

Northwest Texas churches supply students along the Rio Grande

August 8, 2013

STAMFORD—The churches of [Double Mountain Baptist Association](#) worship a long way from the Rio Grande, but they still are making their presence felt in the lives of children there.



Volunteers from churches in Double Mountain Baptist Association package school supplies for 400 Mexican children. Crossing Borders Ministries, located in Fabens, will distribute the supplies to children in 35 locations. (PHOTO/George Henson) More than a dozen rural churches from the association north of Abilene put together money and manpower to buy and package school supplies for Mexican children through [Crossing Borders Ministries](#), located in Fabens.

Churches from Stamford, Haskell, Rule, Rochester, Hamlin and other Northwest Texas communities helped 25 Mexican pastors provide children in 35 locations with supplies they will need to start the school year.

The churches packaged school supply bundles for 400 students and sent the supplies to Fabens for distribution.

Organizers of the project reminded volunteers who prepared the school supply bundles about the importance of the ministry not only to the children, but also to their parents.

“They are counting on us in a big way to be able to deliver these school supplies,” said Jacob West, pastor of First Baptist Church in Stamford.

The ministry partnership with Crossing Borders started 11 years ago when First Baptist Church in Stamford began sending school supplies. Joe Walton, director of missions for Double Mountain, said the effort broadened to other congregations the next year.

“We saw the potential of what we could do as an association,” Walton said.



Lonnie Pittman from

First Baptist Church in Stamford helps load a truck that will transport donated school supplies to Crossing Borders Ministries in Faben for distribution to children in northern Mexico. (PHOTO/George Henson) This year, congregations provided about \$4,000 to purchase the school supplies. Walton's wife, Cindy, the association ministry assistant, orders many of the supplies online but also buys some components locally. If the amount needed isn't exactly covered by the money already donated, the supplies are bought anyway, Walton said.

"We take it on faith that the churches will respond, and they always do," he said.

The missions effort has a positive impact on the congregations that participate, Walton said.

"They have a hand in it. They have participation. They have ownership. They see what they are doing with their dollars," he said.

Since the association covers such a large area geographically, some of the distant congregations choose to send a check, but their contributions are just as significant, Walton added.

Shawn Smith, youth and worship pastor at East Side Baptist Church in Haskell, brought 10 youth to Stamford to help package the school supplies for shipping.

"We want them to realize that God is moving everywhere and not just in small-town Haskell. It's easy for them to forget that God is a lot bigger than what we think he is. They think the influence that they can have for Christ is limited due to a small-town perspective that can creep in, but this is a reminder that they can have an impact on the kingdom on a much larger scale," Smith said.

Walton agreed.

“Not only are we providing supplies for children to be able to go to school; we are demonstrating God’s love. Not only do these children receive pencils and other useful things; they hear the good news of salvation. There is no way to measure the impact that free school supplies and the word of God have on these little ones and their families,” he said.