

Safe Ministries

First Presbyterian Church of Cedar Falls

Guidelines for dealing with emergencies that can arise in the church from fire, storms, violence, accidents, infectious disease, and general safety issues.

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Safe Ministries Policy

Purpose: To create a safe environment for the ministry of First Presbyterian Church, its staff, members, children, visitors, and facilities. Should an incident occur, staff and church leaders have a plan of action in place and are ready to follow safe procedures. Potential emergencies may arise from severe weather, accidents, violence, or infectious disease.

First Presbyterian Church of Cedar Falls takes safety seriously. Safety is about prevention, intentional hospitality, awareness of what is going on around you, and knowing what to do when an incident occurs.

The ministry of First Presbyterian Church of Cedar Falls has been a presence in downtown since 1855. We are a welcoming and inclusive faith community. Our arms reach out to the community in witness to our love of God and our commitment to be disciples of Christ. In these times when schools and public buildings are dealing with safety in a new way, so do we as a church need to find balance between safety and openness.

Fire

Do Not Hesitate to Act (Fire Can Double in Size Every 30 Seconds)

- Call 911
- Leave the building immediately, when fire alarm sounds
- If you notice smoke and no alarm, pull fire alarm and leave now
- Tell others to leave and assist others if needed
- Check temperature of interior doors before opening – if not hot proceed
- Drop to your hands and knees and crawl if caught in smoke
- Breathe through your nose and your shirt or jacket as filter
- STOP, DROP and ROLL if clothing or hair catches fire
- Follow planned routes or emergency exit signs
- Go outside to a safe assembly location and let others know you are okay
- Always follow emergency instructions and do not return until the “ALL CLEAR” has been given

If Your Exit Is Blocked

- Find another exit, if possible
- Don't break windows
- Place wet towels or clothing under door when unable to leave the room
- Notify others where you are

After A Fire

- Once the building is determined to be safe, then staff can enter and begin returning to normal functions
- Pastor and head of staff and Mennonite pastor address needs of the congregation
- All staff assist in returning operations to normal and clean-up
- Properties team assesses any damage and contact insurance company with assistance from the office administrator
- In the event the fire signal is a false alarm, a designated person will notify responders of the situation

Evacuation Routes

Evacuation routes are posted on church maps in classrooms and hallways. Consider alternative routes if routes are blocked.

- For those with disabilities, unable to use stairs, or elderly,
 - Shelter in the bathrooms on the level of the building where you are located – notify someone of your location
 - Or shelter in main hallway with doors to hallway from classrooms and offices closed and fire doors closed
- Follow posted fire plan per room
- Do not take the elevator unless told to do so by emergency personnel
- Do not go to your car or try to leave in your car until directed by emergency personnel
 - Exiting traffic blocks firetrucks and other emergency vehicles from reaching the scene
- Cross the street to get away from the building and the fire emergency equipment and crews
 - Watch for traffic and responding emergency vehicles
- Follow directions of emergency personnel directing evacuation

Exits

- Be prepared, take note of emergency exits when attending services or events indoors
- Check out your best escape plan
 - Do you know where those doors with Exit signs lead?
 - Do you know what lies on the other side of that door?
 - Is the closest exit the best choice for you?
- To evacuate the building from wherever you are, go to the nearest exit that you can safely negotiate
- If you need assistance seek help
- If any of the routes below are blocked or unsafe take an alternate route

Routes vary by emergency

- Active shooter or violence
 - Direct people to get out of building
 - Scatter
 - Shelter in safe place, if unable to evacuate safely
 - Do not shelter near windows, doorways, hallways or stairways
 - Do find shelter where cannot be seen and barricade door
- Fire
 - Evacuate if possible
 - Shelter in place if route is blocked
 - Do not open/break windows unless instructed to do so
- Gas Leakage
 - Follow nearby exit signs to the outdoors

Exiting the Sanctuary

- Route 1 - Exit through the three large interiors doors in the back of the sanctuary leading to the narthex
 - Turn west (left) down the steps to the front doors and out the doors toward Main Street
 - Stay to the left side of the doorway and allow people exiting from downstairs to exit on the right side of the doorway

- Cross street at the intersection away from the building
- Route 2 - Exit through the southeast door of the sanctuary
 - Proceed down outside cement stairs to the south parking lot near the alley
 - Cross the street away from the building
- Route 3 - Exit the southwest door (by the choir loft). This exit leads to an interior stairway
 - Take the first door on the right merging with evacuees coming up from the dining room
 - Go outside and down the stairs to the south parking lot by Main Street
 - Cross the street away from the building

Exiting Dining Room

- Route 1. Exit through the two doors on the north wall to the bottom of the stairway
 - Proceed up the stairway and out the main front doors to Main Street merging with evacuees coming up from the dining room
 - Cross the street at the intersection
- Route 2. Exit through the southwest door
 - Note this exit leads to an interior stairway
 - Take the first door on the left
 - Merge with people coming down from the sanctuary
 - Go outside and down the stairs to the south parking lot by Main Street
 - Cross the street away from the building.

Exiting the main-level and lower-level hallways (nursery, classrooms, library, music room, & offices)

Exit to the north entrance(9th Street) to the parking lot

- Go to east to State Street
- First Presbyterian staff and teachers will assist in the evacuation of children
- Children will gather in the grassy area at the east end of the parking lot (church at 9th and State Streets) to await the arrival of parents or guardians
- Children in activities other than in classrooms will be evacuated from the nearest exit to a safe location outside and away from the building
- Parents should evacuate to a safe place from their location and meet children at the designated gathering place outside

Exiting Upper-Level Floor- Mennonite Church Room

- Route 1. Exit using the fire escape located outside on the east door of the building to the northeast parking lot - Cross the street away from the building.
- Route 2. Exit the inside door to the hallway, take stairway to the main level floor, turn left (north) and exit through the north door. Cross the street away from the building.

Tips for calling 911.

- State the nature of the emergency
- Give your location and specific location in the building
- Stay connected until the operator closes the call
- If you cannot speak, leave the phone open so help can find you

Severe Weather: Tornado, Severe Thunderstorm, Shelter

In the case severe weather is possible in the area, the National Weather Service announces that there is a Watch or Warning over the Emergency Broadcast System with specific detail of the type of weather expected, the expected path and timing of the storm.

- A “*Watch*” indicates conditions are right for the development of a weather hazard. Watches provide advance notice to be prepared should a storm occur in your area.
- A “*Warning*” indicates a hazard is imminent or probability of occurrence is extremely high in the area, and you need to move to your pre-designated place of safety.

When a storm watch includes the church area

- An individual, hence referred to as the official “storm monitor” shall be designated to monitor the current status of weather from the weather service
- The pastor, children and youth leaders, and leaders of other events that are occurring in the building will review the weather sheltering procedures and location of the shelter areas with the participants
- If outdoors, move to an area where you can enter the building should a warning be announced
- In the meanwhile, resume activities as planned

When a storm warning has been issued or tornado spotted near the church area

- The designated “storm monitor” will alert all leaders in the building to move participants to the shelters following the shelter plan
 - Interrupt the worship service and/or other activities in the building
 - Quickly explain the situation and people to direct them to the nearest shelter area in the building
 - Alert ushers to be prepared to direct people and find assistance for those with disabilities, walkers and wheelchairs to get to safety

Shelter

- Shelter in place
 - Best place is away from windows and outside walls, stairways and elevators
- Ushers will direct you to designated storm shelters
 - Kitchen (The roll-up doors above the kitchen serving counters should be closed)
 - Pantry
 - Custodian closet
 - Downstairs rest rooms
 - Dining room north wall away from the windows may be considered for large number of people
 - Overflow area is the lower-level hallway with all hallway doors closed
- Do not use elevators in case of fire, storm or emergency (should electricity go off)
- Allow people from outside the building enter for shelter, direct them to an available location in the building
- Children participating in children & youth programming will be moved to the pantry area by teachers and staff
- Parents may find their way to the pantry area by way of the nearest shelter route in the building

