

From Classrooms to Communities: Hope on Its Way to Haiti



On September 1st, Midwest Mission sent another shipment of hope to Haiti through our partner, Food For The Poor.

International shipment #28 carried \$93,358 worth of supplies — resources that will support education, healthcare, livelihoods, and everyday needs in communities across Haiti.

Inside the shipment were items with many different purposes, but each one has the potential to make a difference. Students will receive supplies to help them learn, educators will have desks and chairs for their classrooms, and individuals and families will receive practical resources to help meet their daily needs.

Here's a look at the contents of the shipment:

- 69 Used school desks
- 36 Midwest Mission desks
- 93 Folding chairs
- 1,680 Student Kits
- 15 Electric sewing machines
- 8 Treadle sewing machines
- 6 Cabinet electric sewing machines
- 35 Rolls of fabric
- Sewing accessories
- 120 Home Care Kits
- 15 Bicycles
- 1,782 Articles of clothing

- 1,310 Hospital sheets
- 870 Hospital towels
- 60 Bed Packs
- 72 Cases of rubber sponges

Together, these supplies represent opportunities.

What may seem like an ordinary donated item can become an important resource when it reaches someone who needs it.

That is the heart of Midwest Mission's work. Through generous donations, dedicated volunteers, and partnerships with organizations like Food For The Poor, we are able to take resources that are available here and send them where they are needed most.

Serve Together This September



What if a few hours of your time could help provide a meal to someone facing hunger?

This September, Midwest Mission is inviting individuals, families, churches, and community groups to make Serving September a month of serving. One way to get involved is at our annual [Rice and Soy Blessing Bag Pack](#), where volunteers will come together September 24–25 to pack 12,000 Blessing Bags—enough to provide 72,000 meals to people facing hunger around the world. We have shifts at both our Pawnee, Illinois and Jefferson, Iowa locations!

But you don't have to come to Midwest Mission to serve!

You can participate right where you are by packing kits with your church or small group, holding a collection of needed items like wheelchairs, sewing machines and bikes, or making handmade items such as quilts, blankets, and other projects.

There are countless ways to turn your time, talents, and resources into practical help for people in need.

Find your way to serve this September at midwestmission.org/servingseptember.

Before You Donate: A Sewing Machine Checklist

A sewing machine can be more than a piece of equipment. It can become a tool for learning, earning an income, and building a more sustainable future.

At Midwest Mission, donated sewing machines are given a second life and are sent to communities where they are needed. Before a sewing machine can make an impact, our team needs to know what condition it is in.

That's why we created the **Electric Sewing Machine Intake Checklist**, a simple resource to help donors check their sewing machine before bringing it to Midwest Mission.

You don't need to be a sewing machine repair expert to complete the checklist. It is designed to help you identify the basic condition of your machine and let our team know about any known problems.

Whether your sewing machine has been sitting in a closet for years or has been a well-loved part of your sewing room, taking a few minutes to check it before donating can make a difference. The information you provide helps our team determine the best next step for each machine.

The **Electric Sewing Machine Intake Checklist** is available at midwestmission.org/collect-donate for donors to access before bringing in their machine.

We encourage you to complete the checklist as thoroughly as possible and bring it with your donation. Providing accurate information about your sewing machine helps our team understand its condition and determine how it can best be used.

If you are unable to check your machine before donating, that's okay! By checking it first, you are only speeding up the process of getting your machine into the hands of someone who needs it.

Do you have a sewing machine you're ready to give a new purpose to? Complete the checklist, and bring it to Midwest Mission or a [Collection Site](#) near you.

CURRENT Needs

Please consider collecting and donating:

- One-handed bags
- Student Kits
- Brand new pillows
- Work gloves
- Feminine Hygiene Kit Items:
 - Day and Night Pads
 - Waterproof Bags
- Layette Kit Gowns & Sleepers (Size 0-6 months)

[Purchase on Amazon](#)

[Sewing Patterns & Instructions](#)

You can bring items to a Midwest Mission location or a [Permanent Collection Site](#) near you – or send them through the mail to 1001 Mission Drive, Pawnee, IL 62558.

