

# EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

## CHURCH USHERS

### MEDICAL EMERGENCY/FIRST AID

In most cases, when dealing with a medical emergency, it's best to call 911. Meanwhile, have the person lay, down, head back with airway open, checking carotid and radial pulses. Also check for any medical alert tag that the person may be wearing (necklace, anklet, bracelet, etc.)

- Allergic reactions to medications
- Seizures
- Fainting (pregnant women, diabetics, others)

In the case of cardiac failure or congestive heart disease, call 911 and make the person comfortable – in most cases not laying down.

For anaphalactic reactions (food allergies, bee stings, asthma, etc.) sit the person down in a place where you can observe him or her. Call 911 if respiratory condition warrants. For children, notify parents that you will call 911 if they feel the child is having difficulty breathing

External Fluids – blood, urine, vomit, etc. Do not come in contact with the fluid without wearing rubber gloves (first aid kit).

- Bleeding
- Vomit

Good Samaritan Law in Minnesota – what's my liability?

### FIRES

Fires in the Church will require evacuation of the church, exiting away from the fire, and the restraint of parents wanting to go to the nursery. If the service is in session at the time of a fire, **the priest leading the service** should indicate that evacuation is required (using his microphone). Evacuation will require strong direction with calmness and authority. A fire is most likely to start in the sanctuary, where candles are lit. If this should happen, all ushers shall stand by west, east and north exits upstairs. People should exit via their nearest exit. Please clear people away from the building and onto sidewalks (until an "all clear" can be called).

Call 911 and notify fire department of emergency. One usher should be by the outside street entrance to show fire squad.

Fire extinguishers are located in the sacristy and in the main vestibule of the church. They are to be used for minor fires only.

### TORNADOES

Tornadoes are usually seasonal and may give us warning. If a tornado siren is heard, please move parishioners and staff in attendance to the basement of the church, seating away from windows. Direction by ushers should be calm, but firm.

## **EMERGENCY BUILDING EVACUATION**

In case of an emergency (not fire-related) when the church building must be evacuated quickly, please post an usher at each aisle exit and direct people outside in an orderly, calm manner.

## **ASSAULT/FIGHT**

First, insure the safety of staff and parishioners. Call 911, if necessary. Defuse situation if possible. Attempt to control the scene and demand that the combatant(s) stop. Clear onlookers. Administer first aid, (plastic gloves are required when blood is observed). Document all activities and notify police if a weapon is used, victim has physical injury causing substantial pain or impairment of physical condition or assault involving sexual contact (Intentional touching of anus, breast, buttocks, or genitalia of another person in a sexual manner without consent. This includes touching of those areas covered by clothing.)

## **SHOOTING**

If you are outside, go inside the building as soon as possible, assisting others in entering the church building. If you cannot get inside, make yourself as compact as possible, put something between yourself and the shooter. Do not gather in groups. If shooting occurs inside the church, direct parishioners to get down, crouching under pews, without talking and remain there until the priest gives an “all-clear”. Assist all parishioners and staff in evacuating from immediate area, as needed, to a safe area.

Call 911 and give as much detail as possible

Ushers should assess the situation as to the shooter’s location, any injuries, and potential for additional shooting. Care for any injured carefully until paramedics arrive.

Ushers refer all media to the pastor or administrator. The pastor and/or administrator will prepare information for release to media.

## **WEAPONS**

Any usher who is aware of a weapon brought into church should:

1. Immediately notify the pastor/priest presider, informing him of the name of the suspected person who brought the weapon, where it’s located, whether suspect has threatened anyone, and give any other details that may prevent the suspect from hurting someone or themselves
2. Call 911 if a weapon is reasonably suspected

## **“INTRUDER”/HOSTAGE**

Ask someone to accompany you when approaching an “intruder” (a person who doesn’t look like he/she belongs here). Politely greet the person and identify yourself. Ask, “Can I help you?” and ask him/her the purpose of his/her visit to the Church. If the person’s purpose is not legitimate, ask the person to leave. Accompany him/her to the exit. When in doubt, have someone call 911.

If the person refuses to leave: Warn the person of the consequences for staying on the church property. Inform the person that you will call the police. If the person still refuses to leave, call 911, giving full description of the person. Walk away from the person if there is an indication of violence. Be aware of the person’s actions (where the person is located in building, if he/she is carrying a weapon, package, or other suspicious object).

If you are a witness to a hostage situation: Don’t intervene if hostage taker is unaware of your presence. Call 911 immediately, give details of situation, and ask for assistance from a hostage negotiation team. Seal off area near the hostage scene. Notify the pastor, priest/presider, who may wish to evacuate the rest of the building, if possible. Give control of scene to police.

If you are taken hostage: Follow instructions of hostage taker. Try not to panic. Treat the person as normally as possible. Be respectful to the person. Ask permission to speak and do not argue or make suggestions

## **DEMONSTRATION OR DISTURBANCE**

Notify police, if necessary. Ensure the safety of all church members. Contain the unrest, sealing off area of disturbance. Warn pastor, priest/presider and staff and initiate any lock-up procedures if deemed necessary. Move people involved in disturbance to an isolated area. Keep people calm. Do not allow church members outside the church building until an all-clear signal is received.

## **TERRORISM, CHEMICAL OR BIOLOGICAL THREAT**

Notify the pastor, priest/presider or administrator. Call 911. Evacuate the building, if necessary, (do not mention “terrorism” or “chemical or biological agent”). If necessary, evacuate people to the school auditorium. Keep involved people calm until public safety officials arrive. Ask people to minimize contact with surroundings designated as crime scene. Ask public safety officials about whether involved persons should change clothes and other decontamination concerns. When approved and emergency is over, notify everyone and normal operations can resume.