



TBM
TODAY

STORIES OF TEXANS ON MISSION

A
YEAR
no one
will ever
FORGET

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TURKEY EARTHQUAKE RELIEF: IT'S HARD TO COMPREHEND THE LEVEL OF DISASTER

The earth shook in Turkey and Syria, and buildings came tumbling down. More than 55,000 people died in the devastation. Millions more are homeless.

"It's hard for people to comprehend the level of disaster based on what they've seen in the news," said Mitch Chapman, director of TBM Water Impact. He traveled to Turkey to deliver two community water filtration systems and to build eight more with local parts.

"The geographical breadth of this was so amazing," Chapman said. "You could drive for six hours and still be in the midst of destruction."

The great loss of life staggered the imagination. "There was no one you met who hadn't lost someone they loved," he said.

In the days after the earthquake, TBM Water Impact built and installed two four-stage filtration systems in the area and helped locals build and install another eight systems. The first two stages removed sediment, a charcoal stage improved the taste and an ultraviolet filter killed any remaining bacteria.

The 10 four-stage systems provided water in the kitchens serving tent cities. Workers cooked two meals a day with the clean water, and the people also brought jugs to be filled for drinking in their tents.

TBM Water Impact is shaping the next wave of response. Homeless residents are expected to be gradually moved into temporary housing with each unit having its own kitchen, Chapman said. "My prayer is that God will open up doors for us to put a bucket

filter in every temporary housing unit."

"There was much we didn't know at the beginning," Chapman said. "We needed to respond quickly, and that's exactly what we did. Over the past few weeks we



have learned a great deal, and the situation is slowly but steadily improving."

Still, the people of Turkey have a long way to go. "Bacteria in the water is going to be a problem from now until the construction stops," he said.

Bucket filters could help both now and with the long-term need. "It's a good solution for the situation, but it still takes a lot of money, a network for distribution of the filters and volunteers to go over and help," Chapman said. "We are working on that now." **TBM**





Temporary Homes for TURKEY

A TBM Disaster Relief team is in the process of building 50 family shelters after the Feb. 6 earthquake in Turkey. TBM volunteers are working with faith-based partners and are expected to build four to six shelters each day.

The shelters come in two sizes and are smaller versions of a Quonset hut, with a semi-cylindrical shape. The large shelters are about 193 square feet and can house six-14



people. The small ones are about half the size and can house families of under five people.

“Please pray for these volunteers as they work in Turkey,” said

Rupert Robbins, associate director of TBM Disaster Relief. “And pray that God will raise up the funds and volunteers needed to build more of these shelters as we work to share the love of Jesus in a very tangible way.” **TBM**



TBM volunteers folded hundreds of blankets bound for Syria and victims of the Feb. 6 earthquake. The blankets that needed folding were in addition to 10,000 blankets bought by TBM and shipped to Syria shortly after the earthquake. “The suffering is great in Syria, and ... God opened a door for TBM to help respond to that need,” said Mickey Lenamon, TBM executive director/CEO. “We are not at liberty to go into details, but TBM quickly secured 10,000 blankets and started them on the trek to Syria.”

Men, women share God’s love through TBM



Fifty-six years ago, my father and five other men helped start Texas Baptist Men as a ministry that would help Christians take the Gospel into their communities and around the globe. It’s also the last

day it was a men’s-only effort.

Shortly after, several of their wives helped serve through the ministry and promote it. Men may have taken Royal Ambassadors camping in those early days, but it was often women who made sure boys had what they needed to go. They were critical in sharing the Gospel with others.

The name Texas Baptist Men has lived on, but the involvement of women in the ministry continues to grow. They now make up roughly 42 percent of TBM Disaster Relief volunteers, working in every facet of ministry. They lead cooking teams. They wield chainsaws. They work on building projects.

In Scripture, God commands each of His followers – male and female – to go and make disciples. That’s exactly what I see women doing each day through TBM ministries. They’re encouraging people. They’re praying with people. They’re leading them to faith in Christ.

As Mother’s Day approaches, I’m grateful for every woman who serves through TBM. You inspire me and others with your faith. You encourage your fellow TBM volunteers with your commitment to serve. You model what it means to follow Christ in today’s world.

Thank you for your ministry through TBM. Together we share God’s life-changing love with hurting people here at home and around the world.

