



Contact Information:

Jana Stoner, Helpington Co-Coordinator
Fifth Avenue Baptist Church
(304) 523-0115
janaw@fifthavenuebaptist.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

“HELPIINGTON” TO BE HELD MAY 3

Church congregations come together to serve residents of the Central City community.

Huntington, W.Va. – For several local churches, morning worship services on Sunday, May 3, will look a little different from normal.

A day of service called “Helpington” will take place throughout the Central City Community this Sunday. Volunteers of all ages from area churches will work in the neighborhoods surrounding Central City Elementary School, with projects including yard work, exterior home repairs and transporting unwanted items to dumpsters. At the school, volunteers will complete painting, cleaning and landscaping projects.

Helpington Co-Coordinator Jana Stoner, minister of children at Fifth Avenue Baptist Church, said the event has grown exponentially since it was first held in 2012. This year’s event will include members of Fifth Avenue Baptist Church, First Presbyterian Church, First United Methodist Church and Westmoreland Baptist Church, as well as students with Baptist Campus Ministries at Marshall University, Central City Elementary faculty and staff and residents of the participating neighborhoods. The City of Huntington is providing dumpsters and safety vests for volunteers.

“What I love most about this event is watching denominational walls fall when we, believers of Christ, come together as one body to serve together,” Stoner said. “As downtown churches, we do not have a ‘neighborhood’—but Central City Elementary and the surrounding areas have become our neighbors. We want them to know they are loved by us and most of all by our Lord Jesus.”

The day of service will begin with a worship service in the Fifth Avenue Baptist Church sanctuary at 8:15 a.m. and will conclude with lunch at 12 p.m. at Central City Elementary. Many of the churches involved in Helpington also participate in a program called Blessings in a Backpack, which provides elementary school students on the federal Free and Reduced-Price Meal Program with a backpack of food to take home for 38 weekends during the school year.

“Our prayer is that we do not just spend the day working,” Stoner said, “but also praying with and for our brothers and sisters and enjoying fellowship with one another.”

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