

MANAGING CHURCH SAFETY, SECURITY,
EMERGENCIES AND DISASTER PREPAREDNESS



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PREFACE

Autobiographical Statement

I became a church business administrator in December 1998-in title only! The year prior to my becoming a paid staff member of Evangel Temple Assembly of God Church, I served at the request of Pastor Cecil Wiggins on a stewardship campaign committee to raise funds for a new sanctuary. I was the administrative coordinator and also a member of the campaign executive committee. My responsibilities included oversight of all administrative matters associated with the campaign. That year of fund raising was a challenging, rewarding and blessed experience, which provided me with valuable insights as to the internal workings of a large church organization. I had previous work experience in non-profit organizations. Retiring from the United States Air Force after serving thirty years on active duty, I worked for the Air Force Sergeants Association as the Director of Support Operations and then as the Director of Member Services. Both of these positions required in-depth knowledge of federal and state non-profit laws, rules and regulations. The position also required a background in managing facilities, funds and personal resources. I also worked for the American Red Cross as a volunteer and as a paid staff member. I served as a Red Cross station chairman and a military station manager for Naval Air Station Jacksonville and Naval Air Station Cecil Field. I have had extensive training in family relief services, damage assessment, disaster response services, emergency command center operations and community first aid and safety. This experience and training gave me the background for this project. I believe there is a real need for churches to consider the importance

of developing a plan for emergencies of any nature that can happen to a church just as they can happen to other businesses, organizations, and neighborhoods. Moving to Jacksonville, Florida after my wife retired from the United States Air Force, we joined Evangel Temple Church. My wife attended this church as a teenager and although I did not have a Pentecostal background, I found myself in a very short time accepting the Lord Jesus as my Savior and being baptized in water. I am now on my way to becoming a certified church business administrator. The challenges, experiences, and the disappointments have collectively broadened my horizons. One of these horizons is my desire to complete this project in such a way that it will not only benefit my church but may serve as an effective resource for other churches. Indeed, my new vocation has been a blessing from God and it is to His Glory that I serve.

Acknowledgements

The following individuals have encouraged and assisted me in the development of this project. Their encouragement and support was a key ingredient to completing this project. I am very grateful and thank all of them:

- my wife Mary and daughter Patricia,
- my dear friends who typed, proofread and assisted in the editing – Melody Wilson and Janice Blanton,
- my Pastors, Reverend Ceceil Wiggins and Reverend Garry Wiggins, who gave me the opportunity for ministry in church business administration.

My Church

Evangel Temple Assembly of God is a full Pentecostal Church dedicated to serving the Lord and to following His direction through His Holy Word. The church grew steadily from 1950 to its current membership of over three thousand. In 1964 our current pastor, Reverend Cecil Wiggins was invited to preach at the church and was subsequently elected as the Pastor. Under his stewardship the church began to purchase land and construct new facilities including a fellowship hall and a new nursery. The church also started to do live radio broadcasts and today the Media Ministries of Evangel Temple reaches via radio and television to many different cities. As the church grew so did the varied ministries and outreach programs that focus on worship, fellowship, discipleship and evangelism. Through our missions program, we support over 100 home and foreign missions ministries. Evangel Temple is in the “Leading ⁱⁱⁱ 100” Assemblies of God Churches in missions giving. Our church has been instrumental in over thirty building projects on foreign soil through the Missions Abroad Place Service Program. There are nine pastoral staff and twelve support full time employees at Evangel.

Consultative Team

Marvin Johnson is a member of Evangel Temple Assembly of God Church and is an active member of the choir. Marvin is a Battalion Chief with the City of Jacksonville Fire Department. He is responsible for the supervision of Fire Stations in four districts in the city of Jacksonville, Florida. Chief Johnson is a Certified Emergency Medical Technician and is a graduate of Florida Community College of Jacksonville. When I made the decision to do a project, which included fire safety, emergencies, and disasters, Marvin Johnson was an individual whom I felt had the expertise to provide the sage advice and counsel needed to accomplish this project.

Jim Register Jr. is an insurance agent with State Farm Insurance. Jim began his insurance career in 1975 with State Farm and spent his first twenty years with the corporation in the Property and Casualty area of the business. Jim has held various management positions, his most recent being Underwriting Operations Superintendent for Commercial Fire Operations in Florida and South Carolina. In addition to his management responsibilities, Jim was active in his community, serving as Board President of the State Farm Employees Federal Credit Union, President of the Mandarin Senior Citizens Advisory Board and the Jacksonville Sheriff's Advisory Council. For the past seven years, Jim has been a local agent in Jacksonville, Florida. Five times his company recognized him Legion of Honor Qualifier and Select Agent. He is a graduate of Southern Illinois University. Jim continues to serve his community as a member and Avenue Director of the Rotary Club of West Jacksonville. Jim is active in his church and serves on

the Insurance Advisory Board and Usher Council. He has been married to Sue for 23 years and they have one son.

