

March 2023

# THE CHURCH GUARDIAN

A MONTHLY NEWSLETTER FROM SHEEPDOG CHURCH SECURITY



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## TOP NEWS STORY

### 4 CARS BROKEN INTO DURING SUNDAY SERVICE AT MEMPHIS CHURCH

Police say four cars were broken into outside a local church during Sunday service. The pastor of Gifts of Life Ministries in Raleigh says that vehicles were broken into in broad daylight, a first for their campus.

Source: [CLICK HERE](#)

# TRAINING SPOTLIGHT

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## Active Shooter Response v4

We live in troubled times – the rise in gun-related violence, particularly violence directed against churches and their congregations across the nation, is proof of this. There were 147 shootings in Christian churches between 2006 and 2016, more than there were in the entire 25 years that came before. It has become imperative that churches be prepared (and able) to protect those worshipping within their walls.

Today, churches must be prepared to combat violence from all corners. It's not just about stopping lone-gunmen with their own agendas targeting church members, or anti-Christian sentiment bubbling over. Church members themselves and their loved ones can bring violence into the church. If you are not prepared, that can spell disaster, as it has for too many churches across the nation.

To ensure that you are prepared for any eventuality and able to curb violent acts, we offer the Active Shooter Response v4 Module.



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# 2012 Destiny Christian Center Shooting

A MONTHLY FEATURE LOOKING AT CHURCH SHOOTING INCIDENTS

## From the Bible

- ♦ The penalty of death for murder:  
*But if he thrust him of hatred, or hurl at him by laying [in] wait, that he die; Or in enmity smite him with his hand, that he die: he that smote him shall surely be put to death; for he is a murderer: the revenger of blood shall slay the murderer, when he meeteth him (Numbers 35:20-21).*
- ♦ Philistine “gangs” invaded Israel:  
*But there came a messenger unto Saul, saying, “Haste thee, and come; for the Philistines have invaded the land” (1 Samuel 23:27).*
- ♦ Criminal gangs were a threat in Paul’s day:  
*In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, ... (2 Corinthians 11:26).*

## Introduction

Sometimes violence at a church or on church property is spontaneously random. In this case, it cascaded from an ongoing altercation having nothing to do with the church. The eventual shooter just happened to crash into another vehicle in the parking lot, then turned on those who came to help.

## Videocast and Show Notes

Kris covers this incident in a videocast on the YouTube channel Sheepdog Church Security Academy (the audio is on a podcast). Special emphasis is on the lesson learned as to how a church safety team can prepare for this and how to respond. Beneath the video screen is a link to the Show Notes (Church Shooting Lessons Learned Download). It will be available for this article until the next Lessons Learned article and videocast are posted.[2][3]

## Crashing In

It was early afternoon on the second Sunday after Easter, April 22, 2012, at a church in Fountainhead Plaza (a business park) in Aurora, Colorado. The morning service at Destiny Christian Center was coming to an end. A car speeding past the church went out of control on a sharp corner and careened into another vehicle. Some accounts say that one car was chasing the other. The driver of one car got out and engaged in an argument with the other driver while holding a handgun.

The church's drummer came outside after hearing the crash and ran inside to get help. He came back out with others and went toward the driver, but tripped and fell. The driver pointed his handgun and tried to shoot him, but the gun jammed. The drummer headed back into the church. The driver kept pulling the trigger.. It finally fired when the pastor's mother came out the door. She was hit and fatally wounded.

The driver/gunman headed for the door of the church. A member of the congregation who was an off-duty Denver police officer had pulled out his handgun. He fired at the gunman, killing him.

When shots were heard, people inside the church ducked for cover, then locked down in two rooms.

## The Last Entry on a Long Record

The shooter had a long-time arrest record going back to his teens. Originally from Aurora, most of the arrests were drug related, and also included theft, resisting arrest, and traffic offenses. In 2008 he was released after three years in a Colorado court-ordered drug treatment program. Then in December 2009, he was sentenced to prison in Oklahoma on drug charges and actions while under the influence of drugs, including marijuana mixed with PCP. The actions included a vehicle collision while impaired.

In November 2011 he was released early from prison (the sentence was through 2021) after completing education and drug rehabilitation. After his release, he moved back to Colorado.

Judging by his demeanor and actions, the shooter had apparently resumed drug use by the day of the shooting. He had been with a friend a bit more than a block away from the church in front of an apartment complex. There he got into an argument with someone else (not his friend). In a rage, he got into his car and sped off, up E. Bethany Street. About a half-block's distance, he turned off the street and into the drive of the business park. The drive went by the Destiny Christian Center.

