

TBM doubles number of meals to unemployed Texans

May 14, 2020

Less than two weeks after committing to provide 50,000 meals to unemployed Texans, Texas Baptist Men announced May 14 the ministry will provide 100,000 meals.

TBM created its first virtual feeding team—dubbed “the biggest feeding unit in TBM history”—to multiply the capacity of church-based food pantries and ministries across the state. Many food pantries were struggling to keep up with demand for food as Texas unemployment has skyrocketed during the COVID-19 crisis.

Within hours of launching TBM Feeding Texans, the ministry already had 40 percent of the funds needed. Donations—all used by ministries to purchase food—continued pouring in.

During the early part of the second week in May, funding surpassed the goal and kept climbing, enabling TBM to help churches to share Christ’s love with more people by providing much-needed food.

“All of us know someone who has had their hours cut, been furloughed or been even laid off during the COVID disaster,” TBM Chief Executive Officer Mickey Lenamon said. “People who have never needed to reach out for help suddenly have no other option. We all know the need across the state.

“Members of the TBM family gave sacrificially to help their fellow Texans in need. Christ commands us to care for the hungry in their time of need, and friends, families and churches are seeking to live out that teaching through TBM.”

TBM helps churches and ministries around the state

TBM already has distributed more than 50,000 meals and expects to provide the next 50,000 meals in the coming weeks through church partners across the state.



Texas Baptist Men launched “TBM Feeding Texans” to multiply the capacity of church-based food pantries and ministries across the state. (TBM Photo / Rand Jenkins)

The meals are helping struggling families throughout Texas, including Abilene, Amarillo, Del Rio, Dallas, Fort Worth, Houston, Laredo, Lubbock, Midland, San Antonio, Sonora, Tyler, Waco and Weslaco.

In several locations, TBM coupled the use of its vehicles and trailers to double and even triple the outreach, empowering churches to meet the needs of more people.

TBM’s effort came at the perfect time, said Jeff Chadwick, executive director of Mission Center of Houston.

“Right now, this is so needed. We get all our food from the Houston Food Bank, and they’ve just been overrun by the major distributions. We’re finding food kind of hard to come by,” Chadwick said.

The disaster is even affecting people where the disease isn’t prevalent. Sutton County has not experienced any confirmed COVID cases, but the economic downturn had an impact on people there, sending them searching for assistance. TBM helped the Food and Resource Center of Sutton County with additional resources through First Baptist Church in Sonora.

“About 75 percent of our local economy is oil and gas. When that closed, we saw a big bump in families needing food,” said Matt Killough, pastor of First Baptist Church in Sonora.

Meeting physical and spiritual needs

Across the state, food distributions are opening up conversations with people about spiritual matters, numerous ministries reported. Individuals are asking church leaders to pray with them. Congregations are encountering on-going ministry opportunities.



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the coming weeks through church partners across the state. (Photo / Neil Williams / Texas Baptists Communications)

TBM is supporting First Baptist Church in San Antonio's food distribution. Through the ministry, church leaders met a couple who worked at Luby's Cafeteria, which has been affected by the slowdown. As a result, the couple hasn't worked in weeks.

The church's grocery distributions make sure the couple and their three elementary-school age children have food.

During a recent delivery, leaders noticed another need—one of the children could use a better bed. The church gave the family a mattress someone recently had donated.

“In the darkest times, light shines brightest,” Lenamon said. “These past few weeks have truly been some of the darkest of our lifetimes. Christ-followers have beamed light into the lives of others in mighty ways. Together, we are delivering help, hope and healing to a hurting world.”

The effort is TBM's latest initiative in response to the COVID-19 crisis. Already, the ministry had donated 15,000 protective masks, 1,200 pairs of protective glasses, 2,000 biohazard suits and four decontamination tents to medical professionals and first responders.

To give online to support TBM disaster relief, visit [TBMTX.org/donate](https://tbmtx.org/donate). To contribute financially by mail, send a check designated “disaster relief” to Texas Baptist Men, 5351 Catron Dr., Dallas, TX 75227.