



Vol. 22, Fall 2021

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Rebuilding Homes • Nurturing Children • Responding Globally

CDS Teams Deploy with Hearts Ready to Serve Again

by Lisa Crouch

Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms.

—Peter 4:10 NIV

I read once that a person's most useful asset is not a head full of knowledge, but a heart full of love, an ear ready to listen, and a hand willing to help. CDS volunteers have emerged from the coronavirus pandemic with these three assets on high as they have been called upon to deploy as true faithful stewards.

While 2020 was bleak for CDS in terms of deployments, 2021 has been quite the opposite.

After a productive spring working along the southern U.S. border, August and September brought requests for CDS to deploy for the Afghan evacuee response and for Hurricane Ida. Through the end of October, CDS had deployed 73 volunteers to serve more than 12,300 children in need in 2021.

Two CDS teams deployed for a total of 17 days to shelters in Baton Rouge and New Orleans, La., after Hurricane Ida made landfall as a Category 4 storm on Aug. 29, 2021, along the coast at Port Fourchon. Thousands of people were displaced by Ida, with some evacuating before the storm and many others leaving due to storm flooding and damage or because they were without electricity for weeks afterward, especially in and around New Orleans.

CDS' largest deployment this year has been in support of Afghans

evacuated from Afghanistan during the historic airlift of August 2021 and brought to the U.S. through the government program called "Operation Allies Welcome". CDS began supporting these welcoming efforts at Dulles International Airport (Va.), and the nearby Dulles Expo Center. In a new partnership working alongside Save the Children, CDS volunteers served in the bustling atmosphere as hundreds of children arrived daily seeking care, safety, and a place to unwind. The language barrier

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What is more rewarding to a CDS volunteer than a group of children playing happily with a train made from a cardboard box?
 Photo by Crystal Baker

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challenged their ability to communicate, but the volunteers greeted the situation with flexibility, determination, and kindness. One CDS volunteer stated, “We do lots of hand signals and shrugs. They are getting some concept of making a line, a circle and waiting your turn. It is a rewarding time being able to see the smiles and laughter.”

Meanwhile, across the country, a large village called Dona Ana was established at Fort Bliss to begin housing up to 10,000 Afghans for vetting before resettlement in the U.S. CDS volunteer teams began serving at this location in early September,



CDS and Save the Children volunteers worked together to care for children of Afghan evacuees at Ft. Bliss. The bracelets were made by some of the children.

Photo by Linda Cooper

working with Save the Children in their established children’s play spaces. CDS planned to continue the deployment through at least the end of October to improve the quality of life for the 3,500 children living in the village.

While the days have been long and sometimes felt mountainous, the reward of serving again greatly outweighed the challenges. CDS is always ready to go wherever children are in need.



CDS volunteers excel at creativity and don’t hesitate to make—and crawl under—a homemade tent to be where the children feel comfortable.

Photo by Crystal Baker



Flexibility and innovation are key to creating a safe child care center.

Photo by Crystal Baker

We Will Go Where the Need Is

Written by Siara Campbell, American Red Cross Public Affairs
Produced by LaMar Holliday, American Red Cross Public Affairs

Christian Gray, an energetic 4-year-old boy, latched onto our Red Crossers the moment upon arriving at the shelter in Marrero, Louisiana. He ran over in furry monster slippers, three times the size of his actual feet, that he refused to take off. Coming from a large family, Christian is the second youngest with his baby sister, Christina just three months old. With the approval of his parents, Christian was our shadow for the morning, showing us around the shelter, holding our hands and jumping on backs insisting on a piggyback ride. He even showed us how good he was

at counting and would race to see who could count to 20 the fastest, of course, he always won.

Following close behind Christian was Crystal Baker, Project Manager with Children’s Disaster Services (CDS), who met us with a bright smiling face, excited to talk about the partnership between them and the American Red Cross.

