

## Sidewalk Sunday school - Christmas gifts for Children

We invite the children and the congregation at large to participate in the 2011 Sidewalk Sunday School Christmas Bag Project. We are asking those who are so blessed this Christmas season to reach out and donate gift bags to children attending Sidewalk Sunday School. The program is a Saturday Sunday school on wheels in neighborhoods that reach out to those in need. This is a great project in giving to share with your children! Participants will fill size 10 by 13 gift bags with new, unwrapped toys for the children. Age categories are 3-4, 5-8, 9-12, and teen. Tie a tag naming the proper age category onto your filled bag(s) and you are done making someone's Christmas special!

If you want to participate (and the rewards of that participation will be boundless), instructions for filling bags can be found on the PVUMC website, or you may email Eric Everett at [eric@pvumc.org](mailto:eric@pvumc.org) for more details. Please read The Ten Commandments of Bag Filling on the PVUMC website [www.pvumcchildren.com](http://www.pvumcchildren.com) before starting this project. Deadline for the bags are Sunday, December 4.



Sidewalk Sunday school Christmas Bag Project

Due by Sunday, December 4

## ***The Ten Commandments of Bag Filling***

PVUMC will once again provide bags for children in low economic situations. The conference 2011 goal is to provide at least 1700 filled bags, plus about 150 medium size stuffed animals for the young toddlers who don't receive bags.

The following guidelines help to prevent children from being disappointed and assist volunteers who process the gift bags. Thank you for following the guidelines.

**1. Use the proper size bag. Use bags no larger than 10 x 13 and no smaller than 8 by 10.** If all bags are similar in size, one child won't look singled out if he or she receives an extra large bag or an extra small one.

**2. Use purchased gift bags that are already decorated for Christmas or bags that are plain red or green.** Please do not use bags that are meant for other holidays, birthdays or decorated by hand.

**3. Use a gift tag that is tied on the bag.** Please no tape, staples or pinned on tags, and no writing on the bag. Taped tags often come off. Staples and pins hurt. Volunteers are looking for tags when the bags are processed and handed out – not writing on the bag. Sometimes if we have too many bags in one category we have to look at the contents and decide if the bag would work for an older or younger child – thus we'd rather replace the tag than scratch out writing on the bag. Bags without tags also means the volunteers have to take time to inspect the contents, and then make out a new tag.

**4. Make sure the contents of the bag match the age and gender on the tag.** Unfortunately we have found items in bags that are not appropriate for the age indicated, and on occasion the gender has been incorrect. No child wants to find the wrong items in his or her bag.

**5. Please use the following age categories when filling bags. 3-4, 5-8, 9-12, teen.** In other words, don't overlap categories. Not using these categories causes the volunteers to guess which of the above categories the bag fits into.

**SUGGESTED GIFT ITEMS FOR 4 TO 12 YEAR OLDS:** crayons & coloring books, anything art related, markers, simple craft kits, small toys, comic books, story books, sports cards, sports memorabilia, balls, small hand held games, games, puzzles, Beanie babies, activity books, match box cars, Nerf toys, Christmas pens/pencils, Christmas socks, jacks, marbles, jump ropes, hair items, Christian items (cross, jewelry, books), gift cards (McDonalds, other fast foods) small stuffed animals. *Anything fun that a child would like!!* PLEASE MAKE SURE ALL THE ITEMS IN THE BAGS ARE AGE APPROPRIATE.

**6. Fill the bags well.** For some of these children the bag is the only Christmas gift they may get. If you can't fill a whole bag, share the joy – ask someone to go in with you in filling it. Quality, not quantity is important. Little toys that would be used as prizes at birthday parties are

not appropriate items unless accompanied with larger, better quality gifts as well. Please don't attach items to the outsides of the bags. It makes them difficult to transport and also makes it look like that child is receiving more. The bags are handed out in a group setting. .

**7. Please give new, unbroken gifts with the price tags taken off.** These children may be poor but they deserve new gifts that have all their parts and are not broken or used. Unfortunately we have found dirty stuffed animals and used, broken toys in some of the bags.

**8. Do not include chocolate** - it can be hot in December and the candy might melt in the outside Sidewalk settings. No peanuts because some children have allergies. No toothpaste, or toothbrushes – this is Christmas - gifts need to be fun. No hotel size shampoos, conditioners, soap, etc. – these aren't fun gifts. No razors or anything sharp.

**9. If you give something that needs a companion, please include both.** For example, coloring books need crayons. Radios and flashlights need batteries as the children might not be able to afford them. Cameras need gift cards to have the pictures developed. A package of pencils needs a sharpener. Watches need working batteries.

**10. Don't break up sets of things.** The children deserve the whole package – not just a portion of it. If something requires instructions, make sure they are included.

**These guidelines are not meant to discourage anyone from filling bags. They are meant to prevent additional work for the volunteers and to keep the children from being disappointed. Your help, understanding and generous spirit is greatly appreciated.**  
**Thanks!**