Exit routes to shelter areas

- Route 1 from sanctuary: Proceed to the lower-level shelters by way of the southwest stairway near the Praise Band/Choir loft area -do not exit the building
- Route 2 from sanctuary: Move to lower shelters by exiting the back (north)of the sanctuary to the front Main Street entrance stairway and continue down to the lower level
- Route 3 from lower-level and main-level hallways: Turn south and proceed to shelter areas
- Exiting the upper floor
 - Leave the upper floor via the inside stairway, closing the door behind you
 - Proceed to the lower level where ushers will direct you to available shelters
- If a person with mobility issues is not able to move themselves down the stairs with assistance, main floor alternative locations are
 - Restrooms off of the narthex
 - Supply room in the church office
- All hallway doors on the lower-level should be closed when optional lower-level hallway is utilized
- People should remain sheltered until the national weather service has canceled the warning for Black Hawk County and the designated “Storm Monitor” gives the “all clear”

Snowstorms

Decision to cancel

- Decision to cancel church services, programs and events is made at the discretion of the pastor.

Cancellation notice will be sent to

- KWWL
- Staff
- Information will be posted
 - On the website
 - Facebook
 - Digital yard board
 - Phone voicemail message
 - If possible, an email blast will be sent to members
- Weekday activities are usually canceled due to weather if Cedar Falls Schools close due to inclement weather or if they cancel activities after school hours.
- It is recommended that participants in activities from outside groups, check with the organizer of the meeting before coming to the building if weather is a consideration.

Violence, Damage to Property, Suspicious Activity, Prevention and Theft

Take all threats of violence, damage, burglaries, arson, graffiti, other property crimes and suspicious activity seriously.

Report all the following to the pastors, First Presbyterian Church and Mennonite Church, and to law enforcement:

- Report ALL violence from any source regardless of credibility or source
- Report all incidents no matter how minor they may seem.
 - There may be a pattern in the neighborhood and law enforcement needs information to be able to determine the scope of the activity
- Report persons who enter the church and make threats or behave in an unusual or disruptive manner
- Report before the situation escalates
 - Law enforcement authorities have resources to assist people, or the person may already be known to them

Failure to report may be a liability to the church if we knew of behavior and failed to act.

Violence Prevention

Visibility increases our awareness of persons in the building allowing us to reach out to them as needed. Should suspicious behavior occur, staff or members can be more aware to take action to protect themselves as necessary. Surveillance cameras provide added security by increasing visibility should incidents occur.

Cameras are installed at the north entrance and upper and lower hallways of the building. A doorbell signal is heard in the office when the north door opens and views from the cameras are monitored in the church office.

Locks: Exterior doors

- Two main entrances are open on Sunday mornings, for special services and for special events open to the public: the front entrance off Main Street and the north entrance off the ninth street and the parking lot
 - Both main doors are locked on Sunday mornings after church services are completed from both congregations
 - People may leave but entrance is not possible without a key
 - The arbitrary earliest time doors will be locked on Sunday morning is 11:40 am, subject to change as needs change
- All nonessential exterior doors are locked from the outside at all the times but do not lock from the inside: the southeast door and the southwest door.
- During the week the north entrance off the main parking lot is open during usual office hours and as needed for our ministry needs, the needs of the Mennonite Congregation, outside group utilization, and other approved events
- When all staff leave the building during normal business hours, the building is locked until they return
- Any group or church member opening the building for gatherings is responsible for locking the building when they leave

Locks: interior doors

- All office doors entering from the hallway will be locked when vacated by staff
- The two conference rooms off the dining room are locked unless in use
- The door to the media control room on the third floor is locked unless in use

- The doors to the elevator mechanical rooms are locked at all times
- The doors to the two closets by the north entrance door automatically lock when closed. A key is located high on the door frame and is primarily to keep children from accessing the closet

Suspicious activity

All who see something, must say something

We are a welcoming inclusive church. It is our mission to help those in need. Weekly visits for assistance are frequent occurrences. Remain alert and aware to what is going on around you at all times.

