



GOD'S PERFECT TIMING

January 13, 2023

Dear Faithful Supporters,

First, I want to take this opportunity to thank each and every one of you for your faithfulness in praying, volunteering and giving to Leverage Ministries. We have so many ministry partners, and we couldn't do what we do without you — especially during the holiday season. This busy time starts early in the fall and includes festivals, the Thanksgiving food drive, Thanksgiving holidays meals, decorating Christmas trees, several Christmas parties and meals and more. It's busy, but it's also a very fun time celebrating with all of our kids their families and the staff at the Runaway Shelter.

One of our big goals every year is to provide Christmas gifts to each of the kids that we serve through the breakfast club and runaway shelter. In many cases, we try to provide gifts to their siblings and other family members as well. We are blessed to partner with the 7th grade class at Lakeland Christian School, whose generous donations provide many of the gifts that go to our neighborhood kids. There are other location organizations that donate gifts as well.

We spend all of December collecting and wrapping these gifts. We serve more than 50 kids, and we try to have 5-6 gifts per young person. That means we wrap well over 300 gifts! We have gifts bags for both boys and girls, and we try our best not to get them confused. Every year this is a giant puzzle because we don't know how many kids are going to show up prior to each party; we may even have new kids show up.

I only tell you all that so know you can see God's perfect timing.

Our runaway shelter Christmas party was the final party of our holiday season. We had our meal, sat around the Christmas tree, shared the true meaning of Christmas with the kids, and played some games. The final thing we do is bring out the bags of Christmas gifts for the kids. We had divided all of the gifts into two categories: boys' bags and girls' bags. Each gift bag had 7-8 gifts for each kid.

For over the three months, one of the boys at the shelter had been telling the staff that all he wanted for Christmas was a watch. Although he told the staff many times each day, we at Leverage Ministries had no idea this young man wanted a watch. We watched as this boy opened his first gift. It was a watch exactly like he'd been wanting for the past few months. I have never seen a kid so excited. He kept asking me how I knew. Even the staff, with tears in their eyes, asked how we knew what he wanted.

We had over 300 wrapped gifts, and there was exactly one watch. The bags were handed out randomly at the very last party, and this boy opened the only gift he really wanted. Only God and His perfect timing can do that.

Your faithful prayers and generous giving allow us to minister to these kids and witness God's perfect timing. Thank you.

In His Service,
Scott Hirdes

Your financial contributions are essential to Leverage Ministries as we work with at-risk teenagers in the Lakeland community. If you'd like to give online, please click the button below.

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PO BOX 1533 AUBURNDALE, FL 33823

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Leverage Ministries · PO Box 1533 · Auburndale, FL 33823-1533 · USA