Just past the front of the church is a sharp left turn. The driver missed the turn and crashed into another vehicle. He exited his car with a gun and argued with the driver of the other vehicle. When someone came out of the church to help, he pointed the gun and began firing. This action would be the last item on his police record, since he was shot by a church member and died.

## Afterwards

The mother of the pastor died from her wounds. The shooter also died. The off-duty Denver police officer, who was a cousin of the pastor and nephew of the pastor's mother, was placed on administrative leave. This was not only for the investigation, but also for his emotional health - time to recover from having to shoot and kill someone. He was also experiencing personal loss after seeing his aunt killed.

Questions were raised about the gun used by the off-duty officer. A Denver Police Department spokesperson explained that each officer purchased his or her own gun meeting department specifications, and also said that even when police officers are off-duty, they are automatically on-duty when a situation arises, such as the one at Destiny Christian Center. All this was to say that the officer was justified both to carry that weapon and to use it in that situation.

Destiny Christian Center was an African-American non-denominational church, but this aspect played no role in the shooting. The shooter was also African-American. All parties agreed that this incident was random violence, with no connection between the assailant and the church. It could have just as easily occurred in front of a store, office, or residence.

The location of Destiny Christian Center is occupied by Christ Central Church, a Korean congregation. The congregation has apparently disbanded. Their pastor has moved to Georgia, close to where his son lives, and is involved with businesses there. He was listed for a while in Aurora as a pastor of the World Outreach Center. We don't yet know what his church involvement is.

## Lesson Learned: Monitor Outside

**Note:** Nothing in this lesson is meant to demean the congregation or its leadership. We learn by hindsight. Hopefully the lesson learned will honor them by saving others.

In a situation such as the one in this case, the one lesson for us is, "Monitor outside."

First of all, there was no way to fence in the parking lot. Vehicles had to park on either side of the business park's drive (this was a rented facility).

If there had been an outside monitor, then when the collision happened in the drive-through parking area, the monitor (Safety Team member, greeter, or other appointed person) could have called 911 and kept others inside with only certain persons allowed to check on the welfare of the driver(s).

Since an armed law enforcement officer was there, he could have gone to the door first to cover whoever might go out and would have seen the post-crash argument. He could have then stopped anyone else from going out. Then the gunmen could have been stopped when he pointed his weapon at someone. With the officer holding his gun in the ready position and shouting at the suspect to stop and drop the gun, the armed driver would likely turn around. In that case, he'd better drop the gun or else, because the officer already had the drop on him.

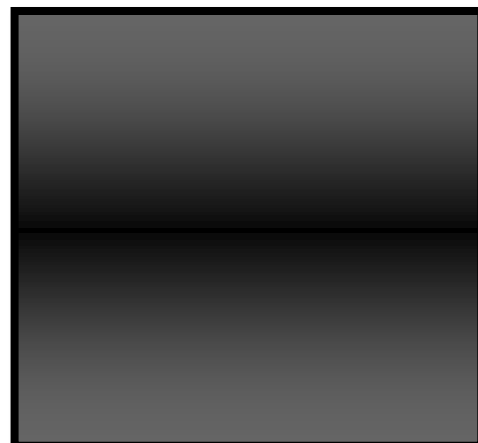
## Conclusion

Random incidents may happen outside our churches. We should be prepared to respond and take precautions in case someone involved is violent.

## There Is More

The next article is "Preparing for Medical Emergencies" (Introducing Church Emergency Consulting). This is based on Kris's interview with Terry Berringer on a videocast and a podcast. Of special interest is their discussion of evacuation cribs. [7][8]

## [Article References](#)



# FLUFFY RAIN, WET BLANKET

## Church Safety in Wintery Conditions

### From the Bible

*"While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease" (Genesis 8:22).*

*Out of the south cometh the whirlwind: and cold out of the north. By the breath of God frost is given: and the breadth of the waters is [frozen solid] (Job 37:9-10).*

*He casteth forth his ice like morsels: who can stand before his cold (Psalm 147:17)?*

*He destroyed their vines with hail, and their sycamore trees with frost (Psalm 78:47).*

*She is not afraid of the snow for her household: for all her household are clothed with scarlet (Proverbs 31:21).*

### Introduction

Here it is, the middle of the 2022-2023 Winter. This month is supposed to have the worst winter weather. However, a bomb cyclone swept across the United States and Canada during the first week of winter. Named "Winter Storm Elliott" by the Weather Channel, it will be remembered as the "2022 Christmas Week Storm." It was as bad as or worse than the worst weather in many previous winters, depending on where you were. More than five dozen people died, most of them in Buffalo, New York. Frankly, most Americans were not prepared for this one.



The big question here is this: Is our church ready for winter weather?

