

Wildfire Update

Sierra Pacific Synod Bishop **Mark W. Holmerud** traveled to **Redding, CA** on Monday to meet with Pr. Bob Swartz and leaders of **St. James Lutheran Church** as the Carr Fire continues to rage and bring much destruction.



Now at 27% containment (as of July 31), it has burned over 100,000 acres and destroyed over 1,000 homes and other structures, as well as taking 8 lives. Bishop Mark attended a briefing led by CalFire where residents who have lost homes and been evacuated were given updates. As you can imagine, there were lots of raw emotions expressed and much sadness shared about the losses people have suffered. There was also much appreciation given to all the first responders who are risking their lives to stop this fire. Many local police and fire personnel have lost their homes even as they have been on the line to protect others.

St. James has opened its doors to provide respite, child care, A/C, food and water and internet connections for all in need and is hosting All Saints Episcopal, which is located in a mandatory evacuation area. Fires are also burning near Yosemite and in Lake County.

Prayers and donations will make a difference!

[Lutheran Social Services](https://www.lssnorcal.org) of Northern California
<https://www.lssnorcal.org>

[Lutheran Disaster Response](https://community.elca.org/donations/wildfires?_ga=2.69715798.798085027.1507654419-32465052.1445976107) (link from the ELCA webpage)
https://community.elca.org/donations/wildfires?_ga=2.69715798.798085027.1507654419-32465052.1445976107

Loving God, in the communion of Christ, we are joined with the sufferings of all. Be with those who are enduring the effects of the fires which are burning in our area of witness and service. Protect those in the path of danger. Open pathways for evacuation and shelter. Help loved ones find one another in the chaos. Provide assistance to those who need help. Let your love be made known in those who seek to bring order in the chaos. Help us to shoulder the burden of suffering, and make us bearers of the hope that is your healing gift in Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen