

For the past few years our congregation alongside our JLNSDC have been generously participating in the *"Samaritan's Purse Operation Christmas Child"* project. We are grateful for the support and achievements in collecting shoeboxes filled with gifts for children all around the world.

This year, we would like to shift our focus, but with the same momentum and support and bless a local shelter with families in need with Blessing Bags. Essentially we will fill Christmas bags with gifts and small necessities for children in local shelter. We have selected to partner with ***Laurel House*** and be a blessing to the families they provide services in their shelters. We will hand out Christmas bags along with a supply list for families who wish to fill a bag at home as a family project.

Filled bags can be turned in no later than **Sunday, December 13th.**

We have provided a list of suggested items for the collection. Bags will be delivered to the Laurel House where coordinators will deliver the bags to families in need at their shelter.

Bags will be available in the Cloister and Coffee Corner along with list of gifts and supplies suggestions. Any questions please feel free to contact Glenda Ortiz at secretary@jelc.org or call /text 215-237-7707

Here are some ideas and suggestions across different age groups to help guide what to include in the blessing bags:

General & Cozy Favorites

Cozy items: A small, soft plush animal, a fleece blanket, or fun grip socks.
Quiet entertainment: Coloring books, sticker pads, journals, colored pencils (avoiding sharpeners for young kids), or small travel games.

Infants & Toddlers (Boy /Girl Ages 0–3)

Currently have a lot of babies and young toddlers, so soothing, sensory, and developmental items are wonderful:

Pacifiers, pacifier clips, bottles
leak-proof sippy cups
"First 100 Words" books
fun holiday-themed outfits
Light-up rattles, soft crinkle books
basic musical learning toys
Chunky Mega Blocks
soft silicone stacking rings
Fun bath toys
gentle tear-free
bubble bath.



Preschool & Early Elementary (Boy/Girl Ages 4–7)

Children in this age range thrive on imaginative play and tactile activities that keep them calm and engage:

Dolls and action figures representing diverse backgrounds (especially dolls of color) to help children feel seen and comforted.
Toy cars
monster trucks
play food
small racetrack sets
Self-contained arts and crafts kits such as watercolor pads, magic-reveal water pens, sticker scene books.
High-quality playdough
kinetic sand pots
or colorful fidget poppers.



Older Elementary (Boy/ Girl Ages 8–11)

Older kids appreciate stimulating, solo-friendly items that feel personal and grown-up:

Small LEGO Creator sets
magnetic tiles
Electronic games & puzzle
Handheld puzzle games
electronic Simon-Says
or brain-teaser cubes
Sketch pads paired with watercolor pencils or gel pens
Durable reusable water bottles
cozy fleece blanket



Preteens & Teens (Boy/Girl Ages 12+)

Teens in shelters are often overlooked during holiday drives, so focusing on comfort, privacy, and independence means the world to them:

Good-quality headphones or wireless earbuds
Fun makeup sets, nail polish collections, hair styling tools,
premium body wash gift sets.
Popular Young Adult (YA) novels
journals, or advanced sketch pads
fine-liner pens
Gel pens
Oversized hoodies,
trendy beanies
sports caps
fuzzy slipper socks.

We will deliver bags the week of December 14th to the Laurel House. They will hand deliver the bags to families they serve. We are looking forward on keeping with the spirit of giving and blessing others during the season of Christmas.

"And do not forget to do good and to share with others, for with such sacrifices God is pleased" ~ Hebrews 13:16