

Christmas in Goma, Democratic Republic of Congo

God was able to use our small church to brighten Christmas for over 1000 orphans in Goma.

Many of us in Maine recognize the amazing Work of Grace that our God is doing through his servants Ann and Bill Clemmer in Goma, DRC. At our business meeting in October, our small church (First Baptist Church of Brunswick) of 12 decided that we wanted to collect for a special ministry project for Christmas.

I saw that the Clemmers did not have a special project listed at International Ministries, so I sent Ann an email asking if there was a need for ministry funds in Goma. Ann's reply:

"We tend to not write projects because we have needs that are not necessarily ongoing. What comes to mind... especially as Christmas nears, are the 1000+ children of Sunday school. Many come to Sunday school in tattered and worn out clothing. In fact, today I just handed out the last dresses I had to two young girls... both malnourished and barely clothed. At Christmas, we like to be able to do something special for all these children. If we had funds to buy a number of large bales of clothing... and/or juice for each child on Christmas morning that would be wonderful! These children who come every Sunday know that Jesus loves them, know that Sunday school is a safe place, and we also try to help them understand that they are special to us and to God."

I read her reply to the church and we agreed that this would be a wonderful need to sponsor. The bales of clothes cost around \$50 each, so I was hoping that we would be able to send around \$500 to help the children. God supplied abundantly through His people. One member contacted her grown children and they suggested that she could donate money rather than send small gifts to her grandchildren. Other members gave sacrificially. We received a check from a friend in Missouri. In total we raised \$1500 toward the needs of the orphans in Goma.

More from Ann:

"What a wonderful blessing!!!!

We went out and bought clothes, rather than buying bales we selected them one by one.. a bit tedious, but that way there was no waste and we were sure to get good quality.

Several teachers and I spent yesterday after Sunday school handing them out to those we realized were in most desperate need. Two little boys in particular stand out in my mind.... they were SO delighted to have clothes that were whole and that fit. Wish you could have seen them. We will continue to hand out clothes to children as Christmas approaches.

We are touched by your care for these children in Goma.

Know that many are being touched with the love of Jesus through your generosity!!!!"

Then, after the celebration:

“Hi, Mark... and everyone at FBC Brunswick!!!!

We had wonderful celebrations this morning ... the entire service was done by the children.

I want to send you more information, but this is a quick note hopefully before church.

We had over 1,500 children... (final tally has not yet come in) and each child got a little Christmas sack with a lollipop, pack of biscuits and juice. They were SO happy!

The Sunday school teachers spent the entire night in one of the classrooms... praying for the service and packing the little sachets.

JOY to you... as you have brought joy to many children in Goma this day.”



This was one of the most impacting outreaches that I remember in the life of our church. People were excited to hear the progress and impact of our campaign. We support the Kalkmans as a church and are unable to add the Clemmers due to our budget constraints. However, God showed us how He can use our small church to fulfill His mission in other ways. We are now collecting funds to buy mattresses for a new shelter for (prayerfully) 10 orphans as an Easter campaign.

If you have questions, please contact me by email: markmarstaller@gmail.com