

# Tabernacle Baptist Church

## Crafters for Christ

*Crafting for Operation Christmas Child Shoeboxes*

Dress Pattern and Instructions



### Supplies Included in Each Kit

- Dress Fabric – Approximately 35"x44"
- Pre-Cut Straps – either 2 (44"x2.5") or 4 (20"x2.5")
- Pre-Cut Pocket and coordinating trim and/or lace
- Elastic – Approximately 27"x 0.5"
- Instructions
- Optional – Dress A Girl Label
- Numbered Ziplock Bag

### Other Items You Will Need

- Coordinating Thread to match fabric or white /neutral color
- Feel free to embellish with your own trim, buttons or decorative stitches. Our ministry operates completely on donations of these items so we may be limited in what is available for your kit.
- Sewing Machine and basic sewing tools (pins, scissors etc.)
- Iron and ironing board
- About 1-2 hours of your time, depending on your skill level.

### Notes

- Use a stitch length of 2.5mm - 3mm long on all straight seams.
- Please backstitch at the beginning and end of each seam to make sure it doesn't pull out.
- Read through all instructions before you begin.
- Remember, this may be the only new dress this little girl gets and it is important that it is well made out of sturdy materials. Please do not take shortcuts in the construction of the dresses.
- Please pray for the girl who will receive this dress!
- We thank you so much for being a part of this ministry. You will be a blessing to a girl in need and you will be blessed!



## Step 1- Sew Pocket Trim/Label

- Pin lace about  $\frac{1}{2}$ " - 1" from top of pocket. Mark and measure both ends of the pocket. Wrap ends of lace around outer edges and sew in place. Be sure to backstitch at the beginning and end. Position rick-rack or other trim on top of lace in same manner making sure to wrap ends underneath to prevent raveling.
- OPTIONAL LABEL - Fold label and pocket in half and hand press, marking center of each. Pin  $\frac{3}{4}$ " - 1" from bottom center, align to your center marks and sew in place close to the edge of the label. An edge foot works great as shown in the photo, as well as a blind hem foot or altering the needle position of a standard foot to get close to the edge of the label. Keep your needle down at the corners and pivot to get a square turn. Backstitch at beginning and end. Pull threads to the back and knot.



## Step 2 - Sew Pocket on Dress Fabric

- Once pocket trim and label have been sewn, you are ready to attach the pocket to the dress fabric. Pocket has been prepared with top folded and edges pinked. It is not necessary to turn under edges. Sew on as is. The pinked edges will fray and give it a decorative look.
- Selvage is the edge of the fabric that may have printed information or be a different color from the rest of the fabric. It has a manufactured finish. The selvage edge runs the length of the dress fabric and should measure about 35" long and is about  $\frac{1}{2}$ " wide.
- Press your dress fabric with selvage edges together. This will give you a nice center fold and smooth out the wrinkles.
- With fabric opened up and selvage edges in a vertical position, measure 13" from the top center of the dress front and mark. Measure both sides of the pocket to make sure it is level and pin pocket in place. Notice center mark of pocket is aligned with center fold of dress fabric.
- Sew the pocket to the dress fabric using a  $\frac{1}{4}$ " seam around the pocket, backstitching both ends and following the curve of the pocket fabric. Leave top open.





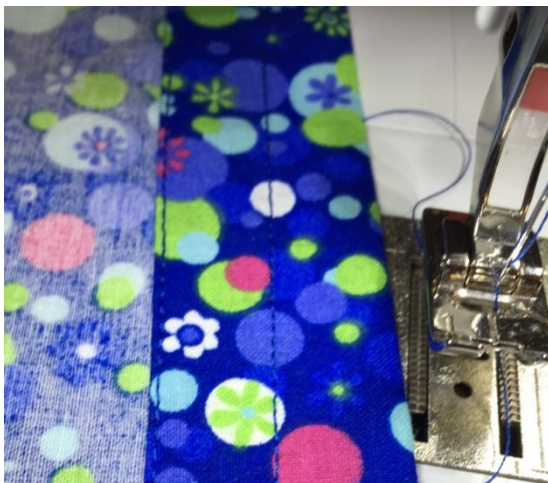
### Step 3 – Back Seam

- Notice the selvage (white edge of the fabric) in the photo.
- Fold fabric in half with right sides and selvage edges together
- Pin selvage sides together, this will be the back center seam.
- Sew a 5/8" straight seam.
- To the right of the straight seam, sew a zigzag seam.
- Trim off selvage edge close to zigzag making sure not to snip any of your stitches.
- You may also use a serger for the back seam or you may do French seams. Any of these methods provides a secure, reinforced seam.



