

The Bandera PROPHEET

March 23, 2022

BEC donates \$2,500 to help local foster families

Bandera Electric Cooperative donated \$2,500 to the Bandera Gateway Fellowship Church for its new Foster Closet program. The Foster Closet is an initiative to help local foster children and families in Bandera County by providing donated items, offsetting the cost of new clothing and other necessary belongings for children in foster care.

Children in foster care are often quickly removed from their surroundings and have little opportunity to bring personal belongings or hygiene items. The Foster Closet provides comfort and dignity to children and assists foster families by providing stability and meeting the child's needs.

Brittany Seaman is the Foster Closet Coordinator at Gateway Fellowship Church in Bandera and a foster parent herself. Since August 2021, Seaman has fostered several children and recognized a need for foster families immediately with the first placement of two boys in her home. "Our first placement caught us unprepared, we didn't have anything for the boys," Seaman said. "Our church community really stepped up and helped us with their needs."

Seaman currently runs the Foster Closet out of her home and says they have already served between 10 and 15 families since last August. Seaman says she is in the early stages of planning a permanent home for the Foster Closet at Gateway Fellowship Church in Bandera.

"We hope to expand services beyond Bandera County once the closet has a permanent location," Seaman said.

The church currently welcomes volunteers and accepts donations for the Foster Closet including very gently used items such as backpacks and travel bags, clothing in sizes from preemie up to 18 years old, books, highchairs, blankets, hygiene kits, car seats, baby food and formula, diapers, bottles, gift cards, pillows, and other items. To schedule a

donation, drop off, volunteer, or if you have any questions, please email BanderaFosterCloset@gmail.com.

BEC continually strives to uphold the cooperative principle Concern for Community with a maintained focus on member needs for the sustainable development of its communities.