

# **'I Lost Everything but My Faith': Firefighters Surprise Family With Christmastime 'Fresh Start'**

It started out as a Christmas story gone wrong.

Crystal Givens returned home the evening of Dec. 22 after spending four hours at the hospital with her husband, who suffered a work-related injury, per Fox News. But when she arrived, she watched her entire house—including the family puppy, Bella—go up in flames. It looked as though a bleak Christmas lay ahead for the family, including Givens, her husband and their three children, ages 3, 4 and 12, until a group of Greensboro, North Carolina, area firefighters came to the rescue.

"The first thing I thought about was 'let me get my dog,'" Givens tells Fox 8 Greensboro. "But when we called her name, and she didn't answer, I already knew she was gone because I couldn't even see her cage when I opened the door."

Not only did the family lose Bella, but they also lost their clothes, toys, furniture and even their Christmas presents. But Captain Ken Lilly, one of the firefighters responding that night, stepped in to help along with his fellow firefighters.

"Wanted to share a story of something that GFT Station 43 B shift spearheaded," GFD Battalion Chief Larry Cockman posted on Facebook. "It shows how your Greensboro Firefighters not only save lives but are still caring after the fire. A family of 5 recently lost everything they had in a fire including Christmas gifts. Station 43 "B" Shift organized a fund raising campaign to help the family out. Stations 2, 14, 1, 5, 40 also contributed money to help this Family. Over 2500 dollars was

donated by the Firefighters. A few private donors contributed as well. What a wonderful thing to do. This is why your Greensboro Firefighters are also a caring and giving organization. This story while being sad is what the spirit of giving back at Christmas is all about.”

Givens shares the spiritual impact of the incredible gift she and her family received from the firefighters on Christmas Eve with Fox 8. “I cried on my way over here. [Lilly] has been on my phone since that night, making sure I was OK. ... I tell everybody I lost everything but my faith, and that’s what’s keeping me going right now. I have to keep faith; He’s not going to bring me this far to let me go now.”

“We just hope it blesses her family this Christmas and just give[s] them a fresh start, because they lost everything,” Lilly adds.

To donate to the family via Givens’ GoFundMe Page, click this link. {eoa}

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