Since 1980 CDS, a

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CDS project manager Crystal Baker

Photo courtesy of Crystal Baker

CDS Updates

CRC Deployment and Training

CDS had a brief deployment this summer to Surfside, Fla., following the collapse of a condo building in the early morning hours of June 26, 2021, which left many people trapped in the rubble. CDS deployed volunteers quickly to serve children affected in this tragedy. Working with Red Cross in a Family Resource Center, the CDS Critical Response Care (CRC) team returned home after six days due to a lack of children needing services. It is always good for CDS to be on-site and available as a resource for families in these situations. CRC teams work with children after an event occurs that has had a significant loss of life. Since 2016, CRC teams have deployed seven times. As the awareness of these specially trained volunteers increases, they are requested more often. With this in mind, CDS held a new CRC training session for 11 experienced CDS volunteers this fall. The online hybrid course is a mixture of webinars and course work. Participants must pass a final interview to become certified as a Critical Response Care volunteer.

CDS Virtual Summer Gatherings

CDS hosted two virtual gatherings in the summer to reconnect with volunteers in preparation for a busy fall deployment season. Over 100 CDS volunteers participated in these online events. The interactive webinar included updates on 2021 deployments, cleaning protocols, safety measures, and a CDS refresher trivia game. CDS plans to host a volunteer connection gathering again in the winter to encourage volunteers to stay active and to continue to build relationships outside of deployments.

Preorder Now: Maria's Kit of Comfort

Our very own Kathy Fry-Miller, former associate director of CDS and current CDS volunteer, and CDS volunteer David Doudt have written Maria's Kit of Comfort, a book about the Kit of Comfort that accompanies CDS teams to disaster responses. The illustrations are done by Kate Cosgrove. The book is published by Brethren Press.

The new picture book is an important resource for stressed out kids to be able to express their feelings through creative play. Children have been facing anxious times lately, whether due to the pandemic or trauma from disasters. While the setting for the book is a children's play center following a disaster, it could also be a home, school, park, or library. We invite you to read the book with a child or two and let them choose how they would like to express their feelings and stories through their play.

To preorder Maria's Kit of Comfort, which will be available in December 2021, go to www.brethren.org/marias-kit-of-comfort. You may also order the book by calling 800-441-3712.

Would you be interested in donating toward the production costs of this special book that celebrates CDS and the important service that volunteers provide in times of disaster and trauma? You can donate online at www.brethren.org/maria-koc or by sending a check to Emergency Disaster Fund, 1451 Dundee Ave, Elgin, IL

60120, with Maria's KOC in the memo line.

Maria's Kit of Comfort would make a wonderful holiday gift!
Or a great addition to your own Kit of Comfort!



Cover courtesy of Brethren Press

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program of Brethren Disaster Ministries, has been meeting the needs of children by setting up childcare centers in shelters and disaster assistance centers across the nation. Specially trained to respond to traumatized children, volunteers provide a calm, safe and reassuring presence during the chaos created by disasters.

"Our mission is to serve the children," says Crystal "and allow for the children to have a safe space and have some normalcy. They have experienced a lot of change and a lot of uprooting."

Their warm and inviting volunteers, Lydia, Toni, Pat and Betty are experts at getting creative to find a safe space to set up an area just for the children. As they began setting up in the PARD Playground shelter, they found large empty boxes that could help serve as a barrier and enclosure for the children's play area. However, the children had another vision for these boxes. The volunteer's intent was no longer relevant as the children had turned the boxes into houses with actual doors that allowed them to go inside. One of the boxes even had a pretend stove.

Seeing the imagination of these children at work reminds you of their resiliency. Imagine the children not having pretend houses, markers to draw, blocks to build with and volunteers to play with. The critical work of CDS was witnessed first-hand.

Another family, originally from Honduras, had four children all between the ages of one and 13 years old. The oldest, a brother to three younger sisters was highly attentive and engaged with each of them, giving their mom and dad a few moments of rest. Pat shared Estefany, the second oldest at age 10, had not put down the markers since they arrived, "She's quite the artist," says Pat.

The common missions between the Red Cross and CDS are what make the partnership so fluid and effortless – the needs of those impacted by disasters are paramount. "We will go where the need is", says Crystal.

Nigeria Crisis Response Will Continue in 2022

by Roy Winter

The Nigeria Crisis Response budget for 2022 has been set at \$183,000 after careful deliberation. Five years ago we expected that the government would restore order in NE Nigeria and families could return to their homes while the response supported their recovery. This led to planning to end the crisis response in 2021, but these plans had to be revised due to ongoing violence, especially in Northeast Nigeria. The reality of the situation is highlighted in a September update from Yuguda Mdurwa, director of EYN disaster relief management (DRM), who shared, “We are grateful to God almighty for his grace and protection. For the first time in [years, for the last] two weeks we did not receive any attack on our communities in Southern Borno and Northern Adamawa, but the ISWAP (Islamic State West Africa Province) and Boko Haram are still causing havoc”. While grateful for this small improvement in the security situation, I am incredibly sad to hear it has been years since they went two weeks without an attack on a community with a Church of the Brethren.

These ongoing attacks, other types of violence, and kidnappings continue to challenge the country, especially

Christians in the Northeast. The result is that 1.9 million people in Nigeria are still internally displaced (they cannot return home). The COVID-19 pandemic has made things worse, with 10.6 million people in need of “urgent assistance” (a 34 percent increase) according to the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA).

In the midst of this crisis and violence, the Church of the Brethren in Nigeria (EYN) continues to grow, plant new churches, and partner with BDM in providing crisis relief. The current relief program includes supporting farmers with seeds and fertilizer; food distributions in critical areas; repairing homes; medical care; and education scholarships for orphans. In each part of this ministry, there are signs of hope and change. A guardian of an orphan in Watu

said, “We never know there are spirited people who can assist orphans like this. We don’t know if there are people who can do more than what you are doing in the lives our children.... May God continue to guide you.”

The response program is saving lives and helping to give children a better future. Please continue to pray for our Nigerian Brethren and to support the Nigeria Crisis Fund (www.brethren.org/nigeriacrisisfund).



Staff of EYN Disaster Relief Management with a group of orphans receiving educational scholarships. Photo courtesy of EYN



Through the Nigeria Crisis Response, EYN provides medical care at IDP (Internally Displaced Person) camps in Northeast Nigeria.

Photo courtesy of EYN



Rev. Yuguda Mdurwa, director of EYN's Disaster Relief Management, presents an orphaned boy with an educational scholarship.

Photo courtesy of EYN

Volcano Relief and Recovery in Goma, DR Congo

The volcanic eruption of Mt. Nyiragongo near Goma, Democratic Republic of Congo, on May 22, 2021, left 32 dead and destroyed 3,629 houses. Fear of a further eruption and toxic volcanic gases, as well as a mandatory evacuation of some areas by the regional government, displaced hundreds of thousands of people who struggled for basic supplies. Although the evacuation ended, many of those whose homes were destroyed are still struggling.

Brethren Disaster Ministries is supporting the Eglise des Freres au Congo (Church of the Brethren in DR Congo) church in Goma, under the direction of Pastor Faradja

Dieudonné, in their response to the volcano. Emergency Disaster Fund (EDF) grants totaling \$30,000 were used to provide initial food, hygiene, and household supplies for about 4,500 vulnerable church and community members.

An additional \$25,000 grant is currently assisting the Goma church with the repair of 23 homes (mostly new roofs) and the building of 31 new homes for families affected by the earthquake. The grant will pay for materials and some construction workers who will be assisted by volunteer labor, including from the beneficiary families. This program will benefit 432 individuals, including 240 children.



The Church of the Brethren in Goma, DR Congo, is building simple houses for vulnerable people who lost their homes because of the recent volcano.

Photo courtesy of Faradja Dieudonné

Extend God's Welcome: Help to Resettle Afghan Evacuees

The Church, challenged by the great need, is being called to help resettle Afghan evacuees. The Church of the Brethren has responded with an initial Emergency Disaster Fund grant of \$52,000 to Church World Service. Financial contributions are needed—give to the Emergency Disaster Fund, online at www.brethren.org/give-afghan-evacuees, or with a check to Emergency Disaster Fund, 1451 Dundee Ave, Elgin, IL 60120, with a memo of Afghan Evacuees.

