

SPEAK UP.

CHURCH SECURITY

PROTECT AND PROMOTE THE RIGHTS OF OUR CHURCHES

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q Why is church security important?

A Church security is vital because more and more churches are reporting violent attacks, vandalism, and disruption of services. In particular, some radical groups are targeting churches that speak out on issues such as abortion and same-sex “marriage.” Having a security plan in place can prevent disaster and keep your congregation safe.

Q Isn't security more of an issue for larger churches?

A No. Many churches that have suffered violent attacks or vandalism in the past few years have been smaller churches.

Q What are the top three things a church can do immediately to improve security?

A Develop a security team that is charged with coming up with a comprehensive plan to handle security concerns.

Contact your local police department to see if they offer security training. If not, contact an organization like the National Organization of Church Security and Safety Management to get training and/or training materials for your staff.

Invest in a surveillance system. Basic systems have become very affordable. The presence of security cameras will make potential bad actors think twice, and will preserve important evidence for prosecution if something does happen.

Q What should our church do if we have evidence that there may be a security threat on a particular date?

A Contact the police immediately and ask them to have officers at your church on and around that date. Next, call the Alliance Defense Fund so that ADF attorneys may evaluate legal concerns and determine whether ADF may be of effective assistance to you. Consider establishing an on-site security team that can work with local law enforcement to prevent violence or disruption.

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Q Can our ushers or security staff use force to remove disruptors?

A Churches have the right to remove disruptive individuals. Nonetheless, states have differing standards on the use of force to remove them, and you should be familiar with your state's requirements for what constitutes reasonable use of force.

Q Is there a checklist of things we should review to ensure we have appropriate security?

A Yes. ADF has developed a security checklist that will help you get started. You can access it at SpeakUpChurch.org/Church in *Resources*.

A RESOURCE OF THE ALLIANCE DEFENSE FUND