RESOURCES & DOWNLOADS



[Download Church Bulletin](#)



[Download Impact Report](#)

Volunteer WORK & PROJECTS

Work Done in Illinois

Onsite:

- Bike Shop
 - Desk Shop
 - Sewing Machine Repair Shop
 - Items counted into inventory
 - Unload trailers
-
- 1,720 Student Kits

Disbursements:

- Food for the Poor - Coconut Creek, FL - Fire equipment, 33 tarps, 2 IBC tanks with metal crate, 10 treadle sewing machines, 24 walkers, 11 shower chairs, 7 toilet seats, 200 blankets, 13 portable electric sewing machines, 4,800 Blessing Bags, 390 hospital blankets, fire resistant clothing, clothing, 27 rolls of fabric, 36 Midwest Mission desks, 15 bikes, 610 hospital sheets, 560 Personal Dignity Kits, 72 sponges, 3 rescue transport chairs - Value: \$110,723.00

Work Done in Iowa

Onsite:

- Sewing Machine Repair Shop
 - Bike Shop
 - Sewing Shop
 - Cleaning
 - Campus Improvements
 - Items counted into inventory
-
- 130 Student Kits
 - 50 Personal Dignity Kits
 - 20 Feminine Hygiene Kits
 - 10 Layette Kits
 - 240 Blessing Bags

GET *involved*

Host a Mission Event

We have several hands-on mission opportunities you can host at your location! Contact Melissa Brookens at [217-483-7911](tel:217-483-7911) or melissa@midwestmission.org to book your event or for questions.

[Learn More](#)

Serve From Home

You can serve people around the world from right at home! From sewing, to assembling kits, there's something for everyone.

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Serve at Midwest Mission

Illinois:

We have dates available in 2026 and 2027! [Click here to check calendar openings and to reserve your spots.](#)

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Learn more at midwestmission.org/at-midwestmission.

Iowa:

If you would like to volunteer at our Jefferson, IA location, visit midwestmission.org/iowa.

Volunteers

September 4th, 2026

Volunteer Leaders



Denise & Tom Patterson



Debbie & Stan Stadel

Illinois Teams



Chapel Hill UMC
Indianapolis, IN



Mount Carroll UMC
Mount Carroll, IL



Union Reunion



Pamela Woodard George



Douglas Avenue UMC
Springfield, IL

Iowa Teams



United Women in Faith
Hornick, IA



Augusta UMC
Augusta, KS



SW District Circuit Leaders



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BUV Empowers Coffee Producers in Honduras



Many of us are avid coffee drinkers. We look forward to starting the morning with a warm mug of coffee or enjoying a mid-afternoon iced coffee pick-me-up. But how often do we think about where our coffee comes from?

Where do the beans grow? Who picks them, washes and dries them, and prepares them for the long journey to become the coffee so many of us love?

Coffee goes through a long process before it reaches our mug. After the coffee cherry is harvested and washed, the bean is dried, milled, packaged, and eventually sent to a coffee-roasting company. That process requires equipment, transportation, and a lot of hard work.

For small-farm coffee producers in developing countries, having access to the resources they need can be a significant challenge. That's why many small farmers work through coffee cooperatives. By pooling their resources, farmers can share facilities, equipment, and supplies that would be difficult or impossible to afford individually.

Combrifol is a coffee cooperative in La Nahuaterique, Honduras, that benefits more than 200 coffee producers. The cooperative supports coffee production and management, creating opportunities and making it possible for local farmers to make a living from their work.

A large number of the coffee producers are women, many of whom are part of the Lenca Indigenous population. Most of the producers live in poverty.

Being part of the cooperative means more than a better livelihood for individual families. Proceeds from coffee sales also support infrastructure projects in the community. The cooperative works to empower women and advocate for women's rights, including programs specifically supporting single mothers.



So, where does Midwest Mission come in?

Last Giving Tuesday, you helped us purchase two [Basic Utility Vehicles](#) (BUVs) to send to communities in need of machinery for agriculture and transportation.

BUVs are built to empower micro businesses around the world. They offer the load capacity and durability of a 4x4 pickup, can travel on bumpy dirt roads, and can operate in the field, pulling equipment such as a planter or cultivator.

When we shared the opportunity with our partner, Food For The Poor, they immediately thought of the Combrifol Cooperative.

The entire cooperative had only one vehicle at its disposal—for more than 200 producers.

That meant farmers had limited access to transportation and faced challenges moving coffee between the different stages of production. One vehicle simply wasn't enough to keep everything moving efficiently.

The BUV is changing that.

With another vehicle available, Combrifol can move more coffee, increase production, and ultimately sell more coffee. That means more support for the families who depend on their work, and more resources for the community they call home.

