

## NALC Disaster Response Annual Report 2024 – what a challenging year!

**ACTIVE RESPONSE:** NALC Disaster Response has responded and supported our NALC congregations to respond to so many disasters in the past year: Maui wildfires, Texas wildfires, California wildfires, Hurricane Idalia Perry FL, Tornadoes in Clarksville TN, Indian Lake Ohio, Omaha Nebraska, Minden Iowa, and the tornado outbreak which began April 26: Oklahoma, Indiana, Michigan, Pennsylvania, Florida, Texas, and Wisconsin. Flooding has occurred in Iowa, severely impacting our congregations. We responded to Hurricanes Debby, Milton and the worst one – Helene which devastated North Carolina. A total of 17 major disasters, including many smaller disasters have struck this past year and our congregations are responding! We are currently working 16 states, providing emergency relief supplies and volunteers to repair and rebuild homes during long term recovery.

**TRAININGS:** NALC Disaster Response has hosted 6 disaster preparedness trainings and 1 “train the trainer” event. We have also hosted 12 disaster response Sundays in addition to the disaster response Sundays that our mission district disaster coordinators have hosted – a big thank you to our volunteers in each mission district. Pastor George Zornow has completed the on-line training program for spiritual Christian care which is found at [www.thenalc.org](http://www.thenalc.org).

**Stuff the Trucks:** There have been “Stuff the Truck” events held in nearly every mission district – a big thank you to the Women of the NALC for hosting our donations management, especially to collect gift cards and keep our regional warehouses filled. All 16 of our regional warehouses needed restocked in addition to the national disaster warehouse in Caldwell Ohio. Flood buckets, health kits, Bibles, quilts, school kits, kitchen kits, and baby diapers/blankets are needed!

**MISSION TRIPS:** A total of 20 mission trips have been completed this past year in which over 400 youth and adults have assisted hundreds of families who have lost their homes due to disasters throughout the United States. NALC Disaster Response also participated in the continental youth gathering in 2024, offering 2 service projects which included the building of 500 flood buckets and 500 health kits.

It is exciting to announce that NALC Disaster Response is assisting our congregations in Canada to initiate disaster response throughout our congregations in Canada. Thank you Jesus for our growing churches!

**Schedule the Volunteer Center now:** NALC Disaster Response has completed the NALC Volunteer Training & Retreat Center in Caldwell Ohio and we have already hosted our first teams of volunteers who were trained in disaster response. We are anticipating retreats to be scheduled this coming year. Mary Bates sends out a big thank you goes out to all our congregations as they glorify God’s name and share the love of Jesus when disasters strike!

Please send gift cards to NALC Disaster Response, 16500 Noble Ave. Caldwell, Ohio 43724 and please send monetary donations to: NALC Disaster Response, 2113 Harwood Rd. Suite 309, PMB 409, Bedford, Texas 76021-4703. Please contact Mary Bates for more information at any time at 740-509-1132. Thank you & God Bless!

## NALC DISASTER RESPONSE UPDATE: April 2024

### MAUI WILDFIRES

On Aug. 8,

2023 a wildfire was beginning on the island of Maui in Hawaii. The wildfire had been contained until Hurricane Dora started picking up speed, causing wind gusts up to 80 miles per hour.

The previously contained wildfire reignited and the town of Lahaina was destroyed in addition to the surrounding country side. More people have died in this wildfire than in any other disaster in Hawaii. There are still over 350 people unaccounted for.....

NALC Disaster Response has responded through our Lutheran church on Oahu and through local points of contact (Pastor Philip Gagnon) on Maui. Over \$17,500 in gift cards have been shipped to Maui in addition to a cargo container of emergency relief supplies. NALC Disaster Response will continue to provide assistance as needed.

