

# Are We Prepared for Gun Violence at Church?

Discover if you're protecting your congregation.

by Karen Arneson

Use the following checklist to see if your church is well-equipped to respond if the unthinkable should happen.

HOW ARE WE DOING	YES	NO	WORKING ON THIS
Do we have an emergency and crisis plan in place?			
Do we train our leadership, ushers, and greeters in crisis response?			
Do we train our ushers and greeters on how to respond to suspicious persons?			
Do we conduct regular evacuation and emergency response training?			
Have we identified key medical professionals in our congregation?			
Do we have a sufficient number of first aid kits available in key areas?			
Have we identified key law enforcement professionals in our congregation?			
Do we have quick access to phones at all times in key locations?			
Are exit routes clearly marked?			
Have we taken measures to secure our buildings with lighting, security cameras, and lock-down areas?			

Not so long ago, believers were able to seek a quiet, solitary moment of worship in their church sanctuaries. No locked door, or armed guard, there was no prohibited entry. In many places, those opportunities to meet God in his house (without first being cleared for admittance) are gone.

The shooting of 14 people attending a youth rally at Wegdwood Baptist Church, in Fort Worth, Texas—the bomb that exploded at First Assembly of God in Danville, Illinois, injuring 35 people—the killing of a wife, son, and fellow-member by a congregant of New St. John Fellowship Baptist Church in Gonzales, Louisiana: these are only a few examples of the violence that has shattered the peace of sanctuaries across our nation.

Does this mean we should barricade the doors, shrinking back in fear of what could happen at our church? No! This is a time not only to exercise our trust in the Lord, but to fully equip ourselves with the right tools to protect our congregation.