

Emergency Evacuation Policies & Procedures

First Church in Cambridge, Congregational, UCC

11 Garden Street, Cambridge, MA 02138

POLICIES

1. Whenever the fire alarm sounds EVERYONE is to leave the building, even if you are sure it is a false alarm or a drill.
2. First Church Staff, Sextons, Deacons, Members of Executive Council, and selected members of the congregation will be trained in Emergency Evacuation Policies and Procedures and should be prepared to assist in the event of an Emergency Evacuation. These staff and members of the congregation are referred to as **Fire Marshals**.
3. The congregation shall periodically conduct a “Fire Drill” in order to practice safe evacuation of the building, according to the following procedures.
4. The Executive Council, in coordination with First Church Staff, will be responsible to:
 - Assure the periodic training of Staff, Sextons, Deacons, Executive Council, and additional selected members of the congregation in Emergency Evacuation Policies and Procedures.
 - Schedule and carry out periodic “Fire Drills.”
 - Periodically review and update the *Emergency Evacuation Policies and Procedures*.
5. Exits will be maintained free of snow, ice and obstructions.
6. In the event that the Cambridge Fire Department is called to the scene, Fire Department (and other Emergency Responders) have authority to determine a course of action; First Church staff, members, and building occupants will follow their directives.

GENERAL PROCEDURES

1. In the event of an Emergency Evacuation or Fire Drill, the **Designated Gathering Area** is directly across Mason Street by the white pillars in front of Radcliffe.
2. **First Response** in the event of a **Fire Alarm**: The sexton on duty instructs people to evacuate the building, assesses the danger level, and goes to 11 Garden Street Entrance to meet Fire Department. Sexton communicates with Fire Department, emergency personnel, and the alarm system company, as necessary.
3. Church Staff and those acting as **Fire Marshals** (if any are present) will help direct people to evacuate the building.
4. Whenever possible, persons who need special assistance in the event of a fire drill or an actual emergency will be paired with a designated “**Companion**” who understands their needs and may be able to assist.

PROCEDURES FOR EVACUATION OF THE SANCTUARY IN THE EVENT OF A FIRE DRILL OR AN ACTUAL EMERGENCY

These procedures apply whenever people are gathered in the sanctuary for a First Church event, such as morning worship or a special event.

BEFORE THE START of the event:

1. **Head Greeter** (or designate) will identify trained leaders (Fire Marshals) and make sure a Fire Marshal is assigned to each section of the sanctuary in order to assist in the event of an evacuation. A List of trained Fire Marshals may be kept at the rear of the sanctuary.
2. **Fire Marshals** will pick up the orange **Fire Marshal Sign** corresponding to the section of the sanctuary where they will be seated, as well as a copy of the Emergency Evacuation Policy and Procedures, before taking a seat. These materials may be found in the rear of the sanctuary.

WHEN EMERGENCY ALARM SOUNDS

1. **Head Greeter** (or designate) will stand and signal to Fire Marshals to take their positions and stand ready to direct people to evacuate the building.
2. **Fire Marshals** will stand in the designated location facing their section of the sanctuary and holding up the orange Fire Marshal Sign for that section.
3. Designated **Companions** will go immediately to persons who need assistance and follow the Fire Marshals' directions to exit the building.
4. **Head Greeter** (or designate) will open all the Narthex doors, the Sanctuary exit, the door to the Tower Room, and the Tower Room exit and will stand in the Narthex between the Front Door and the Tower Room Door to help direct people out of those two exits.
5. A **Fire Marshal** will open the North Transept (family section) door to the hallway by the Hastings Room and will assess the danger level along the corridor leading to the 11 Garden Street Entrance. If and when the pathway is clear and it is safe to proceed, Fire Marshal directs people to exit at the 11 Garden Street door.
6. The **Music Director** will open the doors to the Cloisters Exit (by the choir section) and direct choir members and congregants to exit through that door.
7. All other **Fire Marshals** will go to their appointed stations and stand holding up their hands, ready to direct evacuation as instructed. (If there are people in the balcony, Fire Marshals will go to the balcony stairs).
8. As instructions for departure are given from the pulpit, the **Fire Marshals** will help guide people out in the right direction, keeping an eye out for anyone who may need assistance.

VERBAL INSTRUCTIONS FOR EVACUATION

One of the ministers will go to the pulpit and announce in a calm and reassuring, yet authoritative manner:

(NOTE: other minister(s) will watch for people needing assistance and help as able.)

- ***In the event of a Fire Drill:*** We request that everyone take part in this **Fire Drill** and follow emergency evacuation procedures. Your participation and cooperation will help ensure that our plan is safe and workable and that everyone knows what to do in case of an emergency.
- We have a plan for safe and orderly evacuation.
- Please remain calm and make space for those in wheelchairs and anyone needing special assistance.
- Sections will be asked to leave in a particular order. Please wait for directions.
- **Fire Marshals** are standing by each section of the sanctuary with orange Fire Marshal signs and will be guiding people out.
- Persons in wheelchairs and those needing assistance will be helped to evacuate.
- Church school classes and other groups in the building are being safely evacuated also.
- The safest thing for parents and family members to do is to leave the building and rejoin family members at our Designated Gathering Area.
- You will be directed to the Designated Gathering Area, which is located across Mason Street by the white pillars in front of Radcliffe.
- The church school classes will meet there as well. Teachers will be holding up signs for each class (Godly Play 1, Godly Play 2, etc.) to help parents locate their children.

