

Texas Baptists help provide clean water for Liberian community

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FORT WORTH—Not everyone has easy access to one of the most basic resources—water. About 25,000 people in Brewerville, Liberia, must walk five to 10 miles a day to get drinking water. Sometimes, the water isn't even clean.

Tom Howe, pastor of Birdville Baptist Church in Fort Worth, learned about the need in the area around the Lott Carey Mission School and a project to build a tank tower there to provide a reliable source of clean water. His congregation donates the Texas Baptist Hunger Offering, and the school receives support from the offering for some of its community ministry.

Moved by the need in Liberia, the church decided to give toward the water tower project in addition to regular support for the hunger offering.

Fund-raising walk-a-thon



About 150 people participated in a walk-a-thon to raise money for a water tower in Liberia. So, Birdville Baptist partnered with Haltom Road Baptist Church in Fort Worth to sponsor a fund-raising walkathon in Birdville Stadium with about 150

people in attendance. Birdville Baptist also sponsored two volleyball tournaments and took offerings to help with fund raising.

“Civil wars beat up the infrastructure in Liberia,” Howe said. “They would go in and maim everyone there, or kill off the adults. This mission was started to care for orphans. But then it started getting a lot of amputees or indigent people. They wouldn’t say no to anybody in need, so it grew from an orphanage to a school and began offering job training—how to get a job without a hand or a foot.”

Improve health

All of these people benefiting from the mission suffer from a lack of access to clean water, making them more susceptible to sickness and to the possibility of an outbreak, like the devastation caused by the Ebola crisis from 2013 to 2016.

“The repair/renovation of the water tower on the campus will hopefully ensure a constant supply of clean, purified source of water, which will help cut back on the water-born diseases and skin rashes currently prevalent within the (Lott Carey Mission) community tremendously,” the [LCM Water Tower Project](#) Facebook page states. It will also help improve sanitary conditions in their school and communities.”

Howe noted water tower construction will begin when fund raising is completed. The project will consist of three phases—tower construction, drilling and installation of pump and pipes, and tower housing construction, essentially a warehouse for security and protection from the elements.

“The final collection goal is for about \$56,000,” Howe said. “As of (the walkathon) weekend, we made it to \$37,200.”

‘Take care of somebody in need’

“Our king in heaven, Jesus, is appraising how we treat others,” Howe said during his sermon before the walkathon. “He is watching us. God is going to say, ‘I watched how you treated others, especially the lonely, the hungry, the vulnerable.’ This is our opportunity to do exactly what Jesus is asking us to do: Take care of somebody in need.”

Kris Drees, pastor of Haltom Road Baptist Church, said his congregation resonated with the need for clean water.

“One of our members is an engineer for the waste disposal here in town. So, clean water is something that people in our church can get behind,” he said. “We also have quite a few members who are involved with walking fund-raisers, and we didn’t have any missions or event. So, we thought this would be a good one for that.”

Drees noted he developed a relationship with Howe over the last few months through a peer group, where they met together to discuss Scripture. In one of those meetings, Howe mentioned the need in Liberia, and the two Fort Worth churches decided to partner in the walkathon.

Both Drees and Howe said they are encouraged to see their congregations living out the command to serve the people Jesus called “the least of these.”

To make a donation to ministries like Lott Carey Mission through the Texas Baptist Hunger Offering, click [here](#).