

Operation Inasmuch' brings 10 churches together to reach out to the community

Posted On September 27, 2017 By Mark White, News Journal, Corbin, KY



Volunteer Robin Reeves hands a free doll to Cynthia Bennett and her son, Travis Bennett, during Operation Inasmuch Saturday.

About 10 churches and 50 volunteers came out Saturday at Cumberland Regional Mall for the South Union-Mt. Zion Baptist Association's first ever "Operation Inasmuch." There were free car washes. There was free clothing, children's books and toys for youngsters. Church groups gave out free food, such as nachos, ice cream sandwiches, hot dogs and popcorn. There were free blood pressure checks. Free baby items were given away.

The event is based a verse from Matthew 25:40 where Jesus states, "Truly, I say to you, in as much as you did it to one of the least of these my brethren, you did it to me." "We are out here trying our best to share the love of Christ with the community, and we are doing it as an association," said Dr. Steven Jett, director of missions for the South Union-Mt. Zion Baptist Association and one of the organizers of the event.



Abigail Stephens and her mother, Rebecca Stephens, helped give free car washes during the event.

"Operation Inasmuch" began in Knoxville, Tennessee, and is a national nonprofit organization that employs proven **models** to motivate, train, and equip churches to move more congregants out of the sanctuary seats and into the streets to serve the neediest in their communities, according to the group's website.

The Kentucky Baptist Convention has decided to partner with the group in an effort to reach out to communities. “We were asked by the state convention to be one of those centers where training could take place for Operation Inasmuch,” Jett said. “We had that training last year, and this is our first year to be able to actually do this part of it.”

Jett noted that Operation Inasmuch is larger than just Saturday’s event, such as asking churches to do landscaping for schools or to do things to express appreciation for groups, such as police and firefighters. Recently, some of the association’s members distributed baked goods at the courthouse, police station and jail for what the employees of those organizations do for the community.

Jett said the event was open to everyone, but organizers specifically had in mind helping people like senior adults and single mothers. He said he was pleased with the response Saturday. Organizers hope to make this an annual event, and hope for it to get bigger each year.

“We even had some people here when we got here to start this. We were doing out orientation with our church members and we already had a couple of families here to enjoy the festivities,” he added.



Area residents were able to pick up free clothing, children’s books and household goods during Operation Inasmuch Saturday.

Organizers urged volunteers to tell people about their churches. Jett noted a lot of people have a preset mentality about churches that they primarily want people to join so they will give their money to the church.

“Jesus didn’t tell people come and see. He said go and tell. This is our attempt to go and tell to the community,” Jett said. “We are offering the gospel as well. That is why we are doing it. We are doing it for Christ. We want the community to know we care about them.”

He added several businesses assisted with the effort. Advanced Auto Parts let organizers use their water for car washes, and donated items for use in washing the cars. The Cumberland Regional Mall didn’t charge for use of the mall parking lot where the event was held.