- Be suspicious of strange or unusual individuals, situations and objects
 - Report immediately, or as soon as it is safe to do so, to the pastor, office administrator or other church leaders - knowledge of suspicious activity raises awareness for all
- Greet people unknown to you and ask “what brings you here today?” Ask specific questions that are open ended
- Don’t be presumptive in your questions
- Be friendly, welcoming and compassionate to their need
- Direct persons in need of assistance to pick up food donations as needed in the entryway or contact other local resources
- Suggest the hours they might return should you be alone in the building
- Direct them somewhere there is assistance available if necessary
- Most people seeking assistance will be amenable to redirection

Should the office be open, accompany the individual to the office

- Introduce them to the office staff
- Do not leave anyone alone with staff or pastor
- Have a backup individual on stand-by nearby should the individual become desperate
- We are always wanting to help, not punish, give direction or refer elsewhere for assistance
- Seek assistance from the Cedar Falls Police Department, they often may help give direction or find assistance for the individual
- Identify other sources of assistance: Love Inc, Food Bank, or call for assistance as individual requests if appropriate

Theft

- Theft is often a crime of opportunity
 - Do not leave purses or wallets in plain view, keep them on you or in a locked desk or area at all times; never leave them unattended, even for a few moments
- Do not store cash at the church at any time
- Keep your area clear of any valuable personal or church property not in use and at the end of each day or event
- Secure property in locked desk, file cabinet or closet
- Ensure all portable computers, projectors and other items of value that can be easily carried away are secured when unattended
- Safeguard church keys the same way you would safeguard your home or car keys
- Ensure you park your car in a well-lit area (if it is daylight, park near light poles or other

sources of light) - especially in the winter months

- Survey the parking area for suspicious individuals or vehicles before exiting the building
- If you note something suspicious, trust your instincts and do not leave the building
- Walk to your car with another person if possible
- In case of an emergency or threat directed to anyone, call 911 if needed
- Lock the building if you are one of the last to leave

Assault, guns, active shooter

An active shooter is a person or persons who appear to be actively engaged in killing or attempting to kill people. In most cases active shooters use firearms and display a pattern or selection of their victims. In some cases they may use other weapons such as explosive devices. Generally the event is over in three minutes. Many active shooters are expecting to be killed by law enforcement.

Response to an Active Shooter

Evacuate

- Have an escape route and plan
- Evacuate regardless of whether others agree to follow
- Leave any personal belongings behind
- Run and scatter, seek shelter behind retaining walls, other buildings, brick walls, parked vehicles etc.
- Do not try to find your children until law enforcement tells you to -for your safety and theirs
- Children will be evacuated by and/or sheltered with staff
- Call 911 once you are safe and let law enforcement know you have children at the scene

Hide out

- Seek protection
- Lock and barricade all doors and windows
- Turn off all lights
- Close window blinds
- Take cover and direct others to take cover under desks, concrete walls or behind filing cabinets
- Silence cell phones and other sources of noise
- Call 911 if possible and stay on the line so dispatcher can listen to what is happening
- Keep everyone quiet

Act against active shooter only when your life is in imminent danger

- Distract, attempt to incapacitate shooter
- Act as aggressively as you can
- Throw items: books, chairs, clip boards, candle sticks, pots and pans, dishes
- YELL

After law enforcement arrival

- Officer's job is to stop the shooter
- Keep your hands empty, above your head, and visible at all times

- Do not interrupt their mission
- Stay quiet unless specifically spoken to
- Do exactly what the law enforcement officers say
 - Usually, you are directed to leave in the direction from which they entered the premises
- Do NOT run toward the officers unless directed to do so
- Officers will NOT stop to aid the wounded
- Once you are in a safe place, do not leave the area until directed by law enforcement to do so
- Expect to be investigated and asked questions once the incident is over

If you encounter a potential active shooter in the building or outside

- Remain calm
- Do not to provoke the shooter
- Attempt to negotiate with the shooter only as a last resort
- If the shooter leaves the area, barricade the room or get to a safe location and call 911
- If possible, notify others in the building, to seek shelter and lock down
- If outside, stay outside and find adequate cover such as other buildings, brick walls, retaining walls, parked vehicles etc.

Burglaries, arson, graffiti, property claims

- Notify law enforcement of any suspected burglaries, arson or graffiti
- Do not disturb the scene until told to do so by law enforcement
- Take pictures of the scene for insurance purposes
- Notify the office administrator to submit any insurance claims

Once law enforcement arrives

- The property becomes a crime scene, do not disturb what you do not have to. Do not clean up until told
- Law enforcement will take control of the scene
- Their role is to neutralize the threat
- Keep your hands visible and empty
- Follow their directions
- They want to know the when, where, who and what
- They take over rescue of victims

Bomb Threats

ALL bomb threats must be taken seriously until they are assessed.

