

Chestatee Church Invests in Garden Evangelism

Early last year, the Chestatee Church in Dawsonville, Ga., had a big dream and decided to create an organic garden available for both the church and the community to enjoy its crop of fruits and vegetables. It grew to be the gift that kept on giving.

Under the guidance of experienced gardener David Koliadko, one acre was mapped out, and an irrigation system was developed. Members, young and old, including some who had never driven a tractor, eagerly jumped into the seat to help plow the seven dump truck loads of soil brought in.

Potatoes were planted at the first work bee, followed by corn, squash, eggplant, tomatoes, collard greens, melons, and more. Many at Chestatee are quite knowledgeable about gardening, and their expertise was invaluable. Thanks

to them, along with the hard work and dedication of the Chestatee members, the garden has been a tremendous success.

“What a fun summer it was growing and harvesting our own vegetables,” said one long-time Chestatee member.

The garden kept giving through December, when the Moore family cut seven collard plants that yielded two large bags full. They found a note stuck to the garden gate from someone in the community that said, “I would like to thank all of you for the blessings of these gifts of vegetables. They really have helped many of us through the summer.”

“The positive talk in the neighborhood about our church has significantly increased,” said Mark Waters, Chestatee Church pastor.

The Mayer family made baskets for the garden vegetables to share with their

neighbors, and the children distributed their harvest door to door. “One of the neighbors shouted she was ‘so happy because they had driven all through town looking for squash, and it was an answered prayer,’” recalled Carina Mayer.

In January of this year, the first work bee already took place, and everyone is enthusiastic to make the garden even better than last year. Regarding the cultivation, Koliadko said, “We learned from our mistakes and are fine-tuning so it is less labor-intensive, and our harvest will be more bountiful and of even higher quality.” Chestatee also hopes word will further spread to the community. They are eager to see how God uses the garden to bring people to Jesus and the truth. ●

BY MICHELLE FONTAINE



Ellie and Nicolas Mayer deliver organic food baskets to their neighbors. The Chestatee Church started a garden which produced food all year long, and is increasing positive conversations about the church throughout the community.



Balkis Rajan, a member of the Chestatee, Ga., Church, showcases just some of the organic vegetables harvested from the community garden. Church members created a one-acre garden that produced food, not just in the summer, but all the way to December.