



## WISCONSIN BRANCH Quarterly Newsletter

**Relief for Human Need Worldwide**

December 2022 - Volume 18 - Issue 4

*I will not leave you as orphans. I will come to you. - John 14:18*

# GIVING FROM THE HEART



It all began when I heard that the Christian Appalachian Project in Kentucky was in need of clothing and bedding, etc. (I was born not too far from this area). This past Spring they had a bad ice storm and people were just starting to get back into their homes once the homes were fixed up. Then, they were hit with massive flooding. The same homes that had just been fixed were once more in need of being fixed. The people lost most of their possessions. When I called and talked to someone in that region of Kentucky I asked where the people were living now. She said that those who had family went to stay with family, many were put up in motels, the rest were homeless on the streets. They were feeding as many as they could.

I was told they needed cleaning supplies, diapers, etc. A call was made to Sam's Club and some needed items were delivered there the next week.

(article continues on pages 1-2 of newsletter)

# GIVING FROM THE HEART

## CONTINUED...

At first I thought I would fill my van with clothes and drive down there. I told a friend about it and she said "let's do it!" Well, what started out as one van full turned into well over a hundred fifty three boxes full of clothes, shoes, bedding, household items and some dolls and books. People in Tomah and Sparta have been very generous!!!!!! My phone would ring and I would hear that someone told them what we were doing and they wondered if they could bring over some bags of clothing. One church called and said they had some bags for me that were left over from their church rummage sale. When I went over to pick them up I came away with a very full van filled with bags of nice, clean clothes. (We have clothes from baby size to 6X in both mens and women's clothing).

Some church ladies in Tomah showed me how to make some simple quilts out of sheets. When I would go to rummage sales in Sparta and Tomah and I would tell people why I was purchasing certain items. Many would ask for my name and phone number. Some even reduced the prices of some of my purchases. Hence, my full garage!!!!!!!!!! Kwik Trip, Hansen's and Molters helped provide the many empty apple boxes.

Now comes the hard part-how to get these boxes to Kentucky. I could rent a U-Haul and drive the truck to Kentucky myself, or take it to Westfield, WI to be loaded on a semi. A friend had told me about The Orphan Grain Train which has a branch in Wisconsin. To make a long story short, many churches, organizations and people all over Wisconsin donate quilts, clothing, shoes, back packs, school and hygiene supplies, towels, soap, etc. to the Orphan Grain Train to be given to people who are in need all over the world, and right here in the United States. Loads are dropped off and the donated items are given to those in need.

The picture you see is the large van loaded with 153 boxes. When the shipment is ready to go out, a semi load of potatoes from the Wisconsin - Orphan Grain Train will be added to be distributed to the people in Kentucky.

I was asked if we might be interested in collecting more clothes, etc. on a regular basis to help fill the semi's that will be going out this coming year. It is a wonderful idea and I am sure that people would be willing to contribute, but we would need to find a better drop off point and storing area. Any ideas? Might there be a church that would be willing to coordinate the collections?

A special thanks goes out to the Challenge Academy at Fort McCoy, Wisconsin for volunteering to come and load all those boxes for us!! I had said I would need a football team to help us load, but this is even better!!!! They had the boxes loaded in about half an hour!

A big thank you to all the wonderful people and churches in Tomah and Sparta that were so generous with their donations!!! Please know that you are a blessing to people who are in need. It is easy for people in our area to find jobs, but in this area in Kentucky the coal mines have closed, jobs just are not there. Many of these homes have elderly living in them. They do not have the money to have holes in the roof repaired. Some homes do not have heat, windows are missing, and some of the floors have holes in them. Volunteers are working to make the homes safe and secure and mold free. The job is big, and the workers that are there are doing what they can. The bedding will help those who are still waiting for heat.

Blessings to you all!  
Barbara Akers







# UKRAINE A TENT FOR UKRAINE

OGT - Wisconsin sends large tent to Ukraine!! This beautiful tent will be used for refugees who have been left with no home and are trying to stay warm and keep their families safe. The tent went up this December and is also being used as a feeding center and church. This September OGT was also donated cafeteria tables that were a huge blessing to this project!! God is always way ahead of us, preparing and providing for His people and these precious loads!!





# THE TENT IN ACTION

This is the tent.  
Wow wow wow!  
It's amazing, and  
it's way better  
than we thought!  
We could not  
have even  
dreamt of it.  
Thank you so  
much again and  
again!

God Bless!!!  
Vitaliy Smolin,  
Smolin Ministries



# SLEEPING BAGS FOR UKRAINE

These beautiful sleeping  
bags and other items  
were collected by  
Hosanna Lutheran  
LCMS in  
Mankato, MN.





"THANK YOU!!!" from  
**MOLDOVA**

OGT 2103 was delivered in Moldova late last week! They will start the distribution now! They are very appreciative, and sent the message below:

Greetings and thanks from Bible Mission team for the humanitarian aids you sent to Moldova. I want to inform you that all the custom process went smoothly and the container according to the Invoice OGT 2103 arrived safely in Moldova.

We praise the Lord for His protection over this shipment and also we praise the Lord for you, for your kindness and open hearts to help needy people in our country.

Thanks to all who made this shipment possible! May God bless all the Orphan Grain Train team!!!





# PEWS ON THE MOVE

## HOPE DONATES PEWS

Hope Lutheran Church donated a total of 28 pews to the Orphan Grain Train to distribute. These beautiful pews went to Christian Revival Church Association in Liberia.

