THE Ecclesiastical Province
OF BRITISH COLUMBIA AND YUKON

Emergency Planning Guide for Diocese/Regions/ Parishes

PREAMBLE

Emergency situations are potential realities for all communities. Taking the time to plan how to respond to different types of emergencies, as well as the day-to-day needs of faith communities during such events, is essential.

In times of crisis, communities of faith are often places people turn to for support. Yet, depending on the nature of the emergency, the way a congregation normally functions may be severely affected. Emergency planning is key to not only ensuring the physical health and safety of church staff, volunteers and congregants; it is also key to ensuring that spiritual care, pastoral support, community outreach and worship can continue in ways that are appropriate for the presenting needs and circumstances.

This resource contains information and templates to help ministries design an emergency preparedness plan. It is not exhaustive and should be expanded upon by congregations, taking into consideration the many variables found in church facilities, regions, congregations and potential emergencies. As you work through this resource, you are encouraged to adapt it to suit your context.

It may take you anywhere from a few weeks to several months to complete the 5 steps of this plan. Create a timeline that seems realistic based on the resources available (i.e., time, parts of the plan already complete, etc.) and variables unique to your context. Be sure to complete each step. While completing all 5 steps may feel onerous or daunting at the outset, it will be worth the effort as you will be more prepared for future emergencies.

This Emergency Preparedness Guide is meant to help congregations of all sizes and configurations. Therefore, some of the steps and recommendations in this resource will need to be adapted. Review the whole guide but adapt its steps to suit your specific circumstances.

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STEP 1

Establish an Emergency Preparedness Committee

▮ The Parish Council/Diocese may wish to establish an Emergency Preparedness Committee. The committee may consist of 3–5 members and be responsible for creating and updating the Emergency Preparedness Plan. It will also be responsible for ensuring employees, volunteers and congregants are educated about the plan. In some ministries, the Parish Council may serve as the Emergency Preparedness Committee.

▮ Depending on what is established as the emergency communication strategy, you may want to consider making the chair of this committee the link between the region (public health, government officials, etc.) and the community of faith during an emergency.

The following positions/bodies/people will participate in emergency planning for our congregation/diocese.

Engage in Risk Assessment

| The first task of the Emergency Preparedness Committee is conducting a risk assessment for the congregation.

> Emergencies come in many forms:

- Natural (e.g., storms, floods, wildfires, earthquakes, extended power outages)

- Health (e.g., pandemics, food poisoning)

- Human-Caused (e.g., arson, bomb threat, human-caused violence)

> Consult the municipal and provincial emergency preparedness websites, your church insurance provider, the Red Cross and public health in your area to see what emergencies are most likely where your church is located.

| List as many potential emergencies you can think of in different categories in the chart below.

Natural	Health

Human-Caused	Other

Establish a Leadership Plan

▌ In the event of an emergency, you will want to have a leadership plan in place that addresses how decisions will be made and key functions carried out in the event of an emergency.

▌ There are two types of key leaders in this section: **first-response leader** and **primary crisis manager**.

> The **first-response leader** is the person in a designated position who will lead the response *while it is happening*. They are the person on the scene who will step in right away to address the emergency at hand.

> The **primary crisis manager** (or their backup) will be the person in a designated position who is called in to manage emergencies as they unfold after the initial crisis.

Example: If a person has a medical emergency during a worship service, the **first-response leader** will immediately step in to ensure that the person receives proper first aid and that an ambulance is called, if needed. The **crisis manager**, who may not even be there during that particular worship service, will be called and alerted to the emergency and will follow up with any reporting or coordinating that needs to be done.

First-Response Leader at the Outset of an Emergency

It is best to designate a primary position and a backup position to act as the leader at the outset of an emergency. The person in this role will vary depending on the circumstances under which the emergency occurs. For example, if an emergency happens during a worship service, the best person to coordinate the response may be a person who is leading worship or a member of the greeting team; however, if an emergency happens during another church event in the building, such as a Bible study or luncheon, the best person might be the coordinator of the event.

When making your plan, identify positions rather than specific individuals. For example, the lead greeter will act as the first-response lead and a lay leader will be the primary crisis manager. The reason for naming a position rather than an individual is to

ensure that even if certain individuals are not present at the time of the event there will still be a designated person available to step in. It will be important to train people to perform the tasks required of them under the policy.

Please note: It is advisable that the Incumbent/Priest in Charge is not designated the first-response leader or primary crisis manager. In the event of an emergency, they will have other pastoral duties, such as providing spiritual support to congregation members, and should not be expected to coordinate the response.

