

North Greenwood Church makes sacrificial gift to relief effort

BOWLING GREEN, Ky. (BP and local reports) – North Greenwood Church, Greenwood, has sent \$50,000 to the disaster relief effort underway after as many as 41 tornadoes raked five states on Dec. 10-11, causing 75 fatalities at latest count.



Philips

“Even during this pandemic, our church family has continued to be overly faithful in their giving,” said senior pastor Jim Philips in a written statement to The Baptist Record.

“We look to finish the year above expected receipts for 2021. I suggested Wednesday night, at our final business meeting of the year, that we ought to earmark a portion of that for Kentucky Baptist Disaster Relief. I made mention that I had made a donation online myself and had linked it on my Facebook page.

“I challenged others to do the same. One of our deacons promptly declared, “I move we send \$50,000.” Before anything else was said, there was a second. I called for the ‘AMEN OF CONFIRMATION’ and the ceiling shook with approval.”

Meanwhile, Southern Baptist leaders toured the devastation Dec. 16 and prayed with pastors and residents as victims continue to pick through the rubble from the deadly super cell

that spanned the Midwest and South for more than 200 miles.

According to the National Weather Service, some of the tornadoes had estimated wind speeds of up to 190 mph as they cut a path across Arkansas, Illinois, Missouri, Kentucky, and Tennessee on Dec. 10 -11.

"It's shocking to see the devastation," said Bryant Wright, president of the SEND Relief ministry at Southern Baptists' North American Mission Board in Alpharetta, Ga. "I can't imagine what those folks experienced by going to bed one night and having the storms pounce on them."

Jamie Ward, co-lead pastor at Hillvue Heights Church in Bowling Green, Ky., escorted Wright; Ed Litton, Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) president and lead pastor of Redemption Church in Mobile, Ala.; and Sam Porter, SEND Relief national director of disaster relief, to an area in Bowling Green where two entire families were killed on one street and dozens were left homeless.

"We just appreciate SEND Relief, the Southern Baptist Convention, and the help you all are bringing," Ward said. "You all are certainly bringing physical help, but you're bringing spiritual help as well."

Litton said reaching physical needs opens the door to address spiritual needs. "The Gospel impact of relief is amazing, because satisfying an immediate need helps to open the heart. This is something we're proud of as Southern Baptists, in the right sense, and we should be."

Litton hopes Southern Baptists will be encouraged to continue to give and support those affected by the storms. "This is our life together as Southern Baptists at its best. Out here, everyone knows we need each other from the associational [and] state [convention] levels to the national level."

Kentucky Baptist Disaster Relief Director Ron Crow finds hope

in knowing that Southern Baptists will continue to respond as the recovery moves forward.

“We’re expecting the recovery process to be several months and the rebuild process to last several years. Our disaster relief teams will keep coming, and then the rebuild teams will begin coming. That is seeing the Cooperative Program lived out in real life.”

Todd Gray, Kentucky Baptist Convention executive director-treasurer, is overwhelmed by the support pouring in from churches like North Greenwood. “The ministry and compassion is just incredible. Right now in Kentucky, DR workers from all across the country are wanting to come in. They’re ready the minute they get the word, “Go.” All we can say is thank you.”

Hubert Yates, director of disaster relief at the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, said on the morning of Dec. 17 that Mississippi Baptist Disaster Relief teams continue to remain in a state of readiness if called upon to mobilize by on-scene Baptist leadership.

Litton noted how tragedies can show what’s truly important. “It reminds us that material things are easy to destroy but the basic necessities of life, which are emotional and spiritual, matter most. My hope is and dream is that people will look on Southern Baptists and say, ‘Oh, how they love one another and how they love others.’”

Wright said it’s the love of Christ that opens the door for the Gospel of Christ. “All of this is about us working together as brothers and sisters in Christ to share the love of Christ tangibly, but also to share the Gospel as opportunities arise.”

Tax-deductible financial gifts to meet disaster relief needs can be sent to the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board 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, [click here](#).

To contribute electronically to Kentucky Baptist Disaster Relief through a secure credit card site, [click here](#). Gifts are tax deductible.

SEND Relief has also set up a donation site for those wishing to make a monetary donation for relief. [Click here](#). Gifts are tax deductible.

For more information on Mississippi Baptist Disaster Relief, [click here](#).