INTRODUCTION

What is an emergency? Webster's Dictionary defines emergency as a condition requiring prompt action. The American Red Cross defines emergency as any unplanned event that can cause deaths or significant injuries to employees, customers, or the public; or that can shut down business, disrupt operations, cause physical or environmental damage, or threaten the facilities financial standing or public image. We know that the most common type of emergencies are usually automobile accidents with injuries, house fires, perhaps a lighting strike, a sports injury, a home accident, or a medical condition. Unplanned events can cause death and destruction of property. Accidents cannot be anticipated, however many can be prevented. Emergencies happen at any time of the day or night, 365 days a year. There is no "time out" when it comes to emergencies. Heart attacks come in the middle of the night as well as mid-day. A family vacation can be disrupted due to a serious accident, even a trip to the mall may result in an unplanned event requiring emergency medical care. Churches are no exception when it comes to emergencies happening on church property. A slip in the foyer, a fall in the gym, a vehicle accident in the parking lot, a seizure in the choir during service, a child hitting his/her head in the nursery, all constitute an unplanned event. Many of these unplanned events may require the services of medical personnel. A church must be prepared to respond to situations requiring prompt action. How do churches prevent, prepare for, and mitigate emergencies? Just as any other responsible organization or business, churches must take seriously their responsibility to

ensure that the health and welfare of their congregation is first and foremost. Church members, and those visiting, expect safe and usable space to worship, study, and fellowship. Prevention is the key to avoiding emergencies. Through emergency management, a process can be implemented to prepare for, mitigate, respond to, and recover from an emergency. Emergency management is a dynamic process, which can be used by churches just as it is used in other businesses. Planning, though critical, is not the only component. Training, conducting drills, testing equipment and coordinating activities with the community are other important functions. Is it important for churches to care about emergencies? Absolutely! Churches cannot afford to ignore the seriousness of emergency management. The most important aspect of church emergency management should be the safety of the congregation. The church must do everything in its power to avoid any situation that can cause death or significant injury to its employees, church members, or visitors; or a situation that can disrupt church services, cause physical or environmental damage, or threaten the church's financial standing or public image.

The common factor regarding emergencies is that they apply to large, medium and small churches just as they apply to high rise buildings, an industrial complex, or a small 'mom and pop' business. Knowledge, awareness, prevention, training, and preparation are the keys to successful emergency planning. The command and control aspects of risk management are too large a job for one individual. The Senior Pastor provides leadership and direction for the complete operation of the church, including emergencies. He is the (CEO) Chief Executive Officer of the church and, in his role as Senior Pastor, will make decisions requiring evacuation and re-

entry into the church facilities following an order to evacuate. There will be times when the Senior Pastor will not be available during an emergency. In this case, the Church Business Administrator, who also serves as the church safety officer, will make decisions under pressing emergency situations to evacuate any of the church campus. The head usher is also delegated to make decisions under pressing emergency circumstances. Evangel Temple is blessed with members who possess a wide range of professional knowledge and skills in law enforcement, fire protection and medicine. The church may call on these professionals for their assistance in an emergency situation.

BIBLICAL/THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS

How easily man made objects can fall and cause destruction. As the world witnessed the September 11th attacks, many of us begin to think of just how vulnerable we are to the disastrous unplanned events that can happen anywhere any time. Most Christians went to prayer immediately after witnessing the horrendous attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon. We are reminded and comforted in the scripture, Psalms 91:5-6, *“Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night; nor the arrow that flieth by day; nor the pestilence that walketh in darkness; nor the destruction that wasteth at noonday.”* Also, in 2 Timothy 1:7, it says, *“For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of sound mind.”* We must continue the work of our Lord, not in fear for fear is not given of God. We must, in HIS name and to HIS glory protect HIS resources through sound Biblical principals and effective emergency, safety, and security

practices. The church sanctuary is very often referred to as the “House of God” and is considered to be “Holy Ground”. There are thousands of small churches with only one building that houses the sanctuary and perhaps a classroom or two. Other churches have several detached buildings often called the church campus. Irrespective of church size, the church plant requires protection, not only from the natural elements but also from man made events that can harm people and destroy property. In Psalm 26:8 it says, *“Lord, I have loved the habitation of thy house, and the place where thine honour dwelleth.”* If worship is being held in the main sanctuary, a fellowship gathering in the Family Life Center or a Bible study group in the Ministry Building, they all must be considered activities to HIS glory in the House of God, and they demand protection. Let us not for a moment ignore the importance of our church family and facilities.

OBJECTIVE

The objectives of this project are three fold. The first and most important objective is a commitment to my Lord Jesus to do the very best job possible for the Kingdom of God. In Proverbs 16:3 it says, *“commit to the Lord whatever you do, and your plans will succeed.”* Indeed most of my plans for this project have remained on track despite an overwhelming schedule. Prayer at the beginning of every day enables me and others to pursue goals. One of my goals is to complete the certification project for becoming a Fellow Church Business Administrator. This is the second objective of this project. The third objective is to establish a guide that will enable my church to have a comprehensive policy manual on emergency management.