Identify who will take the lead in coordinating the first stage of an emergency response during …

A worship service

First-Response Leader	Backup
Name:	Name:
Home Phone:	Home Phone:
Cell Phone:	Cell Phone:
Email:	Email:

Another church event in the building

First-Response Leader	Backup
Name:	Name:
Home Phone:	Home Phone:
Cell Phone:	Cell Phone:
Email:	Email:

(chart continued on next page)

Event hosted by renters or community group

First-Response Leader	**Backup**
Name:	Name:
Home Phone:	Home Phone:
Cell Phone:	Cell Phone:
Email:	Email:

Before or after hours when building not in use

First-Response Leader	**Backup**
Name:	Name:
Home Phone:	Home Phone:
Cell Phone:	Cell Phone:
Email:	Email:

A church event outside the building

First-Response Leader	**Backup**
Name:	Name:
Home Phone:	Home Phone:
Cell Phone:	Cell Phone:
Email:	Email:

Primary Crisis Manager

The following person is the primary crisis manager and will serve as the key liaison between the congregation and government and health authorities. You may want to consider assigning this role to the chair of the Emergency Preparedness Committee. This person will be responsible for implementing the various stages of the emergency response plan with input from the Emergency Preparedness Committee.

Primary Crisis Manager

Name:

Home Phone:

Cell Phone:

Email:

Secondary Crisis Manager (Backup)

Name:

Home Phone:

Cell Phone:

Email:

Areas of Responsibility During Emergency

There are certain areas of leadership that do not relate directly to the presenting emergency but still need to be attended to, especially if the emergency is long lasting. It is important to assign people to be responsible for each of the following areas (some areas of responsibility may be covered by the same person, depending on the size and structure of your congregation).

Areas of Responsibility

Pastoral Support

Primary Person	**Secondary Person**
Name:	Name:
Home Phone:	Home Phone:
Cell Phone:	Cell Phone:
Email:	Email:

Liturgical & Worship Support

Primary Person	**Secondary Person**
Name:	Name:
Home Phone:	Home Phone:
Cell Phone:	Cell Phone:
Email:	Email:

Outreach Initiatives

Primary Person	**Secondary Person**
Name:	Name:
Home Phone:	Home Phone:
Cell Phone:	Cell Phone:
Email:	Email:

Finance

Primary Person

Name:

Home Phone:

Cell Phone:

Email:

Secondary Person

Name:

Home Phone:

Cell Phone:

Email:

Human Resources

Primary Person

Name:

Home Phone:

Cell Phone:

Email:

Secondary Person

Name:

Home Phone:

Cell Phone:

Email:

Communication

Primary Person

Name:

Home Phone:

Cell Phone:

Email:

Secondary Person

Name:

Home Phone:

Cell Phone:

Email:

Building

Primary Person

Name:

Home Phone:

Cell Phone:

Email:

Secondary Person

Name:

Home Phone:

Cell Phone:

Email:

Develop a Communications Plan

Your communications plan should include information about **when** *and* **how** to connect with government and health authorities as well as with staff, key leaders and congregation members.

An example of what your communications plan might look like:

```
                    ┌─────────────────────────────────┐
                    │        Emergency Happens        │
                    │              9-1-1              │
                    │ Leader on-site initiates        │
                    │ communication chain             │
                    └─────────────────────────────────┘
                                    │
                            ┌───────────────┐
                            │ Primary Crisis │
                            │    Manager     │
                            └───────────────┘
```

Emergency Happens
9-1-1
Leader on-site initiates communication chain

Primary Crisis Manager

Communicate with governmental & health authorities

Key Church Leaders (Incumbent, Wardens)

Manage Media Inquiries (if any)

Leaders with specific areas of responsibility

All other staff

Initiate Contact Tree for Church Members

Emergency Contacts

If you need the fire department, police or ambulance immediately, you will call 9-1-1 or its equivalent in your area.

It is important, however, to have other local emergency contacts on hand that you may need in different types of emergencies. For example, during the outbreak of a pandemic, you may not need to call 9-1-1, but you will need contact information for the local health department.

You may not need to call these providers but checking their website would be important.

I Keep this list as well as your church's address near the telephones in your building so that first-responders have easy access.

Local Emergency Contacts

Emergency	Local Public Health Authority
9-1-1	Phone: Email: Website:
Police Station	**Insurance Provider**
Phone: Email: Website:	Phone: Email: Website:
Fire Department	**Utilities Provider**
Phone: Email: Website:	Phone: Email: Website:
City/Regional Emergency Management	**Security System Provider**
Phone: Email: Website:	Phone: Email: Website:

Staff & Key Leaders Contact

List contact information for all staff, Wardens, Parish Council, and any other key leadership positions in your congregation, especially if they are not listed in one of the categories above. You may also want to include contact information for your diocese.

