

Texas church shooting victims receive offer from Southern Baptist Convention to cover funeral costs

The Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) has offered to pay for the funeral service costs of all the victims in Sunday's deadly church shooting in Texas, Fox News has learned.

Twenty-six people were killed and 20 others injured after the shooter, Devin Kelley, stormed into First Baptist Church in Sutherland Springs with a Ruger AR rifle and started firing at the congregation.

SBC president Steve Gaines, who heads the network of Christian churches, told Fox News that he was meeting with the church pastor, Frank Pomeroy, on Tuesday to offer up any needed resources.

TEXAS CHURCH SHOOTER DEVIN KELLEY ONCE ESCAPED FROM A PSYCHIATRIC HOSPITAL WHILE IN THE AIR FORCE

Pomeroy and his wife were out of town on the day of the shooting but their 14-year-old daughter, Annabelle, was one of the victims killed in the tragedy.

Also, one unknown member of the SBC has offered to completely rebuild the church following the attack.

The deadly rampage in Texas was the deadliest church shooting in modern U.S. history and the deadliest mass shooting in Texas history, according to Gov. Greg Abbott.

TEXAS CHURCH SHOOTING VICTIMS INCLUDE PASTOR'S DAUGHTER, YOUNG CHILDREN

Kelley was previously enlisted in the U.S. Air Force before being court-martialed in 2012 for assaulting his wife and child and ultimately discharged in 2014 for bad conduct, law enforcement officials have said.

However, his criminal history was never submitted to the FBI database like it was supposed to, which allowed Kelley to purchase guns.

Following the shooting, Kelley was confronted by a nearby resident who also had a gun and was shot at least twice. The man chased the suspect down the road in a truck before Kelley ultimately lost control and drove off the road. Authorities later found the shooter dead on the scene with a self-inflicted gunshot wound to the head.

Fox News' Matt Finn contributed to this report.\

Shooting

Nov 7 2017, 8:50 pm ET

Southern Baptists Offer to Pay for Texas Church Victims' Funerals

by Alex Johnson

The Southern Baptist Convention has offered to pay the funeral expenses for all 26 victims of the church shooting in Texas, the group said Tuesday.

First Baptist Church of Sutherland Springs, where a gunman killed 26 people during services Sunday, is a member of the Southern Baptist Convention, the world's largest Baptist denomination and the biggest non-Catholic Christian denomination in the United States.

Image: Mass Shooting At Texas Church

Mourners embrace during a candlelight vigil Monday in Sutherland Springs, Texas, for victims of Sunday's mass shooting at First Baptist Church. Mohammed Khurseed / Reuters

"It's a pretty somber place today," Scottie Stice, director of disaster relief for the Southern Baptists of Texas Convention, said in a post on the mission board's website. "We've got chaplains at the church responding to the needs of the community and the families impacted by the senseless slaughter."

The offer is part of a flood of assistance that flowed in since the shootings on Sunday.

Related: [Who Were the Victims of the Sutherland Springs Massacre?](#)

Wilson County District Attorney Audrey Louis said the Texas Crime Victims' Compensation Fund, part of the state attorney general's office, had approved distributing \$6,500 per victim to help with funeral costs.

"In addition to that, there is a company that has come forward that has agreed to donate all their caskets to all of the victims, and we are grateful for that person and their service to our community," Louis said, according to NBC affiliate KXAN of Austin.

The Sutherland Springs Community Association, meanwhile, said it had set up a victims fund through a local credit union.