This project offers me the opportunity to compile information relative to emergencies that can affect lives and property. It is my hope that the information in this manual on managing church safety, security, emergencies, and disaster preparedness will help all church leaders to evaluate their own church policy structure by conducting a vulnerability analysis. *“Therefore, my beloved brethren, be firm (steadfast), immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord (always being superior, excelling, doing more than enough in the service of the Lord), knowing and being continually aware that your labor in the Lord is not futile (it is never wasted or to no purpose.)”* I Corinthians 15:58 (Amp.)

**EVANGEL TEMPLE
ASSEMBLY OF GOD CHURCH, Inc.**

**5755 Ramona Boulevard
Jacksonville, FL 32205**

**Pastor Cecil Wiggins
Pastor Garry Wiggins**

**POLICY MANUAL
ON
CHURCH SAFETY, SECURITY,**

EMERGENCIES AND DISASTER PREPAREDNESS

BY
PATRICK A. ARCHULETA
Church Business Administrator

JUNE 2002

Evangel Temple Assembly of God Church, Inc.
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FOREWORD

The membership of Evangel Temple, after prayer, fasting and a call to generosity, hold a vision for building a house for God that will seat 3,200 worshippers. This significant investment requires a total commitment to member stewardship. The security of these facilities and its equipment is demanded. Additionally, members expect safe and useable spaces for worship, study, and fellowship. It is mandated that appropriate measures will be taken to provide for the safety and security of the personnel, fiscal, and physical assets of the church.

The Church Business Administrator is assigned responsibility for the administration of the policies and procedures developed and approved by the Church Board and the Senior Pastor to ensure a safe and secure facility.

Much of the information in the policy manual was obtained from researching brochures, pamphlets, user guides available to the general public and provided by the Federal Emergency Management Agency, The American Red Cross, various Insurance Companies, and local County Emergency Management Office.

The following areas are key components of the church policy and specific methods and procedures will be established to ensure compliance.

- Fire and Safety Responsibilities
- Emergency Evacuation Guidelines
- Building/congregation Safety and Security
- Disaster Preparedness i ent
- Technological Emergencies
- Insurance

Rev. Cecil Wiggins

Senior Pastor

FIRE AND SAFETY RESPONSIBILITIES

As a Church Corporation, it is important to identify and control conditions that may increase the chance for fire damage. A fire can drastically interrupt church services and activities. If unprepared, many churches do not reopen after a major loss.

The Church Business Administrator (CBA) is responsible for ensuring that fire safety regulations, fire safety procedures and fire evacuation guidelines are realistic and meet all local fire department codes. Specifically, the CBA will maintain and update the Emergency Procedures Manual. The manual will be distributed with appropriate revisions when required to all ministry departments. The CBA will, in cooperation with and guidance from the

local fire department, plan and maintain all building fire evacuation procedures including a fire drill in all church owned property semi-annually. Fire extinguishers will be inspected annually and any defects corrected immediately. Maps of fire evacuation routes in all church owned buildings will be plainly displayed. Paid staff and volunteer staff will be trained in fire safety procedures. All records and documents relative to fire inspection, discrepancies, and work orders for any corrective action will be a part of the church record keeping process. A Fire Safety Check List can be found in Appendix A.

EMERGENCY EVACUATION GUIDELINES

In the event of a fire emergency in the main church sanctuary or any of its surrounding buildings, the following procedures apply and will be implemented as required. 1) Call 911 to alert the Fire Department so they can begin their response to the scene. 2) The individual discovering the fire emergency will contact the Pastor or Co-Pastor, who in turn will contact the Church Business Administrator, Head Usher, or Usher Captains, providing there is ample time to do so. *If immediate evacuation is necessary, the individual making that decision must notify the Pastor or Co-Pastor as soon as possible after the order to evacuate is given.*

Should a fire requiring evacuation develop during worship, the Pastor or Co-Pastor will make the necessary decisions and instruct the CBA, Head Usher or Usher Captain to announce through the sanctuary in-house fire communication voice system an order to evacuate.

Should a fire develop in other church owned buildings and there is not time for notification to the Pastors, all departments will protect lives by evacuating immediately, calling 911, and activating fire alarm pull down systems in the buildings that are equipped with this type of fire alarm system.

When a building is being evacuated, the individual ordering the evacuation must have all evacuees follow the Emergency Building Evacuation Maps that are posted. Church ushers are designated "Evacuation Wardens" and will be prepared to take control of the evacuation and help account for personnel. Ushers will pay particular attention to assisting people with disabilities. Depending on the nature, location and time of a fire, it may be necessary for a department head or lay leader to take roll call of his/her people as soon as possible after the evacuation has taken place. The direction that the evacuees exit the building is very important. The ushers are key to maintaining an orderly emergency evacuation.

Evacuees exiting the main church building irrespective of which door is used will proceed to the west parking lot as will those evacuating the old sanctuary building and the office complex. Evacuees exiting the Family Life Center will proceed to the far east parking lot near Ellis Road and Ramona Boulevard. Those exiting the Fellowship Hall will proceed to the

south parking lot. Evacuees exiting the Ministry Building will proceed to the garage parking lot.

As soon as possible after the evacuation of a church building, a head count may be necessary depending on the nature and extent of the fire emergency. Pastors, Deacons, staff and other lay leaders will assume responsibility and control of the emergency situation and ensure that the Fire Department has been notified if an actual fire is evident, detected, or is actively burning.

Only the Pastor or Co-Pastor will determine “all clear” status and will give the OK to return to any affected church building. Additionally, they will make the determination as to when and where partial or total church activity shall resume.

If a building is damaged by a fire, persons designated by the Pastor may be asked to conduct a detailed damage assessment. It may be necessary to convene an emergency meeting of the Church Board to develop and implement a recovery plan.

CONGREGATION/BUILDING SAFETY AND SECURITY

As mentioned in the introduction, however, an emergency is an unplanned event that can cause death and destruction. For that reason it is paramount that church management prepare for every possible emergency. Churches like other public gathering places are susceptible to terrorist activities, crime, threatening or suspicious visitors and/or serious medical emergencies.

Awareness and preparation are the key to prevention, mitigation, and response, and necessary to minimize an unplanned event.

The Church Business Administrator and the Head Usher are responsible for training staff and volunteer personnel on procedures for threatening calls, bomb scares, and potentially violent encounters in the church facilities. Additionally, they are responsible for ensuring that all volunteer leaders attend meetings and classes on the procedures for handling threatening calls, bomb scares, and potentially violent encounters in the church facilities. An usher will be present in the main sanctuary foyer at all times during the services and will periodically check the other buildings for any suspicious activity and secure the building. Particular attention will be given to the nursery area.

If a situation warrants, and in the judgment of the Church Business Administrator, Head Usher or Security Chief, and an immediate threat to safety exists, and the church should be evacuated, the following steps shall be taken:

1. Contact the police by dialing 911 to report the nature of the emergency;
2. Notify the Pastor or Co-Pastor to initiate emergency church evacuation;
3. Evacuate the church buildings as rapidly as possible utilizing all fire exits;
4. Give first priority to the safe evacuation of the church nursery, children's church and other places where children are present for church activities. An Usher will be directed to these areas

to ensure safe evacuation. Ushers will assist handicapped individuals in the evacuation;

5. Use ushers and security personnel to direct people to the nearest exits, informing them to gather in the main parking lot of the church. It is important to have a designated location for gathering in the event of an emergency requiring an evacuation of church buildings. (Refer to the Fire Evacuation Procedures.)

Bomb threats are delivered in a variety of ways. Most are called into the targeted place. Sometimes threats may come in writing or by recording. Whatever the method, church employees and volunteers must be prepared. In the event of a bomb threat by phone, the individual taking the call should remain calm, respond to the caller in a calm tone in order to obtain important information to complete the bomb threat form located near the telephone in the visitors center. Church management may assign a search team using usher personnel to search any area or room. Using usher personnel to search is a rapid approach and causes little disturbance. The best search technique is the two person searching team. This approach allows both team members to do a quick sweep of a room followed by a systematic approach where one individual searches the upper half of a room while the teammate conducts a sweep of the lower half of the room, including furniture or objects. It is imperative that the search team only search and report. Under no

circumstances should anyone move or touch a suspected object. The identified danger area will be blocked off with a 300 foot clear zone including floors below and above the danger area. A Bomb Threat Checklist can be found in Appendix B.

Crimes against the church happen. Purses are stolen during services, equipment is vandalized, property is destroyed and church facilities are burglarized. Security is the responsibility of every church member. God's resources belong to God and they must be protected. Should a crime against a person be committed during services and it is brought to the attention of an usher or other church management personnel, they must inform the Senior Pastor or Co-Pastor immediately before the Police are called (911). Only in an injury or life threatening situation will the police (911) be called prior to notifying the Senior Pastor or Co-Pastor. In any event, everything possible must be done to protect lives and property. Gather as many facts as possible and complete an incident report form. Appendix C.

There are times when a visitor comes to church and may become disruptive, loud and in some cases abusive to other people attending a service. In these type of situations, an usher may need to step out of character and be very directive. Ushers will need to share an understanding and will need to recognize disruptive characteristics. Ushers may need to give orders, be directive, and may have to take charge when an emergency occurs. The usher is a key ingredient to ensuring Sunday service enjoyment. The usher must be able to respond to the "Where" and the "Who." Ushers are to know

among other things, where the telephones are, the location of fire extinguishers, exits, first aid kits and wheelchairs. Ushers should make every attempt to know the whereabouts of a doctor, nurse, policeman, fire fighter, plumber, electrician or individuals with CPR training who is in the congregation during service times. Ushers have been selected to serve. A popular reference is Psalm 84:10, *“For a day in thy courts is better than a thousand. I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness.”*

MEDICAL EMERGENCIES ON CHURCH GROUNDS

In a church setting, the most likely emergencies will be a church member falling or tripping, a child bumping his/her head on a table or cabinet in the nursery area, or a church attendee fainting. While Church Management must never minimize any type of injury – most of these can be handled easily without outside assistance. If a medical emergency arises during church service, an attempt to identify medically trained personnel to assist is the first priority concurrently with initiating the American Red Cross 3 “C” procedure method of Check, Call, Care.

