

Church Safety & Security

Level 1: Recognize Safety and Security Issues.

1. Acknowledge that safety and security issues exist.

If you have been a part of a church for long, you may naturally overlook some issues that need to be addressed because you have grown accustomed to them. However, if you are new to a church, you may readily recognize some safety and security issues because you are looking at them with fresh eyes. Some church leaders have never knowingly faced security or safety threats and do not see a need to address them. The mindset is often “Something like that could never happen here.” Churches typically wait until a crisis occurs and then deal with it. Church leaders who have experienced safety and security issues look for areas which need to be addressed. The first step in developing a church safety and security strategy is to recognize that your church has some areas of vulnerability. All churches, regardless of size and location, have risks in safety and security areas that can be addressed.

2. Examine seven areas the church needs to P-R-O-T-E-C-T.

The list below is not exhaustive but will provide you with some of the basic areas of safety and security that you should consider. Are you aware of the safety issues related to each area? Are others also aware? Do you have any written policies related to these specific areas? Do you follow the written policies? Do you regularly evaluate and oversee the effectiveness of your policies?

Circle the areas where you think your church might be at risk.

P – Property and Building Safety

- Property inventory
- Fire safety
- Arson prevention
- Preventing slip-and-fall accidents
- Lending your church facilities
- Managing keys to your facilities
- Locking doors
- Lighting outside areas
- Hiring a contractor
- Cold weather maintenance
- Insurance needs

R – Regular Employees and Volunteer Safety

- Employment practices
- Employee training
- Volunteer labor
- Volunteer Screenings
- Supervising activities

- Safe mission travel
- Pastoral counseling guidelines
- Insurance Needs

O – Offerings and Finance Safety

- Financial controls
- Offerings and disbursements
- Documents and records
- Cyber security

T – Troubled Individuals and Security Safety

- Membership discipline policy
- Concealed carry/guns on property policies
- Developing a greeter team
- Developing a security team
- Violence in the church

E – Emergencies and Disaster Safety

- Emergency medical care
- Setting up an automated external defibrillator (AED) program
- Providing temporary shelter
- Disaster relief teams
- Severe weather preparedness

C – Children and Youth Safety

- Nursery safety
- Playground safety
- Youth activities
- Safeguarding against sexual abuse
- Supervision and discipline
- Insurance Needs

T – Transportation and Driver Safety

- Driver screening
- Loaning or renting church vehicles
- Ministry-owned vehicles
- Non-owned vehicles
- 15-passenger van safety
- Vehicle inspection checklist
- Auto accident checklist
- Insurance Needs

Level 2: Form a Safety and Security Team.

1. Pastor identifies biblical foundations for addressing safety and security in the church.

Churches can go to different extremes of safety and security. Some churches become so safety and security conscious that it limits ministry, and they feel more like a fortress than a church. Other churches go to the other extreme and make very little effort to address safety and security concerns. It is best to find an appropriate balance that provides safety and security through your church that still enables your church to minister to people and fulfill the Great Commission. See Appendix A, “Biblical Foundations,” for Scriptures that will help you think wisely and prudently about safety and security as well as balancing a love for neighbors and fulfilling the Great Commission. The pastor should look over these passages to become familiar with them before forming a team.

2. Pastor clarifies the purpose for the team.

The main purpose of the team is to identify and prioritize safety and security risks in the church. The pastor should clarify the purpose of the team for the church before forming the team. See Appendix B, “Safety and Security Situations,” for some questions and scenarios to use with clarifying purpose for the team.

3. Pastor identifies potential team members.

The best team will comprise a diverse group of godly individuals who see things from a variety of different angles and can offer their input based on their background and experience. Below are some potential individuals you might consider for the team.

- Current or retired medical personnel (doctors, nurses, EMT)
- Current, retired, or volunteer firemen
- Current or retired law enforcement officers
- Current or retired military personnel
- Insurance agents
- School administrators
- Other key leaders in your church

Team members are best recruited by personal invitation from the pastor or a church staff member. The pastor should be strategic in selecting those who will serve. In some churches, this may not work depending on church polity. It is always best to follow church polity in forming new teams or committees.

4. Pastor meets with the team to discuss the purpose, biblical foundations, and goals.

Schedule the first meeting time in order to discuss the need for safety and security, biblical foundations, the purpose of the team and some goals for the team. From this point forward the pastor works in collaboration with the team to develop the best possible outcomes. See Appendix C, “Initial Meeting Agenda,” to plan the components of the team’s initial meeting.

