



CHURCH SECURITY TEAMS

PRESENTED BY SAM HODGES AT THE
FREE WILL BAPTIST
LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE
DECEMBER 8, 2015



Church Security Seminar

Presented at the Free Will Baptist Leadership Conference
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Church Security Teams

The B.L.U.F. (Bottom Line Up Front)

- + There is not a “one-size-fits-all” for church security teams. Each church must decide what will work best for them.
- + Desired End State: every Free Will Baptist church needs a plan to deal with dangerous or emergency situations should they occur.

Scriptural Basis for Security

- + Nehemiah 4:9—Nevertheless we made our prayer unto our God, and set a watch against them day and night, because of them.
- + Matthew 10:16—Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves.
- + Luke 22:36—Then said he unto them, But now, he that hath a purse, let him take it, and likewise his scrip: and he that hath no sword, let him sell his garment, and buy one.

- + Luke 22:37—For I say unto you, that this that is written must yet be accomplished in me, And he was reckoned among the transgressors: for the things concerning me have an end.
- + Luke 22:38—And they said, Lord, behold, here are two swords. And he said unto them, It is enough.

“The true way to meet opposition is two-fold—prayer and prudent watchfulness. ‘Pray to God, and keep your powder dry,’ is not a bad compendium of the duty of a Christian soldier. “ —MacLaren’s *Commentary on Nehemiah*

**** A Security Team: A Ministry of the Church ****

Historical Examples

The Federal Bureau of Investigation describes “mass murder” as four or more murders occurring during the same incident, with no distinctive period of time between the murders. Typically, but not always, these events involve a single location where victims are killed in an ongoing incident. Using this description, the following recounts mass murders at churches on U.S. soil since 1960. The number of incidents where one, two, or three people have been killed or seriously wounded in church settings has escalated over the past 50 years and numbers in the hundreds.

September 15, 1963—16th Street Baptist Church, Birmingham, Alabama. Domestic terrorists planted a concoction of dynamite on a timer, which exploded under a street-side stairwell at the church. An 11-year-old and three 14-year-old girls were killed.

June 22, 1980—First Baptist Church, Daingerfield, Texas. A gunman attacked the Sunday morning service, coming through the sanctuary doors, yelling “This is war!” and firing into the congregation. He killed a seven-year-old girl, an adult woman, and three adult men in the shooting, which lasted barely a minute.

March 10, 1999—New St. John Baptist Church, Gonzales, Louisiana. On a Wednesday, an estranged husband with a gun killed his wife’s mother at her home then drove to the church, where he walked into the evening service. When the gunman’s two-year-old son said, “Daddy,” the gunman said, “Boy, don’t call me Daddy now,” and killed him. He then killed his wife and a young man sitting nearby.

September 15, 1999—Wedgwood Baptist Church, Fort Worth, Texas. A man, distraught over his father’s death, drove to what appeared to be a random location choice where a See You at the Pole celebration

rally was being held. He shot his first victim while walking in the lobby doors, asking, “Is this where that (expletive deleted) prayer meeting is going on?” He killed two seminary students, a member of the church staff, and four teenagers before taking his own life.

March 12, 2005—Living Church of God, Brookfield, Wisconsin. Angry at his pastor’s sermon, a man left the Sunday morning service and came back shooting. He killed the pastor and six others before killing himself.

August 28, 2005—Sash Assembly of God Church, Sash, Texas. A neighbor of the church walked up to a deacon in the parking lot, whom he shot and killed. He then shot and killed the pastor who was standing nearby. As he fled the scene, he shot and killed two women who had stopped on a road to check their horse trailer.

May 21, 2006—Ministry of Jesus Christ Church, Baton Rouge, Louisiana. An estranged husband attacked his wife in church, killing four others as he stormed into the service. He kidnapped his wife out of the church and killed her at another location. He also shot and critically wounded the pastor.

