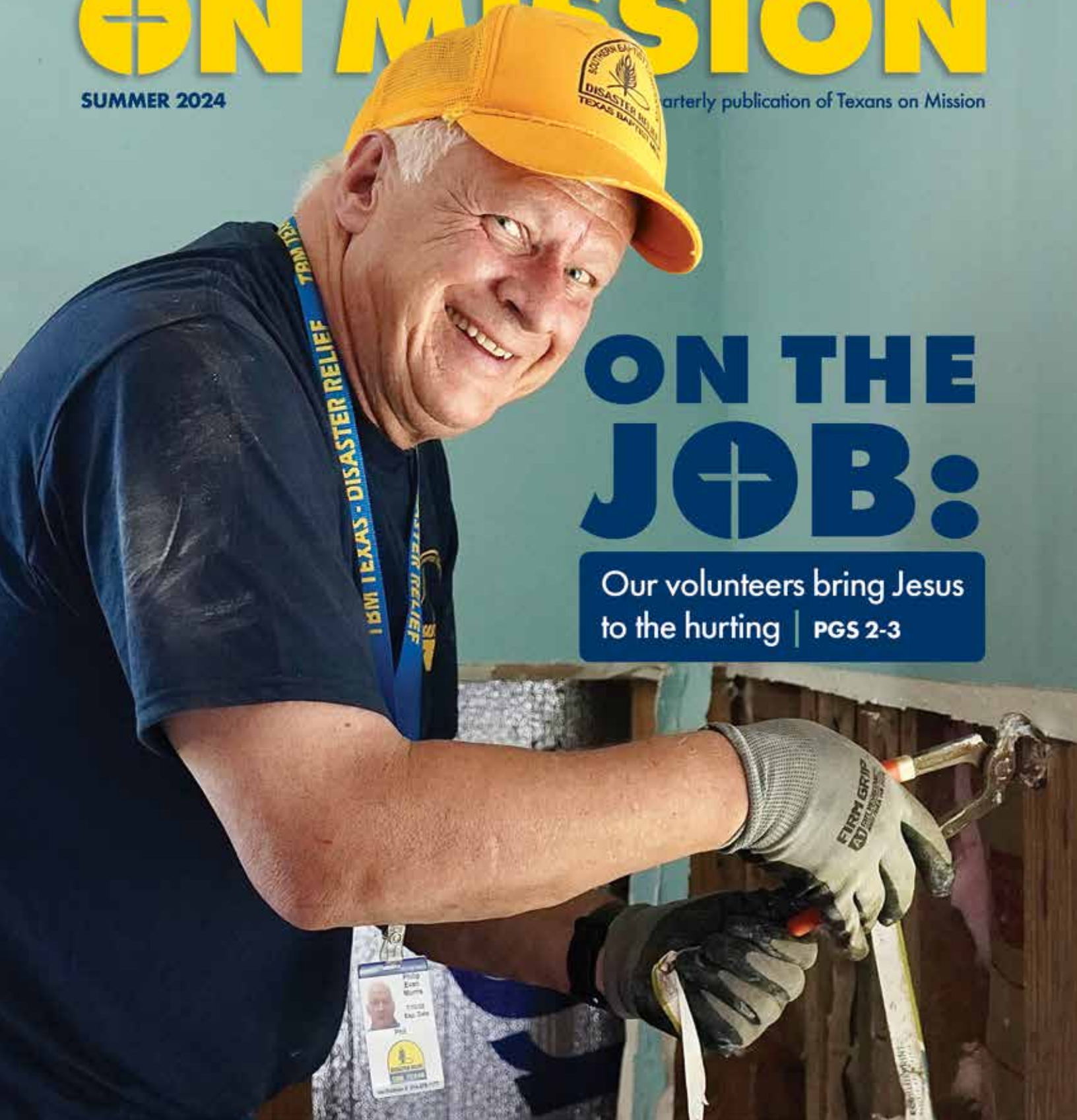


INSIDE: Tornado halts church service | Vincent church brings blessings | Couple: 25 years, 50 projects

TEXANS ON MISSION™

SUMMER 2024

Quarterly publication of Texans on Mission



ON THE JOB:

Our volunteers bring Jesus
to the hurting | PGS 2-3

Texans on Mission teams help Houstonians **forge forward** after Hurricane Beryl

The National Hurricane Center named the storm, Beryl. It slowed down, but it packed a mighty punch.

Houston took it on the chin from Hurricane Beryl in July, and Texans on Mission is pulling out the stops to help the hurting people.



