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**(Neb)-It's Operation Christmas Child Collection Week**



By: John Axtell Posted at: 11/13/2017 02:01 AM

**CHADRON** - This is collection week for Operation Christmas Child, also known as Operation Shoebox, the world's largest Christmas project. Started in Wales in 1990, Operation Christmas Child merged 3 years later in a partnership with Samaritan's Purse - a nondenominational evangelical Christian organization based in the US with more than 20 years of expertise in relief and aid work.

The program sent shoebox gifts to more than 28,000 children that year and has continued to grow with more than 146-million children in over 150 countries getting a brighter Christmas in the years since. This year's goal is over 11-million shoeboxes being filled and brought to local collection centers.

There are 7 community collection sites in the Panhandle, including the First Baptist Church of Chadron, where Aaron Sprock is pastor. He says the area has strongly supported Operation Christmas Child for many years.

Operation Christmas Child has its own shoeboxes, but regular shoeboxes and even plastic boxes of that size are fine. Suggestions on what to put in a shoebox can be found at the Samaritan's Purse website or in a pamphlet available at the community collection sites, but Pastor Sprock says candy and toothpaste are no longer allowed.

Fun toys, school supplies, and hygiene items such as combs, toothbrushes, soap, and washcloths are among the recommended items and Pastor Sprock says the hygiene items are especially welcome by the recipients.

The cost of shipping and handling has risen from \$7 to \$9 per shoebox and while a donation of that amount isn't required, it is suggested. Those wanting to help but not to fill a shoebox can donate toward the shipping either online or at the local collections sites.

Pastor Sprock says Samaritan's Purse has videos on its website giving shoebox donors a chance to see just how much the gifts mean to the kids around the world who get them.

Panhandle collection sites in addition to First Baptist Chadron are the Evangelical Free Church in Alliance, Gordon Wellspring Chapel, Harrison Bible Church, New Life Assembly in Bridgeport, and the First Baptist Church of Scottsbluff...which is also the regional collection center, handling a record 5,489 last year.

There are also two other collection sites in the region: the Lifeway Church in Torrington and the Hot Springs Evangelical Free Church.

## COLLECTION TIMES

Chadron, NE - First Baptist Church  
802 Chadron Avenue  
Mon-Fri 11:00 - 1:00, 5:00-7:00  
Sat, Nov. 18: 9:00 AM - 12:00 PM  
Sun, Nov. 19: 9:00 AM - 1:00 PM  
Mon, Nov. 20: 11:00 AM - 1:00 PM

Gordon, NE - Wellspring Chapel  
101 E 5th Street  
Mon-Friday 12:00 PM - 2:00 PM  
Sat, Nov. 18: 12:00 PM - 4:00 PM  
Sun, Nov. 19: 9:30 AM - 12:30 PM  
Mon, Nov. 20: 8:00 AM - 11:00 AM

Harrison, NE - Harrison Bible Church  
695 Main Street  
Mon, Tues, Thurs 5:00 PM - 8:00 PM  
Wed, Fri 5:00 PM - 9:00 PM  
Sat, Nov. 18: 9:00 AM - 11:30 AM  
Sun, Nov. 19: 9:30 AM - 2:30 PM  
Mon, Nov. 20: 8:30 AM - 11:00 AM

Hot Springs, SD - Hot Springs E-Free  
1509 University Avenue  
Mon - Fri: 4:00 PM - 7:00 PM  
Sat, Nov. 18: 12:00 PM - 3:00 PM  
Sun, Nov. 19: 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM  
Mon, Nov. 20: 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM

Alliance, NE - Evangelical Free Church of Alliance  
611 Cody Avenue  
Mon, Nov. 13: 8:00 AM - 10:00 AM  
Tue, Nov. 14: 3:00 PM - 6:00 PM  
Wed, Nov. 15: 3:30 PM - 5:30 PM  
Thu, Nov. 16: 3:30 PM - 6:00 PM  
Fri, Nov. 17: 8:00 AM - 10:00 AM  
Sat, Nov. 18: 9:00 AM - 11:00 AM  
Sun, Nov. 19: 12:00 PM - 2:00 PM  
Mon, Nov. 20: 8:00 AM - 10:00 AM