Christmas | 27 November 2026 | English article

Five Small-Town Churches Win $10,000 Each for Christmas Outreach From 1,145 Entries

A true story of faith under pressure. Read the first half below, then continue online.

KEY SPIRITUAL TAKEAWAY

"Great American Christmas: Small-Town Churches"

(Transliterated from the original Hindi.)

They had gathered only to pray. When prayer itself becomes the target, faith is proved not by words but by staying.

The Story - Part One

Great American Media has donated $50,000 - $10,000 each - to five small-town churches across four states, chosen from submissions representing 1,145 churches nationwide. That is about one church in every 229 that entered. And the story that leads the list starts with a teenager in Shreveport, Louisiana, who wanted struggling families' children to have a toy at Christmas.

A teenage member of Galilee Baptist Church in Shreveport started a toy drive for children whose families were struggling. His congregation of 400 got behind him, and the little drive grew and grew. Last Christmas, 400 children received toys through the church's community giveaway - and not one child left without a gift.

Think about that for a moment. Four hundred children, in one town, on one Christmas morning, each holding something new because a teenager decided no one should go without. It started with one young person seeing a need close to home - and a whole congregation deciding to carry it with him.

This year the goal is bigger: 600 toys, plus bicycles, free haircuts and food. The church's giving does not stop at Christmas either. It gave 554 backpacks in August, and 1,100 Thanksgiving food boxes - a church that treats generosity as a year-round habit, not a seasonal one.

Five Churches, Four States, One Christmas

The five churches were picked from submissions representing 1,145 churches, and each one will recieve $10,000 to put toward its Christmas outreach. They come from four states, and no two of them look alike - except in one way: each one is small, and each one gives far beyond its size.

Reach Community Church in Laurel, Indiana, has just 100 members. Its own building was damaged in devastating floods that swept through the small town - yet the church takes families shopping for gifts and delivers holiday dinners. A congregation that lost part of its own home still found a way to make Christmas happen for its neighbours.

Briarwood Church in Pampa, Texas, has 450 members. It prepares 75 "Love Baskets", each holding a full Christmas dinner, and stages a live Nativity at Pampa's Celebration of Lights - a whole town's Christmas, carried in part by one church's hands.

The Turning Point - What Happens Next

The story reaches a life-changing moment that changes everything -- and what seemed like the end is only the middle. Two reports disagree on the numbers, and one question is left unanswered: will the CCTV footage ever come out? Read the full story to find out what happens next.

PERSONAL REFLECTION & DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. When gathering to pray carries a real cost, what keeps a community coming together anyway -- and what would keep you coming?

2. The pastor's sister shielded him with her own body and fainted under the blows. What does costly, self-giving love look like in your own family or church?

3. When justice is delayed and a complaint is withdrawn under threat, how do believers hold on to truth without giving in to fear -- or to hatred?

READ THE FULL STORY

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