

**WHAT IF?
EMERGENCY RESPONSE PROCEDURES**

What if there is a fire? What if there is a gas leak in this church or in the neighborhood? What if there is an occurrence of extreme weather, like a hurricane? What if there is a clearly dangerous intruder? Prevention and strategies are key. For all but a dangerous intruder, evacuation is the procedure. For a dangerous intruder, either evacuation or a lockdown is required. What follows is a guide to both.

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|---|----------|
| WHAT IF I: Fire/gas leak in neighborhood | 1 |
| EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURES | 1 |
| FIRE DRILL PROCEDURES | 2 |
| SEVERE WEATHER EVACUATION DRILL PROCEDURES | 4 |
| WHAT IF II: Dangerous intruder | 5 |
| STRATEGIES AND PROCEDURES | 5 |
| LOCKDOWN | 6 |

**WHAT IF I: Fire/gas leak in neighborhood
EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURES**

We understand that parents will want to be with their children to give comfort and aid. We request, however, that parents WAIT until the DRE has an “all accounted” report before reuniting with their children.

What if there is fire or a gas leak in the neighborhood that dictates an exit from the building?

MEETING PLACES OUTSIDE:

- 1) **PARKING LOT JUST BEHIND THE SHED** for RE children and teachers and people exiting south door
- 2) **FAR SIDE OF SPIRAL GARDEN** for people exiting north door

RE Floor:

All children must leave with their teachers.
Primary exit: Rear door off Prep room

Exit ONLY if fire begins in Prep room: upstairs and through door just east of south door

Sequence of evacuation:

- 1) Prep class (youngest)
- 2) Primary class
- 3) Secondary class

Main Floor:

Legal exits: south door and north door (see Certificate of Occupation)

From Sanctuary:

SOUTH DOOR:

- For folks with accessibility challenges, **sit on south side of Sanctuary on outside of aisle. HAVE USHERS ensure that a person who is ready and capable of escorting them out sit next to them.**
- For all other folks sitting on south side of sanctuary

NORTH DOOR:

- For folks sitting on north side of sanctuary

From Kitchen:

NORTH DOOR

From Front Room:

NORTH DOOR

From foyer:

Closest door (currently either NORTH or SOUTH DOOR)

From Nursery & Copy Room:

Child care and Usher must be prepared to bring all children out SOUTH DOOR

2nd Floor:

From all upstairs rooms:

Downstairs through whichever door is closest

NOTE: Last person out the door should be the minister. In minister's absence, it should be the ushers.

For final sweep:

RE floor:

DRE or DRE stand-in for that day

Main Floor & 2nd floor:

Minister and worship assistant. If minister isn't here, worship assistant and newcomer greeter

FIRE DRILL PROCEDURES:

Fire drills will occur twice a year for RE classes and once a year for the whole congregation.

Fire Drill for Religious Education Classes ONLY.

DRE will post identified exit route on 1st floor bulletin board and doors of every classroom.

The DRE will set dates – once in the spring, once in the fall.

The DRE will notify teachers a week prior to the actual drills.

Soon after students have been dismissed from service, the DRE will blow a whistle or otherwise notify teachers of the beginning of the drill.

RE Teachers will be asked to quickly gather their attendance clipboards and their walkie-talkies guide their students out of the building using the identified route.

RE Teachers will move their classes to the parking lot **just behind the shed on the parking pad** and immediately take attendance to make sure all students are accounted for.

RE Teachers will notify the DRE of missing students or give an “all present” report to DRE. If a child is missing, the DRE will ask for assistance from other adults not directly overseeing students to locate the missing students.

When the DRE has all students accounted for, she will record the time.

Only when DRE is assured that the building is safe, she will give an “all clear” report via walkie-talkies to teachers to return to their classrooms.

RE Teachers will return children to the classrooms and resume teaching.

NOTE: This fire drill does not require the activation of the building alarm system (so it doesn't disturb the service for adults). Therefore, there is no need to notify the alarm company, and it can be scheduled and held at the DRE's discretion.

Annual Fire Drill for Whole Congregation

The Property Committee will schedule with the Minister, **the DRE** and the Worship Committee an annual fire drill for the whole congregation.

A representative of the Property Committee (aka drill coordinator, not necessarily a member of the Property Committee) will contact the Alarm Company (xxx and phone) and, at their discretion, the Meriden Fire Department.

Soon after youngsters have been dismissed to RE, the designated drill coordinator will call the alarm company to remind them of the drill, then activate the alarm.

RE teachers will quickly gather their attendance clipboards and lead their students out of the building using the identified route posted on the 1st floor bulletin board and their classroom doors.

The Minister or Worship Assistant (in minister's absence) will announce a calm and orderly evacuation of the sanctuary, instructing adults to move to the area in the parking lot just behind the shed. The Minister or Worship Assistant will extinguish the chalice before exiting.

