By Carolyn Lee
The Imperial Republican

A number of churches in Imperial are participating in a Christmas “Gift” this year, and are asking for community support. The churches are working to help families and those in need to have a blessed Christmas.

In the past Imperial United Methodist Church has “adopted” families at Christmas and provided them with toys, clothing, gift cards, gas cards and more. Utilities have been paid and food has been given.

“It started out as a focus on families with kids so there would be presents under the tree,” according to Coordinator Amy Prior.

In the past the Methodist Church was able to receive names of those in need from the Department of Health and Human Services. However, that is no longer possible.

In banding together, members of the Methodist, St. Patrick’s Catholic, Zion Lutheran, Berean Fundamental, Imperial Bible, Lighthouse Fellowship and Crossroads Wesleyan churches will be able to cross reference names to make sure that families aren’t duplicated.

If someone in the community knows of a need somewhere, forms are available at the participating churches.

Prior said the Methodist Church helped 40 families last year.

“What started out as just a ‘few’ families turned into close to 40 and it became apparent that this needed to be a community project,” she explained.

She said she has no idea how many families and individuals will be helped this year.

“Anyone in need, struggling to make ends meet, the elderly,” are all eligible for the “Gift,” Prior said.

If individuals or businesses would like to share the “Gift,” they may do so by either adopting a family or individual, or providing donations or gift certificates.

If someone wants to adopt a family, they will be given the ages, sizes and interests of the people in the household, and then would be responsible for purchasing and wrapping items for the family.

Persons wanting to give a donation or gift certificate for the churches’ gifts may drop them off at the participating churches.

The churches will place the gift certificates in the boxes for the families, and will use donations for purchases that aren’t covered by “adoptive” persons.

People wanting to be a part of this community mission may contact one of the above churches or Prior before Nov. 27. Gift cards need to be dropped off at the churches or to Prior no later than Nov. 28.

Packages will need to be ready for delivery by no later than Dec. 19. It will be left up to the churches to decide about wrapping and delivering the presents.

Contacts at each church are: Cyndi Weiss at Zion; Sherri Schoen-holz and Norma Dannatt at Crossroads; Nancy Terryberry at St. Pat’s; Jacci Brown at the Berean; Brenda German and Kristi McNair at the Bible; Kristi DuPiere at Lighthouse; and Prior, Sue Moore and Sue Knobbe at the Methodist.

Prior may be contacted at (308) 883-3948 or at arty-ideas@hot mail.com.