

Harvest for the Hungry 2020 - Stories

Below is contextual content for the stories featured in this year's Harvest for the Hungry PowerPoint.

The Angels of Ihtiman - Bulgaria

Slide 3: This lady is preparing vegetables for hot soup. She's a volunteer from the local church in Ihtiman. The team this lady is part of are known locally as the Angels of Ihtiman. Ihtiman is a town 50km outside Sofia, the capital of Bulgaria. It is a town of contrasts, known for its fine golf course, an attraction for the wealthy and newly rich. But over a concrete wall which borders the course, lies the poorest Roma village.



Slide 4: The Angels prepare hot meals during the cold, winter months and take the food out in a huge pot so that they can serve it to those in desperate need – the unemployed, starving families and isolated, elderly people. They share the good news and pray for people.

Slide 5: The church is supported by Mission Possible Bulgaria, which is a Christian social action agency. Transform Europe Network partners with Mission Possible Bulgaria and last year, we were able to send funds to support this vital ministry.

Slide 6: The church is alive in Ihtiman and the Angels have that fire in their hearts to show the love of God in action. But they need encouragement to keep going. That's why Mission Possible Bulgaria is committed to journeying with them as they learn how to effectively serve their community, and why TEN wants to support their work to reach forgotten people. By donating to Harvest for the Hungry, you can partner with the Angels so they can keep going!

Fellowship of The Lord's People – Kosova

Slide 7: Each month, a church in Pristina, Kosova, gives out food parcels to people in need. The kindness is really valued by the people.

Slide 8: The church is involved in a number of ministries which demonstrate practical love to the people, such as bringing firewood to those who struggle to keep warm during the winter and just spending time with people through home visits. The church has established good relationships and many of the people it supports regularly come to church. Even the mayor of Pristina has contacted the church to see how they can partner together and meet the needs of the people!

Slide 9: Last year, the church was able to give out food packages to 120 families – this is more than they are usually able to give each month.

Practical love goes so much further than feeding a person. It helps that person to realise they are seen and they matter. And when the church demonstrates God's love, people are drawn to God's love. Last year, three ladies were baptised and there is hope that two more people who have recently come to faith will be baptised when it becomes possible.



Novi Sad Christian Fellowship – Serbia

Slide 10: Novi Sad Christian Fellowship is a church engaged in reaching out to marginalised men and women. Each month, a meal is prepared and shared amongst the homeless. Members of the church and the homeless serve and eat together. Everybody gets involved!

Slide 11: The *Hand for a Friend* project was brought about when a lady and her husband, both of whom had been homeless themselves, wanted the church to reach out and make homeless people feel loved by God.



Slide 12: *Hand for a Friend* brings dignity, restoration and friendship to people who often feel forgotten and worthless. It turns the prejudices of society on its head and asks, 'What would Jesus Christ do?' It has been such a powerful witness that the church has had donations of clothes and food from the community. On one occasion, a lady made a cake especially for the church's important guests. Even some of the volunteers are not yet believers but they have been so moved by what the church is doing, they want to help.

Slide 13: TEN is really privileged to support this work through your donations to Harvest for the Hungry. Last year, they sent a grant which was used to buy food, which the church might not have been able to afford otherwise. The pastor, Dusan Beredi says that *Hand for a Friend* is an evolving service. The homeless people really feel that this is their home. Currently, there are five people who have struggled with addictions who have now been able to receive support from the church's Rainbow Rehabilitation Centre.

Arben Bedulla - Albanian Earthquakes

Slide 14: Last November, Albania was struck by severe earthquakes, which left many people either homeless, or too afraid to return to their damaged homes. It was the strongest earthquake to hit Albania for more than forty years with a magnitude of 6.4 on the Richter scale and the second to hit the region in less than three months.

Slide 15: TEN's partner, Arben Bedulla, who leads a church in Korçe, went out with volunteers from the church and gave out food and hygiene parcels to those living in the emergency shelters. Many of the people reached out to were not Christians but through these acts of unconditional love, they were able to see that God cares for them. Arben and the church volunteers were able to meet with victims of the earthquakes and to hear their stories. They were also able to share the message of hope that only comes from the gospel.



Slide 16: TEN was able to send out a grant from our Emergency Relief Appeal – a direct response to the earthquakes – which Arben used along with some funds he'd received through our Harvest for the Hungry appeal to buy vital supplies for the people. He was also able to purchase firewood for church members who struggle to buy enough fuel during the very cold winter months.

Slide 17: We cannot see what lies ahead. But we worship an amazing God who can. Your donations to Harvest for the Hungry allowed the emergency funds TEN sent Arben to go further and reach more people. Arben is so grateful for your generosity and so are TEN.