### Step 4 – Top Elastic Casing

- Press a 1/4" fold at top of dress, making sure pocket is up position.
- Fold an addition 1 1/4" to make casing, pin, press.
- Sew in place leaving a 2" opening in back to insert elastic. You could use an edge foot or standard foot sewing about 1/8" from the edge of the turned under fold.
- Kits include 1/2" elastic. If you are using your own elastic, you may need to adjust the casing size to accommodate a different size.



## Step 5 – OPTIONAL – Top Ruffle

- This is not a required step but gives a great ruffle detail on the top of the dress.
- Sew another seam all the way around  $\frac{1}{2}$ " -  $\frac{5}{8}$ " from the top edge. Do not leave the 2" opening as you did for the seam in step 4.
- Later you will feed the elastic between the two seams.



## Step 6 – Bottom Hem

- Just like top seam, press a  $\frac{1}{4}$ " fold around
- Fold up another 2" and press.
- Make sure your back seam is in the same direction as it was when you sewed the top seam.
- Pin in place, sew close to the edge
- Press

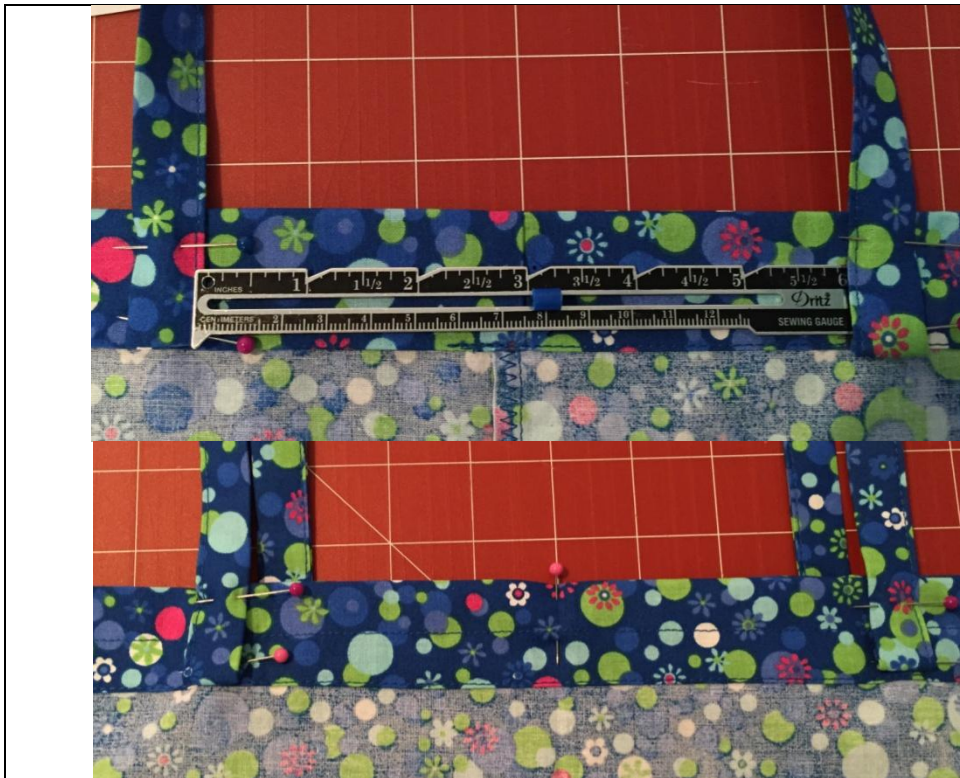




## Step 7 – Strap Construction

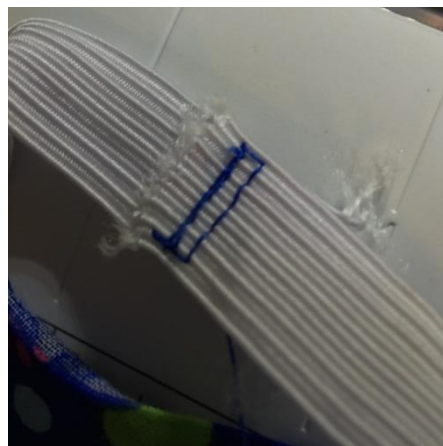
- There are several ways to make straps and finished straps may be  $\frac{1}{2}$ "-1" wide. Grossgrain ribbon is also acceptable, as long as raw edges are turned under and ends cut at an angle to prevent fraying. Here is an easy method that will give you finished edges without having to turn inside out. The extra folding also gives a sturdy strap. Feel free to use whatever method you find easiest.
- To make straps, fold straps in half lengthwise and press (top left)
- Fold each side in towards the center and press (top right photo)
- Unfold the ends and fold in about  $\frac{3}{8}$ " and press. Repeat for each end. (bottom left)
- Fold the long edges back towards the center again.(bottom right)
- Fold in half again, press and pin. Finished strap will be  $\frac{1}{2}$ "-5/8". (bottom)
- Top stitch about  $\frac{1}{8}$ " from the edge, using edge foot or other methods described above.
- For 44"x2.5" straps, you can sew the two long straps and then cut in half to give 4 (22"x2.5") or you can cut in half and repeat 4 times as is necessary for the 20"x2.5".





## Step 8 – Strap Placement

- Lay dress flat on worktable with back facing up with back and front center seam together. Be sure to pin or mark your center front/center back.
- If you have straps that were cut with one raw edge, be sure to turn under the raw edge about  $\frac{1}{2}$ " at the bottom when pinning in place. If all ends are finished it is not necessary to turn under.
- **BACK STRAPS:** Place straps 3" from center seam on right and left sides pinning to inside back of dress just below of casing seam line. (top photo)
