



FMI
building partnerships to empower
indigenous church planters

mail PO Box 932 Newtown Square, PA 19073

voice 610.810.7709

web www.forgottenmissionaries.org

Life had been growing in Meltem's womb for several months, but then death and destruction surrounded her. The pregnant woman's apartment building violently collapsed in the dark, early morning hours of February 6. The first quake measured 7.8 on the seismic magnitude scale. The next one, later that day, measured 7.7. Ten thousand aftershocks followed in the next three weeks and the debris left in their wake covered 140,000 square miles and killed more than 50,000 people. Both Meltem and her unborn baby survived, but were now homeless. She made her way to the capital of Ankara, since that city was still intact, hoping to find emergency assistance there. **What Meltem discovered was new life in Jesus Christ.** There are only a few churches in the city, but their reputation for reflecting Christ's compassion is remarkable. One family from Pastor Izzet's congregation opened their hearts and their home to Meltem. "Stay here with us for as long as you need," they told her. As she learned more about her hosts, Meltem also began to understand about their Savior, Jesus Christ, who delights to rescue people and set them in a secure, unshakeable place (Psalm 91:14-16). Attending church with her new friends has truly become a sanctuary and refuge for her.



When Sabiha lost everything, she found that hope still stands. The 60-year-old atheist was fiercely independent, but when Sabiha lost her home and all her possessions to the earthquakes, more than the physical structures around her were shaken. "My identity collapsed," she explained. "I prided myself on never needing anyone. I suddenly and utterly experienced Need." Like Meltem, Sabiha also relocated to a new city and eventually met one of FMI's partners' as his church spearheaded relief efforts on several fronts. Through the church, her physical needs were carefully met and she began to understand her spiritual needs, too. Within two weeks, Sabiha surrendered her wearisome self-reliance and found rest for her soul as she placed her faith in Christ.

I tell you these stories to illustrate the penetrating power of gospel light in dark places and hard times. I was in Türkiye in the aftermath of the crisis, as the country shifted from the rescue and recovery phase to the relief phase for survivors. I was extremely impressed with our partners' swift response and their dedication to excellence and thoroughness in providing services across the country — from emergency shelter, nourishing meals, and school supplies to trauma counseling — as well as helping seekers find the hope for which their souls longed.

Right now, due to a very generous matching grant provided by a friend of FMI, for every single displaced child or family whom you touch through the hands of one of FMI's Turkish partners, a second child or family will also benefit. During the months of April and May, dollar for dollar, your contribution to our **Hope Stands** campaign will be doubled up to \$50,000.

Your gift will empower our partners' congregations in significant ways. Members from Pastor Dante's and Pastor Enver's churches in Istanbul travel 700 miles or more to volunteer a week at a time, preparing and serving tens of thousands of meals at the impact zones. Dante's church of about 50 believers coordinated the collection and delivery of 40 tons of blankets, new clothes, hygiene items, and food (photo at right). Beneficiaries commented that they would prefer to receive help from the minority Christian community than from any other sector. *The*



Christians see us. They take time to talk with us. They care enough to give us the best — new items, not used, worn out things. Enver said, “While serving food and setting up emergency shelters for displaced families, I often have the opportunity to share the gospel. Please pray for me.”

The darkness of global crises like earthquakes and the displacement of millions of people are opportunities for the light of Christian hope and service to dazzle the watching world. Our partners’ work captivates hearts of people like Meltem and Sabiha...and it captures the attention of local officials, too. Authorities in southern Türkiye requested that Izzet’s ministry organize and implement children and youth activities for the next twelve months in one of the tent cities established for families who have lost their homes, even though Ibrahim’s church is 400 miles away. “Pray that the Lord provides appropriate and effective volunteers to help,” Izzet requests. “May the Lord use us to touch the hearts and souls of these kids, and as a result of developing relationships with the kids, may we have deeper and effective [spiritual] conversations with the parents.”

The initials in our ministry’s name stand for *Facilitate, Mobilize, and Inspire*. Our Turkish partners are obviously already inspired and are mobilized to tackle this monumental task. The Lord wants to use us now to facilitate their relief efforts. Just a few days ago, the International Organization for Migration estimated that the number of people left homeless as a result of the earthquakes in Türkiye roughly equals the entire population of Chicago as of the 2020 US census. FMI’s **Hope Stands** campaign aims to resource our partners on the ground and their churches with \$100,000 to help meet the crucial physical and spiritual needs of these people.

Here’s the simple math behind that ambitious goal: Each dollar of your supplemental gift to FMI’s **Hope Stands** account during the month of April and May 2023 gets doubled. So, for example, your special gift of \$100 becomes \$200; your gift of \$250 becomes \$500. As the total contributions reach \$50,000, they become \$100,000. Insulated tents, nearly 100 square feet to provide emergency shelter to a family of four, set up by our partners’ teams, cost \$550 per tent; backpacks loaded with school supplies and items designed to help traumatized children cost \$55 each (photos from our partners below). A van needed for Izzet’s new youth ministry in southern Türkiye carries a \$40,000 price tag.

To double the impact of your special gift for Turkish earthquake relief with FMI, fill out the white coupon accompanying this letter and return it with your check using the enclosed envelope. Or click on the QR code shown here to designate your online gift for the **Hope Stands** matching grant. This campaign ends in May, so do not let this significant opportunity to double your dollars slip away. (Mailed gifts designated for the **Hope Stands** initiative which are postmarked in May but are received in June remain eligible to be doubled.)



Thank you so much for your dedication to proclaiming unshakable hope that comes through Christ, and for your partnership with FMI. It is an honor and delight to serve as your bridge to connect you with outstanding partners like Izzet, Enver, and Dante...and the multitudes of people like Meltem and Sabiha whom they serve.

Godspeed,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Bruce".

Bruce Allen, Exec. Int’l. Director

P.S. You can **multiply your impact even more** by inviting others to join in this campaign. We know many Christians get excited to give to significant global opportunities like this, so please encourage the participation of other family members, friends, and church groups! Promotional resources, such as PowerPoint slides and templates for bulletin inserts, are available through the QR code’s linked website page.

