

Hope United Church of Christ
Safety Committee *Emergency Action Plan* Summary
Adult Forum – April 28, 2024

Presenters: Steve Graf, Gretchen O’Connell, and Patsy Vollrath

Presentation Goal: To share an overview of the *Emergency Action Plan* and Safety Committee (SC) background.

How the Safety Committee Began: In spring of 2018, while Rev. Richard Feyen was preaching, he noticed a strange man in a black trench coat enter the church and sit in the back of the sanctuary. Around this time, there had been many mass shootings occurring in our country plus there was an incident at Prince of Peace Church where someone had walked up the center aisle and started speaking strangely. All of these events prompted Richard to inquire about starting a Safety Ministry which was formed in May, 2018. Original members included: Steve Graf, Paul Klapatch, Shirley Senarighi, and Jock Wilcox. Their goal was to provide as safe an environment as reasonably possible for the members, staff, and visitors of Hope Church.

Highlight of Safety Committee Accomplishments to Date:

- Created Safety Plan (6-29-21) (updated 6 times)
- Emergency Quick Guide (See below)
- Monitor at the Front Door
- Floor Plans, Numbers on Doors, Cabinet Safety Locks
- Wrote and Received FEMA Grant for Security System & Surveillance Cameras (2021)
- Charged by Council to Manage Hope’s Response to the Pandemic
- Maintenance of First Aid Kits & AED
- First Aid/CPR/AED Training (2 times)
- Armed Intruder Training (2 times)
- Fire Extinguisher Training (1 time)

- Created SafeConduct™ Policy (10-26-21) (updated 13 times)

Emergency Action Plan (See full DRAFT below)

Origin and Progress:

November 2022: After doing research, a member of the SC brought the idea of locking the doors during church service and coffee hour to the table. This was prompted by the continued mass shootings in our country plus the fact that churches are considered a Soft Target (see definition below). The committee went on to do further research/discussion and sent 3 articles to council members for their review.

February 2023: This idea was shared with Council and the committee was directed to gather more information.

April of 2023: Committee hosted the second Armed Intruder Training facilitated by Asst. Police Chief, Dan Brinkman.

May of 2023: In order to learn more about other Wisconsin UCC churches who lock their doors, committee was referred by Rev. Jane Anderson (UCC Conference Assc. Minister) to Rev. Janis Doleschal (see bio below). Rev. Doleschal shared a copy of her *Instructions for Formulating a Church Emergency Action Plan* along with offering assistance if needed.

June 2023: A lengthy discussion took place at Council regarding the pros and cons of locking church doors. In the end, Council voted against locking the doors and charged the SC to create an Emergency Action Plan (EAP) to be practiced by the congregation.

June 2023: SC completed the EAP Risk Assessment which included 8 questions pertaining to specific parts of a safety plan. It stated, "If you answer 'no' to one or more questions, your church is in need of an *Emergency Action Plan!* We had 8 no's!

June 2023 to April 2024: Committee worked diligently to make Rev. Doleschal's EAP Hope's own, keeping Council privy to progress made. With the EAP almost complete, SC researched other means of "slowing down" an armed intruder as a part of the Active Shooter Procedure. All methods were

ruled out due to being too dangerous and not covered by insurance. It was then decided to revisit the idea of locking doors with Council.

April 2024: After a lengthy discussion, Council approved a 2-month trial period for locking the doors during church service and coffee hour. To date, this plan has been implemented three times.

A Soft Target describes a person or location that is unprotected or vulnerable, especially to terrorist attacks. **Why do churches fall into this category?**

- Service times are publicly posted and easy to find.
- Churches stand for a religious truth many find narrow-minded or offensive. (Hope Church in particular because we are a Progressive Christian Church.)
- Many churches in the US are gun-free zones.
- Churches are open to the public with open access.
- Most churches do not have a Safety Ministry.