December 9, 2007—YWAM (Arvada) and New Life Church (Colorado Springs), Arvada and Colorado Springs, Colorado. A young man posted a suicide diatribe on the Internet stating, “Christian America, this is YOUR Columbine.” He then killed a young man and woman at a YWAM training facility, continuing to New Life Church, where he killed two teenage sisters before being stopped by church security.

Examples taken from *Mass Murder at U.S. Churches: A History* by Carl Chinn.

Recent Examples

Man Opens Fire with Shotgun in Church, Knoxville, TN—May 25, 2015

A gunman bursted into a Knoxville church and opened fire with a shotgun while children were performing a production of “Annie,” killing one and wounding eight. No given motive or reason for the shooting.

Hartford, CT—May 24, 2015

Dr. Augustus Sealy, 54, who leads First Church of the Nazarene, was shot outside the church. The victim was placing flags in front of First Church of Nazarene in honor of Memorial day when he was shot three times, police said. He was shot twice in the right leg, and once in the left shoulder, police said. Members

of the church confirmed the pastor, Augustus Sealy of Shrewsbury, Massachusetts, underwent surgery after the incident Sunday morning. Sealy, 54, is in stable condition, police said. Ironically, today was his five-year anniversary as pastor.

Shooter Suspect Kills Nine in Emanuel AME Church, Charleston, SC—June 17, 2015

Dylann Roof, 21, of Lexington County is accused of killing nine people during a Bible study inside Emanuel AME Church on Wednesday night. A witness said Dylann Roof sat inside the church for about an hour before he stood up and started shooting. Eight people reportedly died inside the church and a ninth died at the hospital. According to authorities, six of the victims were female, and three were male. The shooter was arrested and booked into the Sheriff Al Cannon Detention Center on Thursday evening after being arrested at a traffic stop in North Carolina. The Justice Department Civil Rights Division and the FBI are conducting a hate crime investigation into the shooting.

Suspect Shoots Three Members in East Selma Alabama Church, Selma, AL—September 20, 2015

Police authorities reported that James Junior Minter, 26, is being held without bond in the shooting of his girlfriend, his infant son and a pastor who tried to intervene Sunday morning. According to police and witnesses, Minter opened fire during church service at Oasis Tabernacle Church in East Selma, Alabama. Minter shot his girlfriend in the face and a one-month-old boy, was shot in the hand. Pastor Carswell, of Oasis Tabernacle Church, was shot in the leg while trying to grab the weapons from Minter. According to officials victims are in stable condition.

News stories adapted from: www.watchmansecurityconsulting.com/tag/church-shootings/

Statistics

The following statistics reflect Deadly Force Incidents (DFI) at faith-based organizations in the United States (including abductions and attempts, suspicious deaths, suicides, and deadly force intervention/protection). The data is compiled from 1/1/1999 through 5/4/15.

	number	%
Total DFI (Deadly Force Incidents)	1018	
Number of DFI where attack resulted in death of others	341	33.50%
Total known (generally accepted as known) attack triggers	802	
Domestic Spillover (Domestic relationship violence that found it's way onto ministry property and resulted in a DFI)	136	16.96%
Personal Conflict (disagreement between 2 or more non-domestic-related people that erupted into a DFI)	102	12.72%
Robbery	201	25.06%
Gang related (Gang or potential gang related that included drugs are in drugs category). It is reasonable to assume many of the PC and robbery cases were gang-related as well, but cannot be confirmed.	81	10.10%
Confirmed drug related	20	2.49%
Confirmed mental illness	85	10.60%
Religious Bias (against any form of religion)	48	5.99%
Random and other (including rare triggers)	129	16.08%
Number of DFI's occurring based upon the top three known single issues triggers (Domestic Violence, Personal conflict and robbery)	439	54.74%

Total Incident Weapons Known (some more than one weapon)	1051	%
Gun	604	57.47%
Knife (or other stabbing weapon)	173	16.46%
Auto	49	4.66%
Explosives (includes Molotov Cocktails)	59	5.61%
Other (poison, beating, hanging, fire, various objects)	166	15.79%

