Lakehills United Methodist Church

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Emergency Preparedness Plan

Updated May 2018

Charge: Lakehills UMC

District: Hill Country

Conference: Rio Texas

Jurisdiction: South Central

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Introduction

The goal of this document is to provide answers and directions for what to do in most emergency situations. There is no way to prepare fully for all possible emergencies, but this document should provide a plan that will work or can be amended to work for most situations.

This plan will answer questions such as who is in charge during an emergency. Where and when should we evacuate? What do we do after an emergency?

At the conclusion there will be a list of recommendations for the church to consider and a proposed timeline to implement these suggestions. As a church we need to decide which of these recommendations we will put in place, and how they will be implemented and when.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Leadership Phone Numbers** | | |
| **Name** | **Home Phone** | **Cell Phone** |
| Church Office | (830)751-2404 |  |
| Pastor Celia Halfacre |  | 512/564-0686 |
| Scott Maderer |  | 210/862-3978 |
| Jack Trenkelbach | 830/510-4697 | 210/215-2085 |
| Risé Martin |  | 210/215-9630 |
| Samantha Simonis (SPRC Chair) |  | 210/442-9725 |
| Jackie Blakemore(Trustees Chair) |  | 210/414-3387 |
| Ruby Miller (Finance Chair) | 830/510-4470 |  |
| Kris Fett (Treasurer) |  | 210/414-9419 |
| Gerrie Eccles (Office Manager) |  | 979/215-6722 |
|  |  |  |
| Rev. John Wright |  | 512/541/5121 |

When to Evacuate

Depending on the situation at hand, there may be situations which will require the evacuation of any or all of the buildings on the Lakehills UMC campus.

Possible situations include:

Fire All persons need to evacuate the buildings during a fire. Regardless of the size of the fire, all persons should evacuate to one of the designated gathering areas.

Hazardous Material Spill In the case of Hazardous material spill, as directed by emergency personnel, all persons should evacuate the buildings and promptly leave the area.

Bomb Threat In the event the church receives a bomb threat, our first course of action will be to evacuate the entire campus. Unless otherwise directed by emergency personnel, all persons will meet at one of the designated gathering areas.

Active Shooter If possible, in the event of an active shooter, persons should get out of the building and get away.

As Directed by Emergency Personnel

In the event that we have emergency personnel or first responders on our property, all persons should follow their directions, including instructions to evacuate.

Evacuation Routes

Regardless of where people have gathered, when the need arises to evacuate, all people need to proceed to the nearest exit possible.

Sanctuary There are exits in the Narthex to the covered walkway and the parking lot. There are also 2 exit doors in the choir rooms, and 1 exit door through the senior pastor’s office. Each person should use the exit nearest to him or her.

Mission Hall There are exits near the front to the covered walkway, to the parking lot facing the south, and at the back leading to the “man cave.” Again, folks should use the exit closest to their location.

Ed House There are 2 exit doors on the screened in front porch and 2 doors facing east and west in the main room. Again, folks should use the exit closest to their location.

Safe Gathering Places

When evacuation is necessary, it is often necessary that people gather in one or two places at a safe distance from the building. It is important that we all help those who are less mobile to reach those safe places.

Far South East Parking Lot This location offers an area far enough away from the building, without causing people to have to cross the street.

Property Across Street The property across the street (to the South) also provides a location far enough away from the building to be safe and yet close enough that (with help) our congregation members can reach that area in a reasonable amount of time.

The Community Garden This is a last option for us because to get to the garden, the people must cross a busy street, when drivers may or may not be paying attention and emergency personnel are arriving on scene. However, our community garden offers our congregation a location far enough away from the building to be safe and yet close enough that (with help) our congregation members can reach that area in a reasonable amount of time.

The most important thing to remember is that when an emergency arises, we do not want our members to become martyrs for the building. All people are expected to evacuate the building and allow our first responders and professional emergency personnel to do their jobs.

Shelter in Place

In an emergency situation, evacuation may not been an option, or a safe option. In that case, folks are expected to shelter in place.

When to Shelter in Place

Severe Weather Often times in Texas severe weather comes with little or no warning. In such event, there is not time to evacuate and go home. Folks should find a safe location to shelter as interior as possible and free of glass.

Active Shooter It is true that in the event of an active shooter, evacuations may not be entirely possible. In that case, folks should find the safest places available to hide from the shooter or shooters.

As Directed by Emergency Personnel

In the event that we have emergency personnel or first responders on our property, all persons should follow their directions, including instructions to hide.