Rev. Janis K. Doleschal is a Risk Management Expert. Prior to becoming a minister, she was the Commissioner for Sports & Athletics for the Milwaukee Public Schools (MPS) for 28 years. Part of her position with MPS was to ensure schools in Milwaukee were safe during large athletic events. Upon her retirement in 2002 she went on to become a minister and has been teaching emergency preparedness courses for area churches. She has also lectured at laws schools and other places all over the world including in Johannesburg, South Africa after the crowd crush disaster at the Ellis Park Stadium in 2001 that claimed the lives of 43 people. She is currently serving as minister at St. John's UCC in Germantown, WI.

Hope United Church of Christ
EMERGENCY ACTION PLAN DRAFT
Updated: March 21, 2024
Not yet approved by Council

PART 1: INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE

The purpose of an Emergency Action Plan (EAP) is to have as safe a church as possible for all members and visitors and, if an emergency should occur, to be prepared to respond appropriately.

INTENDED USE

This EAP is intended for use in the event of any emergency occurring during the use of the Church building. Emergencies could include anything from burst pipes or a fire, to an active shooter situation, necessitating the building be evacuated. Various emergency scenarios and the necessary action steps will be explained. **Please note, it is recommended disabled or mobility-challenged individuals should sit near a designated handicapped exit.**

It is vitally important the congregation is familiar with the procedures in the EAP and the procedures are practiced on a regular basis (at least twice a year).

It is not the intent the presentation and practice of an EAP should alarm anyone. The intent is to prepare individuals to evacuate quickly if an emergency arises. Questions regarding these procedures should be addressed to the Safety Committee.

PART 2: FIRE EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Leave all belongings. Head for the nearest exit. (See below). If smoke is thick, drop to the floor and crawl to the nearest exit. If you come upon a closed door, feel the door first. If it is hot, **DO NOT OPEN**. Seek an alternate exit.

Remain calm and move as quickly and safely possible. Individuals in the back of the sanctuary should exit through the two north doors. Individuals on the left of the pulpit should exit through the Outdoor Worship door while those on the right should exit through the church front door. Individuals in the Fellowship Hall should leave through the Fellowship Hall exit door.

PART 3: TORNADO PROCEDURES

Leave all belongings. When the community tornado alert sounds or we are advised via media that a tornado warning has been issued for our neighborhood, the Deacons will immediately ask everyone to move through the internal courtyard to the basement.

If a tornado is going through the area, we will wait until it has passed, until the community sounds an OK, or we are apprised via media access that the danger has passed. If anyone is injured, call 911.

PART 4: MEDICAL EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

4A: PREPARING FOR A MEDICAL EMERGENCY

As many people as possible will be requested to take a First Aid/CPR/AED Course. At least one trained individual shall be on duty during each worship service and designated as the Primary Responder. The Primary Responder is in charge of any necessary first aid and will ask another trained responder to assist prior to the church service. A schedule of Primary Responders for all services shall be drawn up, posted, and emailed.

The Primary Responder will notify the Safety Committee of any supplies needing replacement. The Safety Committee will be responsible for purchasing supplies, restocking the first aid kit, and ensuring the AED is always in working condition.

All individuals/groups contracting to use any Church facilities will be given a copy of the Emergency Action Plan. The contracting group shall designate who will call 911 in case of an emergency. The designee will be listed on the Building Use Agreement form.

4B: MEDICAL EMERGENCY

The Primary Responder will stand and announce we have a medical emergency. The Pastor will suspend the worship service until the emergency has been treated or until the individual has been moved to the Fellowship Hall.

The Primary Responder will immediately assess the situation, begin administering first aid, and determine if 911 should be called. If possible, the injured or ill individual should not be moved, and first aid should be administered on the spot. If the individual feels s/he can move to the Narthex or Fellowship Hall, the Primary Responder and a Secondary Responder will assist in moving the individual.

