

## STORIES OF FAITH IN ACTION | 2009

### Prepared To Care Mason City, Iowa

In January 2007, Trinity Lutheran Church, Mason City, Iowa, invited the ELCA's Disaster Response staff to conduct a workshop on disaster preparedness.

About 15 Trinity members attended the workshop, wrote a congregational preparedness plan, and formed the congregation's Disaster Emergency Response Team (DERT). The team wrote plans for evacuations and posted evacuation routes in all rooms. They evaluated their insurance coverage and checked smoke detectors and fire extinguishers. **The congregation agreed to serve as a shelter or feeding station if needed. Trinity received a Lutheran Disaster Response grant to help coordinate preparedness activities.**



Six months later, floodwaters deluged Mason City. **As waters rose, DERT acted quickly.** They set up a feeding station in the church parking lot. They opened their fellowship hall for temporary shelter, which several families used. Within a month, about 35 volunteers helped clean 15 homes.

DERT leader Craig Pross says, **"The most important role [of DERT] was to take stress and responsibilities away from the pastors.** Because the pastors knew that we were actively responding to physical needs, they could do their important work—being with people and caring for their spiritual needs."

**Your gift to ELCA Domestic Disaster Response makes a difference after a disaster strikes.** Gifts for specific disasters provide immediate relief and long-term recovery efforts. Undesignated gifts allow a swift and nimble response to domestic disasters whenever and wherever needed most.

For more Stories of Faith in Action, visit [www.elca.org/stories](http://www.elca.org/stories).  
Do you have a story to share? E-mail us at [stories@elca.org](mailto:stories@elca.org).



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America  
God's work. Our hands.

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