Pastor Enderle from Hope Lutheran Church said, "My heart abounds in thankfulness to be able to gift our pews and for Orphan Grain Train giving us the contact to make it happen. Also, I should mention the 20 or so members and friends of Hope who showed up on Thursday to load them into the semi. God is good!"





# REPUBLIC OF GEORGIA

These are pictures from the distribution at the Republic of Georgia.





# DEVOTIONAL THOUGHTS FROM OUR PASTORS

## "WHAT? AN EPIPHANY!"

"Rabbi, we know that You are a teacher come from God, for no one can do these signs that You do unless God is with him." Jesus answered him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." Nicodemus said to Him, "How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born?" Jesus answered, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." (John 3:2b-b)

Jesus came to take our sin away. How do we know? We've had an epiphany (or many of them). The signs Jesus provided were revealing to common people Who He is. Nicodemus knew what was happening but didn't quite get it. Like the rest of us, he needed the Holy Spirit of our God to make our knowledge mean the right thing. Facts are not always the whole truth. We all need help from above. Jesus didn't come just to help us but to save us completely. That is a fact and it is true. It is the power of the Holy Spirit that moves us to trust that it is true for us and that we receive the blessing Jesus offers to all the world.

During the season of Epiphany we may hear of several of the miracles that reveal that Jesus has supernatural power. If it doesn't impress you as proof that Jesus is God, keep reading. The Holy Spirit uses the facts and His unique power to open the eyes of the dead and blind to give us life and sight. The miracles, the signs, are in context. Don't be short-sighted. God recorded the miracles for us to learn about His love for us; love that will be fully seen in the death and Resurrection from the dead of Jesus.

While we work together in response to that Love, we will have opportunities for people today to have an epiphany about Christians and our Jesus. To some it may seem miraculous. We pray that the Holy Spirit uses our work and witness to bring others to trust our Savior for more than these earthly goods and beyond our brief encounters. The Epiphany that Jesus is God the Son come to rescue us from death and damnation is overwhelming to some. We need to be consistent and persistent in our sharing and caring for others in His Name.

Jesus is much more than a teacher. He is our Redeemer. Many in our world today don't even realize that we can be redeemed and brought into an eternal relationship with our Creator and that He has made it possible. The Church is the body of Jesus in this world where you are gathered in His Name. Make our OGT efforts together Churchly by gathering in His Name and sharing more than the earthly stuff. Do what Jesus does. Forgive sins. Call people to repentance and love them with the holy love of our God.

We don't know if there was more to the conversation Jesus had with Nicodemus but John 19:39 tells us that he cared for the body of our Savior after the Crucifixion. What do you think? Did he have the epiphany he needed by the power of the Holy Spirit? We won't always get to know if our witnessing to others results in them having an epiphany and faith in our Savior. We simply act in the faith and pray for the best for all people.

Praising the Christ of God,

*Rev. Mark R. Meier, Sr.*





# CHILDREN'S ORPHANAGE IN MEXICO

THANK YOU!!!

A children's orphanage in Mexico receives blankets, toys, food, and other needed items. They are so thankful!

## GOT LACE?

IF YOU EVER FIND YOURSELF WITH EXTRA SUPPLIES... YOU MIGHT JUST BE ABLE TO PUT IT TO GOOD USE!



Darlene Krueger of Portage, Wisconsin found a roll of wide lace in her sewing supplies. The roll held around 40 yards of lace. Using fabric, binding, and buttons donated by her daughters and friends (including drapery samples used for some of the pockets), she and daughter Linda made 25 dresses of all sizes, embellished with the pretty lace.



## SPECIAL NOTES

Please remember when you have Orphan Grain Train coming to pick up a load, make sure you have a few people to load up the truck.

Orphan Grain Train is in need of children's shoes and clothing (sizes INFANT through children's size 12) new or lightly used.

Another item we are really low on is hygiene kit supplies, like towels, bar soap, toothbrushes, combs, bandaids, and nail clippers.

Thank you for your support!!!

## So...What's Sewing? BY RITA WOLLER

Here are 42 pair of shorts sewn with repurposed material from bed skirts, pillowcases, pillow shams, and even some cotton curtains. A Thrivent Action Team Kit was used to purchase the elastic for the shorts, and to purchase t-shirts to go with the shorts. Children's clothes are in great need, so keep sewing, and show us what you have made for Orphan Grain Train.

-Rita Woller



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*Relief for Human Need Worldwide*

## **Orphan Grain Train**

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## **ORPHAN GRAIN TRAIN MISSION STATEMENT**

In loving response to Christ, the Servant, the Orphan GrainTrain movement encourages and enables God's people to share personal and material resources in bringing Christ's name and character to needy people both far and near. Sometimes that character expresses itself as a word well spoken, sometimes as a bandage well applied, and sometimes as a child well fed.

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*If someone you know would like to receive this newsletter, and is not on our address list, please let Linda Isberner know. If you wish to have your name removed from the address list, please also let Linda Isberner know. Thanks!*

*If you have an article or picture you would like to include in the next newsletter, please contact Allie Sherron by phone or email. If you prefer to send by mail, please contact Linda Isberner.*

*Linda and Allie's contact information can be found on page 10 of this newsletter.*

### **WISCONSIN - ORPHAN GRAIN TRAIN**

**Is an option for your  
THRIVENT CHOICE DOLLARS!  
Thrivent Choice Dollars need to be  
designated by March 31st on a yearly basis.**

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!**