

Symphony of TBM activity meets needs after hurricane

September 15, 2021

GONZALES, La.—Hours before the sun peeks over the horizon, the sound of footsteps on pavement echo through the air at Ascension Baptist Church.



Texas Baptist Men disaster relief volunteers prepare meals for Louisiana residents affected by Hurricane Ida. (TBM Photo)

It's soon joined by the clunking of plastic containers and the clanking of large metallic skillets. By 5 a.m., the parking lot is filled with a symphony of activity.

In this hurricane-battered area of Southern Louisiana, it's music to residents' ears. It means Texas Baptist Men volunteers are cooking meals for them—nutrition that will give residents the strength they need to push forward.

“Every morning, TBM volunteers wake up at 4:30 to prepare lunch,” TBM Disaster Relief Director David Wells said. “Quickly after finishing that,

they're back at it cooking dinner. These are long, tiring days.

"That's what it takes to serve 7,000 to 10,000 meals a day. But people need to eat and have no other way of getting food. That's what drives us to serve as Christ did."

TBM feeding volunteers from across the state have provided more than 70,000 meals since Hurricane Ida made landfall Aug. 30 with 150-mph winds that tore through much of Louisiana. They continued serving even as Hurricane Nicholas moved across the state with heavy rain.

TBM teams spread across the region



Texas Baptist Men chainsaw crews already have completed more than 100 jobs in South Louisiana, and many more await completion. (TBM Photo)

While the food-service volunteers are based in Gonzales, TBM's work is spread across South Louisiana. More than two dozen TBM volunteer teams have been serving, including chainsaw teams, shower/laundry teams, an incident management team, chaplains and more.

"Needs are all across Louisiana," Wells said. "Our chainsaw teams alone

are spread across communities along a 30-mile stretch. Electricity is starting to come on, and cities are getting up and running again, but the recovery process will be long. We will continue working for weeks.”

Churches across Texas donated cleaning supplies and bottled water to TBM to help Louisiana churches meet immediate needs. TBM already has sent two tractor-trailer loads, as well as another trailer filled with supplies.

“Texas has wrapped its arms around Louisiana,” Wells said. “It is remarkable how often we hear about a need, and then I turn around and a church is donating items that meet that specific need. In the aftermath of the hurricane, God continues to work wonderfully.”

TBM volunteers are meeting more than physical needs. They’re encouraging people. They’re praying with them. God is comforting people after Hurricane Ida, Wells noted.

“God is transforming lives,” Wells said. “Four people have come to know Christ as Savior. Others have grown closer to him.

“Please continue to pray for Louisiana. Pray for those who are responding to needs. Your prayers are truly making a difference after this storm”

To support TBM disaster relief financially, visit tbmtx.org/donate or send a designated check to Texas Baptist Men, 5351 Catron Drive, Dallas, TX 75227.