

August 22, 2021

My name is Jeanette Beamer. I am honored to represent the *Comforters* group at Messiah Lutheran Church in Madison, Alabama. Our group of dedicated ladies make a variety of quilts, lap robes, afghans, and prayer shawls for those in need. Last year, 2020, our work ended in mid- March with the COVID lockdown. During the lockdown many of our *Comforter* members made hundreds of masks for family, church members, local hospitals, and care facilities. In November we were able to box up 60 quilts we completed before the lockdown and ship them to Lutheran World Relief.

In January 2021, with lockdown fever and weary of making masks, three of us got permission to meet at church to see what we could do to restart our very important ministry despite COVID. We came up with a plan to set up quilt projects to do at home. Quilters could pick the projects up from church and complete the work at their own pace in their own home. We set a goal of 61 quilts – one more than we shipped in 2020. Each Tuesday we would come and replenish the projects and pick up completed quilts. On July 27th, less than a month ago, the *Comforters* were back meeting together weekly. Despite the shortened year and COVID setbacks, we are blessed to have accomplished much for our brothers and sisters in need at home and around the world.

This year:

101 quilts will be shipped to Lutheran World Relief for distribution in America and around the world.

20 baby quilts have been given locally and to the Huntsville Hospital Neonatal Intensive Care Unit.

8 quilts were sent to the local hurricane relief effort.

12 lap quilts were sent to Redstone Hospice for distribution to local hospice centers.

In addition, the *Comforters* responded to local requests distributing **16** prayer shawls and lap robes this past year. These are available to anyone in need of comfort and prayers

While we get many fabric donations and can always use clean, colored flat sheets in good condition, we need to purchase batting and additional sheets for backings. The current lowest price for quilt batting is \$8.12 per quilt with Joann's coupons and free shipping. Twin flat sheets at Walmart are \$8.70 each, so each quilt we make can cost up to \$17. We are planning to have our annual fund-raising quilt auction again this November. We make many special quilts and this year have a few donated antique quilts for purchase. The proceeds from the auction pay for the batting, sheet backings, and also thread, tools, sewing machine repair/replacement and shipping costs.

I would like to thank all the *Comforters* members and others (including husbands, friends, and staff) who have contributed to our ministry this past year. They have been blessings to us, and I thank God for them.