

HI,

Thank you VERY MUCH for you and your congregation's generous support for the Texas and Florida disaster relief!! I am so blessed to be part of this outpouring of love, care and mercy shown to the people who lost so much in the hurricanes.

As of today, we as a district have given **\$56,137** for the disaster relief. Praise God !!!!!

If you have not been following the IOWAY or Iowa District West facebook postings on the disaster relief, I invite you to do so. Also, if you are interested in past updates, go to [www.idwlcms.org](http://www.idwlcms.org) under District News.

We are drawing to a close our outreach to Lutheran School Academy in **Houston**.

In summary, IDW has donated:

1. 702 sheets of 4X8 sheetrock, 250 tubs of sheetrock mud and supplies
2. 28 dolls and 14 monkeys with blocks
3. 13 'We Care Tubs' with numerous new kitchen items for each of the 13 faculty families who had major losses.
4. \$13,000 for distribution to families in need.
5. Trinity Lutheran in Jefferson has adopted a family and have purchased six appliances and donated numerous household needs.
6. Gloria Dei in Urbandale is sponsoring a faculty family at Lutheran Academy.
7. Two other churches are considering adopting a family. If you want to, please let me know and by all means, please do.

If you have collected for Houston and haven't turned in the money yet, there are some options.

1. Specify that you want it to go to Houston and we will gladly send it there.
2. If you wish to switch your gift to go to Florida or Puerto Rico, please specify that.

The current status on our outreach to **Florida** is that we have donated thousands of dollars in supplies and food purchased through Walmart and Amazon and sent to Zion Lutheran in Fort Myers. Another \$4,000 will be sent to them next week for them to purchase items needed in their outreach to their community. We will continue to reach out to them.

I have been in contact with Pastor Matthew Ruesch in **Puerto Rico**. He will contact me on October 10 with details on how we as a district can best be of help to him, his congregation and community.

On a personal note, I led a mission team to Puerto Rico a few years ago so I have met the members of Pastor Ruesch's congregation.

Following is a facebook post by Pastor Ruesch:

Update from **Puerto Rico**: I made it into Mayagüez on Wednesday evening with Ross Johnson of LCMS Disaster Response and Al Dowbnia of LCMS Communications. I could hardly believe that the power had come back on a few hours before we got there. The water was back on by the time I woke up on Thursday. It's almost embarrassing...I have so much when so many have so little.

The island is devastation everywhere you look. What was once covered by green leaves and trees is now stripped away and wide open. The effects of the storm are, literally, everywhere you look. Thanks be to God, our members seem to be okay. We've had trouble reaching some of them, but we are so far encouraged. We've handed out a lot of bottled water, food, batteries, baby wipes, and other things to members, friends, and strangers alike. There is such a need here. The question we're trying to answer is "how?" What they need now might not be the same need that they'll have by the time we get things to them.

A man was working near our church yesterday cutting up a tree with a chainsaw. His house in the neighborhood of Maní was completely destroyed by flood waters. He has a wife and one-month-old baby and is living with his mother in law. They have nothing. There are so many other stories like his. Please pray. Please give.

Thank you.

Ellie Menz IDW Disaster Response Coordinator

**P.S. Watch for an article in the Fort Dodge Messenger. I was told that plans are to have an article about our Houston outreach in Saturday's newspaper.**