A recent Newline article (www.brethren.org/news/2021/new-collaboration-for-afghan-evacuees) and new webpage (www.brethren.org/bdm/afghanistan-2021) give more information about what you can do to help resettle Afghan people and to advocate for their needs.

Contact Brethren Disaster Ministries for further information or with questions at bdm@brethren.org or 800-451-4407.



Pastor Faradja Dieudonné (l) with a recipient of relief supplies distributed after the eruption of Mt. Nyiragongo by the Goma (DRC) Church of the Brethren and funded through the Emergency Disaster Fund.

Photo courtesy of Faradja Dieudonné



More than 75,000 Afghan evacuees have arrived, or are expected to arrive soon, in the U.S. with few or no belongings. The Church of the Brethren is partnering with Church World Service to help resettle thousands.

Photo by Nicholas Guevara, US Marine Corps (public domain)



Homes for Haiti

Building on a firm Foundation

Saut Mathurine, Haiti, devastated by a 7.2 magnitude earthquake on August 14, 2021, continues to stand on **God's strong foundation** with a vibrant, growing church that is ministering to the whole community.

**Join us in support for our
sisters and brothers in Haiti!
Help us build upon
God's strong foundation!**

Give to the
Emergency Disaster Fund-Haiti Earthquake Response
1451 Dundee Ave.
Elgin, IL 60120
www.brethren.org/give-haiti-earthquake



For more information, contact Brethren Disaster Ministries at bdm@brethren.org or 800-451-4407



Photos by Jenn Dorisch-Messler

Homes built after Hurricane Matthew stand strong after the earthquake. This joint Haitian Church of the Brethren/BDM project led to a new Church of the Brethren in the community.

Haiti Earthquake Response

The earthquake destroyed up to 90% of the homes in parts of the southern peninsula which is still recovering from powerful Hurricane Matthew (2016). U.S. and Haitian Brethren Relief and Response programming is already underway in the community of Saut Mathurine.

Emergency Relief

food, water filtration systems, tarps, household supplies, medical clinics, other emergency needs

Home Rebuilding

A major program will help rebuild dozens of homes over several years.

Jesus said that those who hear his words and do them "are like a man building a house, who dug down deep and laid the foundation on rock. When a flood came, the torrent struck that house but could not shake it, because it was well built."

—Luke 6:48 (NIV)

7.2 Magnitude Earthquake in Southwestern Haiti

by Roy Winter

The community of Saut Mathurine and much of Haiti's southern peninsula are in the midst of compound disasters spanning years which was made much worse by a powerful earthquake on Aug. 14, 2021. The leaders of the L'Eglise des Freres d'Haiti (the Haiti Church of the Brethren) report that nearly 90 percent of the homes in the area are badly damaged or destroyed, the road to southern Haiti is not safe due to armed gangs and damage, and the Haitian government barely functions, especially since the assassination of the Haitian president in July. Eight people in the community of Saut Mathurine died during the earthquake, including two cousins from the Church of the Brethren. Many more were injured while others barely escaped their homes by the grace of God.

Despite all these challenges, a comprehensive response to the earthquake is providing critical relief in the community surrounding the newest Brethren church in Haiti. Funds from the U.S. Church of the Brethren Emergency Disaster Fund (EDF) were immediately sent to help Haitian church leaders to organize emergency distributions of food, water, tarps, and supplies. Through September 2021, \$80,000 was allocated to start the CoB response. An additional \$52,000 EDF grant supports a Church World Service recovery and rebuilding program in Pestel, north of Saut Mathurine.