Level 3: Assess Safety and Security Issues in Your Church.

1. Identify any existing safety and security policies or procedures that are currently in place.
2. Determine if existing policies and procedures are effective and being followed.
 - Some policies were written long ago and are ineffective because they have not been updated.
 - Even churches with updated policies often struggle to communicate, educate, and equip staff and volunteers regarding how to implement and follow the policies.
3. Conduct a general risk assessment of your church and its ministries.
 - Utilize the Brotherhood Mutual Risk Management *Big Book of Checklists*.
 - You can download it free at <http://www.brotherhoodmutual.com/index.cfm/resources/ministry-safety/publication/big-book-of-checklists/>.
 - This checklist includes a series of questions that will help your team to think through a variety of areas related to church safety and security.
 - Looking at this list can be overwhelming, so guide your group to focus on one area first.
 - Look at the list of broad categories on page 3 in *The Big Book of Checklists*.
 - Ask your team to prioritize the following areas: building and property, children and youth, disasters and emergencies, employees and volunteers, health and wellness, legal and finance, and vehicle and driver.
 - Have them number from 1 to 7 with one being a top priority and 7 being the lowest priority at the time. Just because you choose an area as a 7 does not mean you will not address that risk. It just means that you will not address it immediately.

Some things to consider in prioritizing your list:

- What areas or groups in our church are the most vulnerable?
- If we had a crisis in a specific area, which would be the most damaging to individuals?
- If we had a crisis in a specific area, which would be the most damaging to our church?
- What group or area is most active, potentially increasing the risks?

Compile the group's priorities and then start with the area that the group feels should be the highest priority.

4. Identify issues that need to be addressed.
 - Now that you have identified the highest priority of risk, narrow that area down even further.
 - For an example, let us say that the team selected Children and Youth safety as the top priority. Multiple safety and security issues exist in the children's and youth ministries. *The Big Book of Checklists* lists the following five areas: nursery safety, playground safety, youth activities, safeguarding against sexual abuse, and supervision and discipline. These checklists do not cover everything, but they are a great place to start.
 - Take some time in your meeting to work through the checklists provided. This may require you to visit the nursery area and the playground, and it may require you invite some children's workers or student workers in to help provide insight and feedback.
 - Are there other areas of risk not included in this list that you might need to discuss?

5. Prioritize the issues in the order in which they need to be addressed.

- Now that you have a feel for the areas of greatest risk in the children and youth ministries, take a moment to prioritize your list.
- Add any additional issues that you have identified for your church in this area. Guide the leaders to prioritize the areas of greatest risk from 1 to 5 with one being the greatest risk and 5 being the least risk. Compile the results from your group to clarify the greatest risk you will focus on first.
- For example, let us say that the team identified safeguarding against sexual abuse as the top priority on which to focus. Once you have now narrowed down your risk assessment to a particular area, then you can begin putting some details to your plan.



Level 4: Create Plans to Address Safety and Security Issues in Priority Order.

1. Identify other churches of similar size that have developed safety plans.

- Once you have identified a specific area to focus on, begin working together to put some plans and policies on paper that will guide you toward implementation. Other churches in your area have possibly already developed some policies to address the same kind of safety issues.
- If you do not know other churches in your immediate area of similar size, contact your associational missionary or the Arkansas Baptist State Convention Evangelism & Church Health Team for help in finding similar-sized churches.
- When addressing safety and security in specific ministries, recruit people who currently work in those areas to be involved in this process. For instance, if you are focusing on developing policies and procedures to protect children and youth from sexual abuse, involve the children and youth leaders in that process so they can also have some input. If you are addressing areas related to building and property safety, invite leaders from the Building and Grounds Committee to help you through this process.

2. Gather and review written policies and procedures from other churches.

- Learn from churches who have already plowed some ground in this area. Invite a representative from that church to your meeting to share their process and what they have learned. Ask them for a copy of their policies and procedures.
- Some sample policies and procedures are available online. Ask your insurance company if they have any sample policies and procedures. Examine these different policies and identify the helpful parts that might be applicable to your specific context.

