



## Mennonite Disaster Service

### What Does Service with Compassion Look like?

MDS volunteers are amazing. Throughout the year they are busy responding, rebuilding and restoring the lives of people who have been impacted by disasters. We praise God for their willingness to muck out basements, hammer nails, saw wood, paint walls and equally important, listen to the stories of disaster survivors.

But often, their acts of service with compassion come with little extras that tend to go under the radar. I keep in my files, clips of stories throughout the year where volunteers serve with an extra bit of compassion.

- *(Pensacola, FL) As we were cleaning up after work one day, Ivan took out his harmonica and offered to play "Amazing Grace" for Mr. Joe. It was touching to see him sing along and comment on how beautiful that song is. He then was quite thrilled when we picked him up Sunday morning and worshiped with him in his home church.*
- *(High River, Alberta) As the volunteers put the finishing touches on a house they began the work site cleanup. They could have cleared the site, but instead, took some time to leave behind a pile of wood blocks – all suitable for children as building block toys.*
- *(Lititz, PA) In October a group of special needs students were stuffing envelopes, assisting MDS with its fund appeal letter. A staff member explained to them that MDS provides disaster relief services to people and gave specific examples – helping those who need homes rebuilt after hurricane, earthquake, tornado disasters, etc. In response, one of the student volunteers remarked "I feel like a hero today."*
- *(Griffithsville, WV) While working on the finishing touches of building a new driveway bridge in WV, the volunteers realized they had extra sand, so they built a sandbox for the neighbor's three children.*

In numbers, 2,892 volunteers served 19,852 days with compassion, a value of more than \$3.6 million (based on a volunteer rate of \$23.07/hour\*). Additional volunteers served in many Unit and Regional responses lending a hand to those in their local communities.

We thank God for all the gifts MDS volunteers bring to situations desperately in need of hope.

I pray that that these acts of service with compassion will bring honor and glory to God as we claim Hebrews 6:10: *God is not unjust; he will not forget your work and the love you have shown him as you have helped his people and continue to help them.*

*Kevin King, MDS Executive Director*

### 2015 AT A GLANCE

2,892 Volunteers  
Long-term 330  
Short-term 2,390  
Summer youth 172

200 clients served  
Clean ups 5  
Home repairs 157  
Houses rebuilt 37  
Bridges rebuilt 1