Victim Statistics (not including suicide or attacker killed in action)

Total killed and injured	1049	
Killed	442	42.14%
Injured	607	57.86%
Male victims (killed)	287	64.93%
Female victims (killed)	155	35.07%

	number	%
Aggressor Statistics		
Total known (even if known only by description) aggressors	1018	
Male	930	91.36%
Female	88	8.64%
Affiliated (member, past member, employee, volunteer) with ministry	232	22.79%

Incident Statistics

Occurred inside the building	310	30.75%
Occurred outside on ministry property or activity location	698	69.25%
Occurred during event	396	39.76%
Occurred in off hours	600	60.24%
Single attacker	588	72.50%
Multiple attackers	223	27.50%

Total DFI Stats by Year

Year	Total deaths (includes homicide, suicide, unsolved cases, and aggressors killed in action)	Total Incidents
1999	22	10
2000	9	6
2001	4	6
2002	11	9
2003	12	9
2004	3	4
2005	19	10
2006	30	27
2007	39	41
2008	50	64
2009	54	108
2010	51	102
2011	50	107
2012	76	139
2013	45	132

2014	74	176
2015	27	68
Total DFI deaths since 1/01/1999	549	1018

Attacks by Denomination (Note: Does not specify branches of major denominations)

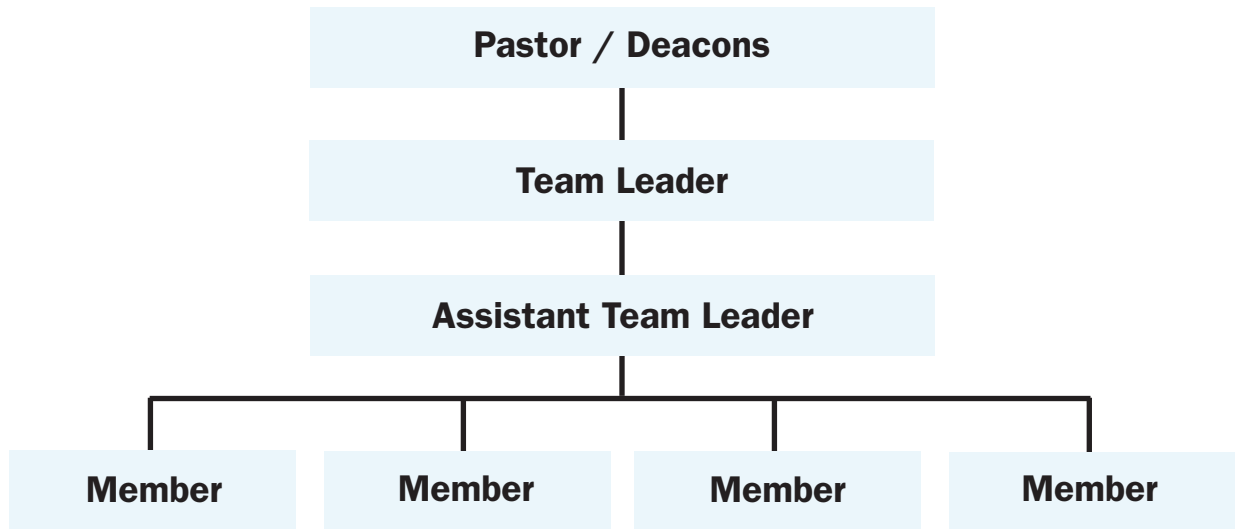
Denomination	Number of incidents	Percentage
Baptist	227	22.3%
Non-denominational	219	21.5%
Catholic	148	14.5%
Methodist	73	7.2%
Lutheran	41	4.0%
Presbyterian	34	3.3%
Parachurch organizations	33	3.2%
Episcopal	25	2.5%
Church of God / COGIC	25	2.5%
Mormon (LDS)	24	2.4%
Church of Christ	21	2.1%
Christian Church	17	1.7%
Pentecostal	17	1.7%
Jewish	17	1.7%
Islamic	14	1.4%
Foreign Ethnic	14	1.4%
Christian Orthodox	12	1.2%
Assembly of God	12	1.2%
Nazarene	8	0.8%
7th Day Adventist	5	0.5%
Unitarian	4	0.4%
Jehovah's Witness	4	0.4%
Evangelical Free	3	0.3%
Foursquare	3	0.3%
Buddhist	3	0.3%
Scientology	1	0.1%
Other	13	1.3%