This is especially important in La Nahuaterique, an area suffering from extreme poverty and a lack of infrastructure. According to Cafe Libertad, a coffee company that has written about the cooperative, "the government generally neglects the region to this day, and there is nearly no public infrastructure." Access to basic necessities such as water, electricity, education, and medical care can require extensive travel, often on foot.

The BUV gives producers a reliable way to navigate the rural roads and keep their work moving.

Cepudo, our partner in Honduras who connected the donation with the cooperative, shared:

"For the producers, many of them women, this donation represents time, effort, and new opportunities to continue working. Each transfer they can now make more easily reminds them that there are people and organizations who believe in their work and in the development of their communities.

The Combrifol producers express their deep gratitude to all the donors who made this donation possible, and especially to Midwest Mission, for providing them with a tool that is making a real difference in their work."

Thank you to everyone who gave toward our 2025 Giving Tuesday Campaign. Because of you, more than 200 coffee producers have greater opportunity to do their work, support their families, and contribute to the future of their communities.

CURRENT *Needs*

Please consider collecting and donating:

- One-handled bags
- Student Kits
- Brand new pillows
- Work gloves
- Feminine Hygiene Kit Items:
 - Day and Night Pads
 - Waterproof Bags
- Layette Kit Gowns & Sleepers (Size 0-6 months)
- Underwear (girl's size 10-14, women's size 5-8)

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RESOURCES & DOWNLOADS



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Volunteer

WORK & PROJECTS

Work Done in Illinois

Onsite:

- Bike Shop
 - Desk Shop
 - Poly Shop
 - Sewing Shop
 - Sewing Machine Repair Shop
 - Cleaning
 - Groundskeeping
 - Items counted into inventory
 - Offsite pack prep
 - Unload trailers
-
- 180 Student Kits
 - 108 UMCOR Cleaning Kits

Offsite:

- 350 Student Kits - Disciples UMC - Mt. Morris, IL

Disbursements:

- John Higgason - Kincaid, IL - 1 wheelchair - Value: \$100.00
- CICIM - Decatur, IL - 8 wheelchairs, 7 walkers - Value: \$1,220.00

Work Done in Iowa

Onsite:

- Sewing Shop
- Bike Shop
- Campus Improvements

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Iowa:

If you would like to volunteer at our Jefferson, IA location, visit midwestmission.org/iowa.

Volunteers

September 11th, 2026

Volunteer Leaders



Mike & Jane Strayer

Illinois Teams



Taylorville UMC
Taylorville, IL



Simpson Group
Springfield, IL



Diane and John Pangburn



Tampico UMC
Tampico, IL



First UMC
O'Fallon, IL



Berkel Family



Wesley Chapel UMC

Jacksonville, IL



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Two Shipments to Help Fight Malnutrition in Guatemala



Last month, a team from Midwest Mission traveled to Guatemala to meet with our partners, Food For The Poor and the Order of Malta, as well as beneficiaries of the items you've helped send over the last several years. **The trip was full of learning, listening, and asking, "What can we do to help?"**

As the team visited place after place, Melissa Brookens, Midwest Mission's Director of Mission, was taking detailed notes and formulating future shipments in her head to meet the needs the team was seeing.

One of the most shocking things we learned was that **almost 50% of children under five years old in Guatemala are chronically malnourished**. That is the highest chronic malnutrition rate in the Western Hemisphere. Chronic malnutrition is a long-term lack of nutrients that can cause slowed growth, stunting, and delays in cognitive development.

Many children experience malnutrition even before they are born when their mothers cannot access enough nutrients to properly support both their own health and their baby's development. Once the child is born, a mother may not have enough nutrition to nurse her child, while proper nutrition through formula can be expensive and unattainable for many families.

And so the cycle begins.

A child who does not receive adequate nutrition may not be as prepared cognitively when they start school, which can lead to difficulty with understanding and focus. Eventually, they may fall behind or even be unable to finish school. Without an education, they may have fewer opportunities to

find well-paying jobs later in life, making it difficult to provide for their families. **When food and funds are limited, families often have to choose what they can afford, which may not provide the nutrition they need.** If that family then has a child, the cycle can repeat itself.

It's a sad reality, but our partners in Guatemala are working hard to break the cycle, and our Rice and Soy Blessing Bags are a big part of that.



When a child comes into a clinic and is found to be malnourished, the clinic might send the family home with an entire box of Blessing Bags to help provide food for the month. During that time, they also work with the family to provide nutrition education and help them develop a plan for better nutrition in the future.

