



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **LOCAL CHURCHES REACH OUT TO THOSE IN NEED**

**Uniontown, PA** – No matter what time of year it is, when people are in need, one of the first places they often reach out to is their local church. As the holiday season approaches, that help becomes even more important, and church families give even more to their communities, sponsoring community holiday meals and organizing myriad other events to raise funds, provide necessities, and just make life a little brighter.

For the past few years, one of Calvary Baptist Church's holiday projects has been to collect and package items for Operation Christmas Child's Shoebox Outreach, an arm of Samaritan's Purse which sends gift-filled shoeboxes to children in need all over the world. This year, volunteers packed 12,900 shoeboxes, Calvary Baptist Church Pastor Ron Hudson said.

Hudson explained the church is a central drop-off location for churches and businesses throughout Fayette County.

"They all collect (items for) the boxes and bring them to our location," he said.

Hudson said a mixture of necessities and fun items goes into each shoebox.

"There will be a fun thing, as well as sometimes a toiletry that they need," he said, listing toothbrushes and other personal care items as possibilities. Stuffed animals, photos, or school supplies might also be added to the boxes.

Once packed, the boxes are loaded into semi-trailer trucks and shipped to where they are needed most.

"We got a lot of volunteers," Hudson said, noting staff members from organizations such as PIC and local businesses like Chick-Fil-A and Rooster's Roost helped with the packing. "There were lots of people from our church and other churches. It was a really cool thing."

Hudson said the shoeboxes are far from the only way in which Fayette County businesses, organizations and private individuals turn out to help others.

"I'm on the board at City Mission, and City Mission does a ton of stuff," Hudson said. "They work with men's and women's shelters and youth programs."

Hudson said City Mission also sponsors missionaries in countries around the world while also supporting good works right here at home.

"Each year, we encourage small groups to do service projects" such as ringing bells for the Salvation Army.

Hudson said Fayette County residents always are ready and willing to step up and help their neighbors.

"I think that we have some of the best people in the country who live right here in Fayette County," he said. "We hear people talk down about Fayette County, but the people that we know, that are our neighbors, that are our friends, that we go to church with, that we see at the coffee shop – they are fantastic people. They are always willing to help, to give, to do what they can to take care of their neighbors."

To learn more about Fayette County, visit [www.fayettecountypa.org](http://www.fayettecountypa.org).

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