

PAYING IT FORWARD

As a woman of ill repute washes Jesus' feet, He explains to the shocked onlookers that she loved much because she had been forgiven much (Luke 7). This woman paid Christ's forgiveness forward in love for Jesus. When we think of what Jesus is now doing through The Table of Los Fresnos Lutheran Church, we see people who love and want the Gospel for this city because they know how much grace they have received.

Los Fresnos is one of the fastest growing cities in the Rio Grande Valley, yet remains one of the most economically challenged regions of the country with a poverty rate 121 percent higher than the national average. The average household income is 43 percent below the national average.

The Table of Los Fresnos Lutheran Church is a community of people who are being connected to Jesus through Word, Sacrament and mission. Worship services began in 2019, and The Table quickly gained the reputation for delivering on its promises to serve residents in need while connecting civic, business, government, school and faith groups. The Table has done all of this without their own worship space. Temporary gathering locations are at high school cafeterias and the community center.

The LWML Texas District mission grant award of \$25,000 is being used to expand the capacity of The



In the summer of 2020, The Table of Los Fresnos began organizing the distribution of free food boxes. Local businesses, churches, the school district and other community leaders jumped in to help. Thousands of families in need have been served.

Table to meet the spiritual and physical needs of the families in the Rio Grande Valley. The award will be used toward the purchase of a step van, 100 chairs and chair rack, and 13 tables. The equipment is needed to increase The Table's impact in gathering and outreach.

One of the responses to the abundance of grace Jesus has lavished on those at The Table of Los Fresnos is the members paying it forward. Thanks to the LWML for this mission grant and the opportunity for The Table to expand the mission in sharing the Good News with those in the Rio Grande Valley!

Patti Samsel

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