After seeing this firsthand, we came back with an even greater fervor for getting meals to Guatemala. Melissa worked hard to put together a shipment that would meet these needs, as well as other needs that became evident during the trip.

Just two weeks after the team returned, two shipments were ready to go out to help fight malnutrition.



The first shipment went out Tuesday, September 15, and the second followed Wednesday, September 16.

Altogether, we sent:

- Rice and Soy Blessing Bags to provide meals
- Bikes
- Personal Dignity Kits
- Home Care Kits
- Sewing Machines
- Two 275-gallon tanks
- Tarps
- Crutches, shower chairs, orthopedic supplies, hospital linens, and walkers

Total combined weight of both shipments: 64,226 pounds

Total combined value of both shipments: \$184,010.00

It was a very inspiring trip, and we look forward to sharing more about what we learned and the people we met in the coming months.

If you want to join the fight against malnutrition, **consider hosting a Blessing Bag Pack with your church, school, or businesses.** For just **\$2 per bag**, you will provide **six people** with a nutritious, tasty meal that will give them energy and health for their future.

To learn more, visit midwestmission.org/mission-events.

Emmanuel UMC Hosts Successful Annual Serving September Event



For the last few years, Emmanuel UMC in Noblesville, Indiana, has hosted a Student Kit Assembly event during Serving September. Members of the church donate supplies and funds, and then gather together to assemble the Kits.

This year, they were able to assemble 125 Student Kits. Twenty-five of those Kits were assembled by residents of a local assisted living facility that the

church has developed a relationship with in recent years.

Pat Baumer, a member of Emmanuel UMC and Midwest Mission Ambassador, shared this event with us and said: "We love that this has become an annual event, one that so many look forward to participating in."

It's amazing to see churches like Emmanuel UMC find ways to make serving part of their annual rhythm. Thank you, Emmanuel UMC, for continuing to show up and provide school supplies for children in need!

If you are participating in Serving September, we'd love to hear your story! Email Mallory Webster at mallory@midwestmission.org with stories and pictures from your events.

CURRENT *Needs*

Please consider collecting and donating:

- One-handled bags
- Student Kits
- Brand new pillows
- Work Gloves
- Feminine Hygiene Kit Items:
 - Day and Night Pads
 - Waterproof Bags
- Layette Kit Gowns & Sleepers (Size 0-6 months)
- Underwear (girl's size 10-14, women's size 5-8)

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[Sewing Patterns & Instructions](#)

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RESOURCES & DOWNLOADS



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Volunteer WORK & PROJECTS

Work Done in Illinois

Onsite:

- Bike Shop
- Desk Shop
- Poly Shop
- Sewing Shop
- Sewing Machine Repair Shop
- Cleaning
- Groundskeeping
- Campus Improvements
- Items counted into inventory
- Offsite pack prep
- Unload trailers

- 367 Blessing Bags
- 125 Layette Kits
- 260 Student Kits

Disbursements:

- Food for the Poor - Coconut Creek, FL - 24,000 Blessing Bags, 15 bikes, 38 pairs of crutches, 10 shower chairs, 12 toilet seats, 111 orthopedic supplies, 26 electric sewing machines, 22 rolls of fabric, 560 Personal Dignity Kits, 650 hospital blankets, 490 hospital sheets, 1,480 hospital

pillowcases, 1 IBC tank with metal crate, 72 Home Care Kits, 36 tarps, 35 walkers - Value: \$88,885.00

- Food for the Poor - Coconut Creek, FL - 24,000 Blessing Bags, 15 bikes, 33 pairs of crutches, 9 shower chairs, 60 walkers, 176 orthopedic supplies, 24 electric sewing machines, 18 rolls of fabric, 560 Personal Dignity Kits, 1,270 hospital blankets, 1,650 hospital sheets, 1 IBC tank with metal crate, 72 Home Care Kits, 47 tarps - Value: \$95,125.00

Work Done in Iowa

Onsite:

- Bike Shop
 - Sewing Shop
 - Sewing Machine Repair Shop
 - Items counted into inventory
 - Sorting fire gear
-
- 170 Personal Dignity Kits
 - 90 Student Kits
 - 20 Bed Packs

Offsite:

- 2,400 Blessing Bags - Aurora, NE

GET *involved*

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[Learn More](#)

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Illinois:

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For local teams and individuals: Volunteer Shifts will open 3 months from the present date.

Learn more at midwestmission.org/at-midwestmission.