3. Develop customized written policies and procedures for your church.

- Now is the time to begin to develop policies and procedures to fit your local church context. In the area of sexual abuse prevention, MinistrySafe, suggests a five-part safety system. For additional information visit www.ministrysafe.com.
 - Background checks
 - Skillful screening of volunteers
 - Sexual abuse awareness training
 - Tailored policies and procedures
 - Monitoring and oversight
- This process will take some time and will involve some revisions to arrive at the final product. Work together to brainstorm the policies and procedures and develop a broad outline. Enlist different individuals to flesh out different parts of the policy and work together to adjust and correct the policy so that it best fits your church.

4. Consult with attorneys, insurance carriers, and local authorities for additional insight and input.

- After you have developed your policies and procedures, consider enlisting an attorney, insurance agent, and local authorities to review your plans and offer insights.

5. Refine policies and procedures as necessary.

- Review the policies and procedures once again before presenting and implementing plans. Realize that no plan will be perfect, but an imperfect plan is better than no plan at all. You will likely need to make some additional adjustments along the way.

Level 5: Implement Plans for Priority Issues.

1. Present and approve plans through your church as necessary (deacon body, church council, business meeting, staff, other).

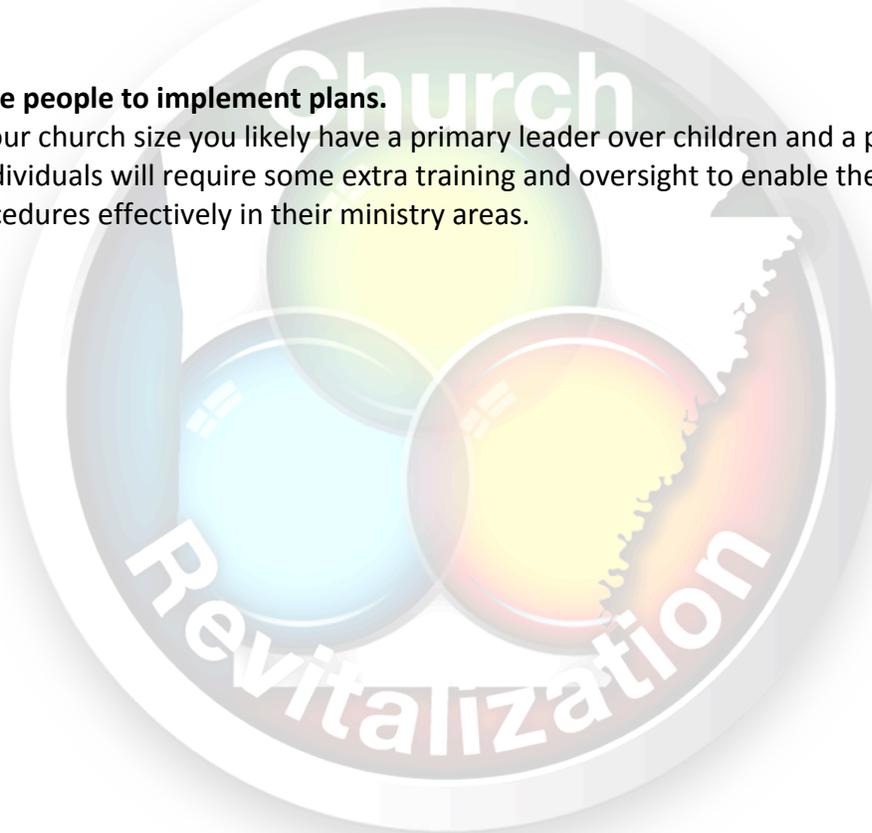
Most churches have some sort of approval process one must go through to make changes. In larger churches staff will often make changes with approval of supervising staff members. Smaller churches will often have to present plans through a deacon body, church council, and/or a business meeting for the plans to be officially implemented.

2. Discuss proposed plans with those most affected by the new policies and procedures.

In light of the fact that the new plans may require significant changes in a particular area of ministry, those most affected will be more likely to cooperate if they are informed in advance of the rest of the congregation.

3. Train appropriate people to implement plans.

Depending on your church size you likely have a primary leader over children and a primary leader over youth. These individuals will require some extra training and oversight to enable them to implement the policies and procedures effectively in their ministry areas.



