

TBM volunteers work long hours to meet needs in Kentucky

August 17, 2022

JACKSON, Ky.—Chelsea has two children, and another is due to arrive any day now. That's enough to keep anyone busy. Then several feet of mud and river water poured into her home.



Joe Fuller from The Heights Baptist Church in Richardson demonstrates what a dirty job looks like, working on a TBM mud-out crew in Kentucky. (Photo / John Hall)

Neighbors rallied around her to help, but the task was simply too large to tackle.

“We prayed for someone to help,” one of the neighbors said.

Then a group of Texans in yellow shirts arrived. In one long, grueling, mud-soaked day, the Texas Baptist Men flood recovery team removed all the drenched sheetrock, flooring and furniture from Chelsea’s home to make it ready to rebuild.

“God answered the prayer of a neighbor,” said Jerry Hall from Hillcrest Baptist Church in Cedar Hill, who led the team who worked on Chelsea’s house. “We came in and did the house today. We’re praying everything will be OK moving forward.”

At least 37 people died in widespread flooding across eastern Kentucky, and many people have lost everything they owned. The economically challenged region also has one of the lowest rates of flood insurance in the nation, compounding difficulties as homeowners try to claw out of the predicament.

“When a disaster hits, people are in positions they can’t get out of on their own,” said David Wells, TBM Disaster Relief director. “TBM volunteers come alongside families to accelerate the recovery process. Christ calls us to help the hurting, and that’s exactly what we’re doing in Kentucky.”

Lifting spirits and sharing the gospel



TBM flood recovery volunteers work on a home in Kentucky. (Photo / John Hall)

TBM flood recovery teams are saving every family they serve thousands of dollars. They're also lifting spirits as they go house to house. Volunteers talk to people, empowering them to unpack the trauma they've experienced.

One woman said she woke up to several feet of water in her house. She, her husband and son swam down the street to safety. Another woman tried desperately to save her horse but was unable to do so.

When the opportunity arises, TBM volunteers offer to pray with people. They've distributed 34 Bibles and talked about God's love.

"People are in shock," Wells said. "They've lost everything and are struggling with what to do next. TBM volunteers are providing the help they need to replace the hurt with hope."

Sometimes that ministry means cleaning out a flooded home. Other times, it's as simple as doing a load of laundry for someone who can't because their washer no longer works. A TBM laundry unit runs from 4 a.m.-11 p.m. each day as volunteers wash, dry and fold loads of clothes and blankets for free that arrive drenched with water and covered in mud.



Jerry Hall from Hillcrest Baptist Church in Cedar Hill works as on-site coordinator for a TBM crew serving in Kentucky. (Photo / John Hall)

Some people bring a trash bag full of items to be washed. Others bring several bags. One family brought enough clothes to fill a pickup truck bed.

“They show up in disbelief,” said Sid Riley, a TBM volunteer on the laundry team. “They want to know how much it cost. They can’t believe it’s free. One woman came in with a small load, and we asked her if she had any bedding. We want to help. They’re very grateful.”

TBM flood recovery, shower, laundry, feeding and chaplain teams continue to serve in eastern Kentucky and will as long as needed, Wells said.

“When there’s a need, TBM volunteers seek to meet it,” Wells said. “They’re stepping up again here in Kentucky. They’re transforming lives in the name of Christ. Please lift the people of eastern Kentucky up in your prayers as well as TBM volunteers who are serving.”

To support TBM disaster relief ministries financially, send a check designated for disaster relief to Texas Baptist Men, 5351 Catron Dr., Dallas, TX 75227 or [click here](#) to give online.