

Dear Fellow Redeemed:

You have my tremendous thanks for the generosity you've expressed for the people suffering from the war and violence in Ukraine. As the pain and suffering continue in eastern Europe, your Synod has been and is responding — by God's immeasurable grace.

Below is a report outlining how charitable contributions have been used already.

- More than \$45,000 has been dispatched to a congregation in Odesa, Ukraine, that is affiliated with our German Lutheran partner church body (SELK). That funding has been used to aid refugees in Lviv, Lutskfor, Vinnysia, eastern parts of Ukraine and other locales. The assistance has been used **primarily for food, medicine, travel accommodations, documents and clothes. We are positioned to provide ongoing similar grants to Ukraine upon request.**
- As Lutheran pastors in Ukraine have pivoted from the “everyday functions” of the ministry, to providing spiritual care to a war-torn people, **your Synod is using charitable donations to compensate these under-shepherds for meeting critical spiritual needs of their communities.**
- Nearly \$68,000 has been dispatched to Lutheran churches outside of Ukraine, in Latvia, Lithuania and Romania. These funds have been used for **food, housing, transportation, medicine and items for personal hygiene and care for displaced persons.** These funds are also being used to help transport fleeing Ukrainians across the border and **provide spiritual and pastoral care** in places like Riga, Saldus and other towns. We are also about to send funds to Slovakia for use at a primary (K-8) Lutheran school taking in refugees.
- Your Synod is collaborating with SELK to **support and increase the church's capacity to serve displaced peoples by providing spiritual care and physical aid** to those seeking safety and shelter in Germany.

Right now, we are contemplating and discussing what our long-term response will be in this situation, given God's abundant blessings. We are setting aside a meaningful amount of the funds we've already received **to help rebuild and assist Lutheran congregations, and to continue supporting those congregations that are caring for refugees, when the war has ended.** We are also considering the **construction of**

**an LCMS mercy center in Romania** — strategically placed to help women and children impacted by this war. This likely will be a six-figure, long-term goal.

It's difficult to believe that this war began only a little over a month ago! **Because you care what happens to the people in Ukraine**, our response has been immediate and will last for the long haul. Contributions from God's people like you are primarily being used to provide immediate spiritual care and physical relief, and likely will be used in those fashions for some time. But there is much thought being invested into orchestrating our response, well past immediate needs.

We are able to feed and care for body and soul of those affected by this situation. You have played a significant role in expanding that ability.

As we reflect on the death and resurrection of Christ our Savior, I reflect on these words in 1 John 4:

*"Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God. Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love. In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him. In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God abides in us and his love is perfected in us.*

*By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit. And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent his Son to be the Savior of the world. Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God. So we have come to know and to believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and whoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him. By this is love perfected with us, so that we may have confidence for the day of judgment, because as he is so also are we in this world. There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear. For fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not been perfected in love. **We love because he first loved us**" (1 John 4:7-19).*

**You have indeed demonstrated and continue to demonstrate Christ's love for the people of Ukraine — because you know of His deep love for you. Thank you.**

In service to our Lord Jesus, and to you,

Mark Hofman  
Executive Director for LCMS Mission Advancement  
The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod