



Week of Compassion Board of Stewards Set Aside \$1.5 million for COVID19 Response

The Week of Compassion Board of Stewards held its annual spring meeting virtually on May 27 to discuss the impact of COVID-19 in the United States and Canada and around the world. The meeting was originally scheduled to take place in Puerto Rico, but COVID-19 halted travel and is affecting the ongoing recovery work from Hurricane Maria. This pandemic is impacting all of the work and partners Week of Compassion supports for disaster response, refugee assistance, and sustainable development.

But as Board Chair, Cinthia Kim-Hengst, reminded the board as the meeting began: "There is one solid purpose in the mission of Week of Compassion, and that has not changed." That mission--to alleviate suffering-- meant that the primary focus of the board meeting was responding to urgent needs created by the COVID-19 crisis. **To ensure that this critical work continues, the Week of Compassion Board of Stewards voted to allocate up to \$1.5 million in unrestricted funds for COVID-19 response.**

These funds will be distributed over a six month period, in addition to support already budgeted for partners and funds for COVID-19 relief that have already been disbursed. As the needs related to this pandemic continue to escalate, Week of Compassion is committed to supporting partners through this time, both locally and globally. In the face of unthinkable challenges, these partners are showing tremendous resilience, adapting their work to serve the needs of some of the most

vulnerable populations. Extraordinary needs call for extraordinary action-- so Week of Compassion will draw on reserves to support this response.

In order to prevent vulnerable communities from going into even deeper crises, a coordinated international response is critical. As part of that global effort, Week of Compassion support will focus primarily on programs addressing food security and disease prevention through WASH (water, sanitation, and hygiene).

Meanwhile, Week of Compassion is also providing support for needs closer to home. The additional funding from reserves allows for reactivation of the Household Solidarity Grant for Income Loss program-- providing support for households experiencing extreme financial hardship who are not eligible for state or federal assistance. Congregational grants will also be available to support churches with feeding ministries, enabling congregations to continue serving their neighbors.

The Board exhibits great integrity in their unanimous approval of the use of these funds to support COVID-19 recovery. Managing Week of Compassion resources wisely, the Board balanced the emerging needs of the current crisis with important ongoing work and commitments. The use of reserve funds for this response ensures that Week of Compassion will not have to scale back on the support for relief, development and refugee programs during this critical time. It also means that Week of Compassion is prepared to respond to other natural disasters that continue to occur, even in the midst of this ongoing crisis.

Executive Director, Vy Nguyen, shares: "I am grateful for the work of the board in strengthening Week of Compassion to respond to this global pandemic that requires the entire church to come together. This work would not be possible if not for all of us- from our donors to our partners- working together as we face what is before us and what will be ahead of us."

During this time of uncertainty the Church is called, more than ever, to respond with compassion, reaching those who suffer and sharing the love of Christ. The Week of Compassion Board of Stewards is doing just that-- serving as faithful stewards of the gifts you have shared with this ministry out of love and compassion. Along with other ministries of the wider church and with local congregations, Disciples continue the work of compassion, together.

If you would like to support the ongoing work of Week of Compassion COVID-19 response, please consider giving and designating your gift "COVID-19 Response." Your generosity will enable us to continue to provide support during this critical time.

For an interactive map of all 2020 responses, [visit our website](#).

Week of Compassion is the relief, refugee and development mission fund of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the United States and Canada.

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