- All staff and key leaders should be notified as soon as possible when an emergency occurs.

- The person responsible for contacting staff and key leaders will be the primary crisis manager.

Parish Staff & Leaders Contact	
Position: Name: Phone: Email: Home address:	Position: Name: Phone: Email: Home address:
Position: Name: Phone: Email: Home address:	Position: Name: Phone: Email: Home address:

Diocese	
Name: Phone: Email	Name: Phone: Email:

Contact Tree for the Congregation

Develop a contact tree for all members of your congregation listing all the various methods of contact. Do not rely solely on one method because phone lines may be down, or the Internet may not be working.

▌ The Incumbent (or where there is vacancy, the Interim), the wardens, and the person responsible for pastoral care during an emergency should have a printed copy in a safe place at home as well as a digital copy.

▌ The list should be updated every six months or as needed.

▌ It is a good idea to test your contact tree after it is updated. Consider the testing of the contact tree an opportunity to do a pastoral check-in with each member of your church community.

Contact Tree Coordinator

You may choose to make this person the leader you've assigned the responsibility of pastoral care or another responsible person in your congregation.

Name:

Phone:

Email:

Home address:

Backup Contact Tree Coordinator

Name:
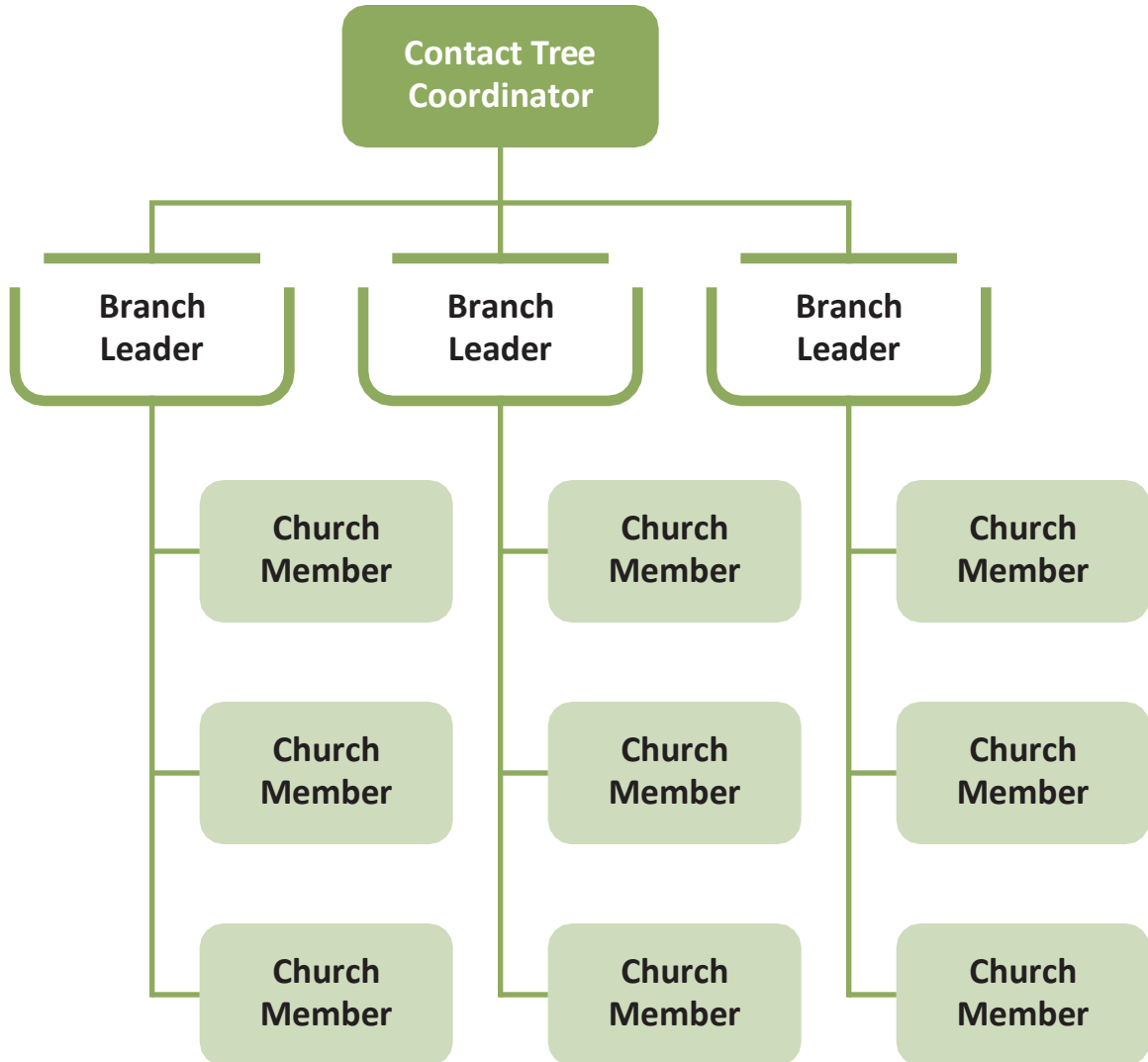
Phone:

Email:

Home address:

(chart continued on next page)

Branch leaders for Contact Tree

You will need a group of key leaders, who will be responsible for calling or alerting members of the congregation. These people should be reliable and receptive to the responsibility of informing people of emergencies. The number of key leaders you need depends on the size of your congregation and how many people you want each leader to contact. Be sure to have an "extra" key leader in case one of the leaders in the phone chain is not available.

Name:	Name:
Phone:	Phone:
Email:	Email:
Name:	Name:
Phone:	Phone:
Email:	Email:
Name:	Name:
Phone:	Phone:
Email:	Email:
Name:	Name:
Phone:	Phone:
Email:	Email:
Name:	Name:
Phone:	Phone:
Email:	Email:

An example of what your contact chain may look like:

```
                    ┌─────────────────┐
                    │  Contact Tree   │
                    │  Coordinator    │
                    └─────────────────┘
           ┌───────────────┼───────────────┐
    ┌────────────┐  ┌────────────┐  ┌────────────┐
    │   Branch   │  │   Branch   │  │   Branch   │
    │   Leader   │  │   Leader   │  │   Leader   │
    └────────────┘  └────────────┘  └────────────┘
      ┌──────────┐    ┌──────────┐    ┌──────────┐
      │  Church  │    │  Church  │    │  Church  │
      │  Member  │    │  Member  │    │  Member  │
      └──────────┘    └──────────┘    └──────────┘
      ┌──────────┐    ┌──────────┐    ┌──────────┐
      │  Church  │    │  Church  │    │  Church  │
      │  Member  │    │  Member  │    │  Member  │
      └──────────┘    └──────────┘    └──────────┘
      ┌──────────┐    ┌──────────┐    ┌──────────┐
      │  Church  │    │  Church  │    │  Church  │
      │  Member  │    │  Member  │    │  Member  │
      └──────────┘    └──────────┘    └──────────┘
```

For further information on how and what to communication during a church emergency, please see Appendix A in this resource.

Website Update

Oftentimes, the first place that people go when they hear that something is going on is to an organization's website. Add an alert to the main page of your website giving basic information about the status of the emergency.

Posting Notices

In addition to posting an update on the website, be sure to post printed notices in the building and outside doors (if appropriate).

Educate about Plan and Keep Plan Up-to-Date

Once the emergency plan is complete, it is vital to begin educating church staff, leaders, members, and adherents about it.

❘ At a Council meeting at least once a year, review this emergency plan and update as necessary.

❘ Provide staff and key volunteers training and practice in initiating and following through with the emergency plan each year.

> As part of this training be sure to conduct security, evacuation and shelter-in-place drills.

❘ Make emergency training part of your usher/greeter training. Also educate your children and youth leaders about the evacuation, shelter-in-place and security plans in case the emergency occurs while children are in Church School.

❘ Consider using gatherings like annual meetings to provide parishioners with an overview of the emergency plan highlighting particularly the security, evacuation and shelter-in-place procedures.

❘ Keep plans in an easy to reach location. Make sure that leaders know where to find it.

Appendix A

Communication Tools

Use the chart below to help plan ahead for **what** information you will communicate and **how** you will communicate it after an emergency event happens. The examples in the chart are meant as suggestions; add or take away as you see fit.

What should you communicate?	To whom are you communicating?	Who should communicate the message?	How should you be communicating?	What can you prepare in advance?
Congregation status	Emergency service partners	People with proper training (e.g., the primary crisis manager, who will be familiar with the church policies and the emergency plan)	Church website	Talking points
Damage assessment	Staff and volunteers Insurance Company	Those with proper authority (e.g., primary crisis manager, Incumbent or Interim, Parish Council chair)	Social Media	Key messages
Services offered or changed	Congregation Members	People who share a consistent message	Verbal	Website Contact-Tree
Funds needed	Funders		Paper By Email Phone call	Emergency related funding solicitations
	Media		Combination of methods	List of ways people can help
	Community Residents			

Additional Ways a Church May Be Called on to Help During an Emergency Event

Advocacy	Animal care	Casework
Childcare	Cleanup (homes and neighbourhoods)	Counselling
Transportation	Food services (cooking, feeding or distribution)	Health services
Home visits/care	Housing	Language translation
Legal assistance	Listening	Office support
Mental health services	Managing donations	Outreach & support to vulnerable populations
Organizing/leading volunteer groups	Pastoral services/ spiritual care	Rebuilding/repair/ restoration
Relocation or moving assistance	Resource development	Shelter services
Special worship services	Warehousing & distribution of relief supplies	

Appendix C

Resources for Creating Emergency Preparedness Plans for Home

Encourage staff and congregants to have an emergency preparedness plan for their homes. They will be able to cope much better with an emergency event at church if everyone at home is safe and healthy.

