

How Zadie came to be a Lottie Moon hero

By William Perkins

Editor

Six-year-old Zadie Pannell's idea about how to support Southern Baptists' Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for International Missions was several months in the making.

Zadie's mother, Melanie Pannell, said the seed was planted in October during a presentation of Heaven's Gates & Hell's Flames at their home church, Center Church in Blue Springs. Melanie worked in the kitchen preparing meals for the cast while Zadie participated as the child who comes down from heaven.

"I asked her if the presentation scared her, and she said 'no,'" Melanie recalled. Turns out Heaven's Gates & Hell's Flames might not have frightened Zadie, a student at East Union Attendance Center in Blue Springs, but it did get her to thinking about her own eternal life.

"She talked with some friends, and the friends came to me. We talked with Zadie, and she said she wanted to be saved," Melanie said. After a meeting with their interim pastor and church member Larry Dunlap, Zadie's baptism was scheduled.



Zadie's ornaments

Not long after that, Busby preached on missions and Zadie was inspired. Melanie recalls Zadie sharing how she wanted to make Christmas tree ornaments to support the offering. "We told her this could be a missions project for her." It eventually turned into a family project with mom, dad James, and brother Levi, age 16, all pitching in.

They were soon overwhelmed with demand for the ornaments as word spread throughout their church friends and community, Melanie said. "Zadie raised \$650. Some people bought ornaments and gave extra because it was a mission project. One hundred percent of it went to the Lottie Offering."

"It was great," Zadie shyly said, as she talked with a reporter during some serious time with one of her favorite after-school snacks, a dish called party chicken.

"Zadie started her mission project while I was in the process of being presented to the church as their next pastor," Busby said. "Her mission project was completed just before I started here at Center Baptist.

"I was touched by her missions-minded desire to raise money and I know the whole family got involved. The Pannells are faithful servants to the Lord at Center Baptist Church and we are grateful for their servant hearts.

"Zadie's mission project can remind all of us that everyone can get involved in missions no matter how old they may be," he said.

Paul Chitwood, president of Southern Baptists' International Mission Board (IMB) which sponsors the annual Lottie Offering, said, "What a blessing to see how Zadie and her church family at Center Baptist Church are supporting the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering.

"Zadie has it right – people of any age can join God's work to reach the lostness of the world with the Gospel. Thank you, Zadie, and thank you, Pastor Jared and your church, for partnering with IMB missionaries. Every penny of this gift will be used overseas to spread the Good News of Jesus."

For more information on the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering, [click here.](#)