Notify the pastor and head of staff, Mennonite pastor and office administrator immediately upon receipt

Responding to a telephone bomb threat:

- Use the Incident Report Form to document the event

- Call 911 to notify law enforcement
- Consult with first responders on credibility of the threat

Responding to a written bomb threat:

- Save the threat document and all of the materials associated with the threat, including any envelopes, containers, samples of handwriting or typewriting, paper and postal marks
- Handle these items as little as possible
- If possible, place all items in an envelope or box to protect them

If the threat is determined to be credible:

Scan office or designated areas for suspicious items

- **DO NOT** touch any suspicious devices, packages, etc. If a device is located, it should be pointed out to emergency responders
- Limit the use of cellular phones, radios or fire alarm system
- Determine if evacuation should be initiated

If an evacuation is initiated:

- Notify all occupants of need to evacuate
- **DO NOT** use cell phones, radios or fire alarm system because of risk of activating a device
- Ensure evacuation routes and area(s) are clear of suspicious items

** When responding to a bomb threat, law enforcement and first responders generally will not search a building unless requested.

Suspicious Packages

Characteristics of a suspicious package or letter include excessive postage or excessive weight; misspellings of common words; oily stains, discolorations, or odor; no return address or a city or state postmark that does not match the return address; or a package that is not anticipated by someone in the building or is not sent by a known vendor.

If you receive a suspicious package or letter by mail or delivery service

- DO NOT OPEN package or letter
- Notify pastor and head of staff, Mennonite pastor and office administrator
- Call 911
- Limit access to the area where the suspicious letter or package is located to minimize the number of people who might directly handle it
- Preserve evidence for law enforcement

If a letter/package contains a written threat but no suspicious substance

- Notify pastor and head of staff, Mennonite pastor and office administrator

- Call 911
- Limit access to the area in which the letter or package was opened to minimize the number of people who might directly handle it
- Preserve evidence for law enforcement

If a letter or package is opened and contains a suspicious substance:

- Notify pastor and head of staff, Mennonite pastor and office administrator
- Call 911
- Limit access to the area in which the letter or package was opened to minimize the number of people who might directly handle it
- Isolate the people who have been exposed to the substance to prevent or minimize contamination
- Turn the letter or package over to law enforcement
- Complete Incident Report Form
- Consult with emergency officials to determine:
 - Need for decontamination of the area and the people exposed to the substance
 - Need for evacuation or shelter-in-place

Medical Emergencies

Medical emergencies can happen from accidents or medical conditions. The role of staff and members in the church in a medical emergency is to provide care to the victim until first responders arrive. No-one should provide any first aid beyond their training. Often the person experiencing the emergency does not acknowledge or denies the situation is serious.

If in doubt, take immediate action

- Survey the scene for additional hazards and ensure it is safe to render aid
- DO NOT move the victim(s), especially if you suspect a head or neck injury, unless safety is a concern
- Check victim for medical alert bracelet or necklace
- Call 911 and give
 - Name
 - Phone Number
 - Address
 - Description of the problem and patient
- Send someone to meet emergency personnel and take them to the emergency site
- Comfort the victim and reassure them that medical attention is on the way
- Assist emergency personnel with pertinent information about the incident
- Remain with the victim until trained help arrives
- Fill out an injury report when necessary
- Report incident to the pastor or minister of administration

- Staff , ministerial, salaried or volunteer, who work with children shall be certified in First Aid and CPR

First Aid Supplies and Equipment

- First Aid Kits are available in:
 - Head office
 - Narthex by the sink
 - Children Youth and Families room off the dining room in the lower level
 - Pantry near the custodian's closet
 - Kitchen
 - It is the responsibility of Children Youth and Family staff to maintain the First Aid Kits

AED (Automatic External Defibrillator)

Located on the wall by northwest sanctuary entrance

Use for unresponsive victim:

- Call 911
 - Assess victim for unresponsiveness, pulse and breathing
 - Call out for help
 - Remove Automatic External Defibrillator from the wall box (loud alarm will sound)
 - Begin CPR if necessary – use face-shield for breathing
 - Attach defibrillator paddles
 - Follow steps 1,2 and 3
 - “I” button is for information
 - Instructions on AED use is in the bag and the machine gives verbal instructions for use in real time
 - Once emergency personnel arrives they resume care of the victim
 - Replace any used supplies and return the AED to the cabinet & check battery light is on
- Care for AED
 - Check batteries at least monthly & sign check list inside cabinet door-Battery light should be lit and is seen through the window box
 - Uses HeartStart FRx 4-year batteries Item #M5070A (lithium manganese dioxide)
 - Store a spare battery in cabinet with AED
 - Properties committee maintains the batteries and replaces as needed

