

# Church's cheap gas gig draws motorists

BY RACHEL BROWN

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When you're talking a 50-cent reduction in the price for a gallon of regular unleaded, it's easy to bring in the crowds.

In two hours, said Tim Baucon, a member of Dalton First United Methodist Church, about 240 motorists had bought 2,400 gallons of gas at Mitchell Chevron on Thornton Avenue for \$2.89 a gallon on Saturday. The church subsidized the regular price of \$3.39 per gallon as a gift to the community, Baucon said.

"We know people are somewhat stressed at Christmas and (this was) just to get people to relax and enjoy the season, and then we invited them to our Christmas Eve services," he said.

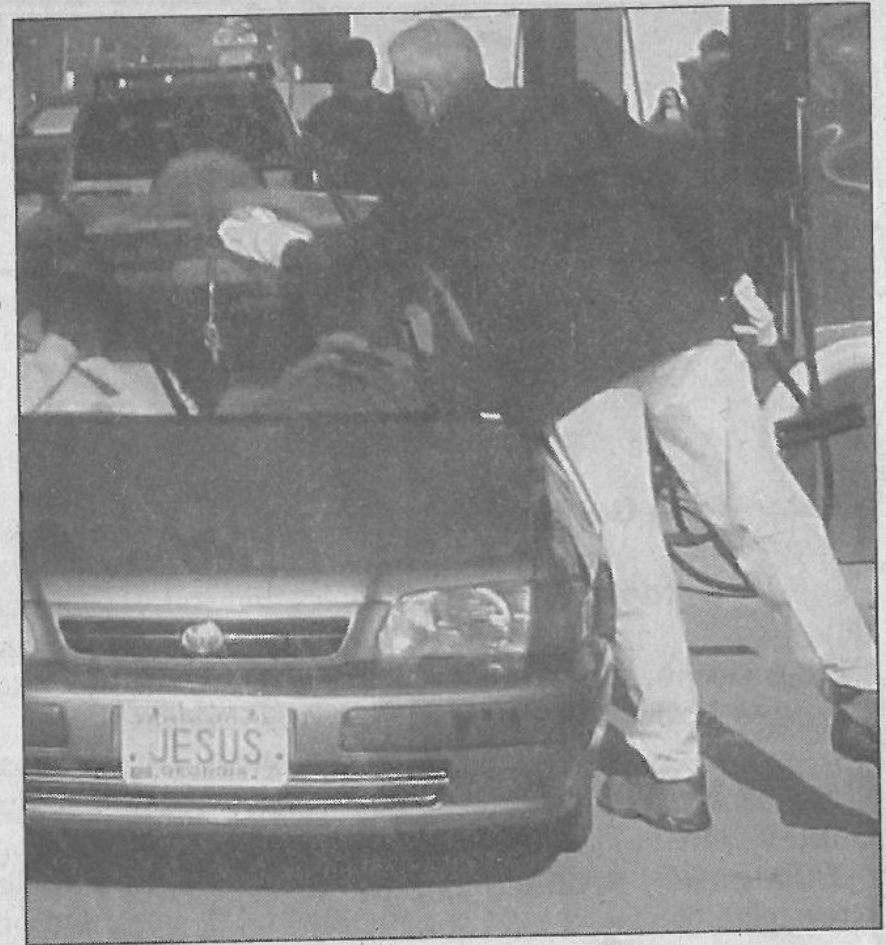
The services are at 4 p.m., 6

p.m., and 11 p.m. at the church on Thornton Avenue.

He said the gas buy-down was the brainchild of Kenny Ott, the church's new outreach minister, and was organized by church member Amy Anderson. Volunteers passed out literature about their church services as well as ice scrapers with information about the church to anyone who bought gas.

Baucon said the idea was intended to be a low-key, no-pressure way to introduce people to the church as well as offer something nice regardless of their decision.

"We were standing out there with a sign that said 'cheap gas,' and then had people send out on Facebook and Twitter. As people would come through you would see them texting other people. It created a real commotion," he said.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

**Dalton First United Methodist Church member Steve Roan washes the windshield of a customer at Mitchell's Chevron Saturday.**

In fact, they had to have people directing traffic as drivers waited in line at one of eight pumps there.

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