“So many people need help,” said John Hall, TXM chief mission officer. “The scope of the suffering is amazing. Beryl was a Category 1 hurricane, but we’ve all learned that the damage can be as bad as from a Category 5.”

Five days after Hurricane Beryl swept across southeast

Texas, large parts of Houston remained dark. Traffic lights, restaurants and homes lacked power in many places. Internet service was sporadic.

It’s temperature hot, as well, with the typical 95 degrees and high Houston humidity.

Frustration filled the air like the oppressive heat. People were on edge. It was like having your wallet stolen,

replacing your driver’s license and credit cards only to have the wallet taken again.

“Texans on Mission volunteers in the Houston area mobilized immediately,” Hall said. “Then more of our teams began streaming in to help, and they will be joined by out-of-state groups. The need is great.”

TXM feeding, chainsaw, flood recovery, temporary roof and laundry/shower teams responded. And incident management leaders set up to coordinate all of the efforts.

And the response to Hurricane Beryl came after months of storm responses through the spring months.

The storm made landfall shortly before this issue went to press. Texans on Mission’s relief continued to grow. ➔

Read more about TXM responses to Beryl and other storms at [TexansOnMission.org/disasters](https://www.texansonmission.org/disasters).



Our God moves mountains



Patty Hill heard the tornado coming but had little time to react. She crouched down in her Pilot Point home and prayed for God to keep her safe as the storm whirled. Thankfully, she survived. But her property was damaged, and her neighborhood was filled with mountains of downed limbs and trees.

Fortunately, we serve a God that moves mountains. Jesus tells us in Matthew 17:20-21: "Truly I tell you, if you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you."



Looking back on the last few months, Texans on Mission volunteers must have a lot of faith because they've moved a lot of mountains in the name of Christ. Our ministry – the one you and I do together – had 25% more work requests in the last quarter as we did in all of 2023.

By faith, you stepped up to the challenge in Patty's neighborhood as well as places like Houston, Dallas-Fort Worth, Tyler, Trinity, Conroe and Rising Star. You provided the critical help people needed in the form of 30,000 meals and hundreds of chainsaw jobs. They had the opportunity to cry and be encouraged. Texans on Mission volunteers shared God's love with everyone they served.

And God's love transforms lives. Just like Patty's. "All the storms around have been daunting," Patty said. "I'm just so grateful that you guys are doing this. It's a holiday and you guys are out serving people. It overwhelms me."

Thank you for being on mission with Christ in Texas and around the world.

Mickey B. Lenamon

Chief Executive Officer
Texans on Mission

Texans on Mission receives state recognition for disaster relief

The State of Texas decided this year to name its first "organization of the year" active in responding to disasters. The state chose Texans on Mission.

The Texas Division of Emergency Management honored TXM in Fort Worth at its Texans Emergency Management Conference. TXM is one of 36 state, national and international groups that are full members of the Texas Volunteer Organizations Active in Disasters.

The award "recognizes an individual or group that has demonstrated exceptional commitment, impact, and service in disaster response and recovery across our great state," said TDEM. The recipient exemplifies the four Cs of VOAD – cooperation, communication, coordination and collaboration.

About 4,000 people from 40 states and three countries attended the Fort Worth conference, which attracted first responders, local emergency managers, elected officials, and state and federal officials.

"We did not know we were going to receive this honor, so the presentation also came as a wonderful surprise," said Rupert Robbins, TXM associate director of disaster relief. "It really is a testament to everyone involved with Texans on Mission, including our amazing volunteers, committed prayer warriors, financial donors and administrative staff, as well as those who have gone before us in our 57-year history.

"And being the first organization to ever receive this award is also very humbling," he noted. "We are known far and wide for being on mission with Jesus Christ in meeting the needs of people after disasters. This award shows that statewide leaders also recognize our commitment to providing services at the highest professional level." 🇹🇽



'We're survivors'

Claire Johnson Conroe Flood

Flood waters five feet high filled the first floor of Claire Johnson's home in Conroe on May 9, mere months after another catastrophic flood.



"The main thing is you have to rethink your possibilities, and then you have to recharge," Johnson said.

A Texans on Mission Disaster Relief team removed drywall, insulation and mud from Johnson's home. They gave her "a lot of hope, a lot of help, and a lot of friendship," she said.

"It's best to be happy. The joy of the Lord is our strength," Johnson said. "We're survivors." 🇹🇽

Antonia "Toni" Vasquez San Marcos Storm

Remaining faithful in times of uncertainty is Toni Vasquez's life motto.