Iowa:

If you would like to volunteer at our Jefferson, IA location, visit midwestmission.org/iowa.

Volunteers

September 18th, 2026

Volunteer Leaders



Cindy & Dale Zank



Sharon & Pat Baumer



Mike & Jane Strayer

Illinois Teams



Asbury UMC
Prarie Village, KS



Turner Family



Westfall Family



Emmanuel UMC
Noblesville, IN



Monticello UMC (1)
Monticello, IL



Monticello UMC (2)
Monticello, IL



Grace UMC
Jacksonville, IL

Iowa Teams



Bethel Warriors & Friends



Lanesboro UMC
Lanesboro, IA



Asbury UMC
Webster City, IA



Hope Church
Pocahontas, IA



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Volunteers Come Together to Pack Meals for Honduras



Over the past two days, **more than 300 volunteers** in Illinois and Iowa served at Midwest Mission to pack meals for Honduras.

This was part of our annual Serving September Blessing Bag Pack at both our Jefferson, Iowa and Pawnee, Illinois locations. It's one of our favorite events of the year because we pack the place full of people with joyful hands and servant hearts, ready to serve the least of these.

This year, we packed **14,960 Blessing Bags** that will feed **89,760 people** in Honduras. Thank you for helping us exceed our goal of 12,000 Blessing Bags!

Why Honduras? Through our visits with our partner CEPUDO in Honduras, we have learned about the great need for meals for kids in schools. Many

parents don't send their kids to school because it's not a priority — they are worried about survival, not education. But, if offered a meal at school, they begin to make it more of a priority. By sending Blessing Bags to Honduras, we will not only be filling their stomachs, but their minds as they are able to learn. And learning will lead to better opportunities for their future.

The meals packed at Midwest Mission are not the only meals being packed during Serving September. **17 Blessing Bag Mission Events** are happening during the month of September in **seven** different states! A total of **34,000 Blessing Bags** will be made off-site in the month of September alone. These bags will feed **204,000 people!**

If your church, school, or business is interested in hosting a Mission Event where you are, visit midwestmission.org/missionevents to learn more.

And, it's not too late to participate in Serving September! Visit midwestmission.org/servingseptember for ideas on how to get involved.

Calling All Who Sew: We Urgently Need One-Handled Bags!



Midwest Mission uses handmade One-Handled Bags to pack Student Kits, Feminine Hygiene Kits, and now Layette Kits (so moms have a diaper bag!).

We're using more One-Handled Bags than ever as we continue to make and send Kits to people in need.

If you sew—or know someone who does—this is a great project to take on right now. **We need more bags to keep up with the number of Kits we want to send, and we currently don't have enough bags to finish packing the Kits in our warehouse.**

If you have some extra time and fabric to spare, consider picking up your sewing machine and helping us fill this need! Each bag represents a person who will receive tangible items that bring hope and empowerment in the midst of their crisis.

Don't sew? **Share this urgent need with someone who does!**

You can find the One-Handled Bag pattern at midwestmission.org/patterns.

CURRENT *Needs*

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- One-handed bags
- Student Kits
- Brand new pillows
- Work gloves
- Feminine Hygiene Kit Items:
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Volunteer WORK & PROJECTS

Work Done in Illinois

Onsite:

- Bike Shop
- Desk Shop
- Poly Shop
- Sewing Shop
- Sewing Machine Repair Shop
- Cleaning
- Items counted into inventory
- Offsite pack prep
- Unload trailers

- 470 Student Kits
- 820 UMCOR Hygiene Kits

Disbursements:

- Village of Lynwood - Lynwood, IL - 108 UMCOR Cleaning Kits - Value: \$8,100.00

Work Done in Iowa

Onsite:

- Bike Shop
- Sewing Shop
- Counting and sorting donations
- Promotion folder assembly
- Prep for Serving September
- Cleaning

Offsite:

- Blessing Bags - Harrisburg, SD
- Blessing Bags - Sioux Falls, SD
- Blessing Bags - DeWitt, IA
- Blessing Bags - Webster City, IA
- Blessing Bags - Nebraska City, NE

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Iowa:

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Volunteers

September 25th, 2026

Volunteer Leaders



Mike & Jane Strayer



Sharon & Pat Baumer

Illinois Teams



Berkel Family



Batestown/Union Corner UMC
Danville, IL



New Knoxville Methodist Church
New Knoxville, OH

Iowa Teams



Ankeny First United Women in Faith
Ankeny, IA



Christ Lutheran Church
Jefferson, IA



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