

Unity Church – Unitarian

Emergency Action Plan (EAP)

Approved by the Executive Team
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I. Staff Response

The basic premise of an emergency response is that at any emergency incident **one** member of the Unity Church Unitarian staff will be present at the site of the emergency and will be in charge of the response to the situation.

Chain of Command

Each individual participating in the operation reports to only one person. This eliminates the potential for individuals to receive conflicting orders from a variety of sources, thus increasing accountability, preventing freelancing, improving the flow of information, helping with the coordination of operational efforts, and enhancing operational safety.

This is necessary so that an efficient, timely, and appropriate response is made. The Incident Command System model is the basis for this plan. Roles/responsibilities are described, will be understood, practiced and adhered to.

The Lead Staff (LS) will direct other staff, volunteers and church attendees in dealing with the emergency. Chain of Command to determine who will be in charge works in the following way. The highest ranked person on the list is in charge unless they are not on the site or unable to serve in this position, which would then move leadership to the next person on the list, and so on:

Chain of Command (This list will change with any change in personnel.)

1. Executive Director: Barbara Hubbard
2. Minister of Faith Formation: K.P. Hong
3. Facilities Coordinators: Teresa Connor and Heidi Birkholz
4. The staff person first on the scene of the situation.

All staff members will be trained in this Emergency Action Plan, additional trainings as necessary and emergency plan exercises. These staff will have the authority to direct all activities related to the emergency and assign other staff to specific duties that may be outside of job descriptions. All staff and volunteers are expected to exercise situational awareness and report concerns to LS as they arise.

Ministers and other worship leaders are not assigned operational duties within this plan, with the exception of #4 above and/or implementing the response as directed by the Lead Staff. Their primary role will be to provide emotional and spiritual care to persons in the emergency and to calm others who are standing by or attending an event at the church when the emergency occurs.

Ministers, and in their absence other Executive Team members, will act in coordination with the Lead Staff as information source to media requests.

The church owns and employs a walkie-talkie system, with key staff and volunteers carrying these devices. There is a dedicated walkie-talkie in the nursery for safety and emergency purposes. During times of worship, staff in the Sanctuary can change to channel 2 for segregation of messages.



II. Medical Emergency

Medical emergencies include persons on the church property who have dizzy spells, disorientation, pass out, have sharp chest pains and/or other pains, falls, cuts, difficulty in breathing, severe vomiting and other medical or life threatening emergencies. The lead staff person (as defined above) will do the following:

- a. Determine if 911 should be called (to 733 Portland) and assign a person to make the call and meet the responders at the 733 Portland entry.
- b. Determine if AED should be used and assign a person to bring it to the scene.
- c. Determine if CPR should be initiated and assign persons to begin compression-only CPR.
- d. Determine if the victim is under 18, assign a person to locate parents.
- e. Determine if injury requires limited movement.
- f. Determine if first aid kit is needed and assign person to bring it to the scene.
- g. Determine if person is or has recently vomited and turn person on their side.
- h. Determine if person needs warmth and comfort and assign persons to find appropriate materials.
- i. **Turn the direction of the emergency over to 911 staff when they arrive.**
- j. Determine if help is needed to calm persons at the scene and assign persons to intervene and move persons away from the scene.

Church-Owned wheelchairs are in the rear of the Sanctuary, under the stairs.



Defibrillators are located:

- Lower level - in the hallway near the elevator
- Main level – in the hallway near the DeCramer room



First Aid Kits are located:

- Lower level - in the hallway near the elevator & in the nursery
- Main level – in the hallway near the DeCramer room, by the front desk & in the kitchen with a burn kit
- Upper level – top of the stairs in the Eliot wing & near the Ames Chapel east entrance.
- First Aid Kits are reviewed and restocked monthly.
-

Body Fluid Clean-Up Kits are located:

- Main level – in the facilities office

III. Public Health / Pandemic Response

Public Health concerns, such as community spread disease or foodborne illness, have the potential to be significant safety issues. As we have learned with Covid-19, some community spread illnesses can quickly and profoundly impact: the health and wellbeing of congregants, particularly the most vulnerable, staffing, and the essential functions of the church. In instances of emerging health concerns we look at our stated sources of authority to determine the most immediate and ongoing responses.