## In the News

*Nationwide, December 20-25, 2022* - A winter storm, named "Elliott" by The Weather Channel, began in the Pacific Northwest, with icy roads in Oregon and Washington. It quickly moved across the Rockies and became a bomb cyclone, "an area of low pressure that intensifies rapidly" (The Weather Channel).

The storm drew Arctic air south and brought record low temperatures to wide areas stretching from Canada to Florida. 1.5 million people lost power. There were at least 61 deaths, with over 40 in Western New York (the Buffalo area) where blizzard conditions lasted over 37 hours.

Christmas Day was on Sunday, but many churches cancelled services because of the weather. Some churches became shelters or warming centers.[2][3]

*West Hempstead, New York, February 19, 2011* - A woman fell outside a church after services. She claimed that it was on a "patch of ice" and sued the church for damages. The suit was dismissed by the court, since (1) the church had not been notified of icy conditions, (2) the woman had not actually seen ice on the walkway, but heard someone say there might have been ice in the mulch, and (3) recorded temperatures for that day and previous days were too warm for snow or ice.[4]

*Payson, Arizona, February 25, 2019* - A man shoveling snow around his cabin tried to knock some off the roof. A thick sheet of snow slid off the roof, nearly burying him. His wife caught the action on video, then dug him out.[5]

*Morgantown, West Virginia, January 28, 2001* - The pastor of a church died from injuries incurred three weeks earlier while removing icicles from the edge of the church's roof. While knocking down the icicles, an ice dam broke and slid down onto him. A leg was crushed and a shoulder broken. The lower part of the leg was amputated. Three weeks later, he died from a blood clot in a lung.

A paper from Michigan State University had four recommendations for reducing the risk of ice dams on roofs (see further down).[6]

*Pittston, Pennsylvania, March 8, 1994* - The weight of snow on the roof of a church caused a wall to flex, knocking out several bricks which fell onto the sidewalk. The sidewalk had to be closed while debris was cleared out and the wall repaired. The church council decided to fix the roof so snow would not accumulate.[7]

*Buffalo, New York, December 23-25, 2022* - During the 2022 Christmas Week Storm, a church in Buffalo just happened to still have lights and heat. The pastors (husband-and-wife) opened the doors to let people come in from the cold, including those leaving stuck cars and others whose homes were without power and heat. The couple had brought in enough food and beds for an expected large family gathering. These turned out to be provisions needed for refugees from the blizzard. The church saved 154 lives in an area with over 40 deaths.[8]



# Snow, Ice, and Cold

In northern states, at least, winter comes with snow, ice, and cold. Snowfall can vary from "fluffy rain" (flurries), to a "wet blanket" (total snow cover), to very heavy snowfall and a howling blizzard. The cold can range from barely freezing to sub-zero temperatures (extreme cold). Wind chill can make the felt temperature much colder than the thermometer reading. At 37°F, wind chill can create road ice.

People in Southern states cannot afford to be complacent, assuming that they're exempt from wintry extremes. All it takes is a polar vortex following the jet stream with a deep southern dip. This past December, it was a major storm - a bomb cyclone - stretching from Canada to Mexico. Brrrrr! Weather watchers are not ruling out a repeat in February.

## Winter Hazards

The hazards of winter are well-known, but a few may be overlooked, so we'll list them:

- ◆ Driving hazards -
  - ◆ Slick roads - Ice and compacted snow will make a road slick. Don't drive unless necessary during freezing rain. Watch for ice on bridges when temps are under 38°F.
  - ◆ Drifting snow and thick snow - This can hide the road's edges and center line. Vehicles may get stuck when snow is too thick.
  - ◆ Blowing snow reduces visibility. Time to stay off the road or pull over.
  - ◆ Strong winds can push cars out of their lanes or off the roads. Box trucks and trailers can be tipped over.
  - ◆ A single collision can easily trigger a multiple-vehicle pileup.
- ◆ Walking hazards - People can slip on icy parking lots and walkways. In the third news story, if ice had really been on the walkway, then the lawsuit might not have been dismissed.
- ◆ Building hazards - Heavy snow can overstress roofs, causing them to buckle or collapse. Snow and ice can also slide off roofs onto people below.
- ◆ Health hazards -
  - ◆ Hypothermia
  - ◆ Frostbite
  - ◆ Existing health conditions made worse
  - ◆ Communicable diseases spread by more indoor crowding

# Winter Safety and the Church

We all know that our churches are not exempt from the weather. A Church Safety Ministry can help make the church safer during winter weather.

## ♦ A Safer Building

Work with the church's governing board to make the building safer and more healthful.