The Secondary Responder will assist the Primary Responder by:

- Transporting the AED to the Primary Responder, if needed.
- Designate someone to:
 - call 911, if needed.
 - meet the EMT at the door.
 - move individuals back to give the Primary Responder space to work.
- Moving the ill/injured individual to the Narthex or Fellowship Hall.

The Primary Responder will be responsible for completing and submitting the Incident Report.

PART 5: ATTEMPTED ROBBERY OF OFFERING

If the individual is armed, give the person the money. Be as alert as possible and immediately following the robbery, write down your recollection of the physical characteristics of the individual, what was said, any distinguishing marks, height, weight, clothing, direction of egress, whether via vehicle or on foot, license number and description of vehicle if individual leaves via vehicle. If the individual is not armed, respond as you see fit, but do not put yourself in unnecessary danger.

Immediately after the robbery, call 911.

PART 6: SUSPICIOUS BEHAVIOR & ACTIVE SHOOTER PROCEDURES

If it appears we will be subject to an active shooter scenario, this plan is intended to give the people in the building as much advance warning as possible. In this scenario, it is important to clear the building as quickly as possible. However, in any emergency the possibility of panic or people freezing is present. In an emergency situation, 80% of the people panic, freeze, or deny the reality of the situation and do nothing to save themselves, 10% of the people get hysterical, and 10% of the people take charge. Therefore, it is imperative that we practice clearing the building as quickly as possible. This can easily be done with ongoing safety drills. Once people get used to leaving their belongings and exiting as quickly as possible, no matter what the situation, they will become accustomed to the emergency procedures.

6A: THE BASICS IN AN ACTIVE SHOOTER SITUATION

1. **CALL 911.**
2. **AVOID** – Leave the building by the nearest way possible, including breaking a window. **DO NOT** re-enter.

3. **DENY** – If leaving is not possible, **DENY** entry to the room you are in by locking the door and barricading it with heavy objects. Turn cell phone ringer off. **DO NOT** stand at the opposite end of the room.
4. **DEFEND** – If entry into the room by the shooter is imminent, defend yourself like your life depends on it by arming yourself with an object. There is strength in numbers; when possible multiple persons should attack as the shooter enters the room. Target vulnerable areas of human body. **DO NOT FIGHT FAIR!!**
5. Follow commands of law enforcement.

6B: PRIOR TO THE SERVICE

Prior to the service the deacon of the day will check to make sure all doors are locked except the main entrance. This includes the following doors: patio in entry way, kitchen, literacy, outside worship, nursery patio, youth room patio, two doors back of sanctuary, library, and two patio doors in narthex.

6C: BEGINNING OF SERVICE

The following safety precautions will be taken during services to aid in preventing any unwelcome intruders from accessing the building easily.

- Once the service has begun, one deacon will close the Sanctuary doors which shall remain closed during the entire service.
- One volunteer will remain stationed in the narthex for the entire service to welcome late arrivals and watch for suspicious behavior.

6D: SUSPICIOUS BEHAVIOR

If at any time, behavior of an individual attending a service, or who has gained access to the service appears to be suspicious, follow these procedures:

- Anyone whose behavior appears to be suspicious should be approached immediately by the narthex volunteer;
- Be calm, tell them you are glad they are here and welcome them to Hope;
- Ask the individual if you can assist them in any way;
- If the behavior appears to continue and the situation escalates, walk away and immediately call 911.

6E: AN ACTIVE THREAT

If an attacker gains access to the building the volunteer in the narthex will sound a **boat air horn toward the sanctuary**. This will alert everyone **with a cell phone** to call 911. Be prepared to give as much information as possible. All persons should leave their belongings behind, move as quickly as possible to the nearest exit away from the shooter, and go to the gathering place. **DO NOT STOP TO ASSIST INJURED INDIVIDUALS**. Help others escape if possible. If you stay to help someone you could become a victim or hinder others from evacuating.

DO NOT return to the church parking lot until the authorities indicate it is safe to do so.