Where to Shelter in Place

Depending on the situation, one would need to look for different aspects of safety in a place for hiding or sheltering. Below are some suggestions.

Sanctuary In the event of severe weather, the best option for shelter would be the closet and sacristy area behind the actual sanctuary. This, however presents the problem that not too many people can fit in this area. As an alternative, the back of the sanctuary, closer to the narthex will work. Also, the pews can provide cover.

Mission Hall The best options available in Mission Hall are the bathrooms, the pantry room and the storage room.

Ed House The bathroom provides the best option for shelter in the Ed House.

It is important to remember that when sheltering in place each person should remain in his or her sheltering place until it is safe to emerge. The all clear may come from persons in charge or from emergency personnel and first responders. Regardless, it is not always abundantly obvious when an emergency has passed. All persons should remain sheltered until the “all clear” is given.

Persons in Charge

During an emergency, there will be often much chaos and confusion. In any case, it is always good to know who is in charge during an emergency. Below is a list of who will be in charge during an emergency.

The Senior Pastor The first person in charge will be the appointed Pastor in charge. He or she will be the primary person in charge.

The Lay Leader If the pastor is unavailable for any reason, the lay leader will be the person in charge.

SPRC Chair

SPRC Members

Responsibilities of the Person in Charge

Communications This person will be responsible for contacting 911. He / She will also be the primary point of contact with the emergency personnel and first responders when they arrive. She / He will stay in contact and on premises until the emergency situation has completely passed. Following the emergency, as soon as possible he / she must contact our district superintendent and bishop to notify them of the situation (as it seems reasonable to do so).

Delegation This person is the one to delegate needed tasks during an emergency.

Head Count This person needs to make sure all people are accounted for during an emergency.

Exception The only exception to the person in charge list is the child care providers. In the event of an emergency, the nursery workers are responsible for the children in their care. As children are checked in to their care, they maintain responsibility until the “all clear” has been sounded or parents or proper guardians can take custody of their children. Parents must check out with the nursery attendants, however, so that they know the children are safe.

Additional Information about Active Shooters

An Active shooter wants to cause a scene. For the safety of the congregation our hope is to limit that “scene.” Below are some actions that may be helpful to prevent a situation, during a situation or to defuse a situation.

* Look for “new” people whom we have not seen before. Engage them in conversation. It may be possible to get a “feeling” for someone who is potentially dangerous (as opposed to someone looking for a new church home).
* To protect our children and staff from a situation resulting from a custody dispute
  + Make sure nursery workers are aware of any potential situation
  + Make sure nursery doors lock from the inside
* ADD
  + A – Avoid the gunman
  + D – Deny him access
  + D – Defend yourself

* **When emergency personnel and first responders arrive it is extremely important that everybody lies on the ground or floor.** 
  + Remember often first responders do not yet know who is the shooter and who are the victims.
  + Do everything the first responders ask without hesitation
    - They are trying to assess the scene
    - They are trying to save your life
    - They are in danger
* When seeking shelter from an active shooter, try to find a place that can be locked.
  + You want to hide from view entirely
  + You want to deny him / her access to where you are
* In most emergency situations, only the Person in Charge would contact or delegate someone to call 911. THIS IS NOT SO for an active shooter. **In the event of an active shooter, emergency personnel and first responders need as much information as possible. Everyone who can, should call 911 and give as much information as possible to the dispatch operators.**

Medical Emergencies

Above all others scenarios, the most likely emergency for Lakehills UMC would be a medical emergency. During such an event, the person in charge will delegate one person to call 911 and return.

If needed, one of those trained in our congregation may administer CPR or first aid. In the sections below there will be some suggestions for ways Lakehills UMC can be better prepared for medical emergencies.

Lakehills UMC will actively coordinate with our local EMS trainers to offer CPR and first aid classes, and to keep up on new information.

Offsite Emergencies

In the event an emergency occurs during a church event away from our campus, much of the above still applies. The Person in Charge will be the designated sponsor of the event. For instance, if the UMYF are on a mission trip during an emergency, the person responsible for organizing the trip will be the person in charge – using the same declining order as listed above. In addition, the person in charge will be responsible for communicating with the pastor in charge or lay leader and parents (as needed, in a given situation).

Additional Information Regarding Suspicious Packages

* In the event a suspicious package is discovered, below are the steps to follow:
* Report the suspicious package to the person in charge (see page 6).
* The person in charge should assess the package.
* If warranted, evacuate the building and call 911.