Mickey B. Lenamon
TBM Executive Director/CEO

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Stories are important in Poland. Everyone has one. These stories reflect who they are as a nation. They tell of a city named for a legend where a mermaid and warrior fall in love. They tell of a church's second step that creaks because it was hinged to hide Bibles during communist rule.

Now there are new stories centered around millions of Ukrainians who fled their homeland when Russia invaded.



As we look back on the year since the war began, let's look through the eyes of Ukrainian refugees who left their home country, as well as the Polish Christians who responded. After all, you are a significant part of it through TBM.

"When something bad happens, we want to give help and hope," said Rand Jenkins, who spearheaded the ministry to Ukrainian refugees for the past year. "That's what we do."



The work continues because the mission remains

Much of TBM's hands-on ministry focused in Chelm, Poland, near the Ukrainian border in the months immediately after the Russian invasion. TBM volunteers washed clothes, cleaned bathrooms and prayed with people in the Baptist church-turned-shelter there. Down the street, TBM volunteers helped distribute 300 tons of supplies.



The church is still housing a few refugees. This time they're often on their way back into Ukraine rather than exiting it. Vanloads of supplies leave the warehouse daily for locations across Ukraine.

The ministry continues because the need remains. It's one that has involved people from around the world, showing

the true power of the body of Christ.

"I want to thank every American person who thinks about us, prays for us, and prays for Ukraine," said Deacon David Maksymiuk. "I want to thank every person who came here and helped us in the church when the refugees came and in the warehouse where we prepare food and most needed things to send to Ukraine."

Lives in limbo

Ola wasn't sure how long she would be gone when she and her family left the Donbas region last year. She hoped they could return. But now her home is surrounded by mines with no end to the war in sight.

"When the rockets fell, I grabbed my children and my friend's children and ran. I thought we would go to western Europe. But there weren't any good options, so we went to Poland. Here, we could find help."

Since then, Ola and her two children have lived in a hotel full of other mothers and their children. They're not sure how long this will last. Most of them do not speak Polish, let alone English. Jobs are few in this small town and transportation without a car is nearly

impossible. The path forward is murky at best.

So with the help of the Zelow church, these mothers do their best. For themselves and their children.

"For the children, it's like they're in summer camp," she said. "They don't understand war. They don't know what's going on. They're just having fun with friends."

"For the mothers, they know the situation. We know we have nothing to go back to." *[Continued on page 8]*



To the ends of the earth ...



Nigdy nie zapomnimy...



Jesus told His disciples they would be His witnesses in Jerusalem, Judea and to the ends of the earth.

We are now His disciples, and we go to Texas, the United States and the ends of the earth – Poland, Turkey, and more.

Through TBM International Relief, you are doing just that by meeting needs after refugee crises, earthquakes and disasters of all kinds. You are sharing God's love with people on six continents.

Through TBM International Relief last year, you:



Served on **6** continents.



Distributed **300** tons of supplies.



Ministered to more than **50,000** people worldwide.



Provided more than **100,000** meals.

Beacons of hope

When the invasion began, more than 3 million Ukrainians left the country, many of them coming through Poland. Poles embraced them, providing rides, housing and meals. Churches became shelters overnight.

The situation slowly normalized, the flow of refugees subsided and Poles returned to work. Still churches pressed forward.

“At the beginning, there were lots of Polish helping,” said Greg Skobel, pastor of the Baptist church in Zelow (pictured below). “We were one of many. After six months, we were the only ones.”

Polish Baptist churches across the nation continue to meet the needs of thousands of refugees. Skobel’s church delivers groceries to women and their children who are staying in hotels temporarily. Members offer counseling and Bible studies. TBM has come alongside the congregation to help with the costs of food and is sending a construction team to meet additional needs.

The ministry isn’t easy or even necessarily neat and tidy, but it’s the mission of the church.

“Our aim is to give them their dignity back,” Skobel said.

Ukrainians and non-Ukrainians alike have noticed the effort. It has elevated the congregation’s position in the community. Refugees are bonding with church members. They’re praying together. The congregation has grown from four people to 22, a significant number in a country where most non-Catholic churches are small. People in the community are starting to see the church as a community of people that helps others.

“When people have needs, they’re calling us,” Skobel said. “The first thought is the church.”

A job to do

Life is full of possibilities for teenagers.

They can be anywhere, do anything. The same is true for Veronica, who this year finished her bachelor’s degree in law.