Sources of Authority:

For local public health concerns The Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) is our primary source of authority. MDH provides specific recommendations for community and faith-based organizations. Minnesota Occupational Safety and Health Administration (MNOSHA) statutes, rules and standards, and Minnesota's relevant executive orders provide additional guidance.

For larger scale community spread diseases and pandemic responses the Center for Disease Control (CDC) provides authority and guidance. For responses to community spread diseases that specifically impact Unity children's educational settings, the Saint Paul School District provides an additional source of guidance.

The Executive Team is the source of authority that determines policy, safety protocols and decisions that impact functions of the church in response to both emerging and ongoing public health concerns.

Response Policies and Protocols:

The Executive Team, using the most up-to-date recommendations from public health authorities, will create policies and safety protocols that are tailored to the emerging public health concern. They will monitor the situation and adjust protocols over time in response to the emerging or ongoing public health concern. Responses may include but are not limited to: safety protocols for staff and congregants to enter the building or gather in person; increased or revised cleaning and sanitization; or reporting to MDH, and, in extreme case of public safety concern, cancellation of programming or building closure.

Reporting a Foodborne or Waterborne Illness:

Reports of suspected foodborne illness should be reported to the Executive Team or follow the chain of command. That person will make a report to one of the following:

- **Call 1-877-FOOD-ILL (1-877-366-3455) from within Minnesota.**

- Submit your report using the [Foodborne and Waterborne Illness Report](#), our confidential online survey.
- Or Email health.foodill@state.mn.us.

IV. Emergency Evacuation due to fire, gas, chemical, or water break

Always call 911 first! If there's a suspected gas leak, leave the building before you call!

To do an all-call intercom message throughout the phone system:

Infinity key (Crazy 8 on its side) 7 0

The building will be evacuated in the case of fire, gas leak or other event deemed necessary by the LS. All persons in the building will be evacuated. The LS and staff will advise people to leave immediately with no stops for personal belongings and will help those in need of assistance. Children will be accompanied out of the building by teachers and helpers in the rooms. The nursery personnel, along with additional resources as may be assigned, will carry the children out of the building as needed. **The elevator will not be used. Exit signs are in each hallway directing the way out.**

Everyone must be at least 100 feet away from the building in case of a fire. **The gathering place is in the House of Hope park to the west of the building. Families will be reunited there.**

See the embedded map for building exits, fire pulls and fire extinguishers.



Evacuation Chairs are positioned on the lower and upper levels of the building and are intended for evacuating those with mobility issues if the elevator is not functioning. They are located:

- Lower level - in the hallway near the elevator
- Upper level – next to the water fountain in the center of the main hallway, across from Anderson Library.



Fire doors will automatically close with a fire alarm. The building sprinkler system will only activate in areas of high heat or if they are hit by an object.

In the event of a **gas leak**,

- Do not pull the fire alarm; alert occupants by word of mouth
- Do not turn on or off electrical switches
- Avoid using electrical device or telephone of any type
- Do not start up or shut down motor vehicles or any other electrical equipment
- Do not strike a match. Avoid open flames or other ignition sources.
- Move to a location a safe distance away.
- Call Xcel Energy (from outside) at **1-800-895-2999** or **911** in an emergency.
- Stay away until Xcel Energy or the emergency responders have told you it's safe to return.
- Staff should monitor the pilot lights on the kitchen stove.

