

Church of the Annunciation

Safety Sunday

May 21st, 2023

**Church of the Annunciation
Safety Plan
Information**

Current Committee Members

Father Gene
Mark Bergmann
Kim Driggs
Steven Flowers
Mike Geary
Frank Lewalski
Anthony Pivarunas
Mike Skrip
Allison Smerka
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History and Recent Accomplishments

Since its inception in 2020, our Health, Safety and Security Committee has made progress with study and action plans for our safety and for our response to emergencies. Infrastructure improvements have been made, along with staff education and identification/location of utility shut off valves and breakers. Additional security cameras and upgrades have been installed within and outside our buildings as a deterrent to break-ins and vandalism. A security walk-through the school examined emergency procedures, communication and modifications to doors

and windows for visibility, for quick opening and locking, and for evacuation. Committee members will be attending a training course sponsored by the Diocese of Buffalo and Department of Homeland Security. At this proposed workshop, the Committee will inquire about changes and challenges to the New York State law on carrying concealed weapons and on the recommendation of police enforcement that a place of worship (church, synagogue, temple or mosque) be ready to lock the front doors in case of an attack. First aid kits are audited to make sure all the kits contain the re-

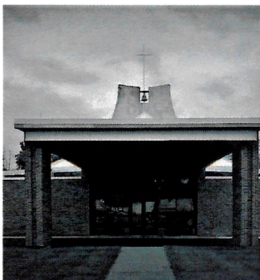
quired current and unexpired material and "stop the bleed" medical kits are now placed in strategic locations. AEDs have been checked for functionality. Recruitment and training of Ushers and Greeters are underway to ensure continued welcome, vigilance and appropriate response to medical emergencies. Our 2nd "Safety Sunday" is planned for May 20-21, 2023.

Building Maintenance and 2022 Christmas Blizzard

The blizzard of 2022 was one of the most catastrophic weather events in Buffalo's history. With a death toll exceeding the Blizzard of '77, and with widespread damage and power outages, no local resident was unaffected by the storm. With roads impassable, many stores closed for days and supply chain issues further strained, many residents ran low on critical supplies such as food and medicine. Walkers and motorists caught by surprise at the intensity of the storm and stuck in the snow were forced to abandon their vehicles for

shelter in nearby businesses, buildings or strangers' homes. In the aftermath of the blizzard, our Health, Safety and Security Committee discussed the feasibility of our parish purchasing and storing a limited supply of extended shelf life food items, bottled water, blankets and first aid supplies. Other necessities would include batteries, a radio and access to landline phone service. These provisions would help sustain a small group for a few days in the event of a similar weather event where individuals become stranded at the church or seek ref-

uge in the church or one of our buildings. Recently, one of our maintenance staff had to stay in the school with no heat for several hours waiting for the utility to restore the natural gas. He needed a blanket to keep warm! There are challenges to this endeavor including availability of storage space and accessibility into our facilities during a major snow event. Further study is needed and communication with public and social agencies like Catholic Charities and Red Cross who have experience in such relief efforts.





Safety and Health Update

- The location of out of hospital cardiac arrests most often occur in homes (73%), followed by public places (17%) and nursing homes (10%)
- If performed immediately, CPR can double or triple the chance of survival from an out of hospital cardiac arrest
- The American Heart Association offers online courses on CPR and how to use an AED

The Church of the Annunciation Parish strives to provide a safe and healthy environment for parishioners, guests, office staff, Family Faith Formation participants, and the Strong Start Pre-K Program children. It is probable an unexpected medical emergency can occur anywhere on the Parish Campus.

The Health, Safety, and Security Committee of the Church is instituting protocols to address an unexpected health related emergency. This “update” will provide a complement to the 2022 Safety Sunday report to our Parish.

Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs) are located in the Church Vestibule,

Selbert Hall, the School/Gym, the Parish Office, and in The Pavilion during events. First Aid Kits, recently replenished, are in the same locations. Printed Adult and Child First Aid Guidelines are hanging on an attached ring in these same locations.

Ushers and Greeters have firsthand experience welcoming people, keeping watch, and responding to health related and other emergencies. They will play a key role in the recruitment and training of new Greeters and Ushers.

Parishioners, who are qualified medical personnel and willing to offer help during an emergency, are encouraged to do so as they have

done in the past. They can identify themselves to the Ushers.

CPR (Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation) training and proper use of an AED have been and will be provided for individuals who wish to become familiar with basic lifesaving procedures, their purpose and proper application.

If a 911 call is deemed necessary, the main purpose of the parish’s response to an unexpected health related emergency is to be with the person in need, and provide initial help until Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs) arrive to provide care and make a decision regarding transport to a hospital.

Future Goals and Moving Forward

Going forward, the Annunciation Church Health, Safety and Security committee will continue to work to develop and improve all of stated goals and objectives. Guest speakers will continue to educate the committee members and interested parishioners. The committee is working on imple-

menting an “incident command structure” to help identify people in charge of and improve the channels of communication in various emergencies. Finally, the committee will help Annunciation integrate into the Family of Parishes model, and share our knowledge and resources in

regards to health, safety and security with other churches in the Family. Please contact committee chair Steven Flowers (sflowers539@roadrunner.com), or any other committee member if you are interested in learning more or becoming a member of the committee!

