

From the Executive Director



Dear Friends,

The highly anticipated New Year is finally here. With the beginnings of COVID-19 vaccine distribution, many of us are beginning to think about what life returning to “normal” may look like in the year ahead: in-person worship, children back in school, travel... While much remains uncertain, the possibilities are hopeful.

In reflecting on the year 2020 I am even more grateful for the ways in which we worked together during some of the most challenging moments. With your help, Week of Compassion provided tremendous relief and support to communities all over the world, and nearly \$3 million in urgent relief support. Together with our partners, we provided emergency support for various disasters, vital sustainable development work, and refugee relief to those who need it most.

And yet, we also know that challenges remain. In our own communities and around the world, this pandemic has had the greatest impact on the most vulnerable among us. The effects, economic and otherwise, will be felt for years to come. With the continued struggles of COVID-19, and the social and political tensions that make these days feel especially uncertain, we know that our continued compassionate response will be critical in the year ahead.

Of course, your continued generosity means that we continue to support refugees and displaced persons and respond to other disasters, even in the midst of a global pandemic. As we move into the New Year, we are anticipating the many needs that may emerge in 2021, from disasters or other circumstances. At the same time, we are strategizing with our partners about moving to the next phase of livelihood support for communities impacted by COVID-19. Empowering families and communities to provide for their own needs and build for the future will be essential moving forward.

Though much about the coming year is uncertain, we know this much is true: the mission and vision of Week of Compassion--to alleviate suffering and transform suffering into hope-- is more crucial than ever in 2021.

With that in mind, here are some of the urgent priorities for the coming year:

- Support for refugees and internally displaced people who have been neglected as they faced even greater challenges this past year; and working with partners to provide vital support.
- Continued support for communities impacted by natural disasters in recent years, domestically and internationally, and providing long-term recovery support.

- Support livelihood programs for developing communities where progress has been impeded by the pandemic, especially around support for women's empowerment and girls education.

The challenges ahead are far-reaching, but here's the good news: so is your compassion. The generosity that you've demonstrated throughout a challenging season will continue to flow into this time of rebuilding and recovery. As Disciples, we believe in the transforming love of Christ, and trust that God uses all of our gifts for good. Even in trying times, the gifts that we share in love have the power to change the world.

Let this be a year of great generosity, fierce hope, and compassion that abides in all things.

Peace to you,

Vy Nguyen, Executive Director

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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