

TBM teams serve Austin homeless population

December 17, 2019

AUSTIN—Early morning, the smell of hot breakfast tacos wafted across a 5-acre lot in Austin that serves as a temporary living space for the homeless. People emerged from all sides of the property, following their noses to food.

Roughly 50 people are greeted individually with smiles and conversation as they worked their way through the line where they are served by Texas Baptist Men disaster relief volunteers. Then, the volunteers suddenly put their serving instruments down.

A homeless woman asked the yellow-cap-wearing team to pray for her. She had been experiencing some pain. The team stopped what they were doing and lifted her needs up to God.

“We’re sharing Christ with people,” said Gary Finley, who is leading the TBM feeding team. “They’re seeing what we’re about.”

Between serving three meals a day, TBM volunteers visit with the people, connecting with them. Over a cup of coffee, volunteers and the people who live here get to know each other.

Several individuals asked a TBM chaplain to lead a Bible study for them.

“That’s been really impressive to them,” Finley said. “We’re here with them. They see we care.”

Responding to the governor's request

TBM is serving in response to a request from Gov. Greg Abbott's office from Dec. 13-Dec. 20. This fall, the Texas Department of Transportation cleared homeless people and debris from underpasses across Austin and opened a 5-acre plot of land to serve as temporary housing for people.

"TBM has been asked by state emergency management to alleviate the hunger and spiritual needs in the area," said Dwain Carter, TBM disaster relief director. "During Christmastime, every person needs a warm meal in their stomachs and hope in their hearts. Christ cares deeply about each and every person."

The deployment extends one of the busiest stretches of TBM disaster relief in the organization's history. TBM Disaster Relief volunteers have responded to needs for 39 straight months, with some people serving more than 100 days this year alone in the wake of windstorms, hurricanes, tropical depressions, tornados and other events.

In that span, TBM Disaster Relief has provided millions of meals and cleaned out hundreds of homes.

"God calls and equips his people to share the gospel of Christ in word and deed," Carter said. "TBM volunteers continually respond to that call to deliver help, hope and healing."

To support TBM disaster relief, click [here](#).