The Government of Canada has a free emergency preparedness guide available online that includes a Family Emergency Plan template and list of emergency kit items: https://www.getprepared.gc.ca/cnt/rsrcs/pblctns/yprprdnssgd/index-en.aspx

The Provincial and Territorial Governments also have guides and resources for creating emergency preparedness plans for home:

Prince Edward Island
Telephone: (902) 894-0385 / After hours: (902) 892-9365
www.peipublicsafety.ca

Newfoundland and Labrador
Telephone: (709) 729-3703
https://www.gov.nl.ca/fes/

Nova Scotia
Telephone Toll-free 24 Hour line: 1-866-424-5620
https://beta.novascotia.ca/government/emergency-management-office

New Brunswick
Telephone: (506) 453-2133 / Toll-free 24 Hour line: 1-800-561-4034
https://www2.gnb.ca/content/gnb/en/departments/emo.html

Quebec
Telephone (toll-free): 1-866-644-6826
General information (Services Québec): 1-877-644-4545
http://www.securitepublique.gouv.qc.ca/en.html

Ontario
Telephone: (647) 329-1100 / Toll-free 24 Hour line: 1-800-565-1842
www.ontario.ca/beprepared

Manitoba
Telephone: (204) 945-4772 / Toll-free: 1-888-267-8298
www.manitobaemo.ca

Saskatchewan
Telephone: (306) 787-9563
https://www.saskatchewan.ca/residents/environment-public-health-and-safety/disaster-prevention

Alberta
Telephone: (780) 422-9000 / Toll-free: 310-0000
www.aema.alberta.ca

British Columbia
Telephone: (250) 952-4913 / Emergency: 1-800-663-3456
http://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/safety/emergency-preparedness-response-recovery/preparedbc

Nunavut
Telephone: (867) 975-5403 / Toll-free 24 Hour line: 1-800-693-1666
https://www.gov.nu.ca/community-and-government-services/information/nunavut-emergency-management-0

Northwest Territories
Telephone: (867) 873-7538 / 24 Hour line: (867) 920-2303
http://www.maca.gov.nt.ca/en/services/emergency-preparedness

Yukon
Telephone: (867) 667-5220
Toll free (within the Yukon): 1-800-661-0408
https://yukon.ca/en/emergencies-and-safety

Appendix D

Protection of Property

When it comes to preparing your property for potential emergencies, the old saying "an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure" is definitely true. How you protect your property from potential emergencies depends on the types of risks that exist in your area.

Review Risks with Prevention in Mind

Review the risks identified in Step 2. Research best ways of protecting church property from the identified risks.

| Consult municipal and provincial emergency preparedness websites, your church insurance provider, and the Red Cross for property protection strategies.

| A full list of Canadian and Provincial Emergency Preparedness websites is available in Appendix C.

List Risks Named in Step 2 For example:	What can be done to protect church property from major damage during these emergencies?
Flood	- Clear debris from roof and eaves troughs regularly so that water runs away from building. - -
Fire	-Test the fire alarm systems in your church buildings regularly. - -
Major Snowstorm	-Trim dead branches and cut down dead trees to reduce the danger of these falling onto the church building during a storm. -

Property Protection Supplies

Using the risks named in the first part of this section, gather supplies you may need to protect the church property. For example, plastic bags, plastic sheeting, tarps, duct tape, rope and waterproof containers are needed to cover equipment and protect items, etc. These supplies should be purchased ahead of time and stored ready for use. Upon notification of a pending disaster event, such as a flood, each area of all buildings should be secured if time allows.

Documentation of Property

Complete a facilities inventory of your property for insurance purposes. Document the inventory with a written description, listing the items, including serial number, cost and date purchased (if possible). Also take digital pictures or a room-by-room video. Make copies and store this inventory in a couple of safe places off site or in a fireproof safe. Update your inventory annually.