- ♦ Heating - The heating system should have been checked and maintained before the heating season began. Pay attention to it and be quick to correct any problems.
  - ♦ By the way, inspect the cooling system before summer comes.
- ♦ Roof safety - Be sure the roof is in good condition.
  - ♦ Ensure that ice dams don't build up.
  - ♦ Remove snow safely before it becomes too heavy.
- ♦ Ensure that emergency exits are not blocked by snow.
- ♦ Safety on the Grounds -
  - ♦ Clear snow and ice from walkways and the parking lot. Use salt to prevent icing.
  - ♦ Keep snow and ice on the roof from falling on people below. Block a walkway if necessary.
  - ♦ Coming inside, keep the entry floor from being wet.
- ♦ Congregational Safety -

Consider church vehicle use, the congregation, and visitors.

- ♦ Stay current on weather conditions and the forecast.
- ♦ Do not put church vehicles on the road when conditions are unsafe.
- ♦ Postpone or cancel meetings, classes, and events when it will be too hazardous to drive to the church.
  - ♦ Use a mass communication system for emergency notifications.
  - ♦ Use public notifications for those who are not members, especially for events attracting the general public.
- ♦ Be trained and prepared to respond to accidents, hypothermia, and frostbite.
  - ♦ Have the equipment and supplies needed to respond to winter emergencies.
  - ♦ Wear clothing appropriate for winter weather, including local temperatures.
- ♦ Teach members about personal winter safety.

## *Advice from the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health*

The Fatality Assessment and Control Evaluation (FACE) investigation report on the death of a Morgantown, WV, pastor from snow and ice falling from a roof ended with four recommendations:

1. Increase truss space ventilation to alleviate accumulation of warm air at the peak of the truss space, subsequent melting of snow that refreezes at the eave edge resulting in an ice dam.
2. Increase truss space insulation to minimize heat loss from the building below.
3. Identify and seal ceiling openings that allow heat to escape from the heated area of the building to the truss space.
4. Use proper tools and removal techniques to remove accumulations of snow on the roof or other methods to minimize ice dam formation.[5][6]

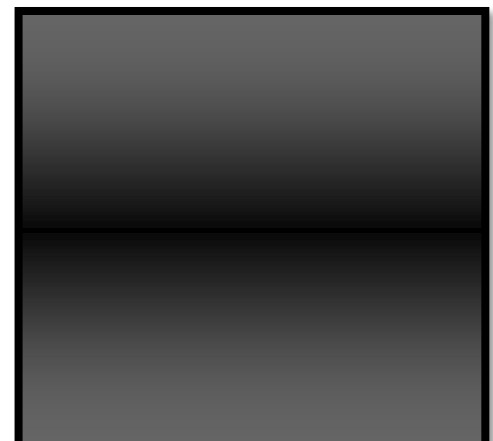
## Conclusion

The beauty of winter has its hazards. We can't stop the weather, but we can help our churches to be safer.

## [Article References](#)



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# INTRODUCING CHURCH EMERGENCY CONSULTING

With a Focus on Evacuation Cribs

## From the Bible

And others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire ... (Jude 1:23).

And the Lord said unto Satan, "... Is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?" (Zechariah 3:2).

## Introduction

There's a fire, and you need to get the infants in the nursery out to safety. Or there's a tornado warning, and you have to take the tykes to the tornado shelter. Or there's an active shooter somewhere else in the building and you're told to evacuate. What these scenarios have in common is the need to move all the children in the nursery at once. If you have more than two infants per worker, this is a problem. That's what evacuation cribs are for.

## On the Web

*Fishers, Indiana, 2017* – In its 2017 Emergency Action Plan: Fire/Severe Weather/Lost Child/Lockdown," the Children's Ministry of Fishers United Methodist Church states that small children and infants will be put into evacuation cribs to take out of the building during a fire.[3]

*Arlington, Virginia, September 11, 2001* – After the Pentagon was hit by a hijacked airliner, a U.S. Air Force Lieutenant Colonel rushed from a meeting to get his two daughters from the Pentagon's day care center. Arriving at the Pentagon 45 minutes later, he was told that on-site military personnel had already taken the children to a safe area a half-mile away. Infants had been taken in cribs.[4]

*Washington, DC, Last Updated August 25, 2022* – In its "2017 Emergency Action Plan," the Early Childhood Learning and Knowledge Center (part of HHS) describes how evacuation cribs could be used during an earthquake. This would be of interest in Pacific states, including Alaska.[5]

Washington, DC, after 2010 – The National Resource Center for Health and Safety in Child Care and Early Education (NCR), in its chapter on “Facilities, Supplies, Equipment, and Environmental Health,” gives requirements and specifications for evacuation cribs.[6]

Bethpage, New York, 2020 - Advanced Egress Solutions discusses evacuation cribs, what is required for one, and how they are used. Among their products is an evacuation chair with pockets for six infants. This can be used for navigating stairs.[7]

## Snatching Infants away from the Fire

Picture yourself in the nursery. The fire alarm sounds. Since no drill is scheduled, you know this is for real. Get the kiddos out. Most of them can't walk, so they must be carried. You pick up one in each arm, but there are others. You need to take more, but how can you? Even if you and the other attendants can carry all the infants, your arms are full and you can't open doors on the way, especially if they have to be pulled open.

