



01/11/2025 update on wildfires in Southern California

Thank you for continuing to pray and for contributing funds to assist the Southern California fire victims - your prayers and gifts are so important as the scale of this disaster grows. The following includes information and updates we have received as of this point.

How to help

So many of you are likely wondering how you can best help the victims of these terrible fires. At this early point, based on guidance we have received from expert disaster responders from the LCMS Synod office and Lutheran Church Charities, the most effective ways to help right now are:

Pray - Continue to lift up the victims, first responders, communities and all of us in prayer as we experience this significant disaster. This includes praying that we recognize the opportunities we have to share the light and love of Jesus to so many in need. See below for a prayer you can offer.

Donate - Victims will have a significant immediate need for financial resources to purchase basic items, pay for hotel stays, pay for meals, etc. The PSD has a standing fund which you can donate funds to for this purpose (see below). One way we will use these funds is obtaining Visa gift cards to distribute to area churches, school and other entities so they can bless their members, students and communities.

Love - Be the hands and feet of Jesus as you care spiritually for those you may come in contact with that are affected by this disaster, and even those who may not be in the immediate area but are traumatized. This especially applies to active, caring listening as they share their trauma and needs. Look for information soon on how you can receive rapid training to effectively provide "spiritual first aid."

PSD Disaster Response Contact

The District contact for disaster response coordination is PSD COO Jon Niederbrach. Email disaster.response@psd-lcms.org or call 949-854-3232 x222.

Donate to Emergency Relief

Resources

For confidential counseling, referrals, and other support, 24 hours a day, seven days a week, contact the **Disaster Distress Helpline at 800-985-5990**.

Concordia Health Plan members also have access to the **employee assistance program (EAP) for mental health resources available at this link**.

For insurance questions and guidance, the California Department of Insurance has personnel available at 800-927-4357. **Online resources for wildfire survivors are available at this link**.

For help in finding disaster services, call 211 or **visit the 211la.org website at this link**. This site includes access to apply for **temporary housing through Airbnb**.

Call 800-621-3362 or **visit disasterassistance.gov** to apply for federal disaster assistance.

Free meals are being distributed by World Central Kitchen at multiple sites near the fire areas. **Locations are listed at this link**.

Clothing, pallets of bottled water, and other donated goods are available at a donation center located in the parking lot at **Santa Anita Park in Arcadia**.

Donate to relief for wildfire victims

As the devastation from the Southern California fires continues to be revealed, the best help that can be offered now are donations to help victims with their immediate needs. This will help provide gift cards and other funds that the PSD will provide to those affected. Your Pacific Southwest District has a standing emergency relief fund in place to assist our churches and schools, their people and community. If you would like to donate to this fund, please click the button below.

Donate to Emergency Relief

UPCOMING: Lutheran Church Charities offering Spiritual First Aid training

LCC's Spiritual First Aid rapid training program teaches people how to be spiritual first responders and mental health champions in times of crisis or trauma.

First Lutheran - Venice

Date and time coming soon!

St. John's Lutheran - Orange

Sunday, January 19th from 5-7:30pm - a light meal will be provided

Online and in-person at the Pacific Southwest District office

Monday, January 20th from 7-9pm, and Tuesday, January 21st from 10-12noon

Look for sign-up information soon!

Sunday morning Worship services available at area churches

Joint service between Palisades Lutheran and Pilgrim Lutheran at Pilgrim in Santa Monica: [1730 Wilshire Boulevard, Santa Monica, CA 90403](#). Bible study starts at 9:00am. The worship service starts at 10:00 am, with food and fellowship to follow.

Historic First Lutheran - Pasadena

Worship at 10am, [808 N. Los Robles Ave., Pasadena, CA 91104](#)

First Lutheran - Venice

Worship at 8:30am Traditional Service & 11am Contemporary Service. Bible study from 9:45am to 10:45am, [815 Venice Blvd. Venice, Ca 90291](#)

Trinity Lutheran - Simi Valley, CA

Worship at 9am and 10:30am, [2949 Alamo Street, Simi Valley CA 93063](#)

Faith Lutheran - Tujunga, CA

Worship at 10am, Christian Education at 9am, [7749 Apperson St., Tujunga, CA 91042](#)

Mt. Olive Lutheran - Pasadena, CA

Worship at 10:30am, Bible study at 9am, [1118 North Allen Ave Pasadena, CA 91104](#)

Our Savior Lutheran - Arcadia, CA

Worship at 8:30am - Liturgical Service, 10:00am - Liturgical Service, 12:00noon - Chinese Liturgical Service, [512 W Duarte Rd., Arcadia, CA 91007](#)

Hope Lutheran Church and School - Glendora, CA

Worship at 9am, [1041 East. Foothill Blvd. Glendora CA, 91741](#)

Resources for children from Lutheran Church Charities

Children are strongly affected by disasters like the fires, even if they are only seeing news reports. Below are resources specially created to help identify when a child is struggling with trauma and resources to help navigate it.

Documents:

[Common Reactions to Trauma - PDF](#)

[Grounding Techniques - PDF](#)

[Gratitude Jar - PDF](#)

Videos:

[Trauma For Kids - Coping With Childhood Trauma, Resilience, Self-Care, Grounding Techniques - Video](#)

[5,4,3,2,1 - Grounded - Video](#)

This video guides children through the 5,4,3,2,1 grounding technique.

