Lending a Helping Hand

In 1999, leaders of the Southside Baptist Association (SBA) had a vision to start a Hispanic ministry in their community. Rev. Charles Smith, former pastor of Kenbridge Baptist Church, and others from Blackstone and Ash Camp Baptist Churches connected with Rev. Juan Carlos Gascon of Mexico to begin Iglesia Hispana Bautista Anastasis (IHBA), a ministry for the Latino community. Jonesboro Baptist Church, led by Dr. Leroy Bradshaw, provided Rev. Gascon and his family their church parsonage to live in at no cost.

Rev. Gascon served the community well during his ministry, but he was in a tragic car accident in 2008 that left him paralyzed. He pressed on, but in 2013 he passed away from complications of his health issues.

All agreed that Gascon’s wife, Connie, should continue the ministry. Recently Connie noticed the parsonage roof was leaking, so she got the message to Rev. Bob Smith, pastor of Kenbridge Baptist Church, who reached out to the SBA. He also contacted Dr. Bradshaw of Jonesboro Baptist Church, thanking him for the church’s faithfulness in providing the parsonage for over 15 years.
He assured him, “We are going to work together to replace the roof!”

Rev. Bob Smith said, “The plan evolved. I asked for volunteers and donations. The people of both the SBA and local churches responded. I merely asked for help and received the volunteers with open arms.”

Kenbridge Building Supply provided the shingles at no cost. And though many have donated money, Rev. Smith reports they are a little shy of the total needed to replace the roof. “No matter what,” he says, “the group will make sure that Jonesboro Baptist does not have to pay for this. They could have rented out the parsonage and collected over $75,000 during this time period, yet they realized that Kingdom work is more important than money.”

Tony Brooks, BGAV Field Strategist for the Southside Region, stopped by recently to watch members of Kenbridge and Blackstone Baptist, IHBA, Kenbridge United Methodist, Mt. Tirzah Baptist, and Perseverance Christian Churches work together to take off the old roof and prepare to put on a new one. The WMUs from Jonesboro and Kenbridge Baptist Churches provided lunches for the workers, and Dr. Bradshaw and others prepared Brunswick Stew. Brooks reported how he saw firsthand that “God works through the good and bad to bring something good for the Kingdom.”