Except she can’t do the two things she wants most: End the war and go home to see her father and mother, who are a policeman and a doctor, respectively, in Ukraine.

“When the bombs started falling, my parents told me to take my sister and go,” she said. “I didn’t want to. I know

they want what’s best for me. But I still picture them crying as we left. I’m a patriot. I feel like I’m betraying them.”

She and her sister did make it back to her parents once. Bombs fell again, and the entire family took shelter in the basement. Veronica’s parents wanted a better life than that for their daughters.

Now she’s trying to seize it.

“I know I have a job to do,” she said.





A new normal

The frantic mass exodus from Ukraine represented the largest movement of people in Europe since World War II ended. Many Ukrainians have either returned home or settled around the world.

But roughly 2 million still remain in Poland.

Warsaw Bible Church ministers to more than 5,000 of them weekly in the capital city. One of a few Ukrainian evangelical churches in the country, the congregation believes God specifically positioned them to serve in this situation.

“We believe just like God used Esther to save her nation, He can use us to save ours,” said Pastor Michael Baloha.

The church has focused on three areas:

- meeting practical needs such as jobs, food and Polish classes;
- helping work through psychological needs created by the invasion; and
- addressing spiritual needs.

As a result, families are getting settled in their new country. They’re stabilizing. And they’re growing

spiritually. Before the war, Warsaw Bible barely fit in its sanctuary. Now, they have even more worshipers, with people filling all of the chairs, standing against the walls and spilling out into a small atrium.

This summer, TBM volunteers will help the church with counseling needs, as well as running a summer camp and English classes. Baloha is excited at the prospect of Texans joining in the effort.

“God’s really blessing,” Baloha said. “Our people’s hearts are open.”

“The power of Christ is put to work through the church.” **TBM**

Ice brought down trees, limbs; TBM teams picked people up



It has a name. Big storms always get a name. Winter Storm Mara blanketed Texas in ice this February and sent tree limbs and power lines crashing to the ground.



TBM Disaster Relief teams from around the state responded to the need. At least 26 teams from across the state served with chainsaws, skid steers, manlifts, shower/laundry and

feeding units.

The worst damage stretched from Canyon Lake, just north of San Antonio, through Temple, more than 100 miles to the northeast. All of the responding units worked in that region, while some also worked in local areas outside the hardest hit corridor.

“The damage from this storm was greater than we thought at first,” said David Wells, TBM State Disaster Relief director. “Our volunteers stepped up in a powerful way and did a great job working in a coordinated response across a large area.”

TBM chainsaw crews had to remove a large number of downed trees and limbs. That work requires large equipment like skid steers and manlifts to help the teams handle what can be dangerous situations.

And when chainsaw crews work, they get dirty and hungry. Several TBM shower/laundry and feeding units supported the chainsaw crews. “Without those support teams, it would be much, much harder for the chainsaw volunteers to do their needed work while away from home,” Wells said.

TBM volunteers put in 10,093 hours responding to the ice storm damage. Most of those hours involved chainsaw crews, which completed 268 jobs. Feeding teams provided 1,353 meals to keep the chainsaw volunteers going. And shower/laundry units provided 387 showers and 273 loads of laundry. TBM chaplains and other volunteers shared the Gospel with 57 people and recorded three professions of faith.

Several churches provided a home base for the volunteers and equipment.

“TBM set up command sites in three churches,” Wells said. “I want to say a special word of thanks to those churches. Without them we couldn’t do our work. And as TBM works, we show a church’s community that these congregations care for both their physical and spiritual needs.”

Each disaster callout is unique, Wells said. “This one required some traveling back and forth, but our volunteers responded with their usual willingness to do whatever it takes to meet needs.” **TBM**



‘Many women do noble things, but *you* surpass them all.’

Being a mom isn’t easy, but we don’t have to tell you that. You know the long hours, the thankless tasks that go unnoticed and the roller coaster of emotions involved in raising a child.

You do it all. And you do it with Christ-like compassion and grace. In the words of Proverbs 31, “Many women do noble things, but you surpass them all.”

Happy Mother’s Day to you and every mom.



HAPPY
Mother's
Day

This Mother’s Day, honor your mom and all the moms who serve through TBM by giving a gift to transform a life through the ministry. Meet some of the very special moms who volunteer through TBM and give at tbmtx.org/mom.