What you and your helpers need are evacuation cribs. These are sturdier than ordinary cribs used all the time. They also have larger wheels so you can better roll over thresholds and rough places.

## A Crib to Fit the Need

What kind and size of evacuation cribs does your nursery need?

### *Capacity*

The National Resource Center for Health and Safety in Child Care and Early Education (NCR) says an evacuation crib should be able to carry up to five children who can't walk, meaning all those younger than 18 months, and a few who are older. Therefore, your church needs one crib for every five non-walking children when the nursery is full (such as during a Christmas program). If you can reasonably expect up to 30 babies in the nursery, then you need at least six evacuation cribs.

From a practical point of view, one fifth of the cribs in the nursery should be evacuation cribs. Mark them with a certain color of reflective tape, such as red or safety orange. You can put white reflective tape on the ordinary cribs so you can find babies with a flashlight if the lights go out.

## Size

\*\*Then the NRC says that the cribs must fit through all doors on the evacuation routes.[6]

In their conversation, both Kris and Terry said they encountered cribs too wide for the nursery door. When Kris first got one for a church, he assembled it, then found that it couldn't go through the door. Terry found that the evacuation cribs in a church he was consulting were an inch too wide.

Here is a chart of five evacuation cribs for sale online. When you measure the door openings in the church, account for the part of the open door that may be still in the way. This is a problem when the door is next to a corner. You do not want to take the time to take a door off its hinges so you can get the crib out.

ID#	Width	Length	Height	Materials	Price
A	25.75	39.13	42.00	Wood	\$599.00
B	26.00	40.50	35.00	Alloy Steel, Metal	\$299.00
C	26.25	39.33	40.00	Wood, Alloy Steel	\$399.00
D	26.50	38.50	39.50	Wood, Alloy Steel	\$399.99
E	27.75	38.25	39.00	Metal	\$334.99

As can be seen, the narrowest evacuation crib is 25.75 inches wide, and the widest is two inches wider. Before you look for an evacuation crib, measure the openings of all doors the cribs have to pass through on both primary and alternate evacuation routes. Then look for those that will fit. Obviously, the wider the doors the more choices you have.

By the way, here are the brands of these cribs:

ID#	Manufacturer/Brand
A	Lakeshore, Heavy-Duty
B	Foundations, First Responder
C	Childcraft
D	LA Baby, Compact Non-Folding
E	LA Baby, The Condo

## *Construction*

Evacuation cribs, by law, have to meet certain construction standards. The walls must be fixed – no drop sides. The space between slats can be no wider than  $2\frac{3}{8}$  inches. There is a minimum depth from the surface of the mattress to the top of the sides. The bottom frame has minimum strength, and there is a minimum diameter for the wheels. The requirement is generally stated by NRC this way:

Cribs intended for evacuation purpose should be of a design and have wheels that are suitable for carrying up to five non-ambulatory children less than two years of age to a designated evacuation area.[6]

## *Wheels*

As noted already, the wheels on an evacuation crib are larger than those on an ordinary crib. Usually these are made of a hard material. Terry noted that pneumatic wheels would be better for rolling over surfaces with debris. He pointed out how easy it is for a little bit of rubbish to stop a shopping cart with hard wheels, even hard ones. A pneumatic tire will have some give, allowing it to conform to the particle and roll on.

Two wheels on each evacuation crib should have quick-set/quick-release locks. This keeps the crib from rolling when it should stay in place, but it can be quickly unlocked for moving. Also, move the cribs frequently so the wheels do not freeze up. Clean the wheels regularly so there's no dirt and debris built up to jam them. Part of this maintenance is keeping the nursery floor clean.

## **Alternate Routes**

A basic part of fire evacuation planning is alternative routes. We cannot always count on the primary evacuation route being open in a real emergency. What if that route is blocked? Then you need to go out another way. Plan alternative routes, then practice them in drills.

What if some nursery workers did not participate in a fire drill? Have a laminated book attached to the evacuation crib with both routes diagrammed in it.

Before ordering evacuation cribs, measure each doorway they will have to go through. Then after the cribs are delivered and assembled, make a test run. Maintain these routes constantly, keeping them clear and ensuring that all doors work as they should.