Sunday School teachers should assist the children to exit via the Literacy door and go **to the gathering point**.

Anyone still in the building when law enforcement officers arrive must immediately hold their hands above their head with fingers spread and remain calm. Follow all directions. **Do NOT** ask for help. **Do NOT** ask questions. Simply follow directions. The role of law enforcement is to neutralize the threat first. Emergency aid will be provided as soon as possible. If for some reason you are unable to exit the church and need to hide, turn the cell phone ringer off. This is vital as cell phones can go off and disclose where individuals are hiding. If possible, evacuate **EVERYONE** from the building.

6F: GATHERING POINT

A gathering point is designated for individuals to use once they have exited the building. This gives law enforcement personnel the time and space to do what they need to do to secure the building and gives individuals at the gathering point to account for everyone and to determine exactly who is left in the building or may have hidden in an undesignated location.

Arrangements have been made for Hope Church's gathering point at the United Methodist Church on the corner of 9th & Michigan. If loved ones have been injured and remain in the building, **under no circumstances** should anyone return to the building until it has been cleared by law enforcement. Emergency medical personnel will be dispatched once law enforcement personnel determine the exact needs.

6G: BEHAVIOR AT THE GATHERING POINT

Remain calm. Once the situation has been neutralized by law enforcement officers, they will tell us when it is safe and to be available for interviews from **ONLY** law enforcement. Only the Pastor and Moderator are authorized to speak to news media. At **NO TIME RETURN** to the Church until we are advised by law enforcement that it is safe to do so.

PART 7: AFTER ACTION PROCEDURES

7A: DEALING WITH THE MEDIA

If the issue necessitated that law enforcement respond, the law enforcement responders will be the main contact with the media. Media personnel may attempt to speak with you as soon as possible after the event. If cleared with law enforcement, the Pastor or the Moderator will act as the main contacts for the media.

7B: AFTER ACTION DEBRIEFING

Following any emergency action that has been taken, there will be a de-briefing conducted by the Safety Committee as soon as possible to review the incident and determine if all necessary actions were taken as indicated. Revisions to the EAP will be made as necessary.

Follow-up counseling will be made available to anyone who feels there is a need. The Pastor, Moderator, and/or Safety Committee Chair will make the necessary contacts.

PART 8: MISCELLANEOUS

8A: LOG BOOK

A Log Book will be kept in the Office. The Log Book will be used to record the following items:

- Maintenance of the AED
- Maintenance of first aid supplies
- Emergencies (need to look at Incident Report to be sure all of the following apply:
 - Incident Report
 - Nature of the emergency
 - Name of the First Responder
 - Action taken (First Aid given, 911 called, etc.)

8B: MAINTENANCE OF AED

The AED shall be checked monthly by a member of the Safety Committee to ensure it is in working order and recorded on the attached AED check card. If not, necessary repairs or replacement should be undertaken as soon as possible.

8C: MAINTENANCE OF FIRST AID SUPPLIES

The first aid kits in the kitchen, nursery, and across from the office shall be checked quarterly by the Safety Committee. The Safety Committee will purchase any necessary supplies as soon as possible and restock the first aid kit.

Resources:

Instructions for Formulating a Church Emergency Action Plan, Rev. Janis K. Doleschal, Pastor, Trinity UCC – Brookfield, WI, June 2015

Hope UCC Safety Plan, June 28, 2023

Defending the Flock: A Security Guide for Church Safety Directors by Kris Moloney, 2017

In the words of a Wauwatosa Police Capt. Brian Zalewski, an *Active-Shooter Response Instructor* and one of the first responders on the scene at the 2012 Azana Spa shooting in Brookfield, WI where four people were killed:

"This is real life. We hope it never happens, but hope is not a good plan."