Level 6: Evaluate and Oversee Policies and Procedures

1. Evaluate and oversee policies and procedures weekly for the first month and make changes as necessary.

This is perhaps the most challenging part of the team's work. Do not expect volunteers (or even staff) to understand and implement the new policies and procedures perfectly the first time. Provide some hands-on oversight for the first month to make sure everyone understands and follows the new policies and procedures. You will probably discover that you still need to make changes which best fit your context.

2. Evaluate and oversee policies and procedures monthly for the next two months and make changes as necessary.

Check with volunteers and staff on a monthly basis just to make sure that they understand and implement the new policies and procedures. Ask if they have any questions or points that need to be clarified. Ask if they have any suggestions for changes in the policies and procedures. (Note: Just because they make suggestions does not mean you will necessarily make those changes, but you can listen, learn and adjust as necessary.)

3. Review policies and procedures quarterly for the next three quarters and make changes as necessary.

After you have made it through the first three months of consistently checking in with staff and volunteers related to the new policies and procedures, you can move to quarterly evaluation.

4. Educate and train appropriate people annually on policies and procedures.

Provide annual training for volunteers and staff. Consider requiring everyone (volunteers and paid staff) to participate in the training even if they were trained in the past. Determine which ministry areas need annual refresher training.

5. Review policies and procedures annually and make necessary changes.

Be willing to evaluate and make changes as necessary to improve your policies and procedures to insure the safety and security of the congregation.

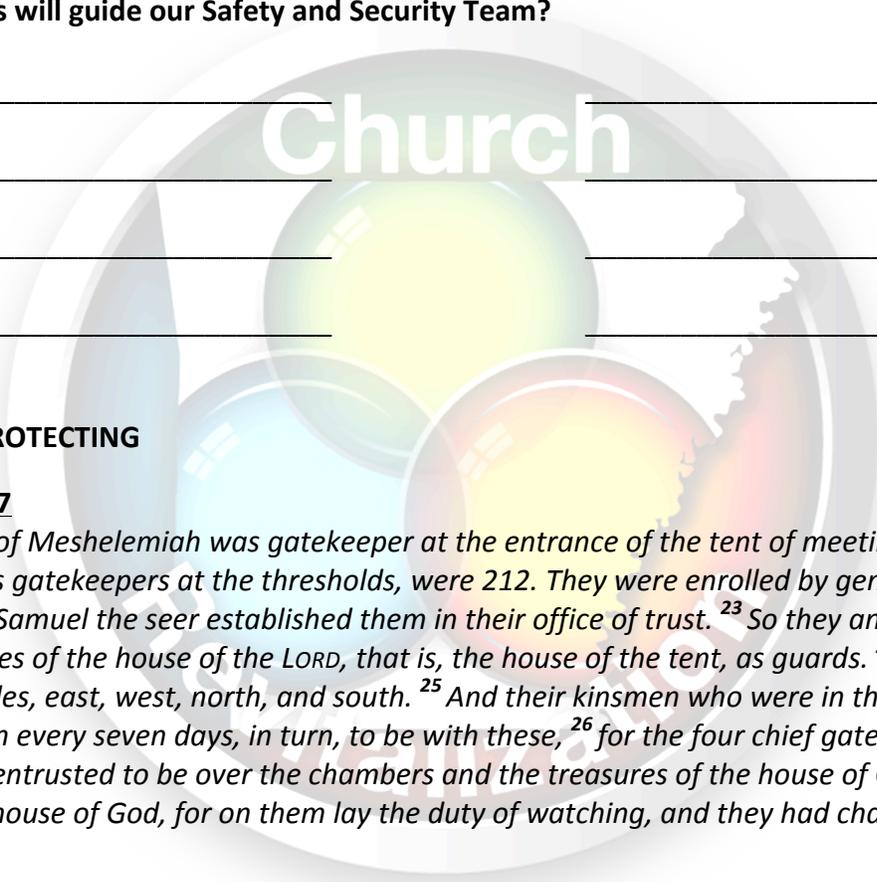
6. Address additional areas of safety and security through the same process until you have appropriately addressed all necessary areas.

The first few times working through this process will be challenging and will take some time. Some areas will require more work and detail than others. Gaining more experience in assessing safety and security risks and developing policies and procedures to mitigate those risks will become easier over time. You and your team will work confidently knowing that you are providing a safe and secure environment that enables your church to continue worshipping together, loving your neighbors, and making disciples of all nations.

