

How We Can Help? Here's How One Church Did!

Christmas 2007

This story comes from the actions and hearts of the children at the Hillcrest Apostolic Church in Moose Jaw, SK. (Sr. Pastor Alan Buchanan). The children's ministry is led by Daycee Siggelkow.

We were heading into our Christmas unit which was called "Love Shines Thru" and focused on Jesus being the Greatest Gift and God's Unexpected Gift of Love to us. We had done projects before with the children through Samaritan's Purse and had a very positive response whenever we did. This year, with the call for help in Zimbabwe we decided it would be better to focus our efforts there. We also thought we would have opportunity for a stronger connection in this project, since the larger organizations are pretty faceless when it comes to knowing exactly how your funds were spent.

(The ACOP Orphan Care ministry is presently functioning in full force in Malawi and Zimbabwe, Africa. We are currently expanding and uncovering new ways to help the

orphans and widows in this part of the world. These children and women are part of the communities where ACOP Churches are ministering. The funds go towards purchasing food, supplies, education and health fees and in general bring HOPE to the hopeless. We have 4 Orphan Care Centers with 2 new ones planned for Spring/Summer 2008. See the current ACOP Fellowship Focus – December 2007 for more details of the ACOP Orphan Care Ministry.

We called the project "The Unexpected Gift" and talked about how at Christmas people *expect* kids to be greedy and gift-hungry, but this year we wanted to do the *unexpected* thing by giving to children in need. I had called the ACOP office for information on the feeding stations and what it cost to run them, etc. looking for something concrete for kids to work toward. I don't know if my formula is correct or not, but we ended up figuring that it cost about \$0.10 per child per meal.

So we did two things, for 5 weeks the kids could bring in their pop bottles

and cans (1 can = 1 meal per child!). We had put some paper cutouts of kids on our Clubhouse wall so when they brought pop bottles they would get one sticker per bottle to place on "their" child.

Secondly, we dug out all our old World Vision Loaves (from the 1970's!) and created our own Loaf Banks. Each child took a loaf bank home with their name on it and filled it with coins for those 5 weeks.

At the end of the unit, we had all the kids bring in their Loaves (most of the funds came in this way). We were thrilled at the amount of money they were able to raise with so little effort! We have about 55 children in the Kindergarten to Grade 5 groups that worked on this project.

These children raised \$450.00... enough for approximately 4,500 meals. The Orphans are smiling again today. They say "Thank you" to the children of the Hillcrest Apostolic Church for: ...remembering us! ... giving us hope! ...sacrificing for us!

How can your church help?



"Stop doing wrong, learn to do right! Seek justice, encourage the oppressed.
Defend the orphan, plead the case of the widow."
(Isaiah 1:17)