

2026 Appalachian Christmas Outreach

Appalachian Coalfields Ministry, sponsored by Baptists on Mission, seeks to meet the physical and spiritual needs of people living in the Appalachian Area. One of the greatest ministry needs in this area occurs at Christmastime. We are calling on churches statewide to respond to this need through Appalachian Christmas Outreach in 2026.

GOAL and COLLECTION DATE:

The statewide goal is to collect **26,000 backpacks** of items to be distributed to Appalachian children in areas of need in December of 2026. The state-wide collection day for 2026 is **Saturday, November 7** from 9am to noon. Thirty-plus collection sites will be set up across the state for churches to bring their backpacks. **We encourage churches to begin collecting and filling the packs early – and throughout the year.**

AGE GROUPING and LABELING.

Each backpack should be labeled boy or girl as well as the appropriate age. Age groupings for this year are 4-7, 8-10; 11-14; and 15-17 Due to labels falling off in previous years, we now use a ribbon system for labeling the backpacks. A **royal blue** (or similar) ribbon indicates a **boy's backpack**. A **pink** ribbon indicates a **girl's backpack**. In addition, a **yellow** ribbon will indicate that the backpack is for **ages 4-7**, a **green** ribbon for ages **8-10**, a **red** ribbon for ages **11-14**; and a white ribbon for ages **15-17**.

ITEMS TO COLLECT

Each zippered school backpack should include:

- 1) **ITEMS OF NEW CLOTHING** including a winter hat, gloves, 2 pair of socks, and a scarf.
- 2) **METAL POP-TOP CANS OF FOOD** (3-4 cans) such as ravioli, tuna, beef stew, fruit
- 3) Two to three **NEW, AGE-APPROPRIATE TOYS**. Examples: small cars, balls, dolls, small stuffed animals, small puzzles, jump rope, sidewalk chalk, Slinky, card games, Legos, other (*no toy weapons, please!*) For older youth category, substitute appropriate item for toy. No pocketknives or blade of any kind please!. (*See website for suggestions*).
- 4) **HYGIENE ITEMS**. Toothbrush, soap, washcloth, brush/comb. Full-sized shampoo, deodorant, toothpaste. (*Fit items into a one gallon Ziploc bag so they will not leak*).
- 5) **FRESH, WRAPPED CANDY** (*no chocolate please, as it may melt – and no peanut products please due to allergies*)
- 6) **A CHILDREN'S OR YOUTH BIBLE** (*no particular version is required*) This is the most important item, please include!
- 7) **A COPY OF "THE CHRISTMAS STORY"** (*downloadable .pdf found on website*)

Share a gift of LOVE and the GOSPEL MESSAGE with a child in need this Christmas!

For more information contact Mark Abernathy, Baptists on Mission, at 919-459-5607 or mabernathy@ncbaptist.org or visit our website at www.baptistsonmission.org/aco



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