Security Team Considerations

- + Be aware of state and local laws before putting a team together.
- + Church leadership (pastors and deacons) should be the approval authority of all members of the team.
- + Size of team should be determined by:
 - Size of the church
 - Number of qualified individuals available (choose quality over quantity)
- + Teams should be put together with the following if available:
 - Police officers (arrest authority, training, local knowledge)
 - Military (training, trained to deal with stressful situations)
 - Civilian firearms instructors or those with extensive firearms training
 - Civilians with concealed weapons permits
- + The identity of team members should not be disclosed to church members. However, church members should know the church has a security team.
- + Head usher should know who the team leader is in order to pass along any security concerns identified by himself or the greeters (first line of defense).
- + Team leader would then address the situation with other team members as necessary.
- + Local law enforcement agencies should be made aware of:
 - Presence of a church security team
 - Pictures of its members
 - Protocols of the team
 - ID cards or other identifying markings / tags
- + One size does not fit all for church security teams. Each church must decide what will work best for them.

****Not Barney Fife and John Rambo****

Recommended Chain of Command



Security Team Considerations

- + Member of the church
- + Attends and is faithful to the church
- + Solid Christian testimony
- + Has a concealed weapons permit
- + Passes pistol qualification semi-annually or annually
- + Possesses other required certification or training to carry a firearm at church (state dependent)
- + Demonstrates the ability to control himself and remain calm during stressful or tense situations
- + Not on mind-altering medications or any other medications where judgment could be impaired

Note: Failure to uphold the above qualifications should mean possible removal from the team.

Recommended Team Positions

Team Leader

- + Most qualified individual available
- + Responsible for team training
- + Ensures all members maintain their qualifications

Team Leader (continued)

- + Makes security recommendations to church leadership as needed (security upgrades, new team members)
- + Depending on leadership, could be solely responsible for approving and appointing team members
- + Responsible for maintaining and updating the church's security plan as needed
- + Keeps and updates team member training records
- + Schedules required training for security team
- + Coordinates and ensures all security personnel are in place during services and events
- + Liaison between team and law enforcement during incidents
- + Coordinates evacuation of church members during incidents

Assistant Team Leader

- + Second most qualified individual available
- + Assists in team training and scheduling
- + Makes recommendations to church leadership as needed (i.e security upgrades, new team members)
- + Assists in maintaining and updating the church's security plan as needed
- + Responsible for the team in the absence of the team leader
- + Responsible for controlling the team during incidents

Team Member

- + Covers assigned sector
- + Makes recommendations to team leader about security updates or improvements he identifies
- + Takes orders/directions from team leader or assistant team leader

Recommended Team Positions

- | | |
|------------------------|----------------------|
| + Active shooter | + Media procedures |
| + Suspicious person(s) | + Natural disasters |
| + Medical emergencies | + Fire |
| + Disturbance | + Suspicious package |
| + Protesters | + Bomb threat |

Recommended Service Protocol

- + All entries to the church are locked except for the main door once the service has started (if this does not violate fire code).
- + Team member sweeps the parking lot once the service has started.
- + Team members are in their assigned sectors prior to the service starting.
- + Potential threats are identified and security measures implemented before, during and after the service.

