

### **FIGHT – An Absolute Last Resort**

*When confronted by an active shooter:*

- Only as an absolute last resort – physically able adults should consider the immediate danger and possible consequences.

*Only if an opportunity presents itself:*

- Try to disrupt or incapacitate the shooter
- Be as aggressive as possible
- Commit to your actions
- Recruit others to ambush the intruder and throw makeshift weapons (fire extinguishers, chairs, books, etc.) to distract and disarm the assailant
- Buy time for others to escape and for the police to arrive
- Assist the police in any way you can

The times in which we live require us all to remain vigilant.

### **SAFETY IS EVERYONE'S RESPONSIBILITY.**

*Though I walk in the midst of trouble, you preserve my life. You stretch out your hand against the anger of any foes; with your right hand you save me.*

Psalm 138:7

*So we say with confidence, the Lord is my helper I will not be afraid.*

Hebrews 13.6

### **SECURITY IN OUR TIME**

Please take time while you are in church to locate the nearest exit to your seat.

Fire alarm boxes are located near every exit.

For those with fire extinguisher experience, please note the location of the extinguishers. They are generally located in the four corners of the sanctuary.

First Congregational Church has taken a number of measures to improve the safety and security of our church staff, family and friends but we realize that safety is the responsibility of everyone and we encourage all to work to create a safe and welcoming place of worship for now and always, together.



## *First Congregational Church* Manchester, New Hampshire

## **SAFETY AND SECURITY AT FCC**

*Peace, I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.*

John 14:37

**Sanctuary: A simple word that evokes feelings of peace and calm. For all who enter our church, our hope is that you experience serenity and stillness, a sense of security where we all feel the presence of God.**

**The Safety and Security Committee at FCC has been working to develop a safety plan since returning from the pandemic. It is a small committee committed to the development of safety procedures and protocols for the benefit of our church members, friends and staff.**

**This brochure is intended to provide guidance in the event of various emergencies.**

*God is our refuge and strength, an ever present help in trouble.*

Proverbs 46:1

## CONGREGATIONAL SAFETY

Be observant! If something does not seem quite right to you, report it to an Usher, Deacon, or anyone on the Church Staff.

All exterior doors are locked 5-10 minutes after the service begins. However, all doors can be opened anytime from the inside to exit the building. If at any time there is a knock on the locked door, do not open it, and notify an Usher or Deacon.

### IN THE EVENT OF:

#### Inclement Weather / Snow & Ice

If the forecast calls for severe snow and/or ice, Sunday services may be canceled.

Cancellations will be announced through:

- Church website (FCCManchesternh.org)
- Facebook page
- WMUR TV

#### A Medical Emergency

If assistance is necessary, notify an Usher, Deacon or a staff member.

- Seek out a congregant nurse or medical professional
- A first aid kit is located in the coat closet in back of the Sanctuary, in the small kitchen adjacent to the Parlor upstairs and in the kitchen downstairs
- AED (Automatic External Defibrillator) is located in the hallway on the wall, near the long table. Follow the instructions and voice prompts
- Call 911 if necessary

#### A Mental Health Emergency

*If a visitor to the church displays bizarre speech or behavior:*

- Give them space
- Do not argue with them or try to convince them that they are wrong
- Identify and address the affect (emotional expression); e.g., or “you look very sad about that”
- Identify, if possible, the genuine need and address it (e.g., provide food from the food closet) or direct to proper resources
- There is usually no need to call the police unless the person is belligerent or aggressive

#### A Fire

If the fire alarm sounds:

- Evacuate the building at once:
- Go to the nearest safe exit and get away from the building
- Individuals with mobility impairments should wait for Ushers or Deacons to assist in the evacuation
- Do not go to Sunday Friends or the Nursery; they have their evacuation protocols

#### An Unattended Package

- If you see an unattended package that looks suspicious:
- Do not touch the package
- Note its appearance and report it.

#### A Suspicious Person

- If you see someone who looks threatening or hostile, acts erratic, irrational, or intends harm:
- Note the behavior
- Do not approach the individual
- Report it to an Usher, Deacon, or staff member.

#### IN THE EVENT OF AN ARMED INTRUDER:

It is a painful and sad reality that faith communities have not been immune from violence. In the very unlikely event of an armed assailant, the U.S. Department of Homeland security, the NH Department of Safety, and local law enforcement recommend these steps:

#### RUN – Escape if Possible

If it is safe to do so, run out of the building and go far away until you are in a safe location.

*Your top priority is to get away*

- Leave all your belongings behind
- Help others escape, but evacuate regardless if others follow or not
- Warn others not to enter the area
- Call or text 911 as soon as possible

#### HIDE – If Escape Is Not Possible

If running is not a safe option, hide in as safe a place as possible.

*If you can exit the area*

- Get out of the shooter’s view
- Lock or block doors
- Turn off lights
- Be quiet and turn off electronics
- Call or text 911 – be as silent as possible

*If you cannot get away*

- Shelter in place
- In the sanctuary – get down on the floor and hide under the pews
- It is critical to buy time until the police arrive
- Stay in place until cleared by law enforcement  
(continued...)