The Pastor or Co-Pastor must be notified immediately if a medical emergency or injury occurs. An Accident/Injury Reporting Form must be given to the Church Business Administrator as soon as possible after the occurrence. A sample form is shown in Appendix D.

Emergencies sometimes can be recognized by using all hearing, sight, and smell. Emergencies are often signaled by something that catches one’s attention, for example:

- **UNUSUAL SIGHTS:** smoke or fire, broken glass, overturned pot, blood, bleeding.
- **UNUSUAL ODORS:** odors that are stronger than usual, unrecognizable odor.
- **UNUSUAL APPEARANCE OR BEHAVIOR:** difficulty breathing, clutching the chest or throat, slurred, confused or hesitant speech, unusual skin color, sweating for no apparent reason.

When a medical emergency or injury occurs on church property, immediate action may be necessary. Deciding to act is a decision that must be made by the individual who first comes in contact with the medical emergency or injury. There are times when help can't wait and action must be taken. Good Samaritan Laws do protect people helping others in an emergency. The first response must be to seek out trained medical personnel and initiating the American Red Cross 3 "C" approach.

CHECK, CALL, CARE

CHECK: Before you can help the victim, you must make sure the scene is safe for you and bystanders. Ask, is the scene safe? What happened? How many victims are there? Can any bystanders help? Check victim for breathing, pulse, or severe bleeding.

CALL: Call 911 or another emergency number as soon as possible or send a bystander to call 911 if the victim is or becomes unconscious, has trouble breathing, has chest pain or pressure, is bleeding severely, is vomiting or passing blood, has seizures, a severe headache, or slurred speech, injuries to the head, neck or back, or has possible broken bones.

CARE: Always care for LIFE THREATENING emergencies first. Note: Before giving First Aid you must have the victims permission if he/she is conscious. You must tell the victim who you are, how much training you have and how you plan to help. Only then can a conscious victim give you permission to give care. If required and the decision is made to give First Aid care, a First Aid kit is available at the Church Visitors Desk in the lobby, in the Family Life Center, in the Church office supply room, in the

Ministry Center, at the retreat property, and in the Fellowship Hall in the Christian Education Building.

DISASTER PREPAREDNESS MANAGEMENT

HURRICANES

Awareness is perhaps the best preparation for hurricane disasters. While it is true that there are some hurricanes that come up very unexpectedly, most in the Southeastern United States area can be predicted and anticipated. When a hurricane actually strikes an area, the results can be devastating as evidenced by hurricane Andrew in 1992, which caused 84 million dollars in damage.

In order to be adequately prepared for a pending hurricane, the church leadership must be cognizant of warning signals associated with a developing tropical depression disturbance, which can develop into a severe tropical storm. The winds of the storm swirl around a calm center known as the “eye.” When the winds reach a velocity of 74 miles per hour, the storm officially becomes a hurricane. Hurricanes are tropical cyclones; large systems of rotating winds, spinning inward to a low-pressure center. Powered by heat from the sea, they are steered by the easterly trade winds and temperate westerlies. Around their core, winds increase with great velocity, generating violent seas. Moving ashore, they sweep the ocean inward while spawning tornadoes and producing torrential rains and floods. Hurricanes are considered by many to be nature’s most destructive phenomena because of their frequency, size, destruction (Andrew 1992) and cost in human lives.

It is important to know as many facts regarding hurricanes as possible because they are very fickle. They can charge straight ahead hitting a shoreline or they may wobble indecisively sometimes remaining stationary then changing direction. Hurricanes have been known to even do loops before moving on and striking land or dying out at sea. Hurricanes have been known to cause sea waves to reach heights of 50 feet or more. Massive swells that go outward from the center of the storm can produce coastal surges that rip piers from their piling and cause extensive damage to the coastlines, including beachfront property. The official hurricane season is from June to November. August and September are the most common months for hurricane development. The National Weather Service states that hurricanes are classified into categories according to wind velocity.

With higher winds, more damage can be expected. With a category 1 hurricane, the damage is mostly to shrubbery, trees and mobile homes. The winds associated with category 1 hurricanes can reach upward to 74 miles per hour. If the storm reaches at least 96 miles per hour it will be classified as a category 2 hurricane. Hurricane Dora, which hit Jacksonville, Florida in 1964, was a category 2 hurricane. Winds that range between 111 and 130 miles per hour are classified as category 3 hurricanes. With category 3 hurricanes, minor damage to buildings and roofs will occur. Trees and shrubbery will be blown down and flooding is probable with a category 3 hurricane. When hurricanes begin to reach winds upward from 131 miles per hour to 155 miles per hour, almost total destruction of doors and windows in buildings can be expected. This is a category 4 hurricane, which can also cause major structure damage to buildings, along with severe roof damage. Hurricane Hugo, which devastated Charleston in 1989, was a

