



FELLOWSHIP COMMUNITY CHURCH

Takin' It to the Schools

Over 300 volunteers from the Roanoke Valley came out for the “Takin’ It to the Schools” service project, where they helped local schools in a variety of ways—all because **Fellowship Community Church** (FCC) in the Roanoke area wanted to help prepare local schools for the students to return. The volunteers rolled up their sleeves and cheerfully faced the task.

FCC projects included cleaning up school playgrounds, landscaping, remodeling staff lounges, and painting hallways. They even created and stocked supply closets to keep teachers from having to purchase items themselves. FCC provided the shelving and supplies and will restock the closets throughout the year as teachers use the supplies for needy children. All in all, the church spent \$24,000 on this outreach opportunity.

John Sharp, the pastor at Fellowship’s Southwest Campus, brought his children to help with the event. He told WSLS TV in Roanoke, “Teachers can teach best, students can learn best in a clean, happy environment, so we want kids to have a blast in the playground. We also believe that serving should be part of the fabric of us as human beings.”

Volunteers worked to clean up Burlington Elementary, Oak Grove Elementary,

GW Carver Elementary, Glenvar Middle, and Fairview Elementary. Three school principals have started attending FCC since the church began ministering at their schools.

The day after the project, the church collected more than 800 student backpacks and took them to 20 local schools. The following week, a team of volunteers from FCC assisted Roanoke City Schools in distributing backpacks and school supplies at the Back-to-School Extravaganza to some of the neediest students in the city of Roanoke.

Bill Fuller, missions pastor at FCC, explained the church’s reason for this type of outreach:

Jesus commanded us to serve those in need. In Roanoke City Schools alone, 590 homeless children attend classes. The average teacher spends \$1,000 out of pocket for school supplies each year for her class. Few pastors can say they spent \$1,000 to buy Sunday School supplies each year out of pocket. Students cannot learn and teachers cannot teach in an environment where students do not have the resources they need.

If a child cannot read, they cannot read the Bible. We believe our service will create goodwill. Good deeds create

goodwill that leads to an openness to the Good News. This comes from Acts 2:45–47. Many Christians protest that prayer has been taken out of the schools. It is more significant that Christians have taken themselves out of the schools. In the words of Tony Evans, ‘It is time to stop protesting and start planning.’

Churches have been given an open door to go inside public schools and serve the staff and students as long as they respect their regulations. Beginning this fall, FCC will put volunteers inside schools throughout the Roanoke Valley with the belief that, as they serve these students and teachers, they will have countless opportunities to meet family needs. In the process, they will have the freedom to answer questions, especially when asked, “Why?”

Would your church consider adopting your local schools for the long haul and committing to help the staff and students have an excellent educational experience?

RESOURCE
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