

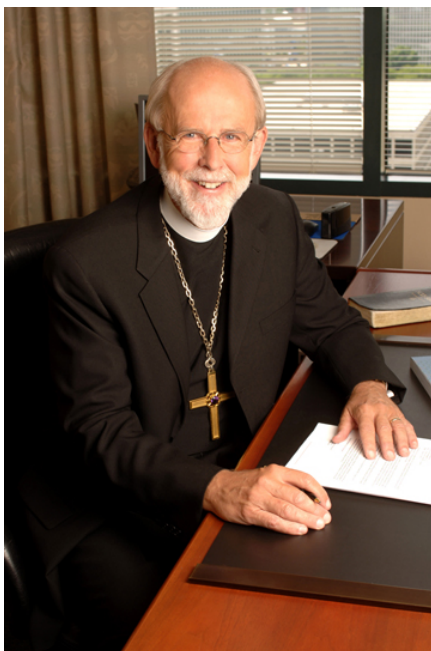
Stream of Information

Upper Susquehanna Synod, ELCA

Bishop Mark Hanson Updates ELCA Response

I am sharing this update on the ELCA's response to the devastating earthquake and tsunami in Japan because it is a sign of hope in a very difficult situation. I am also sharing it because, amidst the cacophony of appeals for Japan relief, our members can be assured that their church is able to act swiftly and effectively because of its global relationships, which enable it to draw from an expanded network in its disaster response:

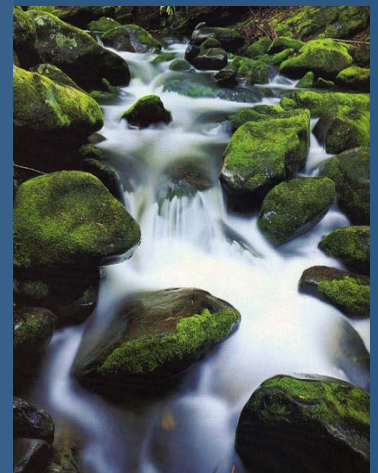
- The ELCA is blessed with a deep and enduring relationship with the Japan Evangelical Lutheran Church that goes back more than a century. This relationship continues to be expressed in a strong companion synod relationship with the South Carolina Synod and ELCA's current placement of 22 missionaries in Japan. The ELCA is making available an initial \$100,000 to assist the JELC in these initial days following the earthquake/tsunami. Already, the doors of the church are open, providing food and shelter to those seeking hope amidst chaos. The JELC will be working with other Christian churches (especially Roman Catholic and Episcopalian) plus partner organizations (like Second Harvest) in areas where there are JELC congregations. Given the historical relationship with the ELCA, the JELC is suggesting to other organizations that assistance from US Lutherans be channeled through the ELCA.
- The ELCA is a member of the Lutheran World Federation, which will be coordinating the response of our global Lutheran communion. The ELCA has made an early pledge of \$40,000 to enable the LWF to offer the communion's support – including a disaster response expert from India, which has had recent experience dealing with a tsunami – to assist the JELC in planning its response for the months and likely years ahead.



- The ELCA is a member of Church World Service, which is working with the Japan Platform, a consortium of 32 Japanese non-profits, and the National Council of Churches Japan to provide a coordinated response to the basic needs of those currently living at evacuation sites, including distribution of blankets received from within the region. An initial \$100,000 will go to CWS from ELCA Disaster Response, towards an immediate response to 5,000 families and a broader coordinated effort among the Christian family.

**A Letter from the
ELCA Presiding
Bishop about the
Lutheran Response
to the Japanese
Earthquake and
Tsunami**

***“Blessed be the God
and Father of our
Lord Jesus Christ, the
Father of mercies
and the God of all
consolation, who
consoles us in all our
affliction, so that we
may be able to
console those who
are in any affliction
with the consolation
with which we
ourselves are
consoled by God.”
(1 Corinthians 1:3-4)***



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So far, ELCA members have given about \$250,000 to disaster relief efforts.

“ELCA members can be assured that 100 percent of their gifts to help earthquake/tsunami survivors will go entirely for local response.”

Stream of Information is a formatted, occasional communication piece highlighting a specific topic of interest to members and leaders of the Upper Susquehanna Synod.

More about ELCA Relief Work in Japan

ELCA members can be assured that 100% of their gifts to help earthquake/tsunami survivors in Japan will go entirely for local response, in partnership with Lutherans and ecumenical partners. Because ELCA members and congregations, through their regular and World Hunger giving, support the wider church, gifts don't lose a portion of their value on their journey to the on-the-ground disaster response of global companions.

We are delighted with the generous response of our people to date: approximately \$250,000! Thanks for your leadership in this situation and for all you and your synods do day-in and day-out to support our church's disaster response and World Hunger engagements, both domestically and internationally. The ELCA Disaster Response website (www.elca.org/disaster) and the related blog on the Japan earthquake/tsunami provide additional background and information, including updated bulletin inserts for use by our congregations in this Sunday's worship.

Finally, as you may have heard, ELCA missionaries serving in Japan and their families have all been accounted for after the earthquake and tsunami. Since Global Mission is taking conservative precautionary measures to ensure that all twenty-two of the individuals sent on behalf of our church continue to be safe, most of those serving in Tokyo have relocated to western Japan for the near term.

Thank you for your prayers – and for encouraging the congregations of your synod to join with others throughout the Lutheran World Federation in prayer for the people of Japan and for our companion church there as this crisis continues to unfold.

