



Youth's efforts raise funds for a well... plus 16 goats... five flocks of chickens... a medical kit... AND a grove of trees!

When she was eleven years old, Josie Day of Ascension Lutheran Church in Nelson, B.C. spearheaded a fundraising effort that raised \$2555 for CLWR's Gifts from the Heart:

"I want to do this," said eleven year old Josie Day to her mother, "I want to build a well in Africa." Looking at the price tag of \$1750.00 for a well, her mother, Melanie, encouraged the purchase of a flock of chickens instead!

Josie had been studying the little catalogue called, Gifts from the Heart, published by Canadian Lutheran World Relief (CLWR). It had been included in the October newsletter of her church, Ascension, Nelson. In the catalogue were 'alternative gifts' that could be purchased to benefit people in developing nations.

The effort started right away. Josie and her friend, Emily Decofta made up an 'order form' for fresh bread, cookies and other baking. They went door to door to neighbours, taking orders for fresh baked goods. Working together, the girls baked all day to fill the orders and begin the fund for the well project.

Josie approached her teacher, Marilyn Lawrence, at Trafalgar Middle School and told her about the fund-raising project to build a well. This complimented a social justice unit the class was studying and Ms. Lawrence encouraged Josie and the class to have a bake sale. All of students participated and the bake sale was a big success raising \$237 toward the well project.

The following week at Sunday School Josie shared her plan with students and teachers – the enthusiasm grew! During announcements Josie told the whole congregation about the well project that had now been adopted by the youth of the church. Immediately a coin jar was started for coffee hour donations. The funds kept rising – but the goal was large and loonies add up slowly.

In an email to CLWR, Josie told of her project and her concern that the goal may not be reached and water – a basic need for all – would not be provided to a community in need.



Tom Brook, CLWR Community Relations Director; Josie Day; Rev. Nolan Gingrich, Ascension Lutheran Church, Nelson, BC.

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- Recognize Refugee Rights Day and the 60th anniversary of the UN Refugee Convention

She was reassured that whatever funds she raised would be used toward a well project.

The fund-raising momentum for the well never stopped. It helped that Josie gave regular updates to the congregation during announcements. All the church youth participated in a 'swim-a-thon,' which raised over \$800! A Silent Auction table, continuing generous coin jar donations and a sale of Christmas centerpieces made by the youth, swelled the fund. A few members and friends donated special gifts toward the well project.

"Everybody's been so generous! Thank you so much for all your support!" exclaimed Josie when announcing the final tally of the 'build a well' venture. On Sunday, December 13th, Josie presented a cheque for \$2555.00 to be forwarded to CLWR! With big smiles Ascension Lutheran youth gathered around the giant cheque that represented three months of focused fund-raising led by an eleven year old girl. "We're building a well for a community that doesn't have clean water! AND we're also buying eight pairs of goats, five flocks of chickens, one medical kit and a grove of trees!"

The youth received a standing ovation for their energy and enthusiasm in giving this genuine gift from the heart.

-Story by Jill Gingrich, Permission granted by *Canada Lutheran*

Honour the rights of refugees

CLWR's Spring 2011 Partnership newsletter, "In mission for refugees," is now available, in time to honour Refugee Rights Day (April 4) and the 60th anniversary of the UN Refugee Convention.

The newsletter covers the global refugee problem, how some congregations are putting their faith into action by welcoming strangers in their lives, and how you, too, can be involved in this rewarding and much needed work. Visit www.clwr.org to read the Partnership newsletter online and contact us at 1.800.661.2597 or clwr@clwr.mb.ca if your congregation or group is interested in sponsoring refugees.

[Refugee Rights Day](#) has been celebrated in Canada on April 4 for the past 26 years. In 1985 the Supreme Court of Canada found that the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms protects the fundamental rights of refugees. 2011 also marks the 60th anniversary of the [United Nations' Refugee Convention](#), the international treaty that protects refugees and prohibits their return to persecution. Learn more at ccrweb.ca.



A Somali refugee prepares a meal for her family in Ifo camp, Dadaab, Kenya. Photo: UNHCR/B. Heger

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- At www.clwr.org
- Toll free at 1.800.661.2597 (CLWR) or in the Winnipeg area: 204.694.5602
- By cheque or money order to: Canadian Lutheran World Relief, 302-393 Portage Avenue, Winnipeg MB R3B 3H6

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