

# New Beginnings partners for the sake of the gospel

November 18, 2022

LEWISVILLE—Pastor Joseph Fields and New Beginnings Baptist Church in Lewisville have a vision—to touch their community and show love by meeting basic needs.



Pastor Joseph Fields of New Beginnings Church in Lewisville believes he and his congregation are blessed by God in order to be a blessing to their community. (Photo / Ken Camp)

“It’s all God,” Fields said. “God is the one who gave the vision, and God is the one who gives the provision.”

The vision prompted New Beginnings Church to open its facility on Mondays, Wednesdays and Saturdays so families in need can receive nutritious food, and to make clothing available two Saturdays each month.

God’s provision came in the form of partner organizations that work

alongside the church to make the ministries possible.

## **‘Blessed us to bless the community’**

“God has blessed us to bless the community,” Fields said.

Heart of the City, a nonprofit formed by Rob Veal, executive pastor of Northview Baptist Church in Lewisville, operates the food pantry, serving an average of 165 families each week.

Love Thy Neighbor, another local nonprofit organization, operates the clothing assistance program at New Beginnings Church two Saturdays each month.

“I just want to partner for the sake of the gospel,” Fields said.



Volunteers with Heart of the City’s Farmers Market Food Pantry provide a drive-through grocery distribution each Saturday morning at New Beginnings Church in Lewisville. (Photo / Ken Camp)

Heart of the City’s Farmers Market Food Pantry provides drive-through grocery distribution each Saturday morning. The food pantry is open by appointment on Monday and Wednesday afternoons, giving individuals the

opportunity to shop for their own groceries—at no cost—and to interact on a deeper level with volunteers.

## **‘We want people to feel love’**

“We want people to feel love. We want to treat them with dignity,” Fields said.

While volunteers engage in brief conversation and offer a word of blessing to neighbors during the Saturday morning food distribution events, the two weekday afternoons provide greater opportunities to build relationships, said Luis Matos, a Heart of the City worker.



Volunteers with Heart of the City load groceries into cars during a drive-through food distribution on a Saturday morning at New Beginnings Baptist Church in Lewisville. (Photo / Ken Camp)

“We offer to pray for them,” Matos said. “We try to establish a rapport with them and offer them a listening ear.”

In addition to the elderly, disabled veterans and the underemployed, the

food pantry has served recent immigrants and refugees from Venezuela, Honduras and Cuba, along with a significant number of the Chin ethnic group from Myanmar. The New Beginnings Church campus is adjacent to Chin Baptist Church, which it helped launch.

Any perishable produce left over after a Saturday distribution is made available to worshippers at New Beginnings Church the next morning.

"We tell people to take whatever they can use. We let them know: 'This is the overflow. You're not depriving anybody in need,'" Fields said.

The North Texas Food Bank provides the bulk of the groceries for the food pantry. Local grocery stores and discount centers also donate some food. New Beginnings includes both the food pantry and clothing closet in its church budget.

## **'A dream come true'**



Pastor Joseph Fields of New Beginnings Church in Lewisville appreciates the opportunity to work with ministry partners such as Mary Ann Saxton, program manager for Love Thy Neighbor's clothing

assistance program. (Photo / Ken Camp)

A group of concerned women in the Lewisville-Flower Mound area started Love Thy Neighbor about 12 years ago to help meet basic needs of families and individuals. For more than a decade, Love Thy Neighbor worked with a well-established local agency to provide clothing.

When that agency narrowed its focus to concentrate exclusively on serving the unhoused, Love Thy Neighbor needed another partner. About that same time, New Beginnings Church wanted to expand its ministry to neighbors in need by providing clothing.

“It was a dream come true for both” the nonprofit agency and the church, said Mary Ann Saxton, program manager for Love Thy Neighbor’s clothing assistance program.



A volunteer with Love Thy Neighbor helps with the clothing assistance program at New Beginnings Baptist Church in Lewisville. (Photo / Ken Camp)

“A family from Venezuela arrived fresh in this country with only the clothes

on their backs,” Fields recalled. “We were able to outfit them in time for their children to start school.”

As volunteers set up early on the Saturday morning of Labor Day weekend, some wondered aloud if they would have many guests to serve on a holiday weekend.

Both ministries exceeded expectations. The food pantry served 107 families on Saturday, after already serving 62 on Monday and Wednesday, providing food for a total of 169 families for the week. The clothing closet served 65 guests, compared to 60 on an average Saturday.

Field hopes the ministries will continue to expand. New Beginnings Church’s long-range plans for facility expansion include designated areas for the food pantry and clothes closet.

“God didn’t just give us this facility to meet on Sunday morning,” Fields said. “We want to touch the community.”

*This article originally appeared in the fall 2022 issue of CommonCall magazine.*