

Loss of life mounting from Dec. 11 tornado swarm; Mississippi Baptist Disaster Relief on standby for mobilization

MAYFIELD, Ky. (BP and local reports) – At least one tornado was reported in Mississippi during the Dec. 11 super cell weather outbreak that took a yet to be determined number of lives in five other states.

“For Mississippi, we experienced a brief, short-lived tornado in Prentiss/Itawamba Counties that resulted in two house trailers destroyed and numerous tree limbs down, with severe thunderstorms across the northern tier of counties adjacent to the Tennessee state line,” reported Hubert Yates, director of disaster relief at the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board (MBCB).



“Mississippi Baptist Disaster Relief (MBDR) will continue

social media updates including encouragement to give financially," he said. "We will also begin to identify MBDR teams that could possibly deploy over the Christmas period to Kentucky to assist."

Tax-deductible financial gifts to meet disaster relief needs can be sent to MBCB at P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Checks should be made payable to the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board and designated "Disaster Relief" on the memo line. To contribute electronically through a secure credit card site, visit <https://www.mbc.org/giving/>.

First responders, family members, and neighbors worked to locate missing people in Arkansas, Missouri, Illinois, Kentucky, Ohio, and Tennessee after the storm passed.

Mayfield, Ky., in the southwestern part of the state was virtually destroyed by one of an estimated 24 large tornadoes spun off by the fast-moving weather system. Dozens of people lost their lives while working in a candle factory there. Warren County (Ky.) Coroner Kevin Kirby said they were also working 11 storm-related deaths in the Bowling Green area.

"This will probably be recorded as the most devastating night in the history of the Commonwealth," said Ky. Governor Andy Beshear.

To contribute electronically to Kentucky Baptist Disaster Relief (KBDR) through a secure credit card site, visit <https://kbc-exe.givingfuel.com/disaster-relief-tornado-donations>. Gifts are tax deductible.

A direct hit to a nursing home in Craighead County, Ark., left at least one dead and several injured at Monette Manor, according to Marvin Day, county judge-executive. Another nursing home was caught up in the storms leaving another person dead, officials said.



WHAT'S LEFT – Residents of Bowling Green, Ky., survey damage on a neighborhood street. Severe storms on Dec. 11 ripped through five states, killing dozens of people. (Photo credit: Baptist Press/Morgan Bass)

The Tennessee Emergency Management Agency is reporting at least three dead across Tennessee. Two people were killed in Lake County and one in Obion County. Police reported at least one fatality in Edwardsville, Ill., as a tornado hit an Amazon distribution site.

Bryant Wright, president of SEND Relief at Southern Baptists' North American Mission Board (NAMB) in Alpharetta, Ga., called on Southern Baptists to pray for those affected by the tragedy. "Let's give generously to help these people recover, clean up, and rebuild," he added.

SEND Relief has set up a donation site, <https://www.sendrelief.org/projects/midwest-south-tornadoes/> for those wishing to make a monetary donation for relief. Gifts are tax deductible.

Coy Webb, crisis relief director for SEND Relief, told Baptist Press he had been in contact with disaster relief directors in the states affected by the storms throughout the day on Dec. 11. He said plans are being made to send DR workers to affected areas.

Wright asked for prayer for “the many SBC state Disaster teams who are mobilizing volunteers to go in and serve those who are hurting.”

NAMB president Kevin Ezell expressed concern for those affected by the storms. “Please join me in praying for those impacted and the many SBC DR [Southern Baptist Convention Disaster Relief] volunteers who will be responding,” he posted on Twitter.

NAMB has already contributed \$25,000 to KDBR, according to the Kentucky Baptist Convention publication, Kentucky Today.

Todd Gray, Kentucky Baptist Convention executive director-treasurer, knows the days of grief and recovery will be long but said, “We will pull together today and in the weeks ahead to serve our neighbors in the name of Jesus.”