After destructive winds caused a tree to fall on her roof in San Marcos, Vasquez believed God would send help despite the shock of it all. She said all she could do was pray and wait for what God had in store for her.

"Let's see what God will send us," Vasquez said. "Sure enough, look. Here comes Texans."

Texans on Mission volunteers arrived to remove the tree from her roof and a second tree hovering over her home. She sat outside with the volunteers the entire time to show her support and appreciation.

After TXM chainsaw team lead Mark Bennett and Vasquez shared a break together, she reflected on the importance of helping each other and having faith in God.

"God works in mysterious ways," Vasquez said. "Just have to have a lot of faith in Him. And we've got to love our neighbors and love each other, you know?" 🇹🇽



Tornado halts church service, tears off wall; Texans on Mission teams come to help

The sky grew dark with threatening clouds shortly before 6 p.m. May 22, but the eight people gathered for the midweek service at Dyess Grove Baptist Church southeast of Temple decided to continue as planned.

"All of a sudden those warnings on our phones went off at about 6:20, said Pastor Steve Goode. "We said, 'Let's cut this short.'"



The congregation fled the building. Moments later, a tornado ripped off the wall that formed one side of the church worship space.

One side of the building remained open to the elements until a Texans on Mission Disaster Relief team arrived to close off the structure as much as possible. That team would soon be followed by a TXM Rebuild team.

Initially, "the insurance company put a tarp on the roof," said Larry Cooksey, a lifetime member who serves as treasurer and deacon for the church. "But they wouldn't tarp the end, and so we had our roofer come out. They were going to put a tarp on the end, but the way those boards are sticking out, ... they said it's going to tear a tarp."

The TXM temporary roof team, with volunteers from Georgetown and Abilene, arrived a few days later. After studying and discussing the various challenges of tarping the open end, they shored up the partially fallen vaulted

ceiling, then covered the open end with a large, blue tarp.

A few days later the TXM Rebuild team arrived from Crestview Baptist Church in Georgetown and Bell Baptist Association. In four days, they had a new wall in place.

"I have never done a job like this before — quite unique in just one wall being sucked off and the structure still standing," said Mike Pickel of Crestview who led the temporary roof team.



Goode and his wife, Linda, barely escaped the tornado as it came by the church. Four days later, church members gathered on a concrete slab beside the building. Twenty-two people attended, and most were visitors, he said.

"No matter what happens," Goode said, "the glory of God is going to shine through the people. ... The church is going to be a beacon" to the surrounding area.

"We know we're going to be alright, but we just don't know how God's going to work it out yet." 🇺🇸

To read more of the story, visit TexansOnMission.org/Dyess-Grove



Texans on Mission: taking care of home

Devastating storms have struck Texas again and again this year. And after each one, Texans on Mission teams **stepped up to meet needs**. Here are some of the places we've worked since the February Panhandle fires, plus some six-month statistics:

KIRBYVILLE
Flood recovery



Statewide
69
Rebuild
days

KINGWOOD
Assessment



Statewide
69
Rebuild
days

TERRELL
Chainsaw



Statewide
390
Chainsaw jobs
completed

SAN MARCOS
Tornado response



Statewide
33,095
Meals
perpared

RISING STAR
Flood recovery



Statewide
33,095
Meals
perpared

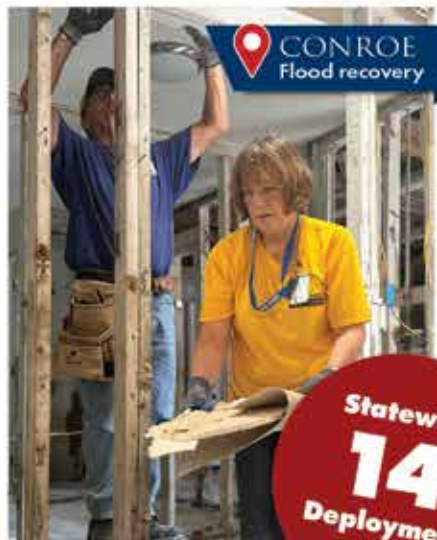
HOUSTON
Feeding



Statewide
33,095
Meals
perpared



In order to continue serving at this pace, we need your support. Your prayers keep us going and serving strong. **Your financial support makes it possible to deploy volunteers and maintain an extensive fleet of equipment.**



STATEWIDE
159 Gospel presentations

STATEWIDE
27 Professions of faith

Every gift you make to support Texans on Mission ministries makes it possible for someone to share God's love in the midst of a person's most difficult days. Help a volunteer be the hands and feet of Christ.

DONATE NOW.
TexansOnMission.org/donate



REBUILD

Lawn Baptist Church team gives week to rebuilding tornado-damaged home

Brooke Brandon deals with a number of chronic illnesses that limit her mobility and require her to use a walker. A year ago this month she crouched in her hallway as a tornado ripped off the roof of much of her home in Matador, northeast of Lubbock.



In June, a Texans on Mission team from Lawn Baptist Church helped Brandon rebuild.

"They did a tremendous amount of work that we had no clue how we were going to get done," Brandon said. "They were working and sweating in the heat. ... It really was humbling and, of course, brought tears to my eyes and my family's eyes."

The Lawn Baptist team of 16 included men and women, teenagers and an 8-year-old boy, said Kristi Whitehurst, co-coordinator with her husband Keith of the church's missions team.

Rafael Munoz, TXM Rebuild coordinator, began

communicating with Brandon and others in her extended family last August. The family secured donations and began the process of rebuilding.

They needed labor, and that's where TXM Rebuild and Lawn Baptist came in.

There is still work to be done on the house, but the "Lawn Baptist Church team has turned the appearance of the home around and revived the sense of community in Matador," Munoz said. The team added new framing, roof decking, sheetrock, ductwork and electrical services.

First Baptist Church in Matador hosted the team from Lawn, providing lunch and dinner plus sleeping space in their building's Sunday school rooms.

Eddy Helms, pastor in Matador, said he "appreciated the example of servanthood that these people showed to our town. ... For them to come and demonstrate their servanthood and their heart was a blessing to us."

Lawn's Keith Whitehurst said: "We do it for the glory of our God." And, "we like to take the kids with us so we can teach them how to be a servant."

The project in Matador required a lot of sweat. Pastor Helms said: "It was 102 one of the days they were on that roof and in the high 90s the other days. I know it was pretty tough on them."

Kristi Whitehurst said Lawn's mission trips are "not just about doing a job. It's about getting to know each other, ... sweating alongside the people we go to church with on Sunday morning and getting to know them better. There's nothing better than that."

Munoz hopes to put together another TXM team to finish the work, but the volunteer response already has captured the homeowner's heart.

"I'm a Christian and grew up in church and sang in the praise team," Brandon said, but being around the Lawn team "has made me want to do volunteer work when I get better" healthwise.

Pastor Helms said, "There's still a lot of work to be done" on the house, but the work done already "was a godsend." 🇹🇽

Small West Texas church leads financial giving to Texans on Mission

History can hang in the balance at unsuspecting times. A congregation of four or five gathered 20 years ago in Vincent to vote on whether or not to disband as a church. One woman cited Scripture: "Where two or more are gathered, God is with us."

"That was a historic moment," said Pastor Walter McCall, who has led Vincent Baptist Church since 2002. The church kept going. No matter their size, they were called to bless others by sharing the Gospel.

Much has happened with Vincent Baptist since the 2004 vote to stay open. Church attendance fluctuated, climbing as high as 40 on a consistent basis, McCall said. The COVID pandemic punched a hole in that, dropping it to the 15-25 range, but the church had already taken a generous approach in giving to help people in crises.

About 10 years ago, "anytime something would happen, a crisis anywhere," a local rancher would "speak up and say, 'I

believe we need to send some money to Texas Baptist Men,'" now called Texans on Mission, the pastor recalled. "That's really what led the church into that on a somewhat regular basis.

"Finances were still really not good at that time," McCall said. "That was before the oil boom took place in the area around the church. But Mr. Autry kind of set the pace for our giving."

Since oil royalties began coming in, "church members are much better off financially," the pastor said. And "they are generous to a fault."

In conversations with church members, the word "blessed" comes up often.

"We've been blessed around here with the oil drilling and stuff, and that's helped a lot," said Terry Shafer. "I've just always felt like giving a tithe was important. It's not just me; others here enjoy giving. We've been blessed, and we want to bless others." ➔

[Read the full story at TexansOnMission.org/vincent](https://TexansOnMission.org/vincent)



Water ministry provides avenue for transformation



From the Baptist Standard

Texans on Mission may have discovered a secret ingredient to community transformation across northern Uganda. Just add water.

This year, Texans and Ugandans on Mission – the name TXM and its 24 Ugandan personnel use—will drill a minimum of 65 wells in Uganda. They teach sanitation, hygiene and pump maintenance in every village where they drill a water well, as well as introducing local residents to micro-finance.

But the real key is the spiritual transformation that occurs in individual lives. Work in each village begins by starting Bible studies. And if there isn't another church within 3 or 4 kilometers, often the villagers ask to start their own congregation.

"I expect to see 500 baptisms this year," said Mitch Chapman, director of TXM Water Impact and bivocational pastor of Oak Grove Baptist Church in Elmo.

TXM envisions expanding its Water Impact ministry into other parts of Africa. Plans already are in place for work in South Sudan within the next two years, with a goal of eventually moving into Kenya, Tanzania and possibly Chad.

Chapman and TXM leaders wanted to develop a model for water ministry that could make the most significant impact on communities without fostering dependency. As they studied other Christian organizations that used water ministry as a tool for sustainable community development, they became impressed

with Fort Worth-based 4Africa and its strategic approach.

TXM leaders learned 4Africa wanted to move away from operating well-drilling rigs in East Africa in order to focus more on the educational components of discipleship and community development.

So, TXM secured the drilling rigs from 4Africa last summer and took on its strategy — moving across northern Uganda district by district from east to west.

The spiritual aspect drives Texans and Ugandans on Mission. Since they began working in northern Uganda last summer, 138 people have been baptized, and another 19 are scheduled to be baptized in the coming weeks.

"When we arrive in a community, water is an access point — a starting point for sharing the Gospel and training church leaders," said Sam Ojok, director of Texans and Ugandans on Mission.

Currently, 340 Bible study groups meet in rural areas of Uganda's Omoro District.

"People are meeting somewhere every day — sharing the Word of God and learning from each other," Ojok said.

"I have not seen another program as impactful as Texans and Ugandans on Mission." 🇺🇸

Read the full Baptist Standard coverage by Managing Editor Ken Camp at TexansOnMission.org/BaptistStandard.

Volunteers work close to home

Preparing First Step Kits, Messages of Hope, Gold-to-Gold Gospel Bracelets

Church groups are teaming up with Texans on Mission to put together various items for people in need. These volunteers are making First Step hygiene kits, hand-designed Messages of Hope and Gold-to-Gold Gospel Bracelets that use colored beads to tell the good news of salvation in Christ.

"Many people cannot go on a disaster callout or a mission trip, but anyone can be involved in preparing items needed for crisis responses," said Sabrina Pinales, director of TXM missions and discipleship. "These are opportunities for hands-on mission work without having to travel."

First Step Kits include a variety of items, such as toothbrush, toothpaste, deodorant, shampoo, comb, shaving razor and washcloth. "These are distributed to disaster survivors and to our local, domestic and international ministry partners," Pinales said.

Messages of Hope are crafted by individuals on packing paper for delivery to victims. "Texans on Mission distributes boxes and packing paper to families after a disaster for them to pack their salvageable belongings," she said. "As



they pack up their belongings they are greeted with these Messages of Hope. It makes such a huge impact on them as they process what they have just experienced and read through the encouraging messages."

Gold-to-Gold Gospel Bracelets contain colored beads representing the journey from life without Christ to faith in Him. "It helps to have a visual representation of the faith process," Pinales said. The first and last color on the bracelet are gold, thus the name. These are being used with TXM Water Impact in Uganda.

TXM provides all materials needed for a group to pursue one or all of these projects. "Churches and other groups contact us in advance about what they would like to do, and we then help them coordinate the effort," she said.

Sometimes groups pursue the project at their own church or other location, while others like to come to the TXM headquarters and tour the facility, as well.

"Either way works great," Pinales said. "We are committed to helping followers of Christ engage in touching the lives of people who are hurting, and this has proven to be very effective." 🇺🇸

For more information, visit TexansOnMission.org/HandsOn, where you will find other ways to get involved, as well.



VOLUNTEERSPOTLIGHT

Twenty-four years, 50 projects

The joyful sounds of children echoing through the activity building at First Baptist Church in Llano are a weekly reminder to church members Neiland and Sherry Fain that their labor the last two decades has not been in vain.

Twenty-four years ago, the couple ventured to their first project with Texans on Mission Church Builders. They worked alongside a diversely skilled team of volunteers to construct the FBC Llano activity building. The duo recently “retired” from Church Builders at age 85 and after participating in over 50 projects.

Twenty-five years ago, Neiland had been laid off from his job of 39 years in the oil field. Unable to find employment, he turned to Church Builders, where he discovered he could use carpentry skills he learned as a young man.

“It’s hard to describe the joy that I get from doing the work,” Neiland said. “It’s a passion. You’re serving the Lord, and you see some results of what you’re doing.” ➡

Read more at [TexansOnMission/volunteers](https://www.texansonmission.org/volunteers).

