

The little things can answer big prayers in Oklahoma

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LITTLE AXE, Okla.—Zach Rowell stood in the bed of his pickup truck as the sweltering summer sun beat down relentlessly. Carefully, he pushed a large corduroy recliner to the back of the bed, securing it with bungee cords.

☒ Cleanup is still going on after the devastating tornado that hit Moore, Okla. Rowell traveled to Little Axe, a community near Norman, Okla., with 25 young people from [University Heights Baptist Church in Stillwater](#) to assist tornado relief efforts.

The recliner loaded in the back of Rowell's truck turned out to be an answered prayer for a disabled woman who lost her home in Moore, Okla., to a tornado that cut a 17-mile path of destruction. The storm left behind 16,000 seriously damaged homes, 24 people dead and an elementary school demolished.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency determined the woman needed a reclining chair, but other things needed to fall into place before she could receive it.

"I was standing in the parking lot (of First Baptist Church in Norman) greeting the Second Baptist Church of Little Rock work crew when a FEMA lady at a meeting in a neighboring church crossed the parking lot to inquire what we were up to," said Jill Hatcher, Oklahoma Cooperative Baptist Fellowship disaster response coordinator. "She took my information, and a couple of days later, she emailed me with the chair request."

☒ The Oklahoma family pictured above, according to Texas Baptist Men

chaplain Russell Schieck, found their 7-year-old daughter Emily safe after she was pulled from a pile of rubble in her tornado-damaged school. She told her family they should have known she was safe because she had prayed and asked Jesus to protect her, Schieck reported. She recalled how she was being hit by bricks and other debris then she prayed, "Jesus help me," and suddenly she felt something soft fall across her back. She emerged with only minor scratches and bruising. (TBM Photo)Hatcher is a member of [First Baptist Church in Norman](#), which housed volunteers in its family life center and served as a hub for CBF disaster response. Texas Baptists' disaster recovery program is partnering with CBF Oklahoma to send groups to serve in Oklahoma.

"It's very important for people to put their feet to their faith and be the hands and feet of Jesus—to show the love of Jesus to the people affected," said Marla Bearden, Texas Baptists' disaster recovery specialist.

Bearden encourages potential volunteers to know every detail matters, no matter how small it may seem.

"Every job we give our volunteers is important," she said. "We are trying to help the disaster victims go back to the way they were before. The task you are assigned helps them come full circle."

The recliner illustrated how seemingly small jobs matter. Someone had donated the chair, but it need to be delivered from Norman to Stillwater, where the displaced woman relocated to live with family.

"We were struggling to find anyone from Norman who could deliver the chair," Hatcher said. "I had jokingly said ... if we couldn't find anyone, maybe Stillwater could help. That's exactly what happened."

The experience showed how God cares for his children, she said.

"I felt amazed that somehow, multiple dots were connected to help

someone with something you might mistake as a small thing," Hatcher said.

"God knew the need, met the need and found transportation. That chair represents for me the reality that we are the conduits by which God is taking care of his children from the small to the big things."

For more information about opportunities to serve in Oklahoma through Texas Baptists' disaster recovery, visit www.texasbaptists.org/disaster.