APPENDIX 4 – BASIC EMERGENCY PROCEDURES (2023-2024)

EMERGENCY PHONE NUMBERS

Fire 911 920-746-2916 (non-emergency)
Police 911 920-746-2450 (non-emergency)
Ambulance 911 920-743-5461 (non-emergency)
Poison Control Center 1-800-222-1222
Door County Health Dept. 920-746-2234
Door County Human Services 920-746-2345

HOPE UCC EMERGENCY CONTACTS

Ann Quale, Moderator 920-256-0006
Sandy Brown, Member-at-Large 920-495-8662
Dave Tauber, Co-Chair Trustees 920-421-1160
Eric Vollrath, Co-Chair Trustees 920-868-6537

FIRE

- *Use fire extinguisher only without risking injury.
- ***GET OUT** - Assist persons with disabilities, move 75 feet away from facility.
- ***STAY OUT.**
- ***CALL 911.**

TORNADO WARNING

- *Turn off stove and oven.
- *Report to safe rooms highlighted in yellow on posted floor plans; assist persons with disabilities.
- *Kneel head to knees; cover head with hands.
- *Remain quiet for “all clear” announcement.

EMERGENCY QUICK GUIDE Hope UCC

INTRUDER SUSPECT

- *Introduce yourself, ask who the person is and purpose of visit.
- *Allow personal space; stand off to the side.
- *Be aware of body language – nervous, lack of eye contact, sweating.
- *If uncooperative and disruptive, **call 911.**

ARMED INTRUDER

- ***Call 911.**
- ***AVOID** – Leave the building by the nearest way possible, including breaking a window. **DO NOT** re-enter.
- ***DENY** – If leaving is not possible, **DENY** entry to the room you are in by locking the door and barricading it with heavy objects. **DO NOT** stand at the opposite end of the room.
- ***DEFEND** – If entry into the room by the shooter is imminent, defend yourself like your life depends on it by arming yourself with an object. There is strength in numbers; when possible multiple persons should attack as the shooter enters the room. Target vulnerable areas of human body. **DO NOT FIGHT FAIR!!**
- *Follow commands of law enforcement.

BOMB THREAT

- *Remain calm, courteous and listen.
- *Try to keep caller on the line.
- *Get attention of another, give note to **call 911** – “Bomb Threat”.
- *If caller ID, record incoming number.
- *Write down exact words of caller and threat.
- *Evacuate and move away from building; assist persons with disabilities.
- *Do not re-enter building until “all clear” is Issued.

CHEMICAL SPILLS

Toxic Fumes

- ***Call 911** for any suspected release of toxic fumes.
- *If known, alert 911 to location or source of fumes.
- *Evacuate building leaving doors open.
- *Observe occupants for symptoms (dizziness, confusion, etc.) and relay information to 911.

Leak or Spill

- *Evacuate from area.
- ***Call 911.**
- *Alert 911 to location of leak.

FIRST AID

- *First Aid kits are located in the kitchen, nursery changing area and in the hall across from the office.
- *Stay calm.
- *Check breathing and heartbeat.
- *Stop bleeding with direct pressure and elevation.
- *Do not move victim unnecessarily.
- ***Call 911.**

Burns

- *Flush with cool water.
- *Apply clean cloth.
- *Do not apply ointments or sprays.

Choking

- *Ask victim if they are choking.
- *If victim cannot speak, perform the abdominal thrust maneuver. (Heimlich Maneuver)

Stopped Breathing

- *Tap and Shout “Are You Okay?”
- ***Call 911** immediately.
- *Check for breathing looking for chest to rise and fall. If the person is not breathing normally or only gasping, start CPR. Get AED.
- *Push on the Chest - Imagine line between the nipples and put your hands on the center of the chest right below that line. Push hard and fast—about twice per second.
- *Rescue Breaths - If you have had CPR training and feel comfortable performing the steps, push on the chest 30 times then give 2 rescue breaths. Repeat cycles of 30 chest compressions and 2 breaths until help

Taken from: Hope UCC Safety Plan, Approved by Council 6/29/2021. Updated: 6/28/2023.