

MISSIONS & OUTREACH

MINISTRY: BACKPACK BUDDIES

Revision1, July 29, 2016

Approved by Session: Aug 8, 2016

OVERVIEW:

Backpack Buddies (BPB) is a program conducted by the Lighthouse Baptist Church (LBC) of Benson, North Carolina. It is a modified version of a larger program in the Greater Raleigh area. The program delivers individual food bags to local schools on Fridays, for pre-determined children who might otherwise have little or no food over the weekend. Providence Presbyterian Church (PPC) supports LBC by donating food and sometimes funds, as well as, a providing pairs of drivers who make the deliveries on Fridays throughout the school year.

CONTACT INFO:

Lighthouse Baptist Church (LBC)
1140 B. H. Parrish Road
Benson NC 27504
(North of NC Hwy 210, east of Hwy 50.)

FOOD DONATIONS:

LBC's approach is to pack enough food for three meals for Saturday and Sunday, more for a three day weekend. These meals are not necessarily "full meals," but provide at least something for each of these meals. An average of 13 items is included in a typical bag. The estimated cost is \$10 per bag. LBC is supported in this endeavor (irregularly) by three other local churches besides PPC.

PPC accepts donations from the congregation year round. Each school year the list of most needed items is provided by the LBC BPB Program Coordinator. This list is posted on the M&O bulletin board, as well as on the blue donation barrels, staged at the inside double doors leading into the PPC Upper Fellowship Hall. Easy-to-open, individual serving containers are requested. Items include things such as canned and pouched meat (tuna, chicken), fruits, cereal, soup-in-a-cup, crackers, snacks, juices, easy to microwave side dishes. The last Sunday of each month is the target donation day for any given month.

On the Thursday following donation Sunday, M&O members separate these donations from the PPC Food Pantry donations (another effort supported by M&O). We count donations to BPB. For instance, a shrink-wrapped container of six-pack fruit cups is counted as six items. Counting keeps our fingers on the pulse of donations. We monitor trends and suggest course corrections as needed. After sorting and counting, a M&O volunteer then delivers the donations to LBC.

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BPB BAG DELIVERY TO SCHOOLS:

In August M&O solicits drivers from the PPC congregation. Names are submitted to the LBC BPB Program Coordinator. A kick-off meeting is then held in September at LBC. Program updates are shared and the final driver schedule for the year is distributed. Depending on the number of volunteers, any pair of volunteers delivers about four times during the school year. Delivery entails picking up the prepared individual bags at LBC on Friday morning at 9:15am. (Boy Scouts and LBC volunteers bag the food weekly. The total number of bags delivered runs anywhere from 45 to 60.) They provide the driver with the breakdown of number of bags to be delivered to each of the three schools being supported by this program. Currently those schools are Dixon Road Elementary, McGee's Crossroads Elementary and McGee's Crossroads Middle School. (These are all schools where children from PPC happen to attend.) The delivery process typically takes no more than an hour, from pick up at LBC to the last school delivery.