



Crossing Borders News

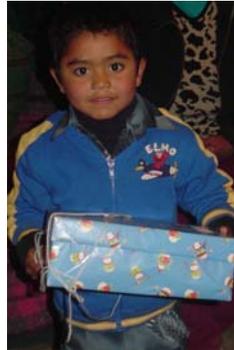
News & Updates on Crossing Borders Ministries - PO Box 35 - Fabens, Texas 79838

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January/February 2008

1300 Gifts!

The 2007 Christmas Shoebox Drive set an all-time record!
Thank You to everyone who made this tremendous blessing possible!
Here's just a sampling of the faces you put smiles on!
We pray the Lord bless you in 2008 and beyond!



A Very Special Thanks Goes To:

There are many hands and many hours that go into making the annual Christmas shoebox drive the success that it is, and we trust our Lord has already blessed their lives for their efforts. Some put in the time to wrap boxes and/or fill them with wonderful gift items. Others gave of their financial means to purchase those various things that were needed to make up shortfalls here and there. But to give you all some idea of the variety and scope of what it takes to bring this all about, we wanted to publicly thank some very special friends for their behind-the-scenes contributions!

- *Grace of Giving* brought a donated Beanie Babies collection to give away
- *Ryan Supply* in Fabens donated many gift items in addition to CBM's part of their annual "Giving Tree"

- Bill Sparks of El Paso Rotary brought down 8 cases of jelly beans

all of these donated shoebox gifts:

- God's Storehouse - Alamogordo, NM
- Patricia Flores of El Paso, TX
- Nelson family of Weatherford, TX
- Students at Valley View M.S. - El Paso

All these gave boxes, extra toys, and more:

- First Baptist El Paso adults groups
- Scotsdale Baptist El Paso adults groups
- Cloudcroft Methodist Church - NM
- First Baptist Cloudcroft, NM
- First Baptist Alamogordo adults group
- First Baptist La Luz, NM
- Cisco Baptist Association
- Lamesa Baptist Association
- The Gathering - Farmington

In addition, there were still others who gave of their finances and kept us covered in prayer. Thank you one and all!

A Time for Everything ...

Here we are, jumping into 2008! Is it just us, or did 2007 fly by for you, too? There's an old song taken from Ecclesiastes 3: 1-11 that says there's a "time to every purpose under Heaven". Well, this past year was a real whirlwind of "building up and tearing down" for us, and we're still waiting for the dust to settle over some of it! We saw ground broken and a warehouse of our own go up, and there's already been talk of raising funds to expand it! We experienced the sorrow of saying goodbye to some old friends, and have rejoiced over saying hello to some new ones. We've even gone through the peaks and valleys of seeing some friendships fizzle and die, while others that had been dormant sprang joyfully back to life - and all in just this past year! At times we've had to remind ourselves to step back and remember that the good,

bad, and ugly of it all has a timing and a purpose in God's greater plan - for truly HIS ways are higher and greater than ours. He makes EVERYTHING "beautiful" in its time!

For the past two years, we've told you about the big donation of fresh eggs we receive in January. Well, this year our friend George Hughes called with the "bad news" that the producer won't be allowed to donate his eggs any longer due to some regulation or other. Poor George put off calling as long as he could, praying for some last minute miracle. More than just our ministry will be effected by this set back. But for all our disappointment, no one is more so than the producer himself. George asked us to have everyone make this a matter of prayer, because the Lord is able to work something "good" out of even this. HIS timing in such things is perfect!

Ready - Set - GROW!



Do you remember growing that lima bean in kindergarten? Maybe it was first grade for you. Anyway, you put that bean in some dirt in a milk carton from lunch, watered it, put it on the window sill, and ... nothing! It seemed like it took that seed FOREVER to put up that sprout! Our various ministries have been a lot like that. We do a thousand little things unseen by anybody except the Lord Himself. But suddenly we've seen a sprout emerge!

Beginning in 2008, the different ministries we are involved in are coming together as a unified work. Hallelujah! The first Sunday in January, we began having the Spanish language mission meet with us in morning worship service. It means having to "stretch" ourselves to lead singing in both English and Spanish for every worship service, but it is so worth the effort! The ladies who work with us as volunteers on Tuesdays are among those who are now in the combined services. And their children and grandchildren will benefit from the youth ministry that continues to grow under Pastor Hugo Garcia. It feels like having ALL our family together at last! Right now the restructuring efforts are that much more work for us, but it's clearly the direction the Lord is leading. The Bible tells us that we're to work together in unity, for the Christian community is supposed to function as the "body of Christ". "Though we are many members, we are one body in Christ Jesus".