Appendix A: Biblical Foundations for Safety

The passages of Scripture below are not an exhaustive list of verses related to establishing a church safety and security ministry, but they will provide a starting ground to help you develop a theological framework for developing this aspect of ministry in your church. The passages listed below are grouped under some broad categories. Your group will likely be familiar with additional verses which you can add to this list to provide additional guidance. Identify a few key passages that will guide you in developing a ministry of safety and security. Remember that balance is key. Developing a safety and security ministry should not hinder your ability to minister and meet needs it should enhance your church and help you meet even greater needs.

Which key passages will guide our Safety and Security Team?



WATCHING AND PROTECTING

1 Chronicles 9:21-27

“Zechariah the son of Meshelemiah was gatekeeper at the entrance of the tent of meeting. ²² All these, who were chosen as gatekeepers at the thresholds, were 212. They were enrolled by genealogies in their villages. David and Samuel the seer established them in their office of trust. ²³ So they and their sons were in charge of the gates of the house of the LORD, that is, the house of the tent, as guards. ²⁴ The gatekeepers were on the four sides, east, west, north, and south. ²⁵ And their kinsmen who were in their villages were obligated to come in every seven days, in turn, to be with these, ²⁶ for the four chief gatekeepers, who were Levites, were entrusted to be over the chambers and the treasures of the house of God. ²⁷ And they lodged around the house of God, for on them lay the duty of watching, and they had charge of opening it every morning.”¹

Psalms 127:1

“Unless the LORD builds the house, those who build it labor in vain. Unless the LORD watches over the city, the watchman stays awake in vain.”

Isaiah 62:6-7

“On your walls, O Jerusalem, I have set watchmen; all the day and all the night they shall never be silent. You who put the LORD in remembrance, take no rest, ⁷ and give him no rest until he establishes Jerusalem and makes it a praise in the earth.”

Nehemiah 4:16-20

¹All Scripture quotations come from the English Standard Version of the Bible (ESV).

"From that day on, half of my servants worked on construction, and half held the spears, shields, bows, and coats of mail. And the leaders stood behind the whole house of Judah,¹⁷ who were building on the wall. Those who carried burdens were loaded in such a way that each labored on the work with one hand and held his weapon with the other.¹⁸ And each of the builders had his sword strapped at his side while he built. The man who sounded the trumpet was beside me.¹⁹ And I said to the nobles and to the officials and to the rest of the people, "The work is great and widely spread, and we are separated on the wall, far from one another."²⁰ In the place where you hear the sound of the trumpet, rally to us there. Our God will fight for us."

1 Peter 5:6-11

"Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God so that at the proper time he may exalt you,⁷ casting all your anxieties on him, because he cares for you.⁸ Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.⁹ Resist him, firm in your faith, knowing that the same kinds of suffering are being experienced by your brotherhood throughout the world.¹⁰ And after you have suffered a little while, the God of all grace, who has called you to his eternal glory in Christ, will himself restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish you.¹¹ To him be the dominion forever and ever. Amen."

1 Timothy 4:16

"Keep a close watch on yourself and on the teaching. Persist in this, for by so doing you will save both yourself and your hearers."

Mark 13:5-6

"And Jesus began to say to them, "See that no one leads you astray.⁶ Many will come in my name, saying, 'I am he!' and they will lead many astray."

Ephesians 6:10-20

"Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might.¹¹ Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil.¹² For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.¹³ Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm.¹⁴ Stand therefore, having fastened on the belt of truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness,¹⁵ and, as shoes for your feet, having put on the readiness given by the gospel of peace.¹⁶ In all circumstances take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one;¹⁷ and take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God,¹⁸ praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints,¹⁹ and also for me, that words may be given to me in opening my mouth boldly to proclaim the mystery of the gospel,²⁰ for which I am an ambassador in chains, that I may declare it boldly, as I ought to speak."

EXERCISING WISDOM AND PRUDENCE

Matthew 10:16-18

"Behold, I am sending you out as sheep in the midst of wolves, so be wise as serpents and innocent as doves.¹⁷ Beware of men, for they will deliver you over to courts and flog you in their synagogues,¹⁸ and you will be dragged before governors and kings for my sake, to bear witness before them and the Gentiles."

Proverbs 14:15-16

"The simple believes everything, but the prudent gives thought to his steps. ¹⁶One who is wise is cautious and turns away from evil, but a fool is reckless and careless."