- **FRONT STRAP:** Place straps about  $\frac{1}{2}$ " to right and left of back straps position, pin front straps in place (bottom photo)
- Sew straps to the dress, across top and bottom casing (on seam line) back and forth several times horizontally to secure.
- Be sure to leave a gap between where the straps are sewn to allow elastic to be pulled through the casing area.
- Note that back straps are closer together than front straps. This will eliminate falling off shoulders when tied.



## Step 9 – Insert Elastic

- Secure a large safety pin into one end of elastic.
- Pin other end to dress to secure while feeding elastic through opening in the casing.
- If you have sewn the optional top ruffle, the elastic will be fed in between the bottom seam and the ruffle seam.
- Once you have inserted the elastic around the dress, remove the safety pin and overlap elastic ends. Make sure elastic doesn't get twisted.
- Pin and sew over several times.
- Place elastic seam in casing, sew opening closed on seam line, backstitch both ends of seam to secure.
- Distribute dress gathers around elastic and position straps. Note the elastic is not sewn down to the dress and can move around in the casing.





## Step 10 – Final Instructions!

- You are all done! Turn dress inside out.
- Give it a final press.
- Fold it up and return the dress with the instructions and place in the ziplock bag.
- Finished dresses can be dropped off at Tabernacle Baptist Church or New Bern Fabric Center.
- Help us reuse and recycle our instructions and bags. Please try to keep your bag as we have a numbered check out system that allows us to keep track of the dress kits we have checked out. If you did not keep your original bag, please put your name on the bag so we can make sure we know you returned your dress
- If you run out of time or are unable to complete your dress, please return the unfinished supplies so someone else can make it.
- Want to learn more about where our dresses go? Each dress is packed in a shoebox for a girl 10-14 years old. We also pack shoeboxes for boys the same age. We collect a variety of items all year long including hygiene items and school supplies. Donations are always welcome or consider packing your own boxes or starting a group through your church, business, or civic group. Learn more at [www.operationchristmaschild.org](http://www.operationchristmaschild.org)
- If you have any questions, please contact Paula Gilgo at [paula\\_gilgo@hotmail.com](mailto:paula_gilgo@hotmail.com) or call the church office at (252) 637-4166. Paula is the coordinator for Tabernacle Crafters for Christ and also a year round OCC volunteer and can help you get started with shoeboxes or sewing ministries.

Thank You and May God Bless You!

Tabernacle Baptist Crafters for Christ