Recommended Training

- + Team members should attend a basic first aid class. This will allow members to handle any basic emergencies that occur.
- + Depending on church budget and team members' experience level, all members should qualify with their firearm semi-annually or, at a minimum, annually.
- + When available, teams should do joint training with local law enforcement agencies.
- + Realistic scenarios should be conducted at church so all members can go through responsibilities and roles should an incident occur.

Pistol Qualification Examples: Stationary Drills

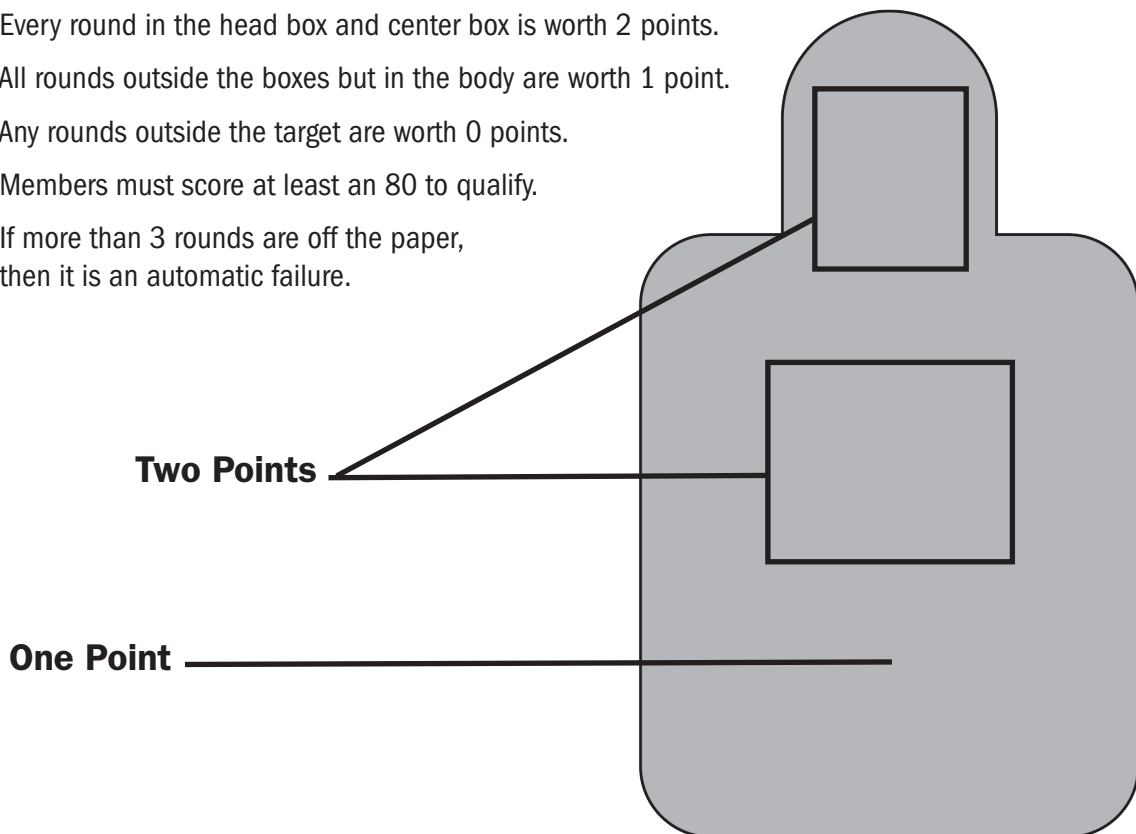
Yard Line	Rounds	Position	Weapon Location	Drill	X's	Time	Total Rounds
10	2	Standing	Holster	Controlled Pair	1	5 sec	2
10	3	Standing	Alert	Failure to Stop	1	4 sec	3
7	2	Standing	Alert	Hammered Pair	2	3 sec	4
7	3	180 Turn	Holster	Failure to Stop	2	5 sec	6
7	2	90 Turn	Holster	Hammered Pair	1	5 sec	2
5	2	Standing	Holster	Hammered Pair	1	5 sec	2
5	3	Standing	Alert	Failure to Stop	2	4 sec	6
					Total Rounds		25

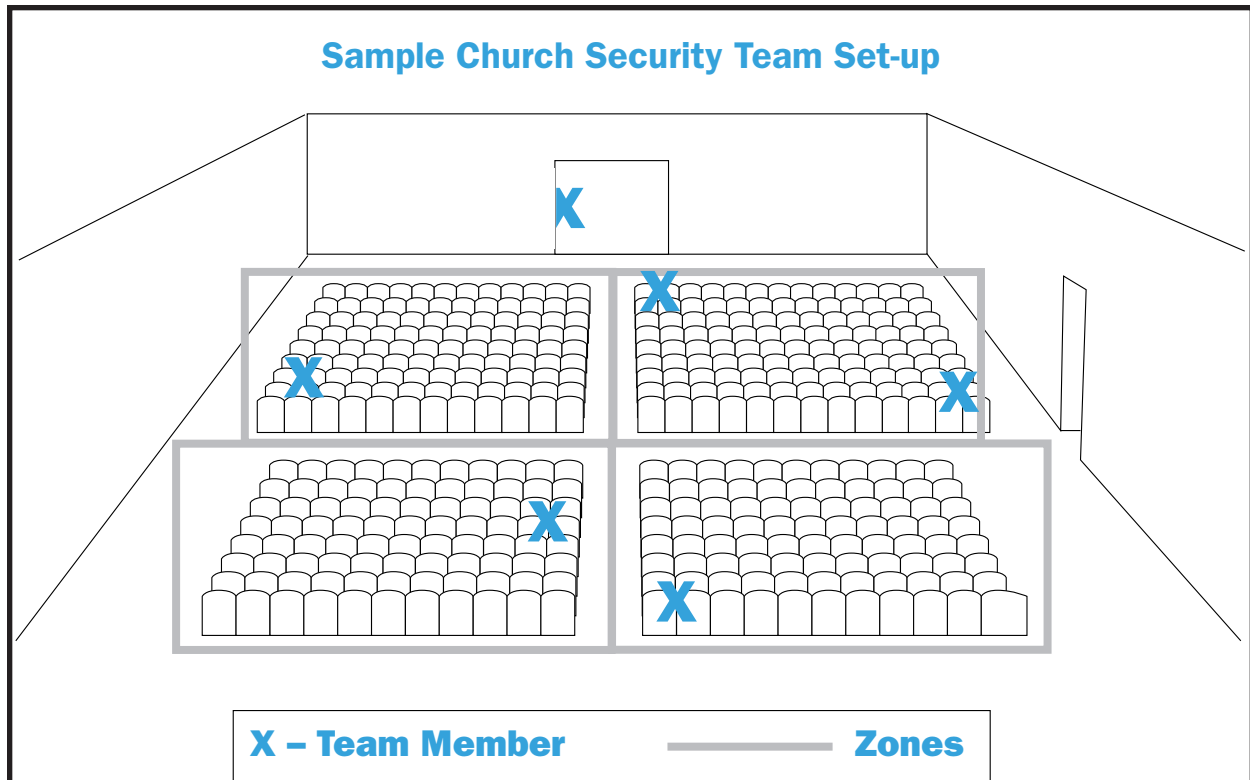
Pistol Qualification Examples: Action Drills

Yard Line	Rounds	Position	Weapon Location	Drill	X's	Time	Total Rounds
10-0	2	Moving	Holster	Controlled Pair	1	5 sec	2
10-0	3	Moving	Holster	Failure to Stop	1	5 sec	3
7-0	2	Moving	Holster	Hammered Pair	2	5 sec	4
7	3	Seated 180 Turn	Holster	Failure to Stop	2	5 sec	6
7	2	Seated 90 Turn	Holster	Hammered Pair	1	5 sec	2
5	2	Seated	Holster	Hammered Pair	1	5 sec	2
5	3	Seated 90 Turn	Holster	Failure to Stop	2	5 sec	6
					Total Rounds		25

Pistol Qualification Scoring

- + 50 Rounds Total: 25 rounds stationary drills / 25 rounds moving drills
- + Each round is worth 2 points.
- + Every round in the head box and center box is worth 2 points.
- + All rounds outside the boxes but in the body are worth 1 point.
- + Any rounds outside the target are worth 0 points.
- + Members must score at least an 80 to qualify.
- + If more than 3 rounds are off the paper, then it is an automatic failure.





Protecting Your Church Against Violence

By David Roach

On June 22, 1980, members of First Baptist Church in Daingerfield, Texas, were singing “More About Jesus” in the morning worship service when a gunman entered and yelled, “This is war!” Then he opened fire, shooting 15 people and killing five. It was the first mass murder by shooting at an American church.

Sadly, similar acts of violence have occurred at other churches in the years since. In both mass shootings and individual episodes of violence, people continue to die at the hands of violent intruders in houses of worship. Since 1999, when violent episodes at churches and other places of worship began to escalate with alarming frequency, 427 people have died in incidents involving deadly force at faith-based organizations in America, according to church security expert Carl Chinn. During that time, more deadly force incidents have occurred in Baptist churches (135) than in any other denomination.

In the midst of such violence, church safety leaders urge Southern Baptist congregations of all sizes to take preventive measures before it is too late.

“It’s unlikely that any one congregation will face a violent intruder,” Jim Welch, director of property and casualty at GuideStone Financial Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention, told SBC LIFE. “But unfortunately, it’s likely that some will. So at GuideStone we want to equip Southern Baptist churches to . . . be prepared for this event if it ever happens to them.”

GuideStone, which provides property and casualty insurance coverage to churches through a partnership with Brotherhood Mutual Insurance Company, has a church safety toolkit on its website (www.guidestonepropertycasualty.org) to help churches guard against violence and other disasters.

A History of Church Shootings

One of the worst church shootings on record occurred in 1999 at Wedgwood Baptist Church in Fort Worth, Texas. Seven people were killed and seven more injured when a lone gunman entered the sanctuary during a See You At The Pole rally

on a Wednesday night. At the end of the rampage, the gunman sat on the back pew and shot himself in the head.

Though church shootings occurred before 1999, that year marked the beginning of a continuing wave of violence that includes murders and suicides on faith-based properties. Church security specialist Jimmy Meeks called 1999 “the year the dam broke” in terms of church violence.

“In my law enforcement career . . . I’ve never seen so many angry people, and angry people will hurt you,” said Meeks, a police officer in Hurst, Texas, who also travels the country doing church security seminars. “In people there’s a lot of anger, and when you’re angry you just don’t care where you commit your crime.”

Some church violence garners widespread media coverage, like the 2007 shooting at New Life Church in Colorado Springs, Colorado, where two were killed, and the 2009 shooting at First Baptist Church in Maryville, Illinois, where pastor Fred Winters received four fatal wounds to the chest. But violent deaths continue, more than thirty per year, even when there is little national media attention.

In December 2012 alone, the last month for which Chinn had posted records on his website, there were ten violent crimes committed on church property in which deadly force was either used or threatened.

For example, on December 9, 56-year-old Kelvin Adams shot his ex-girlfriend two times as she came out of a morning service at Faith Center Church in Sunrise, Florida. Then he used the gun to commit suicide. The victim survived.

And on December 21, a gunman entered Juniata Valley Gospel Church in Hollidaysburg, Pennsylvania, and shot Kimberly Scott as she decorated the building. Before police cornered and killed the gunman, he killed two other people in a crime spree at multiple locations.

“Every seminar I do I put these statistics before the people,” Meeks said of church crime statistics. “Ninety-nine percent of them will admit that they had no idea this was going on.”