Recommendations

Below are some suggestions from the Emergency Preparedness committee and our local law enforcement to help Lakehills UMC become better prepared for an emergency.

* ~~It may be helpful for our firefighters to gain access to the sanctuary building if we redesigned our parking lot so as to include a fire lane~~.
* ~~For youth events, the person in charge should obtain permission to treat forms from all parents. This will allow the person in charge to take a child to the hospital if needed and decisions until the parents can arrive.~~
* To help prevent an active shooter situation, it would be a good idea to have a “greeter training,” so as to help our greeters learn to spot suspicious activity and what to do when they do.
* Currently there is no way to communicate between buildings. We need a way for the nursery, the kitchen and the Ed House to communicate with the sanctuary and each other.
* *~~We need to purchase at least one AED (automated external defibrillator) for the fellowship hall and the sanctuary.~~* 
  + *~~This needs to include the purchase of one additional set of pads and a set of pads that can be used on children.~~*
* *~~We need to have as many people as possible trained in CPR (which includes training on how to use an AED).~~* 
  + *~~We also need to purchase protective masks to allow for the person performing CPR to breath for the affected person.~~*
* We need to have several people trained to administer basic first aid
* *~~We need to purchase an actual first aid kit for the church office and the fellowship hall~~*
* ~~We need to make sure all exits are clearly marked.~~ By each external door, there should be a map of the floor plan with detailed markings to show the evacuation route from that door.
* ~~We need to have fire and evacuation drills at least once a year~~
  + ~~Completed on 10/25/ 2014~~
* Trustees need to discuss adding some kind of locking mechanism to the pantry door and the storage room doors.
* We need another fire drill.
* We need to create a fire lane for the fire department to use, if needed.
* We need to check AEDs to make sure the batteries are still good.
* We need a new drawing of the campus to be placed at all exits.
* Once approved and set in action, this emergency preparedness plan must be reviewed annually and updated with current information as needed. Moreover the congregation should be trained annually on the emergency preparedness plan.

Next Steps:

There are enough suggestions listed in this plan that we cannot possibly attend to all the suggestions in a small number of steps. Below is a suggested time line to implement this plan.

* *~~January 2014 – Purchased 2 defibrillators (1 for each building) and installed~~*
* *~~February 2014 – Present plan to Administrative board for review~~*
* *~~March 2014 – Administrative board votes on the plan~~*
* *~~March 2014 – We are offering our 2~~~~nd~~ ~~CPR training class~~*
* *~~April 2014 – Trustees begin the process of displaying evacuation routes~~*
* *~~May 2014 – Have a “fire drill” during worship (both services)~~*
* ~~2016– Appoint group to research ideas and cost to resolve our inability to communicate between buildings~~
* ~~2015 – Offer another CPR Training class~~
* ~~2016 Offer CPR and First Aid Training class (at least twice a year)~~
* ~~2016– As we begin budgeting for 2017, we need to consider budgeting the cost of equipment to allow communication between our buildings~~
* ~~2015 – Pastor updates emergency plan, present to SPRC. If approved, then present to Admin Council for review and approval.~~
* ~~2016 Pastor updates emergency plan and present to SPRC. If approved, then present to Admin Council for review and approval.~~
* ~~2016 – Schedule with SPRC and MLVFD next fire drill~~
* Schedule 2018 CPR and First Aid Classes with local certified teacher
* Redraw building evacuation routes to allow for new Mission Hall building
* Ensure there is a means of communication between buildings

Discoveries from Fire Drills:

2014

* ~~Need a larger fire extinguisher (at least 3 shots) in the chancel area, under the pulpit.~~ 
  + ~~Reported to trustees in January 2015 meeting. Action item has been assigned.~~
  + ~~Fire extinguisher has been replaced with a full sized extinguisher~~
* ~~It was recommended by the MLVFD that we not evacuate to the community garden unless we absolutely have to do so. In the case of a fire or other emergency, drivers are likely to be distracted and not looking for pedestrians.~~ 
  + ~~Emergency plan has been updated with this information in January 2015~~
* The choir chose to evacuate through the narthex doors with the congregation, as the stairs presented a mobility challenge for them. We need to evaluate the evacuation route for those who are in the chancel area.
  + ~~Will be taken to SPRC in February 2015 meeting~~
  + ~~Will ask Trustees to evaluate options to make the chancel area more accessible~~
  + Currently we have a temporary ramp into and out of the chancel area. The trustees have plans to install a permanent ramp at a later date.