

Christian Ministry of Lincoln County Brings Christmas Hope to Families in Need

Christian Ministry of Lincoln County Williams

LINCOLNTON, N.C.—For nearly 50 years, Christian Ministry of Lincoln County has been a lifeline for individuals and families facing difficult circumstances. Through a variety of programs operating throughout the year, the ministry provides food, emergency assistance and other essential services to neighbors in need.

While its work continues year-round, the Christmas season brings one of the ministry's largest undertakings — an effort that depends heavily on the generosity and support of the community.

Serving Lincoln County Throughout the Year

The ministry operates several programs that make a tremendous difference in the lives of local residents.

- **LINC Home Delivered Meals:** Currently serving 106 recipients each

month with a hot lunch, the program delivered more than 1,800 meals during October.

- **Soup Kitchen:** Open 365 days a year, the Soup Kitchen serves lunch to more than 100 people daily. During October alone, more than 3,800 meals were provided.
- **Emergency Services:** One of the ministry's greatest areas of need, this program provides food, groceries and assistance with essential household expenses. During the last quarter, Emergency Services assisted 1,068 families with food and groceries and provided an estimated $25,067.27 toward utility bills and rent assistance.

These programs operate throughout the year, helping individuals and families through challenging times. However, one of the ministry's most significant annual efforts is its Christmas Ministry.

Christmas Ministry: A Community Effort

Planning for the annual Christmas Give Out begins during the middle of summer, when volunteers start organizing and preparing for the months ahead.

Beginning Nov. 1, families could start registering to receive food assistance and toys for children ages 14 and younger.

Families signing up for food assistance receive a wheelbarrow full of food to help provide for their household during the holidays.

Children ages 14 and younger registered through the Christmas program receive a large trash bag filled with toys. Their families also receive a wheelbarrow of food.

The food and toys are made possible through donations from local churches, individuals, Scout groups, the Lincoln County Schools annual canned food drive and the ministry's Angel Tree Toy Drive.

The impact of this community generosity is substantial. Last year, Christian Ministry provided Christmas toys to 603 children and distributed wheelbarrows of food to 563 families.

The Christmas Fundraiser Helps Sustain Ministry Services All Year

Making this tremendous effort possible requires more than volunteers and donated items. It also takes significant financial support from the community.

Each year, Christian Ministry of Lincoln County establishes a Christmas fundraising goal of $120,000.

According to the ministry, this annual fundraiser has a greater impact on its overall operations than any other fundraising campaign throughout the year. The funds raised help ensure that money is available in the months ahead to assist families with utility bills, rent and food needs.

In fact, the success of the Christmas fundraiser helps determine how much assistance the ministry can provide throughout the coming year. If the fundraising goal is not reached, the ministry may have to reduce the amount of financial assistance available to those who depend on its services.

Community support is therefore essential not only to making Christmas brighter for local children and families, but also to keeping these important programs operating throughout the year.

How You Can Help

There are several ways the community can support Christian Ministry's Christmas efforts:

- Donate new toys for children.
- Contribute nonperishable food items.
- Make a financial contribution to the Christmas Fundraiser.

Financial donations may be mailed to:

Christian Ministry of Lincoln County
P.O. Box 423
Lincolnton, NC 28093

Donations may also be made in honor or memory of someone special. The ministry will send a card notifying that person or family of the contribution made in their name.

Important Christmas Ministry Dates

Several important dates are approaching as the ministry prepares for its annual Christmas distribution:

- **Saturday, Dec. 5 – Used Toy Give Out:** This event will be held in the ministry's parking lot. No paperwork or advance registration is required.
- **Friday, Dec. 11 – Donation Deadline:** Toy and food donations are needed by this date to allow volunteers sufficient time to organize and prepare for distribution.
- **Tuesday, Dec. 22 – Christmas Give Out Day:** The annual Christmas distribution will take place. Families may continue signing up for assistance right up until Dec. 22.

A Little Help Can Make a Lasting Difference

For nearly five decades, Christian Ministry of Lincoln County has depended on the kindness and generosity of its neighbors to help those experiencing difficult times.

Whether through a new toy, a bag of groceries, a financial contribution or a few hours of volunteer service, every act of generosity helps make a difference.

As the ministry prepares for another Christmas season, the community is invited to join in making sure local families and children experience the joy and hope of

Christmas.

For additional information, visit www.christianministryoflincolncounty.org or call 704-732-0383 to learn more about volunteer opportunities and ways to help.