

“... see that you also excel in this grace of giving.” 2 Corinthians 8:7

Grace of Giving



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Serving Him Together

by Elfi Register and Joan Wilson

Editor's note: Elfi Register & Joan Wilson operate Crossing Borders Ministries (CBM) at FBC in Fabens, TX. CBM is a ministry partner of Grace of Giving, to whom we deliver rice and other food items every 2-3 weeks. They kindly agreed to write an article for you this month, so that you can learn more about their ministry.

Crossing Borders Ministries is incredibly blessed to have such faithful partners as Grace of Giving. God orchestrated the paths of several people to introduce our ministries to one another. Back in 2001, when we were just starting out, we got to know Mark & Calli Nelson [Mark is now the Pastor at Bethel Baptist Church in Buffalo, TX – Ed.]. At that time, they were here in Fabens to help us conduct Vacation Bible School at our home church (Fabens First Baptist Church). Their youth group helped us deliver our first load of pinto beans to a feeding station outside of Juarez, Mexico. The Nelsons eventually ended up sitting in Greg Beard's Sunday School class at FBC Clifton when he discussed his desire to help existing ministries feed hungry people. They told him about us, and he called the one phone number he had – which was the church's number. He called it on one of the only days he would have caught us at church, introduced himself and said he wanted to bring us some food.

Now, we had heard this same “speech” from many other well-intentioned folks, so we took his offer with a grain of salt. We spent the first few months on their delivery route expecting them to “fizzle out” like so many others. However, Greg & Dara have been some of the most faithful people we have come across in ministry. They have proven themselves to be people of integrity, who we've come to love and rely heavily upon.

In a nutshell, CBM is two Baptist missionaries (Elfi and Joan) operating a loose network of volunteers to distribute beans and rice through 37 churches and missions along the Rio Grande River from Sauzal (just east of Juarez) to El Faro, Mexico. Pastors from Mexico come pick up beans, rice, and groceries at our church every

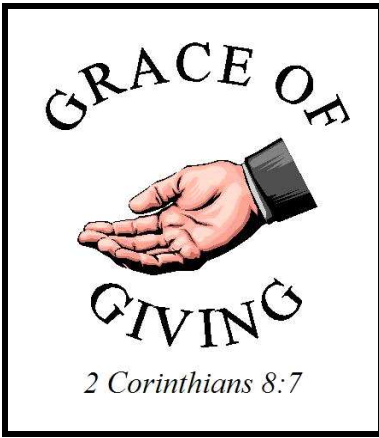
Tuesday, so that 300 families a week are fed. Grace of Giving is one of two major suppliers that keep this operation well stocked and open every week. In addition to our weekly distribution, we organize two big drives for the children in these churches. In July & August we collect school supplies to make up kits that are sent out through the pastors for about 1000 children. Then in the first week of December, we collect shoeboxes filled with special goodies & gifts for these same children. Over the years, these pastors and the families they minister to have become like our own family and they now count on us to be there for them.

Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.
(Matthew 6:19-21)

Several weeks ago, we took Greg & his friend Matt Wallace to visit in the homes of some of these pastors. While this was not a new thing for us, it was the first time we went visiting without the aid of a translator! We're not sure if our pastor friends thought we were very brave, or very crazy, but they were happy to see us all the same. Pastor Antonio Perea of Praxedis told us about one elderly man he gives beans and rice to. The man lives alone in a tiny shack, with no modern conveniences. He has a circle of rocks outside for his “stove”. He puts his only pan on them with a little water and a handful of beans to let the heat of the sun “cook” them. It is a slow process, and then he still has to cook the rice. Yet he is grateful he can eat every day. Bro. Antonio also told us about those he takes food to who tell him they hadn't had anything for breakfast or lunch that day, and they give thanks to God for him showing up just when he does with something to eat. He said it breaks his heart, how poor the people are that God has called him to minister to, yet he is glad to serve the Lord this way. It also reminds us just how blessed we really are. And just how much we take it for granted.

CBM could not operate without the help and reliability of support ministries – especially not without the faithfulness of Grace of Giving. We appreciate the opportunity

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Grace of Giving
Clifton, TX 76634



Please visit our website!
www.graceofgiving.org

Grace of Giving

Grace of Giving is a non-profit, charitable organization that is exempt from federal income tax as a 501(c)(3) organization. Accordingly, the Internal Revenue Service has advised that all contributions to Grace of Giving may be deducted for federal income tax purposes as specified in section 170 of the Internal Revenue Code.

Our priorities for using your gifts are to purchase food and to purchase fuel to deliver the food. The officers of Grace of Giving accept no compensation for their services and currently cover all of their travel expenses.

Officers

Greg Beard — President & Treasurer
Dara Beard — Vice President
Pastor Keith Blanton — Secretary

In Honor of Others

Grace of Giving was blessed recently with the following gifts:

- from Carl and Bettye Dunlop as a memorial to Jodie Richards, brother of Douglas Richards of Scottsdale, AZ.
- from our FBC Clifton friends Shirley Gray and Waylon and Becky Henderson to honor the memory of James Corpier, father of our friend and Sunday School classmate, David Corpier.

We are honored to be able to serve others in God's name as well as in the name of these precious loved ones.

2006 Activity Update

Grace of Giving highlights through June 9:

- Cost of food delivered: \$35,111.09
- Contributions: \$24,396.76
- Covered 69% of project costs (vs. 53% for all of 2005).
- Total delivered: 96,976 pounds
 - 73,289 pounds of bulk beans, rice, sugar, flour, and masa
 - >12,500 cans of veggies, etc.

Thank you in Jesus' precious name for your very generous support!!

Vacation Bible School

We held our annual Vacation Bible School last week at FBC Clifton and were blessed with almost 200 children every day. This year's theme was "Fiesta!", and the VBS coordinators blessed Grace of Giving by allowing us to share details about our mission activities along the border each day with the kids.

The children made blankets for us to take to kids in Mexico, each bearing the words, "Jesus loves you!", in both English and Spanish.

The enthusiasm of the children for Jesus and for our mission activities was wonderful. Each day, the children collected an offering designated for Grace of Giving, and the offering activity quickly grew into a competition between the boys and the

girls.

We all sometimes need to take a lesson from our children when it comes to generosity. By the end of the week, these wonderful young people had collected \$1,122.65 for Grace of Giving to use in our ministry along the border.

\$1,122.65! Wow! That's enough to purchase 3,500 pounds of beans, which will help to nourish 100's in Mexico!!

Please join me in praying for these children, especially that the enthusiasm they showed for serving Jesus will carry forward in every aspect of their daily lives. Also, please pray a special prayer of thanks for the numerous adult and youth volunteers who made our VBS possible. God bless you all abundantly!!

Serving Him Together

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to introduce ourselves to you in this way, and we want to encourage you to be as faithful to the Beards as they are to us. They are jewels in the Lord's crown, and are deserving of your whole-hearted sponsorship. Thank you for helping them, and us, in the process. Muchas gracias, familia!

Serving Him Together,

Elfi & Joan

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Our dear friends and sisters in Christ, Elfi Register (L) and Joan Wilson