Church Proper			
Date of Photo/Video:			
Item	**Serial Number**	**Cost & Purchase Date**	**Description / Details**

Main Office

Date of Photo/Video:

Item	Serial Number	Cost & Purchase Date	Description / Details

Kitchen

Date of Photo/Video:

Item	Serial Number	Cost & Purchase Date	Description / Details

Records Protection

Determine what records need to be protected and copied. List those records in the chart below, where they are stored, and the method you are using to protect them in case of an emergency. Remember that privacy must be maintained for all records that contain personally identifiable information for staff and church members, so wherever you store your records must be secure and only accessible to those who are authorized by the Diocese or Parish Council.

- Place hardcopy files that are not replaceable in a waterproof & fireproof container and store off the floor.

- Consider finding a secure place off site to store hardcopy files of important documents.

- Back-up electronic records on a routine basis and store off site or to the cloud.

Person responsible for protecting and backing up records

Name:

Phone:

Email:

Record Type	Where are they stored?	Backup/ Protection
Vestry Books		
Registries (baptism, marriage, burial, confirmation)		
Finance Records		
Parish Minutes		

Building & Property Inspection

Regular property inspection and grounds maintenance are key components in ensuring that your church buildings can "weather the storm" of an emergency. You should have a property maintenance policy for the church that includes procedures for carrying out regular general inspections, identifying problem areas, and resolving problems.

▍ **How frequently is your building and property being inspected?**

It is recommended that you do so at least once per month.

▍ **What are the dates that church building(s) and property are being inspected?**

e.g., the first of every month

▍ **Who is responsible for inspection?**

It is best to have 2–3 people do the inspection together.

▍ **Do you have a comprehensive and up-to-date inspection list?**

What is on your inspection list will depend on your buildings and properties. For a general idea of what needs to be included on an inspection list, check with your church insurance company. They usually have resources on their websites for building and property maintenance.

Property Information Needed During Emergency

If an emergency happens in your church building(s), you will want to have information for your building service providers (e.g., water, electric, fuel, alarm, furnace, elevator) at your fingertips. You will also want to know where the shutoffs are in your building to turn off utilities if it is necessary to do so before or during an emergency.

Building & Property Service Providers

Water

Location of shutoff in building:

Company Name:

Phone: Website:

Email: Account Number:

Heating

Location of shutoff in building:

Company Name:

Phone: Website:

Email: Account Number:

Electric

Location of shutoff in building:

Company Name:

Phone: Website:

Email: Account Number:

Security/Alarm

Location of shutoff in building:

Company Name:

Phone: Website:

Email: Account Number:

Internet and/or Telephone

Location of shutoff in building:

Company Name:

Phone: Website:

Email: Account Number:

Elevator

Location of shutoff in building:

Company Name:

Phone: Website:

Email: Account Number:

Plan for Emergencies When People are in the Church Building(s)

Church buildings and how they are used vary, which means that plans for dealing with emergencies that arise within them will also vary. The suggestions below are meant to help your Emergency Preparedness Committee develop emergency plans for your specific context. Each parish will need to develop their plans in consultation with local agencies and regional guidelines.

Preparing

There is some key information you'll want to consider when preparing for an emergency that may occur when people are using your church building(s).

1. How many people may be in your building(s) in an emergency?

    On a weekday _____

    On a weeknight _____

    During a service _____

2. What church groups use your building (e.g., crafting group, Bible study, youth group)?

    ❚ How will you safely evacuate people from the various programs?

    ❚ How will you notify loved ones of their status?

    ❚ How may you utilize these people to help in an emergency?

3. What groups and services use your facility (e.g., AA, recreation groups, tenants)?

    ❚ How will you safely evacuate people?

    ❚ Who is your primary contact person for the program? Do they have a list of emergency contacts for participants in their program?

| How will you educate staff and volunteers about the emergency procedures for your building?

It is recommended that you review emergency plans with the leaders of community groups annually and have them sign off on them.

4. Can you anticipate special needs of people using your facilities in advance and prepare for them (e.g., mobility issues, cognitive impairment, special equipment needed)?

Facilities Evacuation Plan

You need an evacuation plan for your church building(s). Evacuation Plans are necessary during any event where you need to move people OUTSIDE the facility, including the following: fire, earthquake, gas leak, hazardous chemical spill, floods, bomb threat, or active shooter.

What types of emergencies will require the *evacuation* of your church building(s)?

Evacuation Plan Checklist

Go through this evacuation plan checklist and ensure that each of these tasks has been completed.

▮ Consult with your regional fire prevention agents for safety standards and practices. **Your evacuation plan must adhere to your regional fire codes.**

▮ Make a floor plan of each of your buildings. On it, mark the exit doors to the outside, location of fire alarm pulls, fire extinguishers, first aid kits and AED unit.

