

Taken from an email from Daniel Kizer, Denton Police Department and is meant to be a reminder of possible actions in the event of an active shooter, July 6, 2015.

In light of the horrific attack that occurred recently in South Carolina and the heightened concerns of terrorist activity, I wanted to remind you of some safety info that we discussed at the conference a couple of years ago.

I've been asked a number of times, "How should church members and staff respond to an active-shooter incident before law enforcement arrive?"

There's no single response to fit all active shooter situations. However, failure to react will most likely increase the number of casualties. Most people either panic and wildly run without thinking or fail to react at all. Giving congregants viable response options will help them to react quickly and lessen the opportunity for the shooter/aggressor to target them.

Disseminating safety information in a group setting is one the best ways to reach the majority of your members. Prior to the start of the weekly sermon, most places of worship have the congregation meet in a large room in the building (i.e. the sanctuary.) This is a great opportunity to reach the most people, as you have their full attention and it would only take a few minutes.

The link below is the run, hide, fight video. It is a great illustration of how to respond to a an active shooter.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5VcSwejU2D0>

Run

- If it is safe to do so, the first course of action that should be taken is to run out of the building and far away until in a safe location.
- Leave personal belongings behind.
- Visualize possible escape routes, including physically accessible routes for individuals with disabilities.
- Avoid escalators and elevators.
- Take others with them, but do not stay behind because others will not go.
- Call 911 when safe to do so.
- Let a responsible adult know where they are.

Hide

- If running is not a safe option, congregants should "hide in as safe a place as possible."
- Lock the doors.
- Barricade the doors with heavy furniture.
- Close and lock windows and close blinds or cover windows.
- Turn off lights.
- Silence all electronic devices.
- Remain silent.
- If possible, use strategies to silently communicate with first responders; for example, in rooms with exterior windows, make signs to silently signal law enforcement and emergency responders to indicate the status of the room's occupants.
- Hide along the wall closest to the exit but out of the view from the hallway (allowing for an ambush of the shooter and for possible escape if the shooter enters the room).

- Remain in place until given an all clear by identifiable law enforcement.

Fight

- If neither running nor hiding is a safe option, as a last resort, when confronted by the shooter, adults in immediate danger should consider trying to disrupt or incapacitate the shooter by using aggressive force and items in their environment, such as fire extinguishers or chairs.
- In a study of 41 active shooter events that ended before law enforcement arrived, the potential victims stopped the attacker themselves in 16 instances. In 13 of those cases, they physically subdued the attacker.