## Conclusion

Evacuation cribs are what we need to get all babies and non-walking children out in an emergency.

## Article References



**WE PROTECT CHURCH**

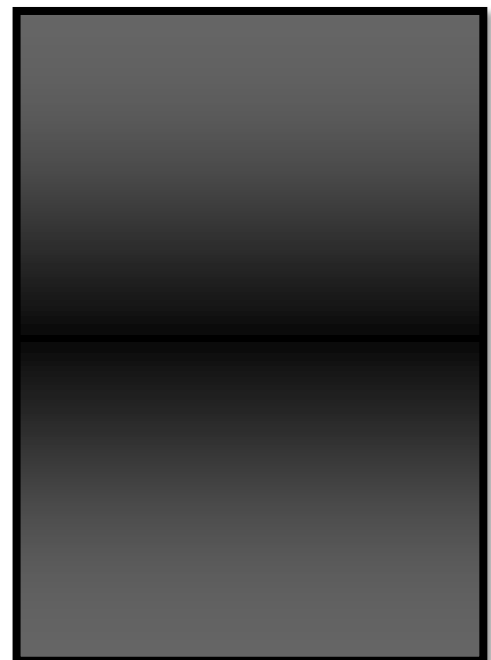
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# 2012 VICTORY FOR THE WORLD CHURCH SHOOTING

## Lesson Learned from a Church Shooting

### From the Bible

- ♦ Violence was a worldwide problem before the Flood:

The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence (Genesis 6:11).

- ♦ An example of this violence:

And Lamech said unto his wives, Adah and Zillah, "Hear my voice; ye wives of Lamech, hearken unto my speech: for I have slain a man to my wounding, and a young man to my hurt" (Genesis 4:23).

- ♦ Jacob's prophecy for Simeon and Levi was based on their slaughter of the Shechemites (Gen. 34):

"Cursed be their anger, for it was fierce; and their wrath, for it was cruel: I will divide them in Jacob, and scatter them in Israel" (Genesis 49:7)

- ♦ James' advice is to restrain our wrath:

Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath: For the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God (James 1:19-20).

### Introduction

A church is part of its community, and problems in the community will come into the church. This means that a church needs to recognize, acknowledge, and address the problems in the community, and be ready to handle them when they arise at church. In this case, the problem was the culture of violence within a segment of the community.

## Death Follows the Funeral

It was a Thursday afternoon, June 7, 2012. About 500 people had gathered at the old chapel of Victory for the World Church near Stone Mountain in DeKalb County, Georgia for the funeral of the 19-year-old son of a church family. Several of his friends were there. This young man had died because of his criminal activities. About two weeks earlier, he had burglarized a home, stealing jewelry, and had assaulted an older woman living there. Then, 12 days before the funeral, he was shot and killed, allegedly by the woman's son. Both men had police records.

In his funeral message, the pastor of the church counselled young people to not resort to violence, but find peaceful ways to settle their differences. His words evidently did not penetrate all minds present. As the crowd was exiting the church, two of the young man's friends got into an argument. They went to their cars, retrieved handguns, then began shooting at each other with one of them in his car. They wounded each other fatally. Two bystanders were also injured.

Initially, some people believed that the accused killer of the young man had come to his funeral and started the gunfire. Police had been looking for him. However, he was not there, and the shooters were the ones who died.

## A Culture of Violence

For thousands of years, there have been criminal elements in large cities. This is just as true today as it was in ancient times. We tend today to think of these as members of certain racial, ethnic, or social groups. However, all groups have been and are represented. When I was growing up, white juvenile criminals made the news.

These elements have exhibited a culture of violence. The violence has in some ways been romanticized, such as that of warring Mafia families and folk notoriety such as Bonnie & Clyde. The culture of violence today is popularized in entertainment and video games. It is also passed on in school cliques and neighborhood gangs.

Although much of the news focuses on criminal organizations like the Crips, the Bloods, and M-13, not all gangs are organized. Some are loose associations of like-minded persons. Although many of those in street gangs are from fatherless families, sons from good families may be attracted by friends who are involved. One thing that has changed since 2012 is more girls and women involved in the gangs or in gangs of their own. This underlies biblical warnings against the wrong friends. A major contributor to delinquency is drug use. Many crimes are committed to get money for drugs. The community of Victory for the World Church includes young people who are in a culture of violence. Anger management is unheard of by many of them. The least grievance will bring a violent reaction, whether with fists, clubs, knives, or guns. Many of the guns used have been stolen. In this respect, the Atlanta metropolitan area resembles Chicago, Los Angeles, New York City, Detroit, and other metro areas.

