

**Procedures for Armed Intruder and/or Active Shooter Emergency**  
**Religious Education Program**

**Procedures drafted on June 28, 2023**

**Note:** In any situation involving an armed intruder, active shooter, or other threat of violence, there will always be a need for **significant discretion on the part of the adult(s) in each room** as to what response is best under the circumstances (Source: [First Unitarian Society-Milwaukee](#)).

**Before ANY Emergencies Occur:**

- Familiarize yourself with your surroundings, the building exits, and each room's evacuation options, which are located by the entryway into each room.
- **For Group Leaders:** If you are leading a Religious Education (RE) group, be aware of how many individuals are present in your group. Make sure everyone is accounted for prior to evacuation, if possible. Alert emergency crews if you are unable to account for all of the individuals in your group. **For Religious Education groups, make sure to take attendance at the beginning of class and keep your attendance roster with you at all times.**
- **Your Safety FIRST:** Make sure you and those in your care (if applicable) are safely evacuated BEFORE calling 911 or providing first aid to others, if needed.

**Religious Education Procedures for Intruder or Active Shooter Emergency:**

1. Should RE volunteers or staff members be notified that there is an intruder with a weapon in the building, OR some other circumstance which necessitates a lockdown, **the first courses of action are to lock down the rooms, cover the small window on the door, and move into a corner as far from the door and exterior windows as possible.**
  - a. As of fall 2023, all classrooms used for Religious Education classes can be locked from the interior of the room.
  - b. Each room is equipped with a small interior curtain which can be used to cover the window on the door.
2. If you are in a room with exterior windows that can be covered with curtains or blinds, cover the windows while you determine next steps. **You want to remain as out-of-sight as possible at all times.**

3. Turn off the lights and any audio equipment which may be on. **Instruct children/youth to remain as quiet as possible.**
4. Adult leaders should **barricade the door** with chairs, tables, and furniture for additional safety IF POSSIBLE (at your discretion).
5. **At the discretion of the adults present:** Assess whether making an **emergency evacuation** is safe and practical. The details of this will vary depending on your classroom location, the specific circumstances (perceived or actual), and, potentially, the number of children/youth present and their ages.
  - a. **For groups meeting downstairs in Rooms 001-006:** These rooms are equipped with portable ladders which can be used to evacuate through the exterior windows. Open the window, cut away the screen with scissors (found in the windowsill), and use the ladder to climb out the window into the playground area. Once outside, proceed to the playground gate by the back parking lot (if possible), exit the playground, and find a \*safe place to gather until help arrives (this is at the discretion of the adult leaders). Once you are in a safe location, call 911.
    - i. **Groups meeting in 001-006 SHOULD NOT evacuate via the stairwells or elevator during a lockdown situation,** since you will be unable to assess the circumstances upstairs prior to doing so.
  - b. **For nursery & preschool groups:** The nursery & preschool rooms have exterior doors that lead directly to the playground. If deciding to evacuate, adult leaders should take children across the playground, through the gate by the back parking lot, and then find a \*safe location to gather until help arrives. Once you are in a safe location, call 911.
  - c. **For the Youth Group room:** The youth room has a sliding glass door which can be used to evacuate at the front of the building. If deciding to evacuate, exit through the sliding door and, assuming it feels safe to do so, cross Taylor and find a \*safe location to gather near the Farmer's Market (or some other location) until help arrives. Once you are in a safe location, call 911.
  - d. **For the Gray Room:** The Gray Room does not have doors or windows that lead directly to the building exterior. IF you decide to evacuate, the following option is likely your best choice (**DO NOT attempt evacuation from the Gray Room if you hear shooting or commotion**):
    - i. Exit into the courtyard via the sliding large windows. Once in the courtyard, proceed through the unlocked glass doors, go across the glass breezeway, and exit via the second set of glass doors to the front of the

building. Go across Taylor and find a \*safe location to gather near the Farmer's Market (or some other location) until help arrives. Once you are in a safe location, call 911.

6. Once emergency personnel and/or law enforcement arrive, follow their directions and notify them about the children in your care. In an active shooter/intruder situation, it will **LIKELY** be law enforcement or emergency personnel who direct next steps, not Eliot Chapel staff and leadership.

*\*If possible, the **designated safe location is the Kirkwood Farmers Market** across Taylor Ave. Adult leaders are encouraged to use their discretion to find another safe location to remain with their group should getting to the Farmers Market feel unsafe or impossible under the circumstances.*

#### **What NOT to do:**

1. **Do not sound the fire alarm.** A fire alarm would signal the occupants in the rooms to evacuate the building and thus place them in potential harm as they attempted to exit. In addition, fire responders could impede the efforts of law enforcement to address the situation.
2. **Remain in open areas, such as hallways or large open rooms.** If you are in an open area with children, do your best to either find a well hidden location OR escape the building.
3. **For parents/caregivers in the sanctuary:** Do not run through the building looking for your children. This places you in additional danger AND could impede the efforts of RE volunteers/staff to secure their classrooms and evacuate. They will not be able to open or unlock doors once rooms are secured (for safety reasons). **Follow the directions of the worship leader and/or emergency personnel.** IF possible, parents/caregivers should evacuate to the Kirkwood Farmers Market across Taylor Ave, which is where RE groups are instructed to gather IF they can get there safely.

#### **These procedures are based on the following sources:**

- Officer Gary Baldrige (Kirkwood Police Department): Training in October 2022
- \*First Unitarian Society of Milwaukee: [Protocols for Armed Intruder/Shooter](#)
- \*UU Fellowship of Huntington, NY: [Safe Congregation Policy-Page 41](#)

\*These policies are shared in the [UUA Safe Congregations Website](#) as resources.

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