

## **Ridgecrest Members Serve at Jeffries Elementary**

Many children anticipate the first day of school when school supplies start showing up in the store aisles. Some may not be ready for school to start, but they like browsing and buying school supplies anyway. Not all children have that opportunity. Their parents may not be able to take them, or they don't have the money. Some foster kids arrive at school after it's already in session without a backpack or supplies. In our mobile society, some kids arrive midterm and don't have the opportunity for back-to-school deals. If they've moved with their parents after school has started, their family probably is experiencing a money crunch. Some children feel odd or uncomfortable when they don't have adequate school supplies. They may not even have adequate outerwear. Dr. Elizabeth Cooper, the principal at Jeffries Elementary, and the teachers watch for kids with needs; then they try to meet those needs inconspicuously. The school supplies donated by Ridgecrest Baptist church in August are kept in a storage area ready to help meet children's needs well into the school year.

Before school began in August, volunteers from the Overcomers' Small Group arrived at Jeffries Elementary with the donated supplies and were ready to do any jobs Dr. Cooper had planned for them. Before their work began, they had an update on Dr. Cooper's sweet one-year-old daughter and were happy to see a picture. They were already acquainted with the Jeffries principal since they had volunteered last school year to pray for her and keep in touch. Now they were ready to give support to their Jeffries' staff member for another school year. Other Small Groups have adopted other Jeffries' teachers who request being in the Jeffries' Adopt-a-Teacher program at Ridgecrest.

Dr. Cooper also pointed out that Ridgecrest volunteers help with Jeffries' projects other than donating to the school supplies drive and adopting teachers through the year. They host a yearly back-to-school luncheon for the staff, and they have assisted with beautification projects and other time-consuming jobs in the past. Some Ridgecrest volunteers are reading tutors and lunchroom volunteers. Dr. Cooper said the volunteers really give the gift of time since the volunteers' help frees the staff to work on other challenges. Several teachers have written to thank Ridgecrest for supporting their school.

The Ridgecrest volunteers that August day at Jeffries understood the need to serve in their community and worked diligently to complete the work, yet they obviously seemed to know how to have fun while working as well. The volunteers said they do enjoy helping and being together at all their Small Group activities. Thank you to all the volunteers who have served or are serving our community at Jeffries Elementary School.