

Maryland-Delaware Baptists ready to respond after Baltimore bridge collapses

Southern Baptist volunteers in Maryland and Delaware are ready to respond as needed after the Francis Scott Key Bridge suddenly collapsed into the Baltimore harbor following a “ship strike” early Tuesday morning (March 26). Search and rescue efforts continue for at least six people who fell into the harbor.

“Because of the search and rescue efforts, currently no response groups can access the area until this is completed,” said Coy Webb, crisis response director for Send Relief, the compassion ministry of the North American Mission Board and International Mission Board. “This event has caused major trauma across Baltimore and will cause major economic impact on the area.”

Maryland-Delaware Southern Baptist Disaster Relief reported Baptists in the area are partnering with the Salvation Army, and feeding teams and a mobile kitchen remain on standby if needed after search and rescue efforts are completed, said Webb, who shared he’d been in contact with Ellen Udovich, Maryland-Delaware SBDR director. Once completed, Southern Baptist volunteers can begin 24-hour shifts to feed workers, who will be clearing bridge debris from the harbor in order to re-open shipping lanes.

Maryland-Delaware SBDR plans to conduct a spiritual and emotional care workshop at a local church in the Baltimore area on Thursday (March 28) that will be led by a Disaster Relief chaplain trainer to equip church members in caring for their community. Details were not yet available Tuesday afternoon. According to The Baltimore Sun, Mount Olive Baptist

Church of Turner Station in Dundalk hosted a prayer service that evening.

The Baptist Convention of Maryland-Delaware has also contacted Southern Baptist churches in the area and has offered to resource them with coffee and snacks if they are able open their buildings as hospitality centers, where people can gather, have a place to pray and be able to talk to someone. The convention said Disaster Relief chaplains will be available as these centers open.

Request for prayer

Prayer has also been requested for the following needs:

- Families of the workers currently lost in the harbor waters.
- Search and rescue workers risking their lives in the search efforts.
- Workers, who will be cleaning up the bridge debris in the coming days.
- Baltimore community as they experience the trauma of this disaster in their community.
- For all the businesses, workplaces that will be impacted by this event and the families that rely on these jobs to support their families.
- Pray that Southern Baptist DR volunteers and local churches can offer the hope and healing of Christ to their communities.

Ways to help

For more information on how you can help, check with your church, association or state Baptist convention to find out how they are contributing to this and other ongoing relief efforts in neighboring states, your state and beyond.

EDITOR'S NOTE – This story was compiled by The Baptist Paper from a report shared by Coy Webb of Send Relief.