Preventing Violence at Church

After the shooting in Daingerfield, some church attendees lost their faith in God while others suffered nightmares and plotted revenge, said Sondra Martin Hicks, producer and director of a documentary on the east Texas shooting. She added that the divorce rate in the congregation surged following the shooting and urged pastors who want to help their churches avoid such misery to start church security ministries.

“When you watch this film as a pastor, you’ll see that if you risk not doing anything, you’re risking people’s lives forever,” Hicks said.

The documentary, titled “Faith Under Fire,” is the product of more than two years of work and is available for shipping costs at Hicks’ website, www.heartstonepictures.com.

Forming a security ministry team should be a priority at both large and small churches, GuideStone’s Welch said. Ideally, the team should consist of active and retired law enforcement personnel along with carefully selected and trained laypeople, he said. Their duties should be to assess risks, establish a plan for responding to security threats, and make sure the church has adequate insurance coverage to help victims recover if crime occurs, according to Welch.

Churches should check state and local laws and seek legal counsel when evaluating security needs because some states limit who can carry a gun to church and what terms can be used to describe security ministries.

“Though some people may bristle or be concerned when they hear something about a safety and security ministry or safety and security team in a church, frankly security is visible everywhere we go—whether it be to the ballgame or a theme park or whatever,” Welch said. “So a visible, friendly, ministry-minded team is something that can help make visitors as well as members feel welcome and safe.”

Among the security risks that teams should look for are:

- + Entry doors without a greeter to monitor them.
- + Unsecure children’s areas.
- + Doors that remain unlocked during the night where intruders can slip in and hide.

During church activities, security ministry members should watch for suspicious behavior like people leaving at unexpected times, especially if they leave something behind they entered with, people wearing trench coats in hot weather, and people wandering in the parking lot.

Teams should also establish ways to communicate with each other and with church leaders quickly if an intruder

enters, and should have specific plans for how to evacuate or lock down buildings, Welch said.

“Some of these security concerns don’t require a considerable amount of capital outlay to be worked on,” he said. “For example, alerting your Sunday School teachers of an intruder could be as simple as sending a group text message to the teachers on their cell phones. Or evacuating worship centers could be facilitated by [having] the right kind of door latches or moving furniture out of the way.”

Confronting a Shooter

Though having an active shooter in the building is an unlikely scenario for any church, it is important to plan for the possibility, according to Welch and Meeks.

Following protocols rather than improvising a response is one of the best ways to prevent deaths and injuries, Welch said. Among the steps he recommended if a violent intruder enters a church:

- + Alert the entire security ministry team and the police.
- + Evacuate worshipers when possible and lock doors in areas that can be secured.
- + Have trained security personnel approach and incapacitate the intruder.

Additionally, make sure your congregation knows that you have a plan in place to address a violent intruder—as well as what steps you want them to take (including evacuating calmly or seeking shelter).

“You’ve got to go wild on this person that comes in your congregation,” Meeks said of confronting an active shooter. “There has to be a group of men sitting strategically that are just going to go berserk and rise up against this person and go after him.”

Churches that can afford it should hire off-duty police officers or a security company to provide armed security, Meeks said, emphasizing that an armed response is extremely helpful in the event of an armed intruder.

Protect Worshipers

Security should not be the main focus of any church, according to Meeks. But providing adequate security helps create an environment for making disciples—one where people don’t fear violence and where memories of violence don’t hinder them from attending church, he said.

“One reason I am so passionate about this to the point where it’s hard to talk without weeping is that I have witnessed for thirty-two years the misery that violence leaves behind,” he said. “They’re still weeping and still hurting at Daingerfield. It’s been almost thirty-three years.”

He urged churches to protect worshipers and remember that God opposes those who plot violence.

About the Writer: David Roach, a member of Buck Run Baptist Church in Frankfort, Kentucky, is editorial associate for SBC LIFE. This article first appeared in the Spring 2013 issue of SBC LIFE, news journal of the Southern Baptist Convention. Used by permission.

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