Red Cross shelters available

If you or someone you know is in need of shelter due to the fires, the latest [list of available Red Cross Shelters is available at this link](#). Shelters available at the time of publication are:

Ritchie Valens Recreation Center Calvary Community Church [10736 Laurel Canyon Blvd 5495 Via Rocas Pacoima, CA 91331](#)

[Westlake Village, CA 91362](#)

El Camino Real Charter High School
[5440 Valley Circle Blvd Woodland Hills, CA 91367](#)

Dream Center
[2301 Bellevue Ave Los Angeles, CA 90026](#)

Northridge Recreation Center
[18300 Lemarsh St. Northridge, CA 91324](#)

Glendale Civic Center
[613 E Broadway Glendale, CA 91206](#)

Westwood Recreation Center
[1350 S Sepulveda Blvd 300 East Green Street Los Angeles, CA 90025 Pasadena, CA 91101](#)

Pasadena Civic Auditorium

Pan Pacific Recreation Center
[7600 Beverly Blvd 132 N Euclid Avenue Los Angeles, CA 90036 Pasadena, CA 91101](#)

All Saints Episcopal Church

Stoner Recreation Center
[1835 Stoner Ave 601 W McKinley Ave Pomona, CA 91768](#)

Pomona Fairplex (Gate 3)
[Los Angeles, CA 90025](#)

Lanark Recreation Center
[21816 Lanark Street Canoga Park, CA 91304](#)

Van Nuys-Sherman Oaks Recreation Center
[14201 Houston Street Sherman Oaks, CA 91423](#)

Reports on affected churches and schools

Note: As the situation is rapidly developing, if you call, text or email pastors, church/school leaders, members, etc. in the affected areas offering help, they very likely are unable to respond.

Please understand they are focused on their members, students, etc. for the immediate future. Look for more information soon on how needs can be addressed.

New updates:

Palisades Lutheran Church - Pacific Palisades, CA

At least 12 members have lost their homes. Members (especially elderly) scattered in different places; one blind member still not located. Loss for members is not fully known. Pastor challenged with trying to contact members.

Historic First Lutheran - Pasadena, CA

Confirmed 5 members have experienced total losses. Unable to contact 9 members. 4 members homes miraculously spared.

Previously published:

Faith Lutheran - Tujunga, CA

Some members impacted. Our organist and his family live in Altadena and had to evacuate. They are staying at the church, but they found out their home is ok. Others have had no electricity for several days. But thank God no major losses or injury.

Pilgrim Lutheran Church/Pacifica Christian High School - Santa Monica, CA *Some members evacuated. Some Pacifica student families have lost homes.*

Trinity Lutheran - Simi Valley, CA

In "the eye of the storm" with lots of wind but no smoke or fire.

Mt. Olive Lutheran - Pasadena, CA

Evacuation of some members, including pastor and family, along with his parents. Planning online services for this weekend.

Gethsemane Lutheran - La Crescenta, CA

Members are currently safe and secure, and the church property remains undamaged.

Emmaus Lutheran School - Alhambra, CA

Church is safe and cleaning up debris from winds. Relative of school family lost home.

Our Savior Lutheran - Arcadia, CA

Faring well. Families without power with some evacuated. Congregational vice president is waiting to hear if they lost their home (young family of 5). Planning to have regular Sunday services for now.

First Lutheran Church - Venice, CA

One family lost their home in the Palisades fire. It seems like everyone has one or more close friends or family members who lost their house.

First Lutheran Church - Monrovia, CA

Pastor and family evacuated their home in the Eaton Fire area at 2:30am yesterday and were staying at their business office as no hotel rooms were available. Church was without power and preschool closed. Aware of several people who have lost homes but no members.

Hope Lutheran Church and School - Glendora, CA

Doing fine so far. One school family evacuated but home is intact.

We continue to pray together:

Lord,

We lift up our eyes to the hills and see danger, threat, and fire. We ask with the Psalmist, "Where our help come from?" It comes, as it always has and always will, from You Lord, the maker of heaven and earth! Give Your help, that is Your strength and support, to all those in need.

Calm the winds and ease the flames by Your power over all things. Give strength and courage to the first responders serving throughout our communities. Many are

weary and overwhelmed. Send relief and assistance, enabling them to find moments of rest.

Comfort those grieving loss, whether of life, home, or security. Send helpers into their lives to meet their immediate needs and to bear witness to Your love. Provide hope in the midst of grief, as only You can, because You are near with everlasting life and security that can never be taken away.

Guide Your people to reach out to our neighbors with the grace and mercy of Christ. Enable us to listen and humble us to serve in the most helpful ways. Work in the lives of those who don't yet believe with the gift of faith.

Lord, throughout it all, direct our eyes to the hill on which You suffered for us. Assure us by Your death and resurrection that You overcome all things and redeem them for Your good purpose. Watch over our going out and coming in now and forever. In the name of our eternal help, Jesus Christ.

Amen

Donate to Emergency Relief



In Christ,

Rev. Dr. Mike Gibson
PSD President

mike.gibson@psd-lcms.org

www.psd-lcms.org

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