▮ Ensure the evacuation plan is in a format that is easy for people to read and understand.

▮ Post the plan throughout the building in easy to see places, marking "you are here" at the appropriate location. Show how to get to the nearest two exits.

▮ Ensure that there are clear and visible signs indicating safety tools, exits and emergency instructions throughout the building.

▮ Ensure you have a fire alarm system that is being tested regularly.

▮ Keep a "Go-Kit" which includes copies of the emergency plan, contact tree information, copies of vital documents in a place that is easy to grab.

▮ Designate a meet-up spot at a safe distance from your church building where you can meet to do a head count. Ensure that those attending services and using your church building know where the meet-up spot is.

Other Evacuation Plans items specific to your church building(s):

Shelter-in-Place Plan

Shelter-in-Place plans are necessary for any emergency event that would require people to stay in your building(s) for an extended period of time. For example, this may be necessary in the case of a severe weather event, biological hazard, or act of violence. While this type of emergency response may be less common than evacuation, it is still important to be prepared in the unlikely event that it happens.

What types of emergencies will require people to *shelter-in-place* in your church building(s)?

Shelter-in-Place Plan Checklist

Go through this Shelter-in-Place plan checklist and ensure that each of these tasks has been completed.

| Check with your city/regional Emergency Preparedness authority to see if there are specific shelter-in-place directives for your region. Your shelter-in-place plan should be based on the recommendations for your region.

| Choose a place in your church building that will serve as your shelter-in-place spot.

> It is best to choose interior rooms, with the fewest windows or vents. The room(s) should have adequate space for everyone to be able to sit in. Avoid overcrowding by selecting several rooms if necessary. Large storage closets, utility rooms, pantries, copy and conference rooms without exterior windows will work well. Avoid selecting a room with mechanical equipment like ventilation blowers or pipes, because it may be difficult to seal this equipment from the outdoors.

| Educate church leaders and group leaders about shelter-in-place procedures. When authorities provide direction to shelter-in-place, they want everyone to take the steps at that moment, where they are, and not drive or walk outdoors. Leaders should be ready to guide congregants, visitors and staff to the shelter-in-place area of your building.

| Ensure staff and leaders are familiar with your building's mechanical systems and how to turn off all fans, heating and air conditioning systems in case the emergency involves fumes or other noxious substances that you do not want to get into the building.

| Gather essential disaster supplies, such as non-perishable food, bottled water, battery-powered radios, first-aid supplies, flashlights, batteries, duct tape, plastic sheeting and plastic garbage bags. Store them in your designated shelter-in-place area.

| Cell phones may be overwhelmed or damaged during an emergency. Ensure you have a hard-wired telephone in your shelter-in-place area.

| Ensure that you also have a battery-powered radio. If the disaster is region-wide, you may need to the radio to get the "all safe" from authorities.

| Be sure there is a notebook and pen in your shelter-in-place area so that you can write down the names of everyone in the room so that when you connect with authorities or your church's emergency coordinator you will be able to report who is in the room with you.

Other Shelter-in-Place Plans items specific to your church building(s):

Security Plan

There are security issues in church buildings that pose a risk to staff, congregation members and visitors. These risks range from unknown people wandering around the building to someone entering a worship service with malicious intent (e.g., theft, harassment, violence). These risks will vary depending on your location and context.

What types of security risks do those using your building(s) face?

Security Plan Checklist

Go through this security plan checklist and ensure that each of these tasks has been completed.

▌ Invite local law enforcement, a security professional or your insurance agent to help you identify potential security risks and offer solutions to help you create a safer church environment.

> Ask specifically about training on what to do if a violent intruder gains access to the church. These professionals will be able to provide advice on the type of intruder training necessary and available for your area.

▌ Obtain a list of area crimes from your local police station. This will help your church create a security plan that suits your context.

▌ Assign security roles based on your church's security need. Possible roles include:

> Ushers/greeters to monitor door during service;

> One or two Council members who are "on duty" during the service (i.e., responsible for keeping eyes and ears open to possible issues and stepping in to help address them if necessary).

▌ Choose one main door that people should use to enter the church building for services.

> Assign an usher or team member to monitor this door once your service starts. All other entrances should be inaccessible from the outside of your church. Ensure that the exit doors remain unlocked from the inside.

▌ Ensure that all locks on all building entry points are functional and in a good state of repair. Also ensure that all hallways, parking lots and external walkways are well lit.

▌ Ensure that those using your building outside of service times know security procedures (e.g., keeping door locked after group has gathered, doing a walkthrough of the building before locking up after an event, setting the alarm, etc.)

▌ Keep an up-to-date list of church key holders.