Sexual Misconduct and Child Protection

- Sexual Misconduct Policy and Procedures and Child Protection Policy are available as separate documents in this manual as specified in the Table of Contents for the Session Policy and Operations Manual. (cross-match)

Training & Sharing

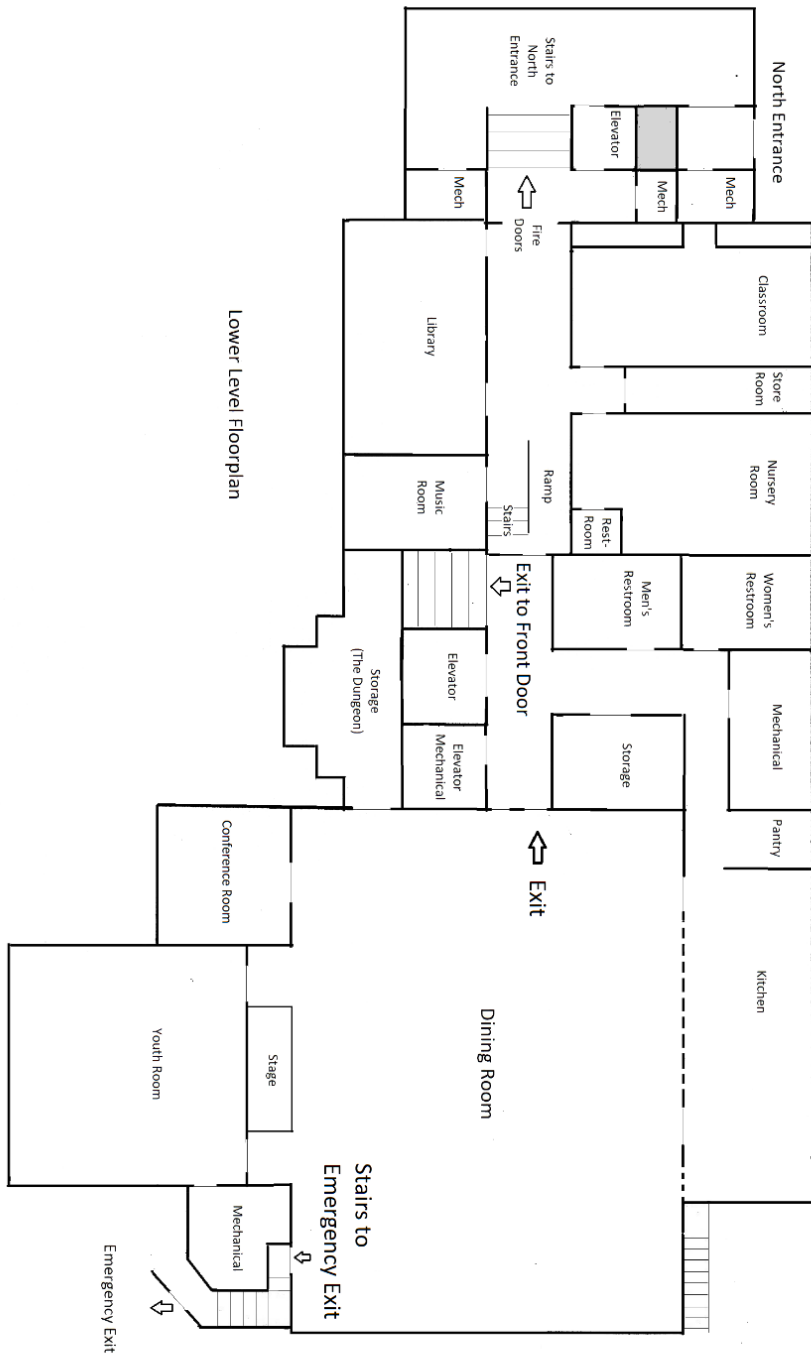
- All staff, session, deacons, and leaders will review the *Safe Ministry Plan* annually
- Copies of the plan are maintained online and, in the *Policy, and Operations Manual* in the office
- Additional copies will be maintained in the kitchen and with usher materials
- Review plans annually with session
- Provide a copy of the evacuation plan and floor plan to law enforcement
- Give copy to pastor to keep at home should they need to assist while off site or the church facility is not accessible
- The *Safe Ministry Plan* will be revised by the Corporate Ministry Team and approved by session.