RE Teachers will follow designated evacuation procedures and move their classes to the parking lot just behind the shed and immediately take attendance. RE Teachers will notify the DRE or designated drill coordinator of missing students or give an "all present" report. If any youngsters are missing, the DRE or designated drill coordinator will go back in to secure this child.

The designated Fire Drill Coordinator will walk the building making sure all life forms have evacuated and noting any changes that need to be made to improve the drill.

When the DRE has reports from all classes, she will notify the Fire Drill Coordinator.

When the Fire drill Coordinator has made sure everyone is evacuated and all students are accounted for, s/he will notify the DRE to oversee students and teachers returning to their classroom.

The Minister or Worship Assistant will send adults back to the sanctuary once they see the RE students returning.

RE classes and worship service will resume.

SEVERE WEATHER EVACUATION DRILL PROCEDURES:

Board Policies require that we hold drills for severe weather. We recommend that such drills be held annually and apply only to RE students, with written instructions made available to the Worship Committee should such an event arise during a service.

For the Severe Weather Drill:

The DRE will organize a date in the spring for the drill.

The DRE will notify teachers a week prior to the actual drill.

Soon after students have been dismissed from service, the DRE will blow a whistle or otherwise notify teachers of the beginning of the drill.

RE Teachers will be asked to quickly gather their emergency clipboards (with attendance sheet) and **walkie-talkies** and shepherd their students into the nearest hallway to sit against the wall.

RE Teachers will do their best to keep students quiet and calm against the wall while attendance is taken.

RE Teachers will notify the DRE of missing students or give an “all present” report.

If a child is missing, the DRE will ask for assistance from other adults not directly overseeing students to locate the missing students.

When the DRE has reports from all classes, she will record the time and then give an “all clear” report to teachers to return to their classrooms.

RE Teachers will return to the classrooms and resume teaching their lessons.

WHAT IF II: Dangerous intruder STRATEGIES AND PROCEDURES

Congregants should remain in place, dropping down in front of their chair or covering themselves with their chairs, and being silent.

As this type of emergency can take many forms, please listen for instructions from any of the following: the minister, the worship assistant, the DRE, and/or the ushers.

Prepare Minister and DRE, Teachers and Ushers in same procedures (includes phoning 911).

EVACUATION:

RE Floor:

Options: ***

Evacuation from building (same procedures as above)

Lockdown (see below)

For evacuation, teachers will take their classes to the area behind the shed and proceed around the farthest border of the parking lot and then down Paddock Avenue toward St. John’s Lutheran Church.

Main Floor:**From Sanctuary and Nursery:**

Parents escort children out FIRST, using exits farthest from intruder.

For all adults, same procedures apply as for fire or gas leak.

From other sites on Main Floor:

Same procedures apply as for fire or gas leak.

2nd Floor:**Options:**

Evacuation from building (same procedures as above)

Lockdown (see below)

For evacuation, same procedures apply as for fire and gas leak.

LOCKDOWN:

The purpose of a lockdown is to be as safe as possible by not being seen, heard, or accessible. Lockdowns maximize the safety of our youngest and most vulnerable congregants in case of a clearly dangerous intruder.

Lockdown drills will be held annually. Before any drills, it will become standard practice for all teachers to confirm BEFORE class begins that their classroom door is locked from the outside. The drill procedure is:

- The DRE will schedule a date for the drill and notify teachers a week prior to the drill.
- Soon after students have been dismissed from the worship service, the DRE will blow a whistle or otherwise notify teachers that the drill is beginning.
- The Lead Teacher will close the curtains and pull the shades. The Assistant Teacher will quickly gather her/his emergency clipboards (with attendance sheet) and walkie-talkie and firmly and calmly gather children in the designated space in their classroom.
- Teachers in Front Room will immediately escort class into Nursery.
- Teachers in the Prep Room will immediately escort children to the Yellow Room.
- Lead Teachers will notify the DRE via their walkie-talkies of missing students or give an “all present” report.
- If a child is missing, the DRE will ask the designated adult (likely an usher trained to do this) to locate the missing youngster(s).
- If a youngster is in the bathroom, that youth will be reported as missing; but the designated usher will try to communicate to that youth to lock the door and stay put.
- For any classes that are outside the building, when the Lead Teacher hears the alarm, s/he will take the class to the area behind the shed and proceed around the farthest

border of the parking lot and then down Paddock Avenue toward St. John's Lutheran Church.

- When the DRE has received reports from all classes, she will record the time and then give an "all clear" report to teachers.

NOTE: Teachers should be notified that in the case of a real emergency, the only people authorized to release them from lockdown are the Minister, DRE, Usher, or a police officer. A list of authorized people will be posted on the emergency clipboard. Teachers must not open their doors for anyone else.

EMERGENCY RESPONSE TASK FORCE

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