During the second week of September, a U.S. Church of the Brethren delegation traveled to Haiti to offer prayers, give support, and help with planning for a BDM/Haiti CoB



Relief supplies distributed in Saut Mathurine included a bag with food supplies and a bucket with a water filtration kit. Photo by Jenn Dorsch-Messler

long-term response. The team included Jenn Dorsch-Messler, director of Brethren Disaster Ministries (BDM); Ilexene Alphonse, pastor of Eglise des Freres Haitiens, a Haitian Brethren congregation in Miami, Fla.; and Eric Miller, co-executive director for Global Mission. While in Saut Mathurine, they observed a distribution of water filtration kits and food, as well as the first of monthly medical clinics provided in partnership with the Haiti Medical Project. The team heard amazing stories of survival, including



This family's house was destroyed in the earthquake. Showing resilience, they salvaged what was useable from the debris and built a temporary home (behind the rubble). Photo by Eric Miller



The earthquake relief distribution was combined with a clinic sponsored by the Haiti Medical Project. Photo by Ilexene Alphonse

from several people who said they had just stepped outside a moment before the earthquake destroyed their home. They also saw the temporary shelters that these resilient families had built out of the earthquake debris. The families shared deep appreciation for the visit and support. One church leader said, "Because of your visit here today, the community is starting to smile".

Relief programming in Saut Mathurine will continue through most of 2021. Planning for long-term earthquake recovery has already begun and will include building dozens of new homes costing about \$7,000 each (plus building materials and labor contributed by the family at a value of about \$1,400); a training program for trauma recovery and resiliency; and a new community safe water system to be completed in partnership with Haiti Medical Project. To accomplish these goals, an additional truck will need to be purchased, and a temporary supply depot and workers housing need to be built. More details will be available soon.

Support the Haiti Response

\$75 – Monthly food kits for a family

\$30 – Water filter for a household

\$7,000 – Materials/labor for a new home

\$38,000 – New 4-door truck for project use

www.brethren.org/give-haiti-earthquake

Pull out this page and hang with page 6 as a poster to remind you of the Haiti Earthquake Recovery program.

BDM-built Homes and the Church in Saut Mathurine

After Hurricane Matthew (2016) caused widespread destruction in the same area of Haiti affected by the recent earthquake, a joint BDM/Haiti Church of the Brethren project brought relief and recovery to the town of Saut Mathurine. At the time, Ilexene Alphonse was a Church of the Brethren mission worker in Haiti. He and Haitian church leaders had never visited the far southwestern part of Haiti but felt called to go there to develop a response. After a harrowing journey, they felt led to Saut Mathurine, where they found that no one else had offered aid. Soon, a major hurricane response was underway which included relief food and supplies, distributions of goats, and the building of 11 new homes. In a testament to the joint Church of the

Brethren work, those 11 homes survived the 2021 earthquake, with just one sustaining very minor damage. They were some of the only buildings still standing in the community.

After the hurricane response, the community asked that a church be started, and a temporary church building was quickly built. While that church building did not survive the quake, a firm foundation of followers of Christ did, and they are ready to rebuild the community and to build a permanent church. The U.S. Church of the Brethren Global Mission office



A joint BDM/Haiti Church of the Brethren project built strong houses after Hurricane Matthew (2016), which survived the recent earthquake. The homes to be built following the earthquake will be similar but smaller, with families contributing building materials and labor.
Photo by Eric Miller

is helping to collect funds for the new church building in Saut Mathurine. To donate, go to www.brethren.org/haiti-church-building.

Rebuilding Lives in Central America: Hurricane Recovery Update

The rebuilding of homes and community water systems continue in Honduras as part of the recovery program from November 2020 Hurricanes Eta and Iota, both powerful Category 4 storms. A total of \$160,000 in grants from the Emergency Disaster Fund (EDF) are supporting these responses to help rebuild lives and to provide water for thousands of people. Ongoing support is needed to continue rebuilding homes for this important response.

In Honduras, where the majority of those impacted by the hurricanes live (4.6 million), key BDM response partner Proyecto Aldea Global (PAG, Project Global Village) is building new 400 sq. ft. houses on land above the flood plain for survivors who lost their homes. These new homes are being built for about \$4,250, with the homeowners providing much of the labor. The cost has escalated in the months since the storms because the steel bar and rafters, as well as the

roofing material, have almost doubled in price. These new and repaired housing projects are improving the lives of 229 families (over 1,145 individuals) in 13 municipalities in western and central Honduras. Through PAG, BDM is also helping to rebuild community water systems for \$5,000-\$10,000 each. PAG reports that water systems have already been repaired for 110 rural communities.