Infectious Disease

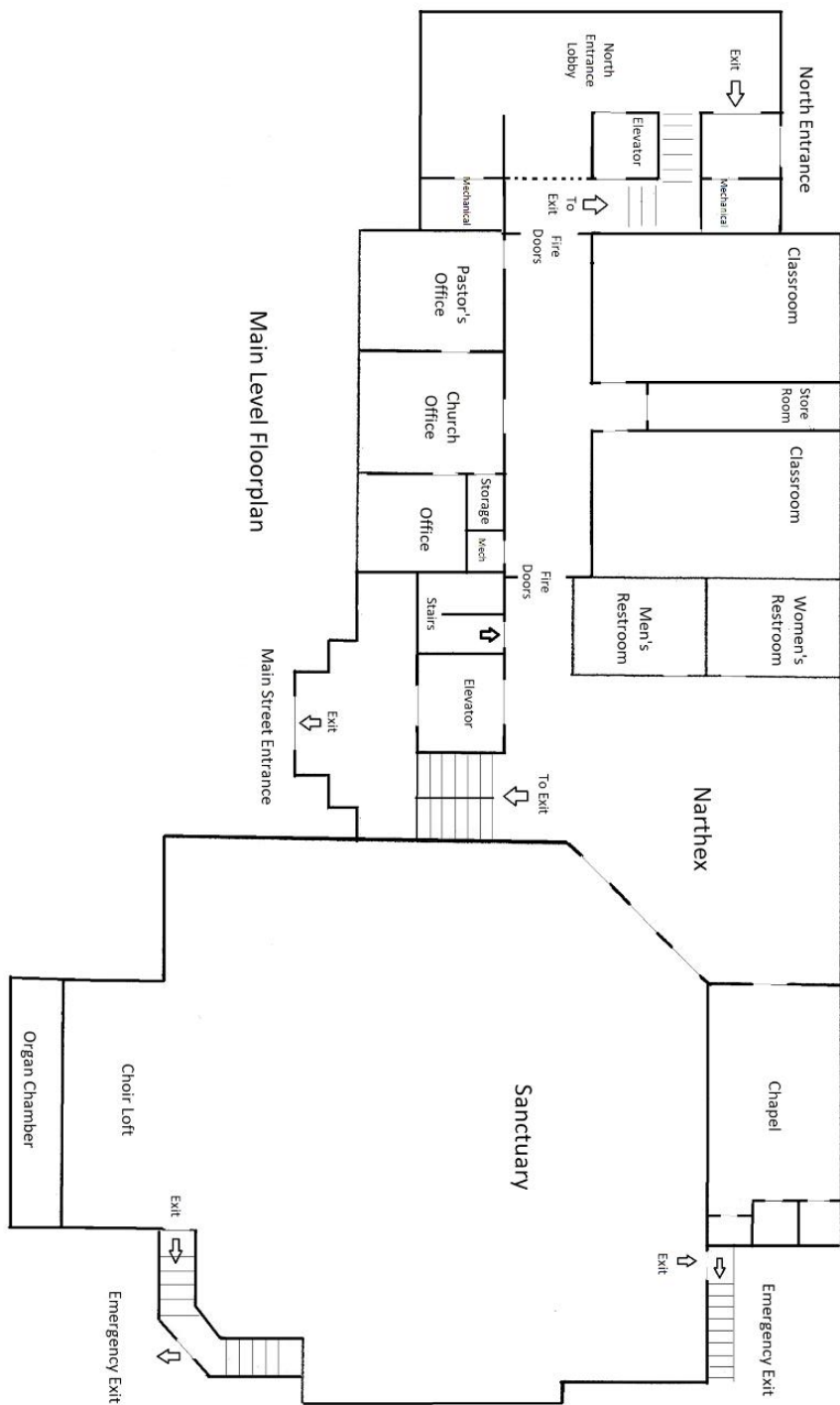
COVID-19 Guidelines (Repository)