### HURRICANE IDALIA

On

August 30, 2023 Hurricane Idalia made landfall on the gulf coast of Florida, at Perry, FL, as a category 4 hurricane, with windspeeds surpassing 140 miles per hour. Florida in this area is more sparsely populated due to a rather large state park. Idalia then proceeded through across Florida and up the east coast to Charleston SC where she then went back out to sea. NALC Disaster Response is responding through a partner church in Perry FL. The first 2 deliveries of emergency relief supplies have been delivered to Perry and were gratefully received. More deliveries are being scheduled as the need is identified. The first mission trip in 2024 is scheduled for January.

### TENNESSEE TORNADOES

On

December 9, 2023 a series of tornadoes struck Tennessee beginning at Rutherford, TN through Dresden TN and then proceeded to the Hendersonville and Clarksville areas. Our church, Resurrection Lutheran is located in Hendersonville, however, the damage was on Main St. and impacted the business community. Thankfully all of our members are safe and have no damage. Mary and Ken delivered a 26' box truck of emergency relief supplies to Clarksville on the following Tuesday December 12 and distributed everything by that evening through our partner Church of the Resurrection (Anglican). There were 6 fatalities and over 3,200 homes and businesses were either destroyed or with major damage. As of this writing, we have delivered over \$8,000 in new toys for Christmas to the children of Fort Campbell and Clarksville. Volunteers from Maryland repaired 5 homes in January 2024 – they were awesome!

### TEXAS WILDFIRES

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Disaster Response is responding to the million acre or 1,750 square miles of wildfires blanketing the panhandle of Texas and moving into Oklahoma. Texas Gov. Greg Abbott issued a disaster declaration this week for 60 counties as the Smokehouse Creek Fire became the second largest in Texas history. Thousands of people were ordered to evacuate as the wildfire remains 97% contained and other wildfires burned, leaving at least one person dead in addition to thousands of heads of livestock.

### OHIO TORNADOES

On March 18, 2024, 6 tornadoes struck Ohio, killing 3 people and destroying communities in 11 counties. The Lakeview and Russell's Point were the most heavily damaged in addition to Plymouth Ohio. NALC congregations in the area had minimal damage and many NALC volunteers did early response cleanup in addition to delivering 6 truck loads of emergency relief supplies. Long term recovery will be extensive.

### NEBRASKA/IOWA TORNADOES

A tornado outbreak occurred across Nebraska and Iowa on Friday April 26, 2024. Several significant long track tornadoes destroyed over a thousand homes and businesses throughout the Great Plains. NALC Disaster Response provided 6 box truckloads of emergency relief supplies in both Nebraska and Iowa.

### SPRING TORNADOES

Since April 26, there have been tornado outbreaks in Oklahoma (both Sulphur and Norman), Indiana (Brookville), Michigan (Portage), Pennsylvania (Finleyville), northern Florida (Tallahassee), and Texas (Houston). These storms are causing massive devastation and loss of life. Thankfully, NALC Disaster Response and our congregational volunteers are able to respond, bringing the message of hope to the impacted families who have lost everything – thank you Jesus for amazing volunteers!

As of this writing, Hurricane Debby has made landfall on the west coast of Florida and is currently impacting the Georgia and South Carolina coastlines. Feet of rain is being measured, causing severe flooding in coastal communities. NALC Disaster Response has delivered flood buckets and emergency relief supplies to Perry Florida and Beaufort SC, with more deliveries scheduled for the Carolinas as roads become passable – please pray for the families impacted and our volunteers!

Hurricane Helene made landfall on Sept. 26 and caused devastation in 6 states. See separate report on Hurricane Helene.

Hurricane Milton made landfall on Oct 9, devastating Florida and the Tampa area continues to struggle in their recovery.

Alvin Texas and surrounding communities were impacted by an EF-2 tornado on Dec. 31, 2024.

Southern California has been suffering through a series of wildfires in the Santa Clarita to Palisades to Eaton areas just north of Los Angeles. Billions of dollars in damage has occurred to date, with the fires starting January 7, 2025. Our NALC congregation in Santa Clarita is 2 miles from the fires and possibly 20 families from Christ Lutheran Church have been impacted. NALC Disaster Response is responding and providing support for the community.