Another of BDM's partners, Church World Service (CWS), is focused on rebuilding livelihoods, replanting crops, repairing or reconstructing homes, and rehabilitating water systems in Honduras, Guatemala, and Nicaragua. Helping these families rebuild quickly, and in many cases live in better homes on higher land, gives them hope in a future and enables them to stay in their community.



In San José de Colinas, Honduras, the new houses were constructed on a hill on land provided by the municipality. A sewage system was also installed and beneficiary families have access to water.

Photo courtesy of PAG

Community Recovery in Dayton, Ohio

As we come to the end of BDM's Memorial Day 2019 tornado recovery project in the Dayton, Ohio area it is wonderful to think of some of the highlights that have made it unlike most BDM rebuilding projects. These include the local district answering the call to serve wherever needed, a recovery community that continued to assist even during a pandemic, and a new program which was formed to serve a group of survivors not often helped after a disaster.

The Southern Ohio/Kentucky District (SO/KY) stepped up in ways



Much of the work in Dayton involved repairs to siding that was damaged by debris in the tornadoes.

Photo by Helen Wolf



Many homes in the Dayton, Ohio area had damaged roofs from the Memorial Day 2019 tornadoes.

Photo by Helen Wolf

not usually seen on other BDM national projects where the closest Brethren church is typically hundreds of miles away. For months, beginning within days of the tornadoes, there were SO/KY volunteers helping to clear trees, tarp roofs, and canvas neighborhoods looking for those in need of help. District Disaster Coordinators, Burt and Helen Wolf, began coordinating with volunteers in the Dayton area even though they were away serving on the Coastal NC rebuilding site when the tornadoes hit. Later they and other BDM representatives collaborated with others in the community in the formation of the Miami Valley Long-term Recovery Operations Group, which planned the next steps in the recovery of the whole community.

Following the initial work by district volunteers and leaders, a national BDM program rebuilding site was scheduled to open in April 2020. Everything about life and plans changed around that time, however, altering the timeline and halting all rebuilding work.

The global pandemic brought a lot of challenges and unknown factors, including travel recommendations which restricted travel for volunteers from outside the Dayton area. By July 2020, however, local volunteers from BDM and other organizations were able to join together to begin serving survivors. The long-term BDM disaster project leadership, typically provided by those who travel to serve on a site, was led by Christi "Sammy" Deacon, Phil Deacon, and Rex Miller, who served for many months within an hour of their homes.

The reduction in volunteerism and funding for most volunteer groups made it clear that if organizations did not work together in the safest way possible, families would be left out of their homes for even longer. And so, after a necessary delay to develop COVID-19 protocols and put them in place, non-profits in the area began new partnerships to work for homeowners with new ways to

physically be in each other's presence.

By August 2020, the project volunteer housing was opened and BDM volunteers from other states who agreed to observe the strict COVID-19 protocol began serving in Dayton. The project remained open through November 2020 and then again from April-October 2021. During this time, the number of volunteers able or willing to serve across all organizations was lower than usual, which made the local community even more thankful for those who came to serve.

The last rebuild that BDM worked on belonged to Ms. Lillie, who had part of the roof blown off two rooms in her home by the tornado. BDM's volunteers helped her by saving thousands of dollars in contractor fees. Few days went by without Ms. Lillie coming by to say thank you or her neighbors in the tightknit community stopping to share their appreciation. A neighbor even purchased lunch for all the volunteers one day as a thank you for helping Ms. Lillie finally get back into her home after over two and a half years.

A focus other than repairing storm-damaged houses developed when a new set of public and private partners created the Tornado Survivor Pathways to Homeownership program (referred to as Pathways). This

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Everyone in the neighborhood could see the BDM volunteers replacing Ms. Lillie's roof and found ways to stop and thank them for their service.

