

Texas Baptist disaster relief volunteers say they want to serve where God is working_40504

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LATHAM SPRINGS-Seeing God work through Texas Baptist Men disaster relief inspires volunteers to continue the ministry, relief leaders testified at a recent training event.

Rain from a tropical storm flooded the home of Skip Holman, pastor of First Baptist Church in Boling and a regional TBM leader. TBM retiree builders replaced the carpet and molding in his home. The organization has helped many people near him.

That experience inspired Holman to want to help people in other parts of Texas like the people in his community have been helped by TBM. He is

leading the effort to start a disaster relief unit in Coastal Bend Baptist Area.

"We have had a tremendous amount of help from people around the state," Holman said. "It's payback time for our area."

Steve Payne of Trinity Baptist Church in San Antonio worked in a field kitchen during the 2002 Central Texas floods. As volunteers met physical needs, they discovered spiritual needs, he recalled. Witnessing opportunities were common.

More than 40 people made professions of faith in Christ at New Braunfels alone, and 32 rededicated their lives to God, Payne said.

Acting out of faith serves as a powerful testimony, he remarked. "People can preach all day long (and see no results). All you have to do is step out."

For years, Erna Pattillo of First Baptist Church in Nixon has watched TBM volunteers, including her husband, meet physical and spiritual needs through disaster relief. She volunteered to become a unit supervisor when she saw the necessity for child care assistance.

Someone should care for children as adults assess damage and look for assistance, Pattillo said. TBM can protect the youngsters in the wake of disasters.

"I see the need we have for child care," she said. "We've focused on food and chainsaw (units). We need to emphasize child care. The children need to be cared for."

The commitment to disaster relief ministries grows out of faith, volunteers said. Each spoke of feeling God calling them to serve in a specific way.

"People say good works don't save you," Payne said. "I say, once you're saved, it's time to get to work."

The workers said they look forward to God continuing to touch lives through TBM disaster relief.

"The main thing I enjoy is serving the Lord, doing what we're here to do," Pattillo said.

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