category 4 hurricane. Once winds reach 155 miles per hour, the damage that a hurricane brings is tremendous. The velocity of these high winds is so severe as to cause catastrophic conditions. A community hit by a category 5 hurricane would suffer greatly. Recovery would take months if not years. One other very important aspect of preparation for hurricane type weather is knowledge regarding “warnings” issued by the National Weather Service over radio and television stations. There are three warnings that churches must be familiar with and must also be ready to take action regarding any of these warnings. The “advisory” gives the location,, wind velocity, speed and direction of the hurricane path. A hurricane “watch” is issued when there is a possible threat that a hurricane may strike in the area. A hurricane “warning” is issued when a hurricane is definitely expected to make landfall. Hurricane winds are dangerous. Hurricanes cause storm surges that can raise the sea level from ten to twenty feet or more which in turn can cause rivers and creeks to overflow,, the result will be flooding in low lying areas. Hurricanes are not fun, they cause grief and destruction. Hurricanes also put an enormous strain on the resources of local governments. Property damage can be devastating and run into millions of dollars. Lives can be lost. It may take years for a church and community to recover from a hurricane. The church staff must maintain a constant vigil when weather conditions are worsening in anticipation of preparing church property to minimize damage. The church may also be called upon to house displaced church members and other during the hurricane storm recovery period.

PROTECTION OF PROPERTY

The basic structures of the church buildings will more than likely survive a hurricane. However, there is a possibility that certain categories of

hurricanes could damage many doors and windows. As much as possible, windows should be measured and plywood pre-cut to fit windows and doors. These should be installed if the hurricane is a category 3 or higher. Buildings and grounds should be surveyed to insure that objects such as trashcans, moveable signs, etc. are either stored or secured in a building. The church should have an ample supply of filled sandbags since heavy rain can be expected with hurricane type conditions.

UTILIZING CHURCH PROPERTY

Should a decision be made by the Pastor to use the Family Life Center Facility for storm recovery purposes, it will be necessary to implement strict definitive procedures regarding the use of this building as a shelter. Issues that must be considered and acted upon are:

- Building capacity (how many can be accommodated)
- Shelter management, including volunteer church members to assist in shelter operations.
- Mass feeding capacity (food types and quantities)
- Separate bunk area of men and women.
- Inventory of supplies on hand prior to storm, what supplies are needed to sustain after storm shelter operations.
- Based on the type and seriousness of the storm recovery effort, a policy and procedure memo will be available for distribution prior to opening the Family Life Center outlining rules and conditions for utilizing the shelter. The facility use memo will be given to all individuals who may use the shelter.

SUPPLIES REQUIRED FOR SHELTER OPERATIONS

There are seven basics that should be stocked and ready for use on church property in the event of a storm or in the event that the Family Life Center is used for a storm recovery operation.

- WATER: Store in plastic containers. Normal consumption of water per person, per day is one gallon.
- FOOD: At least a 3-day supply should be available. Best foods are those that do not require refrigeration, non perishable, ready to eat canned meats and vegetables, high energy foods such as peanut butter, jelly, crackers, granola bars, etc.
- FIRST AID KITS: Kits may be purchased ready-made in various sizes or individual first aid items may be purchased separately.
- TOILETRIES: Soap, toothpaste, toothbrushes, hygiene items, shampoos, toilet paper, towelettes, etc.
- CLOTHING AND BEDDING: Cots, sleeping bags, floor mats, blankets, etc.
- TOOLS AND MISCELLANEOUS SUPPLIES: Paper plates, cups, plastic utensils, battery operated radio and extra batteries, flashlights, fire extinguisher, tool box with tools, plywood sheets, plastic sheeting, masking, duct, and electrical tape, plastic storage container, liquid detergent, disinfectant, bleach, plastic and garbage bags.
- SPECIAL ITEMS: Baby formula, diapers, bottles, powdered milk, games and books.

This list is not all-inclusive.

TORNADOES

It is important to note and list several facts regarding Tornadoes and their damaging effects. Tornadoes are very destructive especially if they touch ground. What is a tornado? The Federal Emergency Management Agency identifies a tornado as a violent windstorm characterized by a twisting, funnel-shaped cloud. It is spawned by a thunderstorm (or sometimes as a result of a hurricane) and produced when cool air overrides a layer of warm air, forcing the warm air to rise rapidly.

Injuries can occur outside as well as inside a building. Collapsing buildings can cause deaths and serious injuries. People who find themselves outside during a tornado may be injured by flying debris or by being uplifted and thrown by the incredible velocity of the wind. Speed of the winds can reach 300 mph, blowing away structures, uprooting trees and overturning vehicles, many of which can become deadly missiles.

Every state within the continental United States can experience a tornado given the right weather conditions. The three main areas of the United States where tornadoes are most likely to occur are the Midwest, Southeast, and Southwest. The states in these areas are at greater risk.

Tornadoes are classified according to the Fujita – Pearson Tornado Scale. The classifications are known as F-0, F-1, F-2, F-3, F-4, and F-5. The mile per hour wind velocity is between a low of 40 mph for an F-0 tornado to a high of 318 mph for an F-5 tornado. The damage caused runs from chimney damage on the low end to homes lifted off their foundations on the high end.

Tornadoes that touch the ground are always dangerous and a potential disaster.

The church must be prepared to react in the event a tornado watch has been issued. Staff must monitor the development of weather conditions and must begin preparing to ensure that buildings are ready. Items that may become flying missiles must be secured.

