

## How to respond to an intruder in a Church building

**Purpose:** This document has been prepared to provide guidance in responding to an incident where an event or gathering at your premises may be disrupted by an intruder or a similar security issue.

**Definition:** For the purpose of this document an intruder is considered to be a member of the community who has entered the premises with the intent to cause unwelcomed disruption or harm of any kind.

Please note persons may not always immediately present as intruder(s). They may join peacefully for a period of time before causing disruption, and an incident may escalate at any time. *Report any incident to police at the earliest time that it is safe to do so.*

### In the event of an intruder, take the below actions:

- 1. Assess:** try to identify the person's reason for intruding and assess whether there is any immediate or potential risk of harm. Remain calm and ask the intruder(s) to leave the premises, noting that it is private property.
- 2. Call:** if there is any immediate risk of harm or if you feel unsafe, call 000. Otherwise, have someone contact your local police station to report the incident as soon as possible.

Glen Waverley Police Station 9566 1555

- 3. Respond:** based on your assessment of the situation, you may need to respond to ensure peoples' safety, this may include evacuating or creating barriers or space between yourselves and the intruder(s) for safety. Be aware that the situation may escalate at any time.

### If the incident escalates

Quickly determine the most reasonable way to ensure your safety. Remember that attendees are likely to follow the event leaders/organisers during an emergency situation.

<b>1. Evacuate:</b> evacuate the premises via nearest, safest exit. <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Have an evacuation route and plan in mind</li><li>- Leave personal belongings behind</li></ul>	<b>Call 000 when it is safe to do so</b> Once you have secured your personal safety and those around you, call 000 to inform emergency services. The more details you are able to provide the better.
<b>2. Hide:</b> if you are unable to evacuate, find any means of hiding yourself from the intruder(s) or create barriers or space between yourselves and the intruder(s) for safety.	
<b>3. Defend:</b> <i>as a last resort only</i> , defend yourself from the intruder using any means or objects available to you, or 'swarm' as a group. Seek to defend yourselves – not to harm the intruder(s).	

### Notify your Presbytery and the Synod as soon as you are able

Once your safety and the safety of those around you has been secured and emergency services have been notified, contact your Presbytery and the Synod to inform them of the incident and of any support required in managing the incident and/or its consequences, such as pastoral services or services from the Synod's Legal, Insurance, Risk and Property teams.

**Synod contact:** Isabel Thomas Dobson, Associate General Secretary

Phone: (03) 9251 5208      Mobile: 0418 349 896

Email: [isabel.thomasdobson@victas.uca.org.au](mailto:isabel.thomasdobson@victas.uca.org.au)