



## Small Gifts From Big Hearts

By: Bruce Pokarney

To a 10-year-old boy, \$10 in the piggy bank can be a lot of money. Mason Frank could have used it to help pay for a new baseball mitt or the hunting gear he has his eye on. But Mason, unprompted and without hesitation, handed over the ten-dollar bill to Bethlehem, hoping to help the church reach its \$360,000 goal as part of a special appeal this summer.

Soon, his sister Hailey got in on the generosity act by pulling \$15 out of her personal savings to donate to the church. Mason came back with an additional \$20, and the sibling rivalry was underway. Both showed up at Wednesday service and happily placed the money in an offering envelope, with Pastor Jeff showing them how to fill it out. Soon, the money joined the incredible number of other donations—big and small—in response to the *Caring for God's House* appeal.

Parents David and Natalie Frank are more than proud of Mason and Hailey. The family, which includes older daughter Abigail, have long been active, faithful members of the congregation. But the instant response by the kids upon learning about the special appeal is something special itself.

“It was a proud moment for sure,” says David, former Secretary-Treasurer at Bethlehem and current Commissioner of the Financial Resources Team. **“They wanted to do something kind for someone else that they didn’t have to do and weren’t asked to do. They chose to do it.”**



It all started when David came home from a meeting at the church with a *Caring for God's House* pamphlet.

“Mason was in the living room and asked, ‘Dad, what’s that?’ I’m sure he thought it was a Scheels catalog and that he might be getting a baseball glove or hunting gear. When I told him it was a pamphlet for the church, he asked, ‘for what?’ I told him the church was trying to raise money to take care of the building. It was a short conversation. Soon after, Mason came down the hallway with \$10 in his hand. He said it was for the church.”

When David told Natalie about Mason’s generous act, Hailey overheard and came out with money from her piggy bank as well.

Mason told his dad that he thought the church could use the money better than he could. When asked how his donation made him feel, Mason answered with a thumbs up. Hailey, too, felt good about her contribution.

“I wanted the church to have it,” she says. “I knew that it could really use it.”



**The successful campaign will allow Bethlehem’s facility to make badly needed repairs and replacements to a building that is now nearly 30 years old**—everything from replacing the flat roof over the office area to replacing carpeting, lights, and fire sprinkler heads. Investment in new equipment can now be paid for. In fact, the appeal resulted in such a strong response that over \$453,000 was raised. Contributions made above the \$360,000 goal are being directed to the Future Maintenance Fund to help with future building, grounds, and equipment needs.

Going beyond the goal does not surprise David.

“It really doesn’t,” he says. “In all my time dealing with the finances of the church, one thing stands out: **the people of Bethlehem step up when there’s a need.**”

Even the small financial gifts make such a difference, especially when you see the eagerness of young people as they show what a wonderful, selfless act giving is.

“It’s so fun watching the enthusiasm that kids have when they go to the globe offering at Sunday or Wednesday services,” says David. **“If everybody in our church gives with the enthusiasm that the children do, that just might solve all our budget problems.”**

That enthusiasm often starts at home with the innocence and generosity of a child. While large gifts are at the core of a successful campaign, it takes donations of all sizes to reach the goal, even some that come straight from the piggy bank.



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