If a tornado warning is given during service, people in the sanctuary must stay in the building in the main sanctuary. The main sanctuary area of the church offers the best protection in the event of a tornado. A tornado warning means that a tornado has been sighted and may be headed in the direction of the Church.

If a tornado strikes Church property, there may be injuries that require immediate medical care. Ushers and staff will assume control for the purpose of recovery and aid to the injured. Efforts to identify medically trained personnel, policemen and firemen must be a first priority. The Pastor and Co-Pastor will direct recovery operations and assign specific tasks to available ushers and staff. It is important to remain calm, check for the injured, begin first-aid if necessary and follow instructions from the pastors or their designated representatives. If it becomes necessary to go outside after a tornado has passed, be aware of downed electrical power lines and trees.

FLOODS

Floods can be a very devastating disaster. Floods are often misjudged because of their unpredicted force and speed. They can be instantaneous and deadly and cannot be predicted in advance. Many areas around the Church property are susceptible to flooding. One of the first precautions to take is to know the area surrounding church properties, i.e. low lying areas, small creeks, gullies, and culverts. Staff must understand the weather terminology used to describe flooding conditions. The church must maintain a stock of emergency supplies and be prepared for disruptions in electrical, gas or water services. A supply of sandbags (filled) must be on hand and readily accessible along with plastic sheeting. A flash flood warning means flash flooding is occurring or is imminent in a specified area. Personnel should move to safe ground immediately if they are in the announced specific area. An important flood safety precaution is not walking through flowing water. Also, not driving through a flooded area. Stay away from power lines and electrical exposed wires. If outside, watch for snakes. Be alert for gas leaks. In the event the Church has to be evacuated, staff must take as many copies of Church records as possible before evacuation. If time allows, photographs and video of Church property should be taken.

LIGHTNING

Nobody expects an emergency or a disaster that affects them, their employees, or their church. Yet, the truth is that emergencies and disasters can strike anyone, anytime, and anywhere. Lightning has always been a mystery of nature. The electrical discharge between clouds, within a cloud and between clouds and earth can discharge up to 100 million volts of electricity and may reach 60,000 degrees Fahrenheit. Some lightning can be

very dangerous and strike where least expected killing many people who otherwise had no idea a storm was even in the area. Lightning is also the major cause of forest fires. Thunderstorms and lightning often accompany one another. Church staff must be aware of changing weather conditions and pay particular attention if lightning has been noted in the area. If a severe thunderstorm with lightning hitting the ground, occurs during a worship service, people must be prepared to remain indoors, away from windows. Doors should be opened to equalize indoor and outdoor atmospheric pressure. Inside a building is the best shelter, do not use phones unless it is an emergency, and try not to touch metal. Staff must disconnect all electrical items, especially computers. If someone is stuck by lightning, they should be treated with CPR and 911 called for emergency assistance.

HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

Because our church is located adjacent to East/West Interstate 10, we are vulnerable to the harmful effect of an accidental release of a hazardous material. Substances in a liquid, gas or solid form can cause serious illness or death. Staff will notify state and local officials immediately should an accident involving hazardous material occur near or on church property. Under no circumstance will church staff approach an accident area unless otherwise directed by emergency officials who are prepared to provide timely, accurate information and instruction. It is imperative that their instructions be heeded. It may be necessary to evacuate the church in the event of a HAZMAT (hazardous material) incident. The Pastor or Co-Pastor will assess the situation and make the decision to evacuate the Church buildings.

TECHNOLOGICAL EMERGENCIES

The loss or interruption of a utility service, power source, information system or critical equipment needed to keep the Church service going or the Administration function of the Church operating is a technological emergency and must be planned for. Critical operation must be identified and back-up systems available to continue normal operation. Staff must ensure that key safety and maintenance personnel are thoroughly familiar with all building systems. Security and alarm systems must be checked and serviced as required by the maintenance manuals. If possible, back-up systems must be in place for the sound system and the lighting system.

In the event that it becomes necessary to move the computer off site due to an evacuation order, all computer data will be backed-up prior to putting the computer hardware into plastic bags for removal from the building. Duplicate as many back-up copies of the server data as possible. Back-up diskettes will be secured in a metal container and given to the Pastor or to the staff member designated by the Pastor. As many hard copy records as possible will be boxed and moved off site if time permits. Administrative staff is responsible for implementing the recovery of all computer data after the emergency event.

INSURANCE

The cost of insurance for a Church the size of Evangel Temple is approximately \$45,500.00 each year. Churches, like a business entity, are faced with a number of issues that create daily challenges. These challenges include labor costs, budgets, employee safety, safety of Church attendees',

government regulations, and unexpected situations and problems. Why have insurance? Loss control is an organized and continuous effort to help lessen the possibility of unforeseen losses and the impact of those that do occur, whether from fires, electrical surges, burglary, lawsuits, or injuries. So, even though a Church may have insurance, loss control is what keeps premiums under control. However, there are situations that occur where a church insurance policy may not be sufficient to cover a particular situation. For that reason it is important to review the total and complete insurance coverage. Churches must look at premises; liability for injuries on church property. This is not limited to slips and falls but could also include improper storage of goods, lack of adequate housekeeping, storing of chemicals, just to name a few. Insurance for crime against property such as burglary, robbery, and theft of church property should be adequate to cover anticipated losses.

