

TBM volunteers support evangelistic outreach, gain experience

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DALLAS—Between Easter and Pentecost, Texas Baptist Men disaster relief volunteers not only are supporting efforts to revive churches and share the gospel, but also gaining hands-on experience working in a field kitchen.



Time to Revive volunteers gladly receive breakfast prepared by Texas Baptist Men disaster relief volunteers who set up a mobile field kitchen in the parking lot of a South Dallas church. (Photo/Ken Camp) TBM crews—including volunteers who typically work with chainsaw or mud-out teams—are providing Friday and Saturday meals for volunteers with the Richardson-based Time to Revive ministry during the [Revive Texas](#) evangelism emphasis in the Dallas-Fort Worth area, April 16-June 4.

Engage Christians in personal evangelism

[Time to Revive](#) volunteers from 20 states are working with more than 300

North Texas churches for seven weeks to equip their members in personal evangelism by engaging them in sharing their faith.

“We go up to people and ask them how we can pray for them, and that typically gives us opportunities to share the gospel,” said Rich Goodwin of Garland, who works with Time to Revive. “The harvest is great, and it’s right outside the church walls. We’re just trying to help churches get their people out there.”

During the first week, Revive Texas sent out nearly 3,000 people in 755 teams across the Dallas-Fort Worth area. As a result, 134 people made professions of faith in Christ, and 310 asked for follow-up.

In addition, volunteers presented the gospel in jails and juvenile centers, schools and businesses, where more than 400 people made commitments to Christ.

People who make faith commitments are invited to Project 52, a one-year Bible study, in which they will meet for about a half-hour each week with a local Christian for one-on-one discipleship.

Move outside the four walls of the church

Wade Aaron, a Time to Revive missionary based in Lewisville, spent the last year and a half enlisting churches to become involved in the Revive Texas emphasis. Even the churches he contacted that did not become involved in the effort acknowledged the need for ministry outside the walls of the church, he noted.

“By and large, the churches recognize what they are doing isn’t enough, and they can’t keep relying on an attractional model,” Aaron said. “They realize they need to get out of the four walls of the church and share the gospel—whether they are doing yet it or not.”

Provide meals for evangelistic teams

On Monday through Thursday each week until June 4, host churches provide meals for Time to Revive teams. On Friday and Saturday, volunteers from throughout the region gather at the Inspiring Body of Christ Church in South Dallas, where [TBM disaster relief](#) volunteers serve them three meals a day.



Ray Gann of Sherman (right) visits with David Thaxton, a Texas Baptist Men disaster relief chaplain from Decatur. (Photo/Ken Camp) Ray Gann of Sherman, director of the TBM state food-service unit, is coordinating the centralized meals, as he has at least a half-dozen other Time to Revive events around the country.

Gann led the first crew of 18 TBM [“spiritual relief”](#) volunteers to serve more than 5,000 meals in Asheville, N.C., in 2012 to support the multi-denominational evangelistic effort.

“In Jesus’ prayer in John 17:23, it says it is in our unity the world will recognize Jesus for who he is,” he said. “The heart of this ministry is in that verse.”

Opportunity to ‘get the rust off’

Gann contacted disaster relief team leaders from Dallas, Alvin, Wichita Falls and Conroe, as well as Golden Triangle, Tarrant and Bell Baptist associations, who mobilized crews to work at different times during the

seven weeks—both to support the evangelistic outreach and to hone their skills.

For some TBM volunteers who have been trained in food preparation but who spend more time in other areas of disaster relief, it provides them the opportunity to “get the rust off” and gain expertise, he noted.

“We always learn something, no matter how many times we’ve been involved,” Gann said.

Good teaching and learning exercise



Nancy Wines, a Texas Baptist Men disaster relief volunteer from First Baptist Church in Nederland, leads by example in serving breakfast to Time to Revive volunteers. (Photo/Ken Camp) Nancy Wines from First Baptist Church in Nederland served as on-site coordinator for a team that included volunteers from multiple churches in Golden Triangle Baptist Association, as well as other parts of Southeast Texas.

“We have some who have been doing this kind of work for 10 years and one couple in their first year,” Wines said.

“They all have been trained in feeding and food handling, but some spend most of their time with chainsaw or clean-out crews. I try to put the people with less experience in feeding with some of the more experienced people to teach them the ropes.”

Mobilizing a crew to prepare and serve meals for Time to Revive volunteers is easier in some respects than a disaster relief operation, because it is a two-day commitment that can be planned in advance, she noted.

“It’s a good place to learn, because there’s not the pressure,” Wines said. “It’s a good teaching exercise. In a disaster, I don’t have as much time to teach.”

Wines praised the willingness of her crew to volunteer for any assignment, whether it involved cooking, working on the serving line, pouring drinks or washing dishes.

“They are a good group,” she said. “They see who needs help, and they go to work.”

The volunteers also appreciate the interaction with the Time to Revive volunteers, hearing their stories about transformed lives, Wines noted.

“It’s a time for us to get revived, too,” she said.