Proverbs 22:3

"The prudent sees danger and hides himself, but the simple go on and suffer for it."

Proverbs 27:12

"The prudent sees danger and hides himself, but the simple go on and suffer for it."

Proverbs 27:23-24

"Know well the condition of your flocks, and give attention to your herds, ²⁴for riches do not last forever; and does a crown endure to all generations?"

Ecclesiastes 7:1

"A good name is better than precious ointment, and the day of death than the day of birth."

Proverbs 18:10

"The name of the LORD is a strong tower; the righteous man runs into it and is safe."

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN

Matthew 18:5-6

"Whoever receives one such child in my name receives me, ⁶ but whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him to have a great millstone fastened around his neck and to be drowned in the depth of the sea."

Mark 10:13-16

"And they were bringing children to him that he might touch them, and the disciples rebuked them. ¹⁴ But when Jesus saw it, he was indignant and said to them, "Let the children come to me; do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of God. ¹⁵ Truly, I say to you, whoever does not receive

the kingdom of God like a child shall not enter it." ¹⁶ And he took them in his arms and blessed them, laying his hands on them."

THE MISSION AND MINISTRY OF THE CHURCH

Matthew 28:19-20

"Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

Mark 12:29-31

“Jesus answered, ‘The most important is, ‘Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one.’³⁰ And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.’³¹ The second is this: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no other commandment greater than these.”

Acts 2:42-47

“And they devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.⁴³ And awe came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles.⁴⁴ And all who believed were together and had all things in common.⁴⁵ And they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need.⁴⁶ And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts,⁴⁷ praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved.”

Ephesians 4:11-16

“And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers,¹² to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ,¹³ until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ,¹⁴ so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes.¹⁵ Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ,¹⁶ from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.”

Hebrews 10:24-25

“And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works,²⁵ not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.”

1 Corinthians 14:40

“But all things should be done decently and in order.”

1 Corinthians 16:19-20

“The churches of Asia send you greetings. Aquila and Prisca, together with the church in their house, send you hearty greetings in the Lord.²⁰ All the brothers send you greetings. Greet one another with a holy kiss.”

1 Corinthians 9:22-23

“To the weak I became weak, that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all people, that by all means I might save some.²³ I do it all for the sake of the gospel, that I may share with them in its blessings.”

Galatians 6:7-10

“Do not be deceived: God is not mocked, for whatever one sows, that will he also reap.⁸ For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life.⁹ And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up.¹⁰ So then, as we have opportunity, let us do good to everyone, and especially to those who are of the household of faith.”

SHEPHERDING

Ezekiel 34:1-10

"The word of the LORD came to me: ² 'Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel; prophesy, and say to them, even to the shepherds, Thus says the Lord GOD: Ah, shepherds of Israel who have been feeding yourselves! Should not shepherds feed the sheep?' ³ You eat the fat, you clothe yourselves with the wool, you slaughter the fat ones, but you do not feed the sheep. ⁴ The weak you have not strengthened, the sick you have not healed, the injured you have not bound up, the strayed you have not brought back, the lost you have not sought, and with force and harshness you have ruled them. ⁵ So they were scattered, because there was no shepherd, and they became food for all the wild beasts. ⁶ My sheep were scattered; they wandered over all the mountains and on every high hill. My sheep were scattered over all the face of the earth, with none to search or seek for them. ⁷ 'Therefore, you shepherds, hear the word of the LORD: ⁸ As I live, declares the Lord GOD, surely because my sheep have become a prey, and my sheep have become food for all the wild beasts, since there was no shepherd, and because my shepherds have not searched for my sheep, but the shepherds have fed themselves, and have not fed my sheep, ⁹ therefore, you shepherds, hear the word of the LORD: ¹⁰ Thus says the Lord GOD, Behold, I am against the shepherds, and I will require my sheep at their hand and put a stop to their feeding the sheep. No longer shall the shepherds feed themselves. I will rescue my sheep from their mouths, that they may not be food for them.'"

Acts 20:28-31

"Pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of God, which he obtained with his own blood. ²⁹ I know that after my departure fierce wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; ³⁰ and from among your own selves will arise men speaking twisted things, to draw away the disciples after them. ³¹ Therefore be alert, remembering that for three years I did not cease night or day to admonish every one with tears."