This unifying work can flow through from Sunday worship to Tuesday Distribution where the Mexico pastors continue to lead a morning service for reaching out to the community. Then there's Wednesday night youth group (called Lifestone) where we'll also expand to include a Bible study for Spanish speaking adults. Where the different ministry areas have been disjointed and have pulled us every direction as missionaries, we believe this year will see an ever-increasing partnership emerge between CBM, our church, Lifestone youth, and the Mexico pastors. And since the mission teams that stay in the church's dormitory are involved in one or more of these areas of ministry, we'll see increased partnership with these teams as well.

Already we have one mission team from Arlington, TX preparing to come during spring break in March to conduct backyard Bible clubs with us and do some community projects, too. Then another team from Elgin, OK is going to conduct a week of Vacation bible School near the end of June. So our plate is already looking full - and it's only January!

March 10 will mark CBM's 7th anniversary. Seven years of watering and waiting to see how the Lord was going to grow it. All along we've prayed and hoped we weren't stretching ourselves too thin. Some haven't understood that it's been the LORD and not us that's shifted one way and stretched out roots another. We've been doing our utmost to be obedient to the prompting and leading of the Lord. Not to imply we think we've "arrived". We just sense we can finally see the tender shoot breaking ground. So now more than ever, we covet your prayers and support - knowing that we're ALL partners for one cause; to be the hands and feet of Jesus in helping meet the physical and spiritual needs of the poor and hungry.

Continued from page 1

God's Provision Makes the Decision

Nothing brings the concept of God's "timing" into better focus than the events that rapidly fell one on top of the other in December! As the shoebox gifts began arriving, so did donations of food, blankets, and coats. In poured 600 # of venison, hundreds of cases of oyster crackers, Ranch dressing, animal crackers, instant oatmeal, dill pickles, ketchup, pastas, candies, chips, sodas, and bread. In response to our asking for additional beans and rice we had 4000 # of beans and 1000 # of rice delivered. Several groups collected and delivered new blankets and good, used coats for men, women, and children. We also had a group of young men dig a trench for the new gas line into the warehouse for heat. Coordinating this huge influx of donations is a story in itself, but nothing can outshine the fantastic quantity and assortment of Christmas gifts that came in! In GOD's miraculous way of counting, HE even caused 1100 gifts coming in to become 1300 gifts going out!

Part of this miracle is in how He leads us to store and manage all that comes in throughout the year. Yet He showed Himself to be the "Provider" in some really amazing ways. By mid-November, we had the names lists from 39 locations and not one gift box in-house. Praise the Lord, gift boxes began arriving at Thanksgiving, which gave us a bit of a "head start" on this massive project! Over and over again, we witnessed how the numbers of gifts that came packed alike matched up to the quantities on the different names lists! This way, siblings and friends were given a similar gift and no one got "more" than the others in a particular community.

The 200 gift "discrepancy" even worked out in some miraculous ways. One ministry to a remote village near Creel, Mexico requested gifts for 50 boys and 50 girls - but could they please be in bags instead of boxes? Surprise! We'd stored a variety of cloth bags that had been left by a missions team in the past. About the size of a sheet of paper, there were 50 of one color and 50 of another! We received one church list late, yet we found more bags to meet this need as well - right down to only NINE felt bags with Teddy Bears on them, which "happened" to match the NINE aged 3-5 boys on their list! This same "numbers game" continued through finding just the right quantities of Nerf balls, jacks sets, coloring books, play-dough, and other sorts of things that came in as "extra" box stuffers that had been donated! Quiet little miracles you only see in the details!

As all of these "finds" began to run out, MORE little miracles showed up again and again! Like modern-day "wise men", the Murtlands from El Paso popped in bearing check after check after check - donations from friends who wanted to help. A phone call from Weatherford, TX told us 45 gifts were "in the mail" - exactly what we needed for the church in Guadalupe. Another phone call was an even bigger surprise - students at Valley View Middle School in El Paso had heard about the shoebox drive and had put together 50 boxes! The kids had even made up little story books in Spanish and English about different cartoon characters to put inside. They were so cute! Finally, we were unexpectedly blessed by some "last minute" donations from Ryan Supply that let us take care of 30 more kids on Christmas Eve!

So you see, GOD's timing is PERFECT - even when we can't wrap our brains around present circumstances. Whether its eggs, shoeboxes, beans, rice, friends, family, your health or your future - GOD does have a plan and HE can be trusted!

Crossing Borders is a ministry of First Baptist Church of Fabens, developed and operated by Elfi Register and Joan Wilson. Your financial support is vital to this ministry. When sending your check, please make it payable to:

Fabens First Baptist Church

and attach a note to specify if it is for support of Elfi and/or Joan or for Crossing Borders general fund.

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Thank you for your continued prayer & support!

Elfi & Joan are Mission Service Corps missionaries out of FBC Fabens. MSC is part of the North American Mission Board, whose members must provide their own finances.

