Church Together

A Church Together for the Sake of the World!

What a wonderful world we live in, full of generous, giving people. The following will bring joy to your heart and tears to your eyes.

In 2011 the Handbell Choir (The Carillons) from St. James Lutheran Church in Redding, CA, traveled to Wittenberg, Germany, to help Castle Church, which is the church of Martin Luther, to establish their own handbell choir. The members of The Carillons and their director Nancy Schmitt took with them bells that had originally been owned and used by Paradise Lutheran Church.

Just this past October, the Handbell Choir of Wittenberg was able to return the visit, traveling to northern California and sharing their gifts of music with the congregation at St. James. Since their trip was in October they arrived after the devastating Carr fire in and around Redding that destroyed 1,079 residences. Then in November, Northern CA suffered the most devastating fire in CA history in which 13,972 residences and many other buildings were lost and over 80 people died. This fire and the core of the devastation was centered in the town of Paradise.

This news reached the wonderful members of The Castle Church in Wittenberg. Sarah Herzer, the director of the Handbell Choir at Castle Church sent an email to her friends in Redding. "We have been so shocked here in Wittenberg to hear of the terrible fires in Paradise and Northern California. We have decided to have our annual Christmas Concert (Dec. 22) as a benefit for fire aid in Paradise. The church council has also passed a donation that will add to our total donations. It is strange that we were in California
between the terrible fires in Redding and then in Paradise. Our thoughts and prayers are with the many people who have experienced loss and with those who are helping.”

When the program director of Lutheran Disaster Response, Pastor Michael Stadie, heard about the generosity of The Castle Church in Wittenberg, he said, “We are indeed a ‘Church Together for the Sake of the World!’”

Do you have a story that you would like to share? Send any Church Together story requests to mic@spselca.org.