Insurance coverage for employee dishonesty must be considered even though a Church may think it could never happen. Many churches have shut down due to sophisticated bookkeeping and computer fraud. Having controls can minimize employee crime. Controls such as the two-signature requirement for issuing checks is a good example that is currently used by Evangel Temple. Another control that staff must continue is “Tally Sheet”, the form is used for accounting and control for processing money received by the church.

Fire Protection insurance is very important and should be reviewed every six months. Loss Control Mitigation in this area can include fire protection

sprinkler systems, fire extinguishers, smoke detectors and flammable liquid storage and use procedures.

There are a number of insurance options and endorsements available depending on what a church feels it requires for total and adequate protection. “Directors and Officers Liability” and “Property of Others” are two that churches should consider.

Insurance is a very important and necessary aspect of Church operation. It should be taken seriously. Church leadership should meet with the insurance agent at least once each year to review all policies held by the church.

CONCLUSIONS AND FINDINGS

The first and perhaps the most significant conclusion reached as a result of this project is that I may have taken on too many subject areas for inclusion in one policy manual. Safety, security, disaster preparedness are topics each demand a manual. The very nature of the topics are such that a fire or other emergency event could have a devastating impact on the Church. That being said, I did enjoy the research and also the attempt to reflect on my active duty time in the United States Air Force and also the time I was employed by the American Red Cross. Both organizations offered me the opportunity and challenge to work in areas that are addressed in this manual. Information obtained from discussions with experts in fire safety, security, and insurance was a valuable experience which I’m confident will lead to a

permanent networking relationship for future consultations. I believe the effort will serve me to the degree that I will be able to better serve my God and my church.

I discovered that there is considerable information available on emergency management and also on safety, security, disasters and medical emergencies. This information is available to assist the individual homeowner, business owner, large and small, as well as church leadership in preparing for and managing emergencies. I encourage church leadership to seek out and establish a reference library with this type of information. It could be handbooks published by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), a brochure by the American Red Cross (ARC), a flyer from the local police and fire departments, or a manual produced by the Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearm Agency (ATF). Insurance companies also offer an array of items to assist churches in prevention, mitigation and recovery from disasters and emergencies. I would also recommend that church leadership obtain a copy of Richard Hammer's publication on Risk Management, "Risk Management Handbook for Churches and School", publisher, Christian Ministry Resources, P.O. Box 1098, Matthews, NC 28106.

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APPENDIX A

FIRE AND SAFETY CHECK LIST

	Yes	No	NA
• Are smoke detectors installed and functioning properly?	___	___	___
• Are smoke detector batteries regularly replaced?	___	___	___
• Are fire extinguishers in place and serviced regularly?	___	___	___
• Is the automatic sprinkler system tested?	___	___	___
• Are flammable liquids stored in appropriate containers?	___	___	___
• Are “No Smoking” signs posted?	___	___	___
• Are Fire Evacuation Maps posted in visible locations?	___	___	___

APPENDIX B

BOMB THREAT CHECK LIST

Exact time of call: _____

Exact words of caller: _____

QUESTIONS TO ASK

1. Where is the bomb to explode? _____
2. Where is the bomb? _____
3. What does it look like? _____
4. What kind of bomb is it? _____
5. What will cause it to explode? _____
6. Did you place the bomb? _____
7. Why? _____
8. What is your address? _____
9. Where are you calling from? _____
10. What is your name? _____

CALLER'S VOICE (circle)

Calm	Disguised	Nasal	Angry	Broken
Stutter	Slow	Sincere	Lisp	Rapid
Giggling	Deep	Crying	Squeaky	Excited
Stressed	Accent	Loud	Slurred	Normal

If voice is familiar, whom did it sound like? _____

Any background noise? _____

Person receiving call: _____ **Date** _____

Telephone # call received at? _____

**APPENDIX C
CRIME REPORT**

DATE _____

EVANGEL TEMPLE ASSEMBLY OF GOD CHURCH

Location (FLC) _____ FH _____ MB _____ Maint. Garage _____

Victim: Staff Member Visitor

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: residence _____ Office: _____

Time of incident: _____ Type of incident: _____

Description of incident: _____

Injuries sustained: _____

Medical treatment required? YES NO

If yes, where? _____

Other remarks _____

Names of witnesses: _____ Phone: _____

_____ Phone: _____

Report taken by: _____

Police on site? YES NO

APPENDIX D

EVANGEL TEMPLE ASSEMBLY OF GOD CHURCH ACCIDENT/INJURY REPORTING FORM

Date submitting form: _____

Date of accident or injury: _____

Ministry department submitting report: _____

Name of individual submitting report: _____

Name of individual injured: _____ Age: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone number: _____ Cell: _____

Type of injury: _____

Narrative description of accident or injury:

NOTE: Report of accident or injury must be reported ASAP to the Senior Pastor, Co-Pastor, or Church Business Administrator. Written report must be submitted after initial notification of accident or injury.