V. Weather Emergency

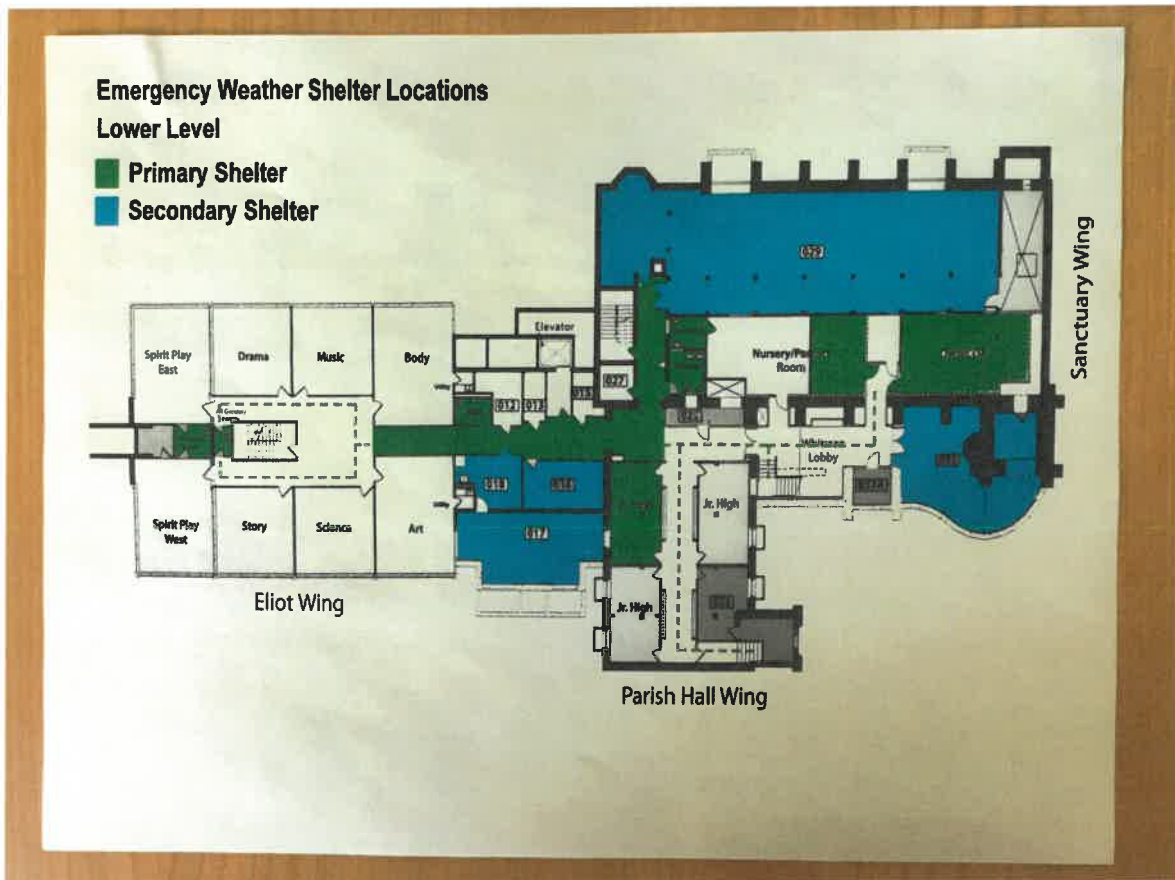
In the case of a storm emergency such as tornado, the person monitoring the situation will direct appropriate staff to **inform all persons currently in the building to seek shelter in the lower level of the building.**

The goal is for all persons to be in rooms with NO windows and NO exterior walls. If the numbers of people exceed what is deemed to be safe, the staff in charge will unlock other rooms in the area such as the mechanical room and other storage rooms. The end of the emergency will be determined by the LS.

- What prompts a weather emergency? Sirens or weather alerts on radios and phones.
- Who calls it? The Lead Staff.
- Everyone needs to get inside and downstairs.

The two sets of fire doors on the lower level will be closed and all persons will seek shelter in

- the hallway to the elevator,
- the hallway outside of the Shop and Dry Storage rooms,
- the Eliot Wing restroom,
- the hallway to the Mechanical room,
- the Shower bathroom,
- the Nursery bathroom,
- the northeast Junior High room.



VI. Loss of Power

If in the elevator during a loss of power, call 911 from cell phone or elevator phone. The fire department has a team that responds to these situations. Decisions about staff and programming will be made based on the estimated length of outage, the time of day regarding sunlight and what is happening in the building at the time.

VII. Persons showing inappropriate behavior

Unity Church – Unitarian, through active outreach, community partnerships, and signage, has chosen to take explicit actions on political and social issues. It is incumbent on our congregation to be prepared for negative reactions from those that don't share the church's views. To that end the following policies and processes will be put into place.

Inappropriate Behavior

Recognizing there is a spectrum of inappropriate behavior that ranges from mild annoyance to active shooter it is important that all "Initial Contact/Front Line" volunteers and staff be trained in how to recognize and react correctly to inappropriate behavior in and around Unity Church.

Much of what may be considered unsuitable behavior by groups today is organized and conducted thru social media. A staff member is assigned to consistently monitor regional and local social media sites, for "negative chatter" relating to Unity Church.

Acknowledgment of the role of initial contact

There must be recognition that not everyone may be emotionally or substantially able to take on the task of making the initial judgment and reacting to inappropriate individuals.

Staff assigned and people volunteering for these positions should be candidly evaluated as to their ability to function in what, on occasion could quickly escalate into an uncomfortable or dangerous situation. Individuals not willing or able to respond properly should not be in these first contact situations.

Planning not profiling

Sometimes a situation calls for having mental scripts, or slides in your memory banks to allow for a rapid assessment of the situation and formulation of a plan. These may be mental short hand in the sense that *"I've seen this behavior before and it led to this kind of reaction"*. What we need to do is quickly understand the totality of the situation and behavior – not who is or isn't exhibiting that behavior.

It is critical to pay attention to and note details that describe the person, e.g., clothing, facial features, hair, height, weight, race, apparent gender expression, age, etc.

Spectrum of potential Inappropriate Behaviors

There is no hard and fast definition of inappropriate behavior in relation to Unity Church. Behaviors could range from simply disruptive to an active shooter. There is no model of Inappropriate Behavior and it is usually situational, therefore there is not an all purpose response.

The key message is that Initial Contact or Front Line situations will need to have people who are trained and able emotionally and physically to react to inappropriate behavior with appropriate behavior.

Examples of the spectrum of behaviors:

- Passive aggressive
- Intoxication
- Mental illness
- Political demonstrations
- Theft and vandalism
- Active threat
- Active shooter
- Domestic terrorism

Risk Frequency Analysis

Over reaction may be as harmful as under reaction. Most of the time dealing with inappropriate behavior at Unity Church will be in the low risk/low frequency quadrant.

Recognizing Violent or Threatening Behavior

Engage! “Welcome to Unity. What brings you here today?”

Violent behavior includes, but is not limited to:

- Any physical assault, with or without weapons.
- Behavior that a reasonable person would interpret as being potentially violent, such as throwing things, pounding on a desk or door, or destroying property.
- Specific threats to inflict harm, such as a threat to shoot a named individual.
- Use of any object to intimidate and/or attack another person.

Threatening behavior includes, but is not limited to:

- Physical actions short of actual physical contact and/or injury, such as moving closer aggressively, waving arms or fists, yelling in an aggressive or threatening manner.
- General oral or written threats (in any medium, including email and social media) to people or property, such as, “You better watch your back” or “I’ll get you” or “I’ll ruin your car.”
- Threats made in a “joking” manner.
- Stalking behavior.
- Implicit threats, such as, “You’ll be sorry” or “This isn’t over yet.”

Reporting Violent or Threatening Behavior

If you are aware of a situation that has indicators of concern like the ones listed above, please share what you know with a member of the Unity Church Executive Team, so that others may be notified as appropriate.

VIII. Demonstrations

The First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution states *“Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances.”*

With that in mind Unity Church – Unitarian must also be prepared to react to demonstrations that may occur within or near the church. Our current political climate fosters strong reactions across the spectrum. All viewpoints should be considered within the guidelines of the First Amendment.

Some guidelines as to the church’s appropriate response are essential and should be incorporated into policy. With strong belief in and support for the First Amendment, our collective obligation to protection of the congregation and church property is primary.

Before the storm: Risk Management

Understand the risk fully. Often, but not always, demonstrations at the church may be predicted by the ongoing monitoring of the Internet and social media by staff.

The staff needs to think through all the risks that might be involved in any event, including a mental walkthrough of possibilities and appropriate responses. “What if?” Then based on findings, develop a plan making sure there is an emergency policy that everyone knows. It should be a known part of the culture that is reviewed frequently. LS informs other staff and volunteers who are likely to be onsite at the time.

During the storm: Crisis Management

The Lead Staff will either interact with the demonstrators, or will delegate this to another staff person, explaining that the public areas e.g sidewalks, boulevards may be used as long as entrances and exits to the church are not blocked.

Signs and other objects of disruption may not be brought into the church, and while all are welcome to enter, any disturbance of the sanctioned activity will not be tolerated. If needed, the police will be called to intervene.

Individuals in the congregation need to be informed of what is going on and what appropriate behavior is expected.

After the storm: Debrief

A debrief should be carried out as soon as appropriate. Three questions need to be addressed: What was planned? What actually happened? What do we need to do differently next time?

IX. Suspicious Package / Bomb Threat

A. Suspicious Package

Letter and Parcel Bomb Recognition Checklist, What to Look For

- Foreign mail, air mail, and special deliveries.
- Restrictive markings such as "CONFIDENTIAL" or "PERSONAL".
- Excessive postage.
- Handwritten or poorly typed address.
- Incorrect titles.
- Misspellings of common words.
- Oily stains or discoloration on package.
- Strange odor.
- Strange sounds.
- Excessive weight.
- Rigid, lopsided, or uneven envelopes.
- Excessive tape or string.
- Visual distractions.
- No return address.

Handling Suspicious Packages – **DON'T!**

- DO NOT open or shake it.
- DO NOT carry or show to others.
- DO NOT bring to the Police Department.

- DO NOT sniff, touch or taste.

Handling Suspicious Packages – **DO!**

If a suspicious package is left outside of the door, leave it there and call 911.

If the package is delivered to the inside of the building, put on gloves and move it to the vestibule closest to the door of delivery and lock the door to confine the area.

- Alert others in the area.
- Leave the area, close doors and prevent others from entering by using signs or guarding.
- Distance and separation are the safest precautions to take.
- Wash hands with soap and water.
- Call 911
- Take note of what courier delivered the package.
- Create a list of persons in the room where the package was received.

Other Packages / Items at the Holly Avenue reception desk

- When items are left at the Holly Ave desk for someone to pick up, attach a note identifying the date that the item was left, who will be picking it up and when.
- An alternative is to leave items for pick up in the Copy Room.

B. Bomb Threat

A good majority of bomb threats are benign, but all must be taken seriously. 911 responders will determine the need to evacuate the building.

If a bomb threat is received by handwritten note:

- Call 911
- Handle note as minimally as possible so as to preserve any evidence e.g DNA, fingerprint.
- Notify others in the building.

If a bomb threat is received by e-mail:

- Call 911
- Do not delete the message.
- Notify others in the building.

If a bomb threat is received by phone:

- Keep the caller on the phone, and ask a lot of questions using the check list below.
- Have someone contact 911 during or immediately after receiving the call.
- Notify others in the building.

Ask Caller:

- Where is the bomb located? (Building, floor, room, etc.)
- When will it go off?
- What does it look like?
- What kind of bomb is it?
- What will make it explode?
- Did you place the bomb? Yes/No
- If yes, why?
- What is your name?

Document:

- Responses to above questions
- Exact words of threat
- Where is the caller located?
- Estimated age?
- Is the voice familiar? If so, who does it sound like?

Caller's Voice:

- | | |
|-------------------|------------|
| • Female | • Excited |
| • Male | • Laughter |
| • Accent | • Lisp |
| • Angry | • Loud |
| • Calm | • Nasal |
| • Clearing throat | • Normal |
| • Coughing | • Ragged |
| • Cracking voice | • Rapid |
| • Crying | • Raspy |
| • Deep | • Slow |
| • Deep breathing | • Slurred |
| • Disguised | • Soft |
| • Distinct | • Stutter |

Background Sounds:

- | | |
|------------------|---------------------|
| • Animal noises | • Motor |
| • House noises | • Clear |
| • Kitchen noises | • Static |
| • Street noises | • Office machinery |
| • Booth | • Factory machinery |
| • PA system | • Local |
| • Conversation | • Long distance |
| • Music | |

Threat Language:

- Incoherent
- Message read
- Recorded message
- Irrational
- Profane
- Well-spoken

X. Active Shooter Event

An active shooter is an individual actively engaged in attempted murder. The weapons may be firearms, explosive devices, chemical or biological agents.

- Victims are selected individuals or a group at random.
- Event is unpredictable and evolves quickly.
- Those in the vicinity must make a rapid decision based on the situation at hand.
- Knowing what to do will save lives.

When an active shooter is in your vicinity you have three options: Run, Hide, Fight. This includes the LS and all other people in the vicinity.

RUN - This is **always** the preferred option. **Trust your instincts and don't delay. Get away as quickly and as far as possible.**

- Always maintain good Situational Awareness. Have an escape route and plan in mind.
- Do not sound the fire alarm. A fire alarm will signal to occupants to evacuate the building and thus potentially expose them to the shooter(s).
- Leave your belongings behind.
- Evacuate regardless of whether others agree to follow.
- If possible, help others escape.
- Do not attempt to treat or move the wounded.
- Prevent others from entering an area where the active shooter may be.
- When encountering Police or other First Responders be aware they don't know you or what is happening in a very dynamic and dangerous situation. Listen closely to and **follow their commands exactly.** Keep your hands visible, fingers spread apart.

HIDE - If you can't flee, hide. But this is only temporary – your best option is always to flee. Hiding is temporary and you should always be focused on escape. Hide only until you have a clear path to getting away from an active shooter situation.

- Obstruct or deny the active shooter from accessing your area. Relocate as needed as quickly as possible.
- Remain out of the shooter's view.
- Lock door and/or barricade entry to your area. Turn out all lights.
- Silence your cell phone (including vibrate mode) and remain still and quiet. Be prepared to defend yourself if needed.

FIGHT - When all else fails...

- Fight as a last resort and only when your life is in imminent danger. If others are with you, work together as a group.
- Commit to your actions ... your life and those of others depends on it. Act with as much physical aggression as possible.
- Attempt to incapacitate the shooter. This is not a movie, there are no rules; scream, kick, improvise weapons or throw items at the active shooter - do whatever you can. Eyes, shins, genitals are all targets.

Call 911 as soon as it is safe to do so.

Information to Provide to Law Enforcement

- Location of the active shooter, as precise as possible.
- Number of shooters.
- Physical description of shooters.
- Number and type of weapons held by the shooters.
- Number of potential victims at location.

How to Respond When Law Enforcement Arrives on the Scene

- Remain calm and follow instructions.
- Drop items in your hands (e.g., bags, jackets).
- Raise hands and spread fingers.
- Keep hands visible at all times.
- Avoid quick movements toward officers, such as holding on to them for safety.
- Avoid pointing, screaming or yelling.
- Do not ask questions when evacuating.

The first officers to arrive on scene will not stop to help the injured. Expect rescue teams to follow initial officers. These rescue teams will treat and remove the injured.

Once you have reached a safe location, you likely will be held in that area by law enforcement until the situation is under control and all witnesses have been identified and questioned. Do not leave the area until law enforcement authorities have instructed you to do so.

Signatures dates

Following annual training all staff, volunteers, anyone covered by this plan will sign off on their refresher training and commitment