

**FIRST PARISH CHURCH OF GROTON  
1 Powderhouse Road**

**CRISIS PLAN**

A Crisis Plan is not meant to prevent an incident from happening, it is in place to help increase the chances of surviving an unexpected and potentially dangerous disruption. By giving people options to manage a crisis it empowers them to take control and lessen the damage.

**SAFETY ALERT**

A Safety Alert is announced when there is a heightened security status due to a perceived danger or threat outside of the building and people are asked to shelter in place. This could be an unexpected severe weather event, a biohazard spill that has occurred on the street or an incident taking place in the adjoining neighborhood to name a few. Once word of the Alert has been received **NO ONE** should exit the building. The Minister or the Administrative Assistant should be in contact with the police department notifying them that the Church is occupied and open communication with the police. This is the only person who should be using their phone. During a Safety Alert no electronic devices may be used. Measures will be taken to alert all members not in the main site (downstairs in the hall or in an adjoining building) that an alert is taking place. Depending on the type of event, doors may be locked and windows may need to be shut. Activity can continue inside the building in a calm and orderly manner. Depending on the incident preparation for evacuation may take place. This continues until the **ALL CLEAR** has been received from the police department and the congregation may then leave the building.

A SAFETY ALERT may last an extended period of time so supplies may be needed to have on hand such as small water bottles, snacks, flashlights, etc.

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### INCIDENT REQUIRING RESPONSE OPTIONS

**Response Options** are used when an incident involving one or more persons, using firearms or other weapons, engage in the act of causing serious harm to others.

The program we use in these situations is A.L.I.C.E. A.L.I.C.E is an acronym for the 5 steps you can use to increase your chances of surviving one of these attacks. A.L.I.C.E. stands for Alert- Lockdown- Inform- Counter and Evacuate. These steps are not designed to be used in sequence.

**ALERT** – is the first notification that you receive that something is happening. This could be an announcement from the pulpit, it could be a scream from the back of the church or it could be the sound of gunfire. As soon as you hear something out of the ordinary, begin to react.

**INFORM** - is a continuation of alert. Begin to inform people around you that something is happening and when possible, call 911 and give the police dispatch any information that you have concerning the event. The more information that comes out of the event the faster the event can end.

The next three steps correlate with an individual's basic instinct to Flight, Freeze or Fight.

**EVACUATE** - if you can safely remove yourself from the danger zone do so as quickly as possible.

EVACUATION - is the #1 goal as it reduces the number of possible victims

RUN – once outside run to cover (buildings, trees, walls, etc) DO NOT run to your car and avoid crossing main roads

**RALLY POINT** – once you are far enough away from the site and feel safe, head to LA Tennis Courts behind the church and go to the Richardson Mees Performing Arts Center Door #14 (these are the glass doors). You will be met by First Responders who will be able to assist you.

**LOCKDOWN** – if your initial option is to stay:

**SECURE THE ROOM** by any means available. Using tables, chairs, bookcases or any other heavy objects, secure the doors so no one can get in to the room.

**TURN THE LIGHTS OUT and COVER THE WINDOWS**– make the room as dark as possible so it appears empty

**SILENCE CELLPHONES AND PAGERS**– do nothing that will attract attention to your space

Once the room is secure look for alternate escapes routes for evacuation

**COUNTER** – if you cannot evacuate and your barricade has been breached use whatever means available to survive.

**WEAPONS** – anything can be use as a weapon, (books, baskets, water bottles, purses, fire extinguisher, hornet spray, etc.)

**DISRUPTION** – aim for the intruder’s head or other sensitive areas on their body to disrupt their attack

**DISTRACTION** – make as much noise and movement as possible

**SWARM** – attack in a group, it is easier to take a person down. Once the intruder is on the ground, keep him there until the police arrive.

**DO NOT PICK UP THE WEAPON** – kick it away from the intruder and place something over it. Make sure the police are aware of it.

Typically an event lasts 5-6 minutes and ends when the intruder has been immobilized and the police have arrived. During that time period you are the First Responder on the scene, by having a proactive plan and practicing it you are more

mentally prepared to make the decisions that will increase your chance of survival.

### **RALLY POINT**

The Rally Point for the Crisis Plan is the Richardson Mees Performing Arts Center at Lawrence Academy. Enter Door #14 (the glass doors) near the Tennis Courts. All people involved in the incident should make their way to the Rally Point as soon as safely possible. EMTs and ambulances will be there to assist anyone that needs medical attention and it is the place where families should reunite. Head counts will be taken and as soon as you are aware that someone is missing notify the Worship Leader. Police and Fire will dispatch to locate the person. For this purpose, it is imperative that EVERYONE check in at the Rally Point. When going to the Rally Point DO NOT take your car or walk in the main road. Remember emergency vehicles are heading to the site and they need clear roadways to get there as soon as possible.

The Police Department will give the ALL CLEAR once it is safe to leave the Rally Point and return to your vehicles. Please follow their directions.

### **MEDIA COMMUNICATIONS**

Emergency situations attract media attention. For that reason, media crisis communications are an important part of emergency response procedures.

All employees and members of the congregation should direct ALL media inquiries to the Fire or Police Departments' media representative. This will help ensure that all media interview the same spokesperson and they receive accurate, identical information. This will also help to relieve stress and pressure to any victims and/or their families.

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### **NOW WHAT?**

While we can't make ourselves safe from all evil and we can pray that it never touches us, we can also do things necessary to prepare for it.

**CREATE A PLAN** – congratulations you have done that!!!

**INFORM YOUR CONGREGATION** – that a plan is in place and it is important to follow it

**CONDUCT PRACTICE DRILLS** – work with the Fire and Police departments to hold practice drills using different scenarios. Repeated drills will help them gain confidence in the plan and therefore will help them remain calm. They will also identify problems within that plan that can be corrected to prevent errors during an event.

**REVIEW YOUR PLAN** – this should be done on a regular basis as members of the congregation come and go and changes to the sites occur.

**OPEN COMMUNICATION** – always keep an open line of communication between yourself, the Fire and Police departments and your neighbors.