



# Messiah Lutheran Church

## Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

### Emergency Response Plan

#### **Purpose**

This purpose of this plan is to provide a basic framework for how staff, volunteers and other members of the congregation should respond in four types of emergencies: a weather emergency, a medical emergency, an intruder/ active shooter emergency and a fire emergency.

#### **Weather Emergency**

The goal in a weather emergency is to make sure no one is at church to begin with. If a primary Sunday worship service needs to be canceled due to snow, icing or other weather emergency, the Pastor and the President will make the call on Saturday night by 8:00pm. If worship is canceled, the Pastor will then be responsible for sending out an email to the congregation, posting on Facebook and alerting the School Closings Network (<http://www.schoolclosingsnetwork.com>). The President will maintain and call a list of members who do not have access to email.

Leaders of other events and meetings are responsible for alerting participants about a cancellation.

If a weather emergency takes place while individuals are on church premises, the Sanctuary is the primary shelter space. The Pastor and/or event leader is responsible for contacting emergency responders and parents of any children as appropriate. The Pastor and/or event leader should pay particular attention to keeping everyone calm and assisting people who are differently abled in getting to a safe location and/or evacuating if necessary.

#### **Medical Emergency**

In the event of a major medical emergency during worship, the Care & Concern Committee Chair, or another trained member of the Care and Concern Committee, is responsible for coordinating care. Ushers are responsible for calling 911 from the office phone as soon as an emergency is identified, although this doesn't preclude others from calling 911 as well. The Pastor and the Parish Musician/ Cantor & Choir are responsible for maintaining calm, continuing the service if appropriate and urging individuals to stay in place unless otherwise asked by the Care & Concern Committee Chair.

The Care & Concern Committee Chair or other trained member will first check to make sure 911 has been called and will make a decision about whether the patient can be moved to the narthex. In any case, the patient will be comfortably laid on a flat surface. If necessary, an AED is available in the Narthex above the food donation boxes and a primary first aid kit is in the Parish Administrator Office below the mailboxes. An additional first aid kit is located by the Usher's Desk under the stairs to the choir loft. The Care & Concern Committee Chair or other trained member will be responsible for coordinating care, whether it be using the AED,

administering CPR or providing other forms of first aid. Any notes about a congregation member's health may be kept in the locked AED box.

In the event of a major medical emergency during other times on church premises, the Pastor and/or event leader will be responsible coordinating a similar plan as described above.

### **Intruder/ Active Shooter Emergency**

When a hostile person(s) is actively causing deadly harm or the imminent threat of deadly harm or is barricaded within church premises, the following procedures should be followed:

- Everyone should lock themselves in the room you are in at the time of the threatening activity.
- If communication is available, call 911.
- Do not stay in open areas.
- Lock the window and close blinds or curtains.
- Stay away from windows.
- Turn all lights and audio equipment off.
- Try to stay calm and be as quiet as possible.
- The Pastor and/or event leader is responsible for helping children carry out this procedure.

If individuals are caught in an open area, such as a hallway or the sanctuary area, they are responsible for deciding what action to take.

1. You can try to hide, but make sure it is a well-hidden space or you may be found as the intruder moves through the building looking for victims.
2. If you think you can safely make it out of the building by running, then do so. If you decide to run, do not run in a straight line. Keep any objects you can between you and the hostile person(s) while in the building. Use trees, vehicles, or any other object to block you from view as you run. When away from the immediate area of danger, summon help any way you can and warn others.
3. If the person(s) is causing death or serious physical injury to others and you are unable to run or hide, you may choose to play dead if there are other victims around you.
4. The last option you have, if caught in an open area, may be to fight back. This is dangerous, but depending on your situation, this could be an option.
5. If you are caught by the intruder and are not going to fight back, follow their directions and don't look the intruder in the eyes.
6. Once law enforcement arrives, obey all commands. This may involve your being handcuffed or made to put your hands in the air. This is done for safety reasons, and once circumstances are evaluated by law enforcement, they will give you further directions to follow.

### **Fire Emergency**

If anyone detects fire, smoke or a significant gas smell on church premises, that person is responsible for alerting the Pastor and/or event leader, the Property Chair and for calling 911 if deemed appropriate.

Fire extinguishers are located in the Sanctuary by the piano door, in the stairwell to the Fellowship Hall, in the Large Sunday School Room and in the Kitchen. If you know how to use

a fire extinguisher and feel the best course of action is to attempt to extinguish the fire, locate an extinguisher and, without risking injury attempt to extinguish the fire. If the fire is beyond the point of a safe attempt to extinguish it, isolate the fire by closing doors in the area before evacuating.

The Pastor and/or event leader is tasked with making sure everyone safely evacuates the building calmly while quickly walking, not running, with special attention given to children and people who are differently abled. Ground level exits include the main entrance, the Sanctuary door by the piano, the Large Sunday School Room exit and the Furnace Room. Once evacuated, everyone should assemble on Oak Street as close to Floral Avenue as possible. No one is to reenter the building until an "all clear" is issued by the Fire Department.

Evacuation maps are located by the Usher's Desk, in the Narthex, in the Fellowship Hall and in the Youth Wing.