## Impact

The deadly shooting at Victory for the World brought shock and dismay. It caused many to ask how this could happen and how it could be prevented. One result of this and other similar incidents is warnings about potential violence at or around the funerals of gang members.

One such person addressing these questions was Gwen Thomas, an associate minister at Victory for the World. In a blog post on HuffPost, she said, "If we don't consider evolving in our parenting styles and discipline methods, we may perpetuate the notion that violence is the logical response to perceived wrongdoing." What she proposes is a serious attempt to break the generational perpetuation of retaliation. She admits that this has become embedded in some generational lines, and it will take more than one generation to break the cycle.

As to whether there have been changes in security at Victory for the World Church, there has been no mention of them. With rare exceptions, changes in church security are usually kept confidential. In some cases this is to keep would-be violators from learning how to breach security. Evidently, Victory for the World did have some security measures in place before the incident. The shooters left their guns in their cars when they came to the funeral.

## Lesson Learned: Stay in Tune

A key aspect of the shooting incident at this church is that it happened outside, after the funeral, even though it involved two men who attended the funeral. What could a Safety Team do to forestall this from happening? Stay in tune to what is going on. Keep your attention on the most likely troublemakers and their moves. Let's apply it to this case:

1. *Have security persons outside.* – Church Safety Team members who are outside can keep an eye on things while being in place to respond. If they are inside watching the monitors for outside surveillance cameras, it takes time to get to the door and out – not a good scene in a fast-moving situation such as this.
2. *Know who likely disruptors and victims are.* – Since this was the funeral of a person who had been part of the culture of violence and had been murdered, his friends and rivals were likely disruptors. From her position on the platform, Ms. Thomas took note of the pall bearers as members of the young man's gang. By now, we know that they could be likely targets of another gang. In this case, the threat was from within the group.
3. *Be aware of any disruptive behavior.* – In this case, it was the argument. An argument any time is concerning, but when it is among members of a culture of violence, this calls for special notice.

4. Be aware of potentially threatening moves. –When two arguing gang members go to their cars, it does not automatically mean that they will simply drive away. They had to leave their weapons behind to go into the church for the funeral. Going to the car during an argument is just as likely for grabbing a weapon as it would be for leaving.

5. Be ready to intervene. –Know how to approach someone getting a weapon from a vehicle. If they know you're ready to respond, this may be a deterrent.

## Conclusion

In a troubling situation, monitor troubling persons and be ready to respond appropriately.

## [Article References](#)

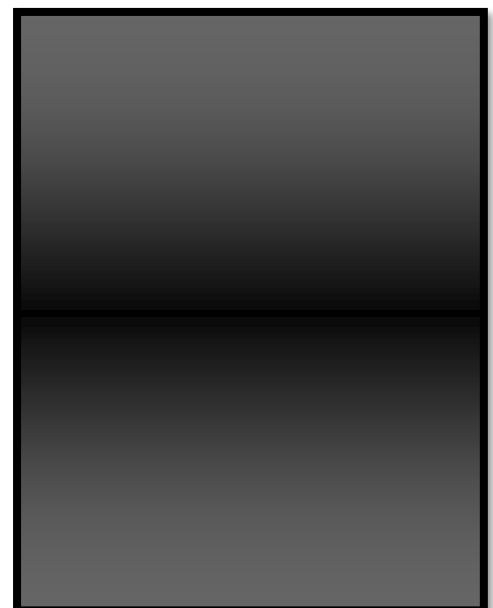


**THEY PROTECT US. WHO PROTECTS THEM?**

**THE CORNELIUS PROJECT POLICE**

**SUPPORT LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS**  
PTSD • Mental Health • Spiritual Guidance • Training • Legal Protection

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# CHURCH SECURITY ROLL CALL

WEEKLY TIPS AND ENCOURAGEMENT FOR CHURCH SECURITY TEAMS  
HOSTED BY KRIS MOLONEY



## 2012 Victory for the World Church Shooting

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## 2012 Destiny Christian Center Shooting

