



Eastern N.C. Churches Collaborate for Christmas Backpack Drive

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HAVELOCK, N.C. -- Cherry Point Baptist Church in Havelock has been the collection site in eastern North Carolina to provide items for children in need along the Appalachian region.

Hundreds of backpacks are now bound for a Christmas relief mission to West Virginia.

"We're going to put our stuff on a truck and go to one of 43 sites that have been targeted by North Carolina Baptist Men throughout the state that need help along the Appalachian region," said Steve Epperson, pastor of Cherry Point Baptist Church.

The site they will be heading to is Ansted, West Virginia.

"This is one of the most impoverished regions in the entire nation. The unemployment rate is the highest in the entire nation. Their death rate is the highest in the entire nation," said Marion Sykes, church member.

As a way to help children there, the church will be distributing more than 600 backpacks.

"We make sure that each backpack has a bible, a Christmas story, and it's also filled with basic items that a child could use," said Sykes.

The backpacks are filled with school supplies, toys, coats and health kits. Handmade hats and scarves were also donated by the Havelock Senior Center.

"We have sort of a statement. We pray, we give, and we go and the members of this church certainly do that," said Epperson.