ORDER OF EVACUATION (*minister continues reading from the mic*)

All doorways will be opened and evacuation will proceed through all doors simultaneously *unless otherwise directed*. Sections will leave in the order directed, as follows:

Note: Directions are based on the orientation of someone who is facing the dome at the front of the sanctuary with the north transept (family section) on the right and the Choir Section on the left.

North Transept Door (front right side of sanctuary)

1. **WHEELCHAIR USERS** exit via doorway in north transept (family section) to hallway outside of Hastings Room. Exit building at 11 Garden Street Entrance. *Note: this is the only exit to the street where there are no steps.*
2. **NORTH TRANSEPT (FAMILY SECTION)** exits via the north transept door to hallway outside of Hastings Room. Exit building at 11 Garden Street Entrance.

Cloisters Doors (Choir Section—left front side of sanctuary)

1. **CHOIR MEMBERS** exit through the Cloisters Doors.
2. **LEFT FRONT SECTION** exits through the Cloisters Doors.
3. **CENTER FRONT SECTION** exits through the Cloisters Doors.

Narthex Doors to Sanctuary Entrance (rear of sanctuary)

1. **RIGHT REAR SECTION** exits through right narthex door and directly out the Sanctuary Entrance.
2. **CENTER REAR SECTION** exits through center narthex door and directly out the Sanctuary Entrance.
3. **RIGHT SIDE OF BALCONY** exits through right narthex door and directly out the Sanctuary Entrance.

Narthex Doors to Tower Room Exit (rear of sanctuary)

1. **LEFT REAR SECTION** exits through left narthex door and through Tower Room to exit.
2. **LEFT SIDE OF BALCONY** exits through left narthex door and through Tower Room to exit.

PROCEDURES FOR EVACUATION OF MARGARET JEWETT HALL IN THE EVENT OF A FIRE DRILL OR AN ACTUAL EMERGENCY

These procedures apply whenever people are gathered in Margaret Jewett Hall for a First Church event, such as fellowship hour or a special event.

VERBAL INSTRUCTIONS FOR EVACUATION

A Minister or Fire Marshal will stand on the stage and announce (in a calm and reassuring, yet authoritative manner):

- We have a plan for safe and orderly evacuation.
- Please remain calm and make space for those in wheelchairs and anyone needing special assistance.
- Fire Marshals are holding up orange **Fire Marshal Signs** and will be guiding people out.
- Persons in wheelchairs and those needing assistance will be helped to evacuate.
- Church school classes and other groups in the building are being safely evacuated also.
- The safest thing for parents and family members to do is to leave the building and rejoin family members at our Designated Gathering Area.
- You will be directed to the Designated Gathering Area across Mason Street by the white pillars in front of Radcliffe.
- The church school classes will meet there as well. Teachers will be holding up signs for each class (Godly Play 1, Godly Play 2, etc.) to help parents locate their children.

Fire Marshals open doors to Mason Street exit and rear stairwell to Shelter exit. Assist people as quickly as possible out of Margaret Jewett Hall.

Designated Companions may offer help to persons in need of special assistance.

PROCEDURES FOR EVACUATING CHURCH SCHOOL CLASSES IN THE EVENT OF A FIRE DRILL OR AN ACTUAL EMERGENCY

In the event of an evacuation while church school classes are in session, the Director of Creative Worship and Arts (or her proxy) should be keeping an accurate record of where each church school class is located within the building.

1. **Church School Teachers** pick up the roll/attendance list for the class and their “**Classroom Sign**” (Godly Play 1, Godly Play 2, etc.) and lead the group out of the building.
2. Once out of the building teachers guide their classes to the **Designated Gathering Place** on Mason Street by the white pillars in front of Radcliffe.
3. Go to the location where other church school classes are gathering and check with the **Director of Creative Worship and Arts**.
4. Stay organized in classes until it is known that everyone is safely out of the building. Teachers may hold up their **Classroom Sign** to identify their group.
5. **Parents** may join groups, but are asked not to take children away until everyone is accounted for.
6. **Church School Teachers** will report to the Director of Creative Worship and Arts once every member of their class has been safely evacuated.
7. **Church School Teachers** will see that children are paired up with their parents and will let the Director of Creative Worship and Arts know when all families have from their class have located each other.
8. **Fire Marshals** will reassure family members that it is safer for everyone to exit the building and meet their children at the appointed location, rather than go into the building looking for them.

AFTER A FIRE DRILL OR EMERGENCY EVACUATION

At the conclusion of A Fire Drill or Emergency Evacuation, people may re-enter the building ONLY after it has been cleared by a member of the Fire Department OR at the direction of a Minister or Designated Leader.