



Are you prepared?

Recently I attended a “**Basics of Church Security**” Workshop for area churches in Northwest Ohio. I was very encouraged by the number of congregations and ministers present. In view of the several recent church tragedies, I thought I would post some of what I learned in this month’s Ohio Messenger.

- The **myth** that “something like this could never happen here or at our church”, is no longer a myth! Our churches are under attack, be prepared.
- **Consult** your Church Insurance Policy Agent for materials and perhaps personnel who can help you develop a “What If” Plan. Install cameras (most intruders do not want to be seen) and they act as a deterrent.
- **Develop** a security team and make sure many are visible to the eye.
- Limit the number of **doors** open for public access, but keep in mind local and national fire codes requires that individuals be able to get out in case of emergency.
- Main access doors should be **monitored** throughout the service (know who’s coming and going).

Though there are many acronyms to help people be aware that danger is present, keep it short and simple. Many of us are familiar with the term “**ALICE: Alert, Lockdown, Inform, Counter, Evacuate**”, there are others: “**RHF: Run, Hide, Fight**” and “**ADD: Avoid Attacker, Deny Access, Defend Your Life**”. You have heard the words, “watch as well as pray”, today’s times also requires us to have someone watching with their eyes open as others are praying!

Please know, the above information should not be a substitute for attending a live training seminar. Better yet, contact your local Public Service Department for ways that your individual congregation can be prepared if such a horrific tragedy occurs among your “Faith Community”.

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