

Church offers motorists bargain gas and full service

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By George Henson

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SCHULENBURG—Not too many people have experienced blessings at the gas pump lately, but residents of Schulenburg did recently, thanks to First Baptist Church.

For a couple of hours on a Saturday, the church pumped gas and washed the car windows of patrons of Alfie's Food Mart & Shell Station, all the while subsidizing the price of gas by 50 cents a gallon. So, the bargain rate for gasoline was \$2.19 a gallon rather than the \$2.69 that had been posted.

Volunteers from
First Baptist
Church in
Schulenburg
washed
windows and
pumped 1,758
gallons of cut-
rate gasoline for
local motorists
as a good-will
gesture to their
community—and
as a way to earn
a hearing for a
gospel witness.

In just two hours, church members pumped 1,758 gallons of gas. That put the bill for First Baptist Church at \$879, and Pastor Eric Vaughan said it was money well spent. About 120 people were able to fuel up during the ministry.

“It was a neat, neat day,” he said. “A lot of people were surprised, and their first question was ‘Who are you?’”



A convenience store employee lowers the gas price for a couple of hours, thanks to a subsidy and volunteer labor provided by First Baptist Church in Schulenburg.

When customers learned a church was helping them fill their tanks and washing their windows, many stopped for longer conversations. Meeting so many people in such a positive way made the expense paltry in relation to the good will engendered, Vaughan stressed.

“It was all about blessing the community, and that’s what our church is all about—just loving people,” he said.

While the line was sometimes a little long, no one was unhappy. Vaughan had talked to the police department well in advance, so a traffic flow plan was in place to keep things moving as best they could.

“No one was unhappy with their wait.” Vaughn said.

When the two hours were up, a sign was put in the back glass of the last vehicle in line at that time to let those behind know that discounted gas was ended. A volunteer also stayed in the area to make sure there were no misunderstandings.

Vaughan had served previously been on staff at a church that had a similar ministry, but the work of the 27 volunteers and the church council who helped make the preparations made the day such a success, he emphasized. The church already is making plans to repeat the project, he added.

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