Photo courtesy of BDM

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program supports renters, who had lost their housing due to the tornados, to return to their home neighborhoods and to purchase new or rehabilitated properties. Thanks to technology, the planning for this program took place virtually. The groundbreaking on the first home was on March 29, 2021. BDM volunteers have served on five of these Pathways houses. The first former renter/new homeowner moved in at the end of the BDM project.



The damage to Ms. Lillie's house, the last rebuild home that BDM volunteers completed in Dayton, was extensive.

Photo courtesy of Miami Valley Long Term Recovery Operations Group

Although scheduled to end in September 2021, the Dayton site was extended and the last group of national BDM volunteers left on Oct. 30. Incredibly, and in God's timing, as local SO/KY volunteers closed out the remaining work in Dayton, another group of SO/KY volunteers arrived in North Carolina on Oct. 31 as the first group to return to the Coastal NC project.

Thank you to all who volunteered, donated, and prayed

for community recovery in Dayton!

"The way the people around Ms. Lillie's house would wave and thank us for helping out Ms. Lillie even though they were not the one being helped." – a highlight reported from a Mt. Wilson (Pa.) Church of the Brethren volunteer

A portion of this project was funded by a grant from the Greater Dayton Disaster Relief Fund of The Dayton Foundation.



The front of Ms. Lillie's house nearing completion shows the detailed work that BDM volunteers did to bring her home.

Photo by Jenn Dorsch-Messler

BDM Video Updates

BDM videos are the perfect way to share information about BDM's ministries with others. Listed below are online links to the general BDM video, the latest CDS video, and our most recent video celebrating the hurricane recovery work in Puerto Rico. YouTube videos are easy to watch online if you can connect to the internet. Videos on Vimeo are easy to watch online or to download onto your device to share using Wi-Fi. And if you don't have either, we have DVDs available.

Called to Serve: The work of BDM (general BDM)

YouTube: www.youtube.com/watch?v=_s96pbXpUE8&t=23s

Vimeo: vimeo.com/629347644 (watch)

vimeo.com/chofthebrethren/download/629325560/81434b395b (download)

Children's Disaster Services

YouTube: www.youtube.com/watch?v=t4JmQVE1n5o&t=33s

Vimeo: vimeo.com/629353474 (watch)

vimeo.com/chofthebrethren/download/629353474/a68f45894e (download)

Celebrating an Answered Call (Puerto Rico Hurricane Response) English

YouTube: www.youtube.com/watch?v=AyguCaF6AMc&t=3s

Vimeo: vimeo.com/629300695 (watch)

vimeo.com/chofthebrethren/download/629300695/fc8ca8aedd (download)

Spanish

YouTube: www.youtube.com/watch?v=nSmuE-i9Jsw&t=6s

Vimeo: vimeo.com/629325560 (watch)

vimeo.com/chofthebrethren/download/629325560/81434b395b (download)

New Long-term Rebuilding Volunteer



BDM is excited to welcome Lynn Evans to the long-term volunteer role as office manager on our rebuilding site. She started her service with the return to the

Coastal NC site where she is scheduled to serve at least through the length of the project in April 2022. Lynn will lead the office management side of the project, including tracking finances, communicating with incoming groups, and supporting connections and logistics with local partners.

Lynn is from Pottstown, Pa., and has spent most of her career serving in various Christian ministries in multiple states. She has also been active serving in various leadership roles at the churches she has attended, and has participated in multiple missions internationally. Her experience with BDM includes several rebuilding trips as a weekly volunteer in South Carolina and, most recently, in Dayton, Ohio.

Rebuilding Updates



Coastal NC Rebuilding site partners said, "Not only have you helped to repair hurricane damaged homes, but you have also helped to restore and mend broken hearts." Photo by Kim Gingerich

Coastal NC Project Reopening

On Oct. 31, Brethren Disaster Ministries will be returning to Pamlico County, N.C., to reopen the Coastal NC rebuilding site and continue recovery efforts from 2018's Hurricane Florence. The project had previously been open in this area from September 2020 to April 2021, serving



There is still a great deal of work that must be completed for families in Pamlico County, N.C., where even in the winter it is a great place to serve outdoors. Photo by Kim Gingerich

Would you like to receive BRIDGES by email?

