

Massive 8-Alarm Fire Engulfs Church

Emergency crews responded to a church fire in Burlington, New Jersey, Monday night. The blaze was so intense it lasted until Tuesday morning.

The fire that consumed the Fountain of Life Center began just after 6 p.m. according to authorities.

More than 150 firefighters from both New Jersey and Pennsylvania arrived on scene to combat the rapidly spreading fire.

Originally classified as a 3-alarm, the fire grew rapidly into a 5-alarm, then the intensity of the flames was upgraded again into a 8-alarm blaze.

Thankfully, no injuries have been reported at this time.

"It's a devastating loss," Russell Hodgins, a senior pastor, told Philadelphia's KYW-TV.

"The church is not brick and mortar, the church is really the body of believers," Hodgins said. "God will help us through this, and I believe the church will be stronger than ever."

It took only a few short hours before the entire roof of the church collapsed.

"Even though this building could not be saved, they've done everything they can to save our school building, which is attached through a link to the church," Hodgins told WPVI.

Pastor Matthew Boudwin lamented the loss of the church as "incredibly tragic."

"This is my entire life and the community here really means

everything to me,” he said, as reported by WPVI.

The Fountain of Life Center is a staple in its community.

According to the church’s website, it provides to the neighborhood “a multi-purpose, 120,000-square-foot facility with a preschool, basketball courts and a fitness center.”

While no charges have been filed, the cause of the fire is currently under investigation. {eoa}

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