Red Truck Ministry

The Red Truck Ministry is demonstration of God's timing in partnership, missions venture, or Kingdom-sized dream. A journey that started over five years with a grant, the Red Truck Ministry took a few detours to arrive at its long-term home at the Lynchburg Baptist Association (LBA).

In 2012, the Baptist General Association of Virginia (BGAV) received a grant from the Texas Baptist Hunger Offering for a mobile grocery unit that would bring fresh produce, meat, and dairy to food “deserts,” where low income residents lack access to affordable, healthy food. BGAV Hunger Specialist Joel Ingram drove to Pennsylvania to purchase an old Coca-Cola delivery truck for the venture.

The truck was refurbished by a Disaster Response volunteer to accommodate the necessary refrigerator and freezer units, and it made its debut at the 2012 BGAV annual meeting in Roanoke. Following its introduction, the Red Truck Ministry was field tested at Northminster Baptist Church, an urban congregation with an existing feeding ministry in Richmond. There, a team developed a system for setting up the shopping experience and learned the importance of providing products appropriate to the cultural preferences of the community.

Despite early interest, The Red Truck had struggled for three years to find a long-term home. Fast forward to 2016, LBA pastors discussed the problem of food deserts in their own community and prayed for
direction. Field Strategist Tony Brooks shared about the Red Truck mobile grocery unit, and the pastors became convicted by Lynchburg’s need and their opportunity for impact through the research of Randolph College’s Dr. John Abell. The pastors learned that while many Lynchburg ministries are focused on the issue of food scarcity, only four of the 34 food pantries in the city are located within one of the eight food deserts identified.

In the Red Truck, the pastors saw an opportunity to improve food access and build community in these previously unreached food deserts. They wanted to provide spiritual as well as physical support to the community members shopping at the Red Truck. Volunteers take the time to listen, and one recent prayer time resulted in a family whose five children were sleeping on the floor to receive a home visit from a pastor and new mattresses for the entire family.

To date, this ministry has recently fed 184 families and engaged over 60 volunteers in its first four weeks of operation. Read more about how the Red Truck Ministry has mobilized the community and impacted the Lynchburg food deserts at BGAV.org.

For more information about BGAV Hunger Ministry, contact:
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Volunteers attend training on the Red Truck.