers," he says. "Because most immigrants come with few resources, Hope is, and can be, more of an oasis in a sea of people.

We can offer a true sense of family to the people of our community who come from all over the world, a place to worship, a place to have fellowship, and a place for some guidance and financial assistance."

WHAT CAN I DO?

Learn more about other humanitarian aid projects supported by WELS Christian Aid and Relief at wels.net/relief.