Brethren Disaster Ministries is now offering our Bridges newsletter electronically. If you would like to receive Bridges by email, you may contact us at bdm@brethren.org, or give us a call at 800-451-4407. Bridges is also available online at www.brethren.org/bdm/updates.

25 families with over 10,000 volunteer hours. Since BDM paused the site, other organizations have continued to work on houses but it has been a struggle for them to get volunteers to come on a consistent schedule in order to complete the work quickly.

BDM's partners are excited for our renewed weekly commitment of volunteers, thanks to your support serving, helping to finance the project, and providing prayers. This project is scheduled to be open as the only BDM rebuilding site through April 2022.

Midwest Flooding Response

From Oct. 3-16, eighteen BDM volunteers and leaders served near Omaha, Neb., to repair several homes in the community of King Lake. The community was devastated by historic flooding in March 2019. Record January-March snowfall, followed by accelerated thawing and heavy rainfall, caused the major river systems throughout the Midwest to overflow their banks and levees.

BDM partnered with The King's Garden, a local non-profit, and Omaha Rapid Response to help families affected by the flooding who

have still been unable to recover after two and a half years. Volunteer housing was located at Presbyterian Church of the Cross in Omaha. This response had been scheduled for August 2020 but was postponed due to COVID-19 concerns in the area at that time.

Waiting List for 2022 Schedule

Due to the reduced availability of volunteers and leaders, BDM is currently scheduling only one project for the 2022 calendar year. There has been a great response and we are happy to have groups committed for almost all of the weeks of the year that are open. There will be a continual assessment of when and if a second site would be able to be supported and opened. If you or your group want to serve but are not currently already booked on our BDM 2022 schedule, please contact your district disaster coordinator or the BDM office to be added to a waiting list based upon your interest and availability. This will allow us to monitor when there might be enough volunteers available for a second location or for more short-term responses as they are identified.



Western Plains district disaster coordinators, Ronnie and Diane Mason, volunteering on the Nebraska short-term project. Photo by Patricia Challenger

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Unexpected Blessings

The Coastal NC Rebuilding site (Bayboro, N.C.) closed for volunteers at the end of April 2021, but not without a week of unexpected additional blessings for one homeowner. Several weekly BDM volunteers were working on a home that was still not completely repaired from damage due to Hurricane Florence two years and seven months prior. They learned from Sandra, the homeowner, that the roof of her next-door neighbor's house had caved in over all but one room. He was still living in that room and almost never left. In addition, the septic pump, which served both houses but was powered through the neighbor's house, had not been working since the storm because the neighbor had no electricity. It was clear that, because of this situation, her plumbing had been emptying into the yard between the houses.

When this was discovered, BDM leaders went to our partners at Pamlico County Disaster Recovery Coalition to see what could be done

to help. A County Sewer and Water employee made an initial discounted estimate of over \$4,000 for the labor for the repair service. After some conversation, they were willing to lower it to a price that was possible with the available funding. In addition to other repair work, that week's BDM volunteers worked hard to dig a trench to connect the electrical line, both of which were needed before the County employee came to do his work.

When the employee arrived, he was amazed by the work that had already been done and was inspired to complete the remaining service at no cost. There were tears in Sandra's eyes when she was told that in addition to the expected repairs on her home, her plumbing would also be repaired, which she never thought would be possible. With such kindness shown to



Sandra is presented with a beautiful quilt during her home blessing as her granddaughter looks on.
Photo courtesy of Doretta Dorsch

her, Sandra shared that she would work harder to help her neighbor since she is one of the few people that he trusts.

BDM volunteers complete so much work for disaster-affected families during their time on site in the Lord's service. This rebuilding work is an incredible transformation, but it is also common that it inspires others to give back and to support the community in many other ways.

BDM returns to work in Bayboro on Oct. 31, after the Dayton, Ohio, site is closed, to continue to serve in this Coastal NC recovery.