James 3:1

"Not many of you should become teachers, my brothers, for you know that we who teach will be judged with greater strictness."

1 Peter 5:1-4

"So I exhort the elders among you, as a fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, as well as a partaker in the glory that is going to be revealed: ² shepherd the flock of God that is among you, exercising oversight, not under compulsion, but willingly, as God would have you; not for shameful gain, but eagerly; ³ not domineering over those in your charge, but being examples to the flock. ⁴ And when the chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory."

Acts 5:29

"But Peter and the apostles answered, 'We must obey God rather than men.'"

OBEYING AUTHORITIES

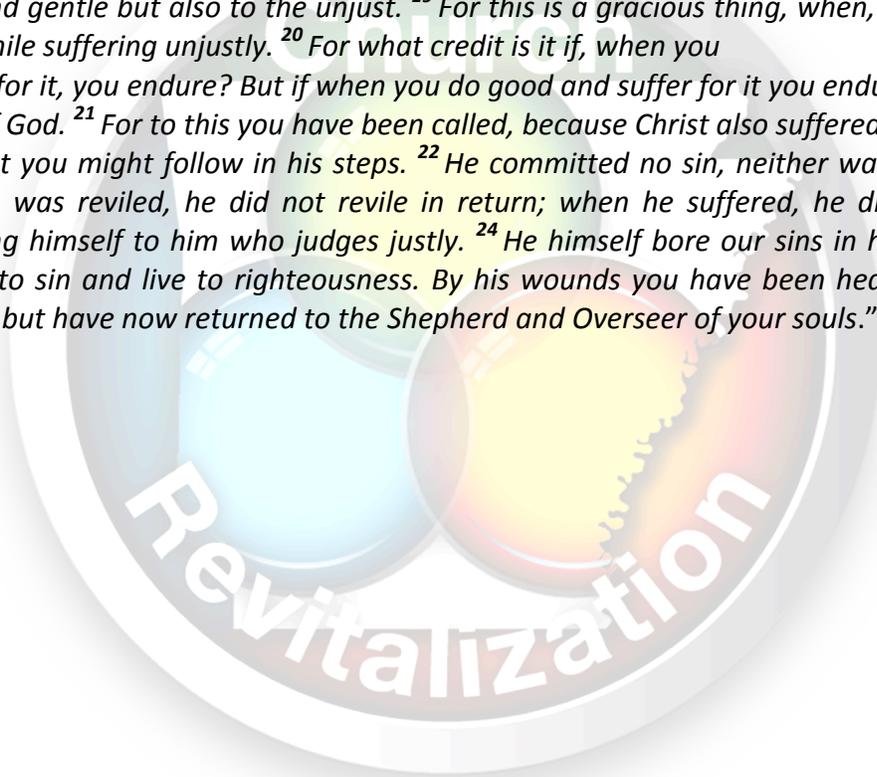
Romans 13:1-6

"Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God. ² Therefore whoever resists the authorities resists what God

has appointed, and those who resist will incur judgment. ³ For rulers are not a terror to good conduct, but to bad. Would you have no fear of the one who is in authority? Then do what is good, and you will receive his approval, ⁴ for he is God's servant for your good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not bear the sword in vain. For he is the servant of God, an avenger who carries out God's wrath on the wrongdoer. ⁵ Therefore one must be in subjection, not only to avoid God's wrath but also for the sake of conscience. ⁶ For because of this you also pay taxes, for the authorities are ministers of God, attending to this very thing."

1 Peter 2:13-25

"Be subject for the Lord's sake to every human institution, whether it be to the emperor as supreme, ¹⁴ or to governors as sent by him to punish those who do evil and to praise those who do good. ¹⁵ For this is the will of God, that by doing good you should put to silence the ignorance of foolish people. ¹⁶ Live as people who are free, not using your freedom as a cover-up for evil, but living as servants of God. ¹⁷ Honor everyone. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the emperor. ¹⁸ Servants, be subject to your masters with all respect, not only to the good and gentle but also to the unjust. ¹⁹ For this is a gracious thing, when, mindful of God, one endures sorrows while suffering unjustly. ²⁰ For what credit is it if, when you sin and are beaten for it, you endure? But if when you do good and suffer for it you endure, this is a gracious thing in the sight of God. ²¹ For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you might follow in his steps. ²² He committed no sin, neither was deceit found in his mouth. ²³ When he was reviled, he did not revile in return; when he suffered, he did not threaten, but continued entrusting himself to him who judges justly. ²⁴ He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed. ²⁵ For you were straying like sheep, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls."



Appendix B: Safety and Security Situations

In order to help members of the Safety and Security team understand their purpose and the importance/urgent need of their role, consider sharing some questions and scenarios related to key safety and security areas. Below are some examples:

Property and building safety

- A relative of a church member schedules a wedding service using your church facilities. After putting the date on the calendar and accepting their deposit, you learn that this is a same-sex couple wanting to use your facilities for their ceremony. How will you respond? How can you mitigate risks in this area?
- A fire breaks out in the children's area of the building during a Sunday evening service. What is your plan to protect people through evacuation, communicate with parents, and minimize building damage? How can you mitigate risks in this area?

Regular employees and volunteer safety

- A female secretary works at the church by herself on certain days of the week. On some occasions, individuals have entered the unlocked church building asking for benevolence help. What steps can you take to help protect her from potential harm? How can you mitigate risks in this area?

Offerings and finance safety

- Some homes in the area surrounding the church have been burglarized recently. Your church takes in a significant amount of cash offerings on Sundays. What can you do to protect the offering from the time it is collected until it is deposited in the bank on Monday? How can you mitigate risks in this area?

Troubled individuals and security safety

- A guest in the service stands up during the middle of the sermon and begins shouting and screaming obscenities. How can you mitigate risks in this area?

Emergencies and disaster safety

- An elderly person has a heart attack during the Sunday morning service. What are your plans to respond quickly to save this person's life? How can you mitigate the risks in this area?
- During a Wednesday evening service your area comes under a tornado warning (a tornado is occurring or expected to develop). What are your plans to protect those present? How can you mitigate risks in this area?

Children and youth safety

- Less than 10% of sexual molesters will ever encounter the justice system. One in four girls and one in six boys are molested. What are you doing to protect children and students who are in your care church beyond doing a background check? How can you mitigate risks in this area?
- A child is severely injured on your church playground because of a broken piece of equipment. The parents are planning to sue the church to pay for their medical costs and damages. How can you mitigate the risks in this area?

Transportation and driver safety

- Your church youth group is on their way to camp and is involved in an accident because of a tire blowout. There are several severe injuries and one fatality. How will you communicate to parents and family members? Will your insurance coverage be sufficient? How can you mitigate risks in this area?

Appendix C: Initial Meeting Agenda

The initial meeting of the safety and security team is led by the pastor and allows him to discuss the purpose, biblical foundations, and goals of the team.

A. Open with Prayer.

B. Discuss the Purpose of the Team.

- A suggested purpose for the team: This team exists to identify and prioritize safety and security risks in our church and develop policies and procedures to mitigate those risks.
- Personalize the purpose of the team so that it best fits your context.
- Discuss and clarify the purpose of your team, making changes as necessary. Write a purpose statement.

C. Discuss the Biblical Foundations of the Team's Work.

- Discuss biblical foundations by sharing a few verses from Appendix A.
- Ask team members to share about what they learn from those passages and how that might guide the team to address safety and security risks in the church.
- Ask team members if they have additional passages that can help provide some wisdom for the team.

D. Establish the Goals of the Team.

- After discussing the purpose and biblical foundations of the team, establish some goals that will guide the team as you meet.
- Here are some *sample* goals that can help get you started:
 1. We will assess the safety and security risks related to our church. (What are the issues?)
 2. We will prioritize the risks for our church. (Where will we start?)
 3. We will learn how other churches address similar risks. (What are others doing?)
 4. We will create policies and procedures that are specific to our church. (What are our specific policies and procedures?)
 5. We will educate and train appropriate staff and volunteers. (How will we implement our policies and procedures?)
 6. We will oversee and evaluate policies and procedures. (How will we continue to improve?)
 7. We will continue to address additional areas of safety and security. (How will we continue to address other areas within our church?)

E. Identify the Team Leader.

- Outline the team members' and team leader's responsibilities.
- The pastor may have already recruited a team leader. If so, make certain the team is aware.
- The pastor may prefer to lead the team to select a leader. Make certain potential candidates understand the team leader's responsibilities.

F. Schedule Next Meeting and Dismiss.