Other (under development)

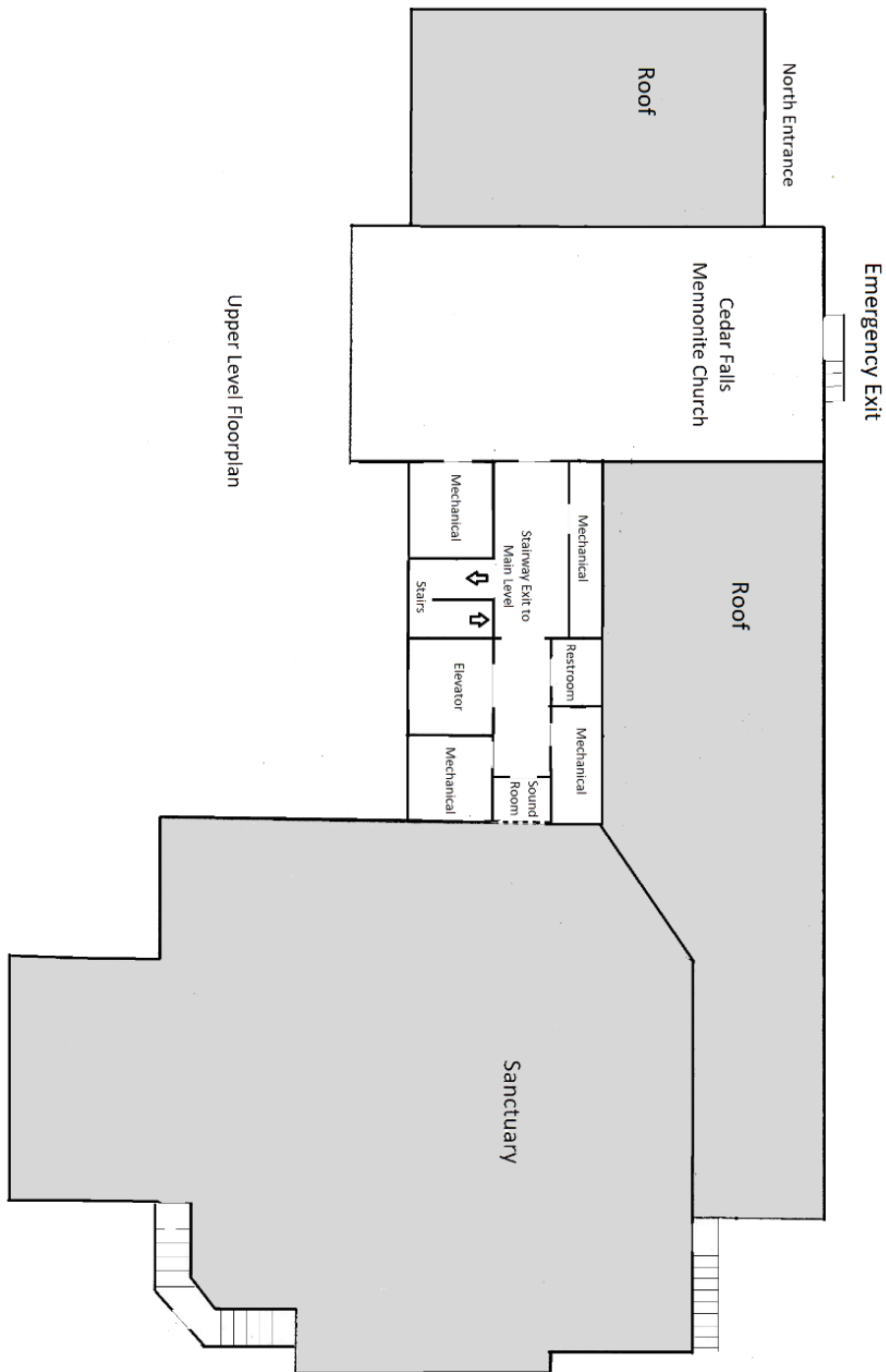
Floor Plans
Lower Level



Main Floor



Upper Level



Upper Level Floorplan