▌ If you have a security alarm system, ensure that:

> church leaders and staff are formally trained on alarm system arming and disarming procedures;

> the system is serviced annually by a certified trained technician;

> the arm/disarm code is changed and reissued annually;

> the names and call numbers of persons on the central station call lists are reviewed and updated at least annually

l Educate church members about security procedures; consider doing an after-worship seminar or sending out security information by email or newsletter.

l Connect with neighbours and neighbouring businesses to discuss neighbourhood safety.

> It is always helpful to have neighbours keeping an eye on the church building and property when members and staff are not around.

Other security items specific to your church building(s):

Plan for How You Will Continue to Care for Staff, Congregation and Community

Now that you have planned how you will prepare for and address emergencies when they arise, *it is also important* to consider how your congregation will continue to offer the support and services that are necessary for your church and wider community in the aftermath.

Consider the purpose and mandate of having an emergency plan and contemplate in particular these questions:

❙ Which essential services must continue? Why?

❙ What additional services (if any) will you be asked (and be able) to provide?

Some examples are provided in the chart below. Please adapt the chart to best suit your own context. What are considered essential support and services will vary depending on the nature, scope and duration of the emergencies your congregation could potentially face.

Essential Support & Services	How will we continue to offer these services? Is there anyone we can partner with to do so?
Liturgical & Worship Support	> Plan for alternative options for worship in the event that gathering together is not viable (e.g., online, partnering with another local church, distributing sermons, etc.). > Train and equip lay leaders to offer appropriate prayer and pastoral care. > Promote morning and evening prayer as a dispersed community activity. Set a common time for community prayer so that individuals and families can feel part of a larger community of prayer.

Pastoral Support	> Establish pastoral "neighbourhood care" networks (grouping church members/adherents in same area) and identify a leader/contact person for each network. > Distribute "care cards" containing essential information such as a contact tree, pastoral contacts, prayer contacts, etc. > Identify and equip lay people who can provide telephone support and prayer for those who are fearful or otherwise distressed. > Purchase/assemble necessary protective equipment (alcohol-based hand sanitizer, cleaning wipes, masks) for ministry personnel so that they can continue to do pastoral visits if public health allows.
Fellowship/ Community	A key element of worship and the church in general is the community. How will you keep people connected after an emergency? > Develop a list of volunteers who are willing and able to get groceries and run errands for others. > Plan to host online fellowship gatherings (e.g., virtual coffee hour).
Supporting Church Staff & Leaders	> Prepared for an increase need for employee/volunteer wellness services and support (EAP, pastoral care, etc.). > Have prepared policies on sick leave, compassionate leave, and work-from-home. > Ensure you have access to payroll information to ensure that employees will continue to be paid after an emergency.
Outreach Initiatives	> If there are food banks, daycares, community closets, breakfast programs that are run out of your church, consider how will you continue to offer these forms of support. > Identify alternative locations you could offer these services out of if part of your church building damaged in an emergency event.
Community Connections	> Identify other churches and organizations that you could potentially coordinate with in an emergency.

Additional Service Your Church May Be Asked to Provide in/after an Emergency

In some cases, depending on the type and scope of the emergency event, people from the community may turn to your congregation for support. It is helpful to have thought through what you may be asked to provide and what your capacity is to provide that support.

Examples of possible areas of support include:

- pastoral care, counselling and support to neighbours
- emergency shelter for congregation members or neighbourhood residents
- facility space for other congregations forced to relocate
- food preparation or distribution
- facility for information resources
- transportation hub
- volunteer hub

*See Appendix B for more ideas of additional ways your congregation may be called on to help.

Alternative Building Options

An emergency may render portions or all of your church building(s) uninhabitable. Plans are needed for alternative work and worship spaces.

- Determine if there is an accessible location, perhaps another church, for an alternative office that can be used in an emergency situation (e.g., offices damaged, no power, etc.).
- Develop an agreement with that site that you will offer your facilities to them for emergency use if they will reciprocate.
- Plan for an off-site worship location; it may be the same location as the alternative office space.
  - > You are required to cancel in-person worship services if advised to do so by local health or safety authorities; however, if safe to do so, meeting for worship after an emergency event in a neighbouring church or other building can be a great time of healing and connection for church members.
- Develop off-site capabilities to keep the website operational. Ensure that several people are trained to manage the website and social media in order to post updates, schedule changes, etc. as directed.

Alternative Office Space

Name of Site:

Address:

Phone:

Email:

Name of Contact Person:

Alternative Worship Space

Name of Site:

Address:

Phone:

Email:

Name of Contact Person:

Website and Social Media Off-Site

Name of Person with Website & SM Control:

Address:

Phone:

Email:

Name of Backup Website/SM person: