

TEXAS BAPTIST CHURCHES PARTNER TO PROVIDE WATER FOR STRUGGLING LIBERIAN COMMUNITY

By Analiz Schremmer



Not everyone has easy access to one of the most basic resources – water.

About 25,000 people in Brewerville, Liberia have to 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 the need at the Lott Carey Mission School (LCM) through the donations his church made to the Texas Baptist Hunger Offering because LCM is one of the recipients.

The church was moved by the need in Liberia, and decided to give to the LCM water tower on top of their Texas Baptist Hunger Offering donation.

On March 26, Birdville Baptist partnered with a neighboring church, Haltom Road Baptist Church, to host a fundraising walkathon in Birdville Stadium with about 150 people in attendance. Birdville Baptist also hosted two volleyball tournaments and took offerings to help with fundraising.

“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.”

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 2013-2016.

“The repair/renovation of the water tower on the campus will hopefully ensure a constant supply of clean, purified water which will help cut back on the water-borne diseases and skin rashes currently prevalent within the LCM community tremendously,” says the LCM Water Tower Project website. It will also help improve sanitary conditions in their school and communities.”

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

“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 the need for clean water was something that resonated with his congregation.

“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 fundraisers and we didn't have any missions or events so we thought this would be a good one for that.”

Birdville Baptist Church and Haltom Road Baptist Church raised a total of \$29,575. Combined with gifts from the Hunger Offering and the Texas Baptist Missions Foundation, Texas Baptists raised \$45,575 for the water tower.