

With love from St. Alban's

"We give thanks to you God that we are able to offer these gifts to strangers in your name." With that prayer the children of St. Alban the Martyr Anglican Church helped dedicate

approximately 150 shoeboxes filled with gifts for kids in developing nations during Sunday morning's service.

Invited up to the front to lay their hands on the pile of boxes, the kids in the congregation surrounded them at the altar as The Reverend Brian Galligan said the boxes would go to kids who didn't get Christmas presents. "It is important because we've got so much and they've got so little and today we are going to send them love and blessing..."

This is the 15th year that St. Alban's has participated in Operation Christmas Child, a project of Samaritan's Purse, an international Christian relief organization. One of the organizers, Chris

Miller said months ago church families selected ages and sexes of children in need and then filled a shoebox with toys, and gifts including, hygiene items, clothing, hair clips, jewellery and hard candy in a re-sealable bags.

Most children included a personal note – or filled out a brief bio describing who they are and where they live, and a photo. A church member took the boxes to Guelph today (Thursday) to be shipped overseas – last year Canada shipped 660,000 boxes to children in 130 countries. This year, the shoeboxes will be sent to children in Africa and Western Haiti. Each box included a minimum \$7 donation to cover project costs, including shipping.



OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD: The children of St. Alban Anglican Church helped dedicate 150 shoeboxes they filled with gifts for kids in developing countries during Sunday's church service. - Frances Learment photo

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