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## Vetting Volunteers

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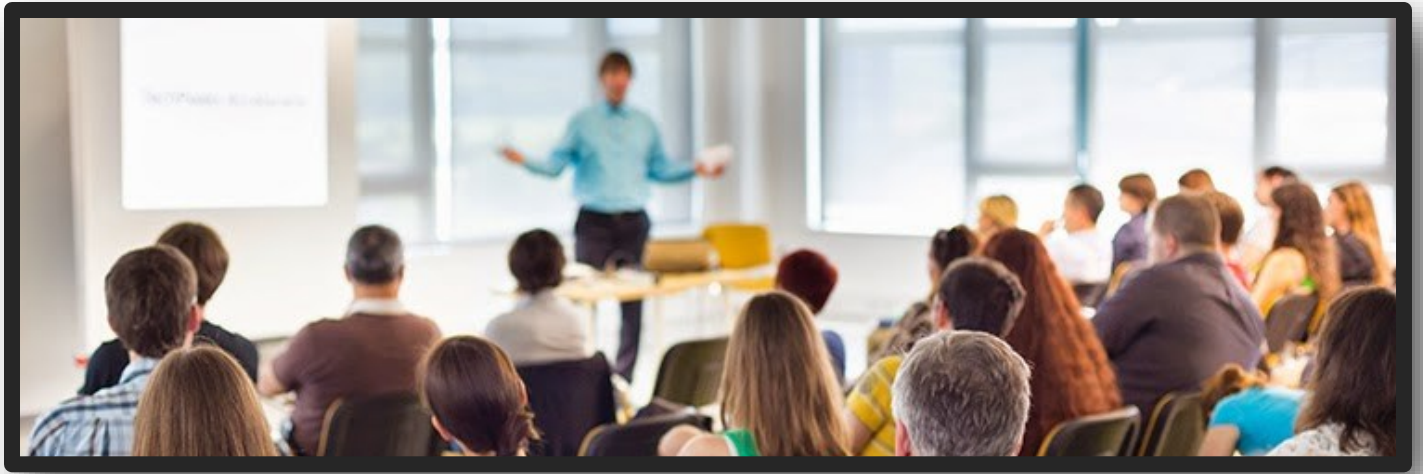
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## St. Thomas Church Shooting

[LISTEN ON SOUNDCLOUD](#)

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## **SHEEPDOG SEMINAR FOR CHURCHES**

**Church-related sex crimes are a problem...**

**We are begging you - PLEADING WITH YOU - to send your Youth Director and Children's Workers to this seminar.**

**We will show you what is happening - and what you MUST do to decrease the chances of a sex crime occurring at your church or church-related event. Please share this with every youth and children's worker you know!**

**FOR THE CHILDREN!!!**

### **DATE**

**MARCH 23, THURSDAY NIGHT  
6:00 P.M. - 9:30 P.M.**

### **LOCATION OF EVENT**

**Lexington County Sheriff's  
Department Training Center  
541 Gibson Rd  
Lexington SC 29072**

### **TIME**

**THURSDAY NIGHT  
6:00 P.M. - 9:00 P.M.**

**[REGISTRATION IS NOW OPEN](#)**

**COSTS - \$30.00 PER PERSON  
PRE-REGISTRATION  
REQUIRED**

# SHEEPDOG CORNER



*Hi Sheepdog,*

Many of you have heard about the church security guard that was killed just this last Friday. (If not: <https://www.krqe.com/news/crime/church-security-guard-killed-while-on-the-job-suspect-in-custody/>)

Some of you asked about approaching suspicious vehicles. Here is my response for now... When in doubt, Call the Police about Suspicious Persons (SP) and Vehicles (SV). (Especially during off hours and late at night/dark.) Call for Backup. Never approach a SP or SV without someone in an overwatch/cover position. (Contact/Cover Procedure Applies) If you don't have backup, Call the Police. Approach SV from the side, avoiding the front and back of the vehicle. (ie. possible path of the vehicle should they attempt to leave or try to run you over.) As much as possible, approach in their line of sight. Don't sneak up on them. (If you feel like the situation calls for you to 'sneak up' on them then it is a 'Call the Police' situation. Smile, wave, and watch their demeanor (facial expression, movements, trying to look casual, etc.) If they show strong emotions (anger, fear, despair, nervousness, etc), Fall Back and Call the Police. If they move around a lot (possibly going for a weapon, hiding something, etc.), Fall Back and Call the Police. Greet them kindly. Ask them if you can help them. Use Verbal De-escalation skills to maintain control. Respond to any force used against you.

Here are four possible situations (You may be able to think of more.)

They are NOT up to no-good. Maybe stopping to meet someone, using the Wi-Fi, using their smartphone, getting directions, etc. Good public relations opportunity. Go about your day. They are up to no-good but the threat is minimal. Your contact may be enough to delay or deter their plan. They are in Crisis. Medium Threat. Use verbal de-escalation to keep the subject from becoming violent. Fall Back and Call the Police if you are unable to de-escalate or the subject escalates. High Threat. Respond to any immediate attack as necessary. Fall Back, if possible. Seek cover, in the church if possible. Go into Lockout. Call the Police.

We will expand on this in a future Article and [Church Security Roll Call](#) video.

*Your Loyal Companion in Christ,*

*Kris P. Moloney*