

‘Jesus in the Streets’ seeks to bring healing to Houston

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Rebuilding continues more than two years after Hurricane Harvey caused widespread devastation along the Texas Gulf Coast, and a missionary with Texas Baptists’ River Ministry has expanded the scope of her work to help bring healing to the Houston area.

Silvia Briones launched an initiative, “Jesus in the Streets of Houston,” inspired by a similar project she was a part of in Mexico. The campaign theme is based on Matthew 9:35, a passage that describes Jesus going throughout cities teaching, preaching and healing.

“The plan is to get the people in Houston excited about it and get them to be the hands and feet of Jesus. When other people come from outside of Houston, it gets them inspired. When they see others doing everything they can for this city, they want to do it too,” Briones explained.

To kickstart Jesus in the Streets, Briones invited six churches and a youth conference from Texas and Mexico to serve in Houston in the summer.

Preaching, teaching and healing

In all, 110 volunteers served across the city. Some worked at churches, while others led evangelism events and organized health fairs for low-income areas. All of the ministries focused on engaging Hispanic residents.



Volunteers help paint and make other repairs to a home in Houston damaged by Hurricane Harvey. (Photo courtesy of BGCT)

Azle Avenue Baptist Church from Fort Worth hosted Vacation Bible School at two Houston churches. They also repaired the baptistry at Iglesia Bautista Hosanna, which had not worked for a long time. They also helped distribute flyers at a trailer park promoting a church event.

In another part of Houston, Birdville Baptist Church from Haltom City went to Iglesia Bautista Cochran to repair damage from Hurricane Harvey. The volunteers repaired both the church and the congregation's guest house for visiting pastors and missionaries. Thanks to the assistance the Birdville team provided, the church will be able to continue its ministry, providing free lodging to ministry workers.

Several churches from Mexico engaged in evangelism and discipleship throughout the city. They helped Houston-area Hispanic churches create Bible classes in which new believers can learn basic biblical principles. The volunteers hosted the class while they were there, teaching the local

church how to run the program after they left.

Other churches hosted health fairs. The Baptist Student Ministry at Rice University connected Briones to medical students from Rice University who, along with a physician, partnered with the churches to provide check-ups and health education trainings. Members of the church were available to pray with the patients.

Continuing the movement



Volunteers from Jesucristo es el Señor in Monterrey, Mexico, smile after a long day of work. (Photo courtesy of BGCT)

After the teams left Houston in mid-summer, many of the churches involved in Jesus in the Streets continued to support the work of the Houston-area churches where they served.

While the Birdville Baptist Church group was in Houston, they met a widow Iglesia Bautista Cochran was supporting and helped relocate her to an apartment of her own.

Upon their return to Fort Worth, the volunteers spoke to their church members about the woman, and Birdville has decided to send more support

for the woman. The church has also committed to taking offerings for Iglesia Bautista Cochran so that they can continue the good works they are doing.

“They did everything they could do here, but then when they got back, they inspired their whole church to do more,” Briones said. “I think that’s what God desires for those who are called. We should be obedient to his wishes.”

The students from Rice were excited about the positive impact they were able to make through the churches during Jesus in the Streets. They asked Briones to connect them with other churches in the area that would be willing to host health fairs and training events.

Briones plans to host another large event in July 2020 and is praying that churches around the state will answer the call to service.

“Pray for churches to see the need here in Houston and for our own churches in Houston to wake up and listen and obey God,” she said.

To learn more about volunteer opportunities with Jesus in the Streets of Houston, contact Silvia Briones at masilvia@hotmail.com. Translators are available to churches without Spanish speakers.