

## Old St. Paul's Church Escaped Felon Scenario

**Setting:** 7PM Thanksgiving Eve Worship Service, 30 minutes into the service. Pastor Sain is in the last few minutes of the sermon. Attendance at service is 105: Team 2 is on Duty with 1 member on cameras, 2 members on parking lot patrol and 1 member out front at narthex doors. Weather is overcast, dark and 48 degrees with no wind.

**Event:** Notification of a Escaped Felon is transmitted via cell phone and church phone by Catawba County automated system. SST members that received alert by phone communicates' info to SST Team Leader on Duty. Team Leader sees numerous patrol cars around Historic Church and calls for all SST members to come inside church and lock down all outside doors. Police cruiser with lights flashing arrives in parking lot. Team Leader goes outside to investigate and discovers that escapee was last seen in OSP graveyard. Other police cruises in- circle graveyard and surrounding area.

Team Leader notifies all SST members via radio communication of situation and calls for 4 members to remain in sanctuary and discreetly (showing no weapons) guard all doors. All other SST members are to report to SST office where Team Leader will disperse teams of 2 people per unit to guard all outside doorways and adjacent halls throughout the facility. Team Leader will sound emergency alarm and Kevin will make a lockout announcement to the congregation.

### Event Actions:

- Team Leader continues to monitor cameras for activity
- Congregation is sheltered in place with SST members guarding 4 entrances
- 15 minutes has passed since lockout alarm with no police communication
- SST members who are monitoring lower level Sunday School Wing Hall hear glass breakage in Hand Bell Room. They investigate noise.
- SST can't gain entrance to room because of locked door. Flashlights are used to scan room thru window in door and they see broken window and glass on floor. They do not see anyone but can't view back corner of room or behind bell tables.
- Info is radioed to SST office and Team Leader notifies 911 of situation at OSP
- Area SST Team backs off from Hand Bell Room and takes up a semi-concealed position in nearby Sunday school room.
- Police arrive on site and are met by Team Leader. They proceed to location.
- Other officers arrive and are directed to backside of Sunday School wing to investigate
- Team Leader calls for key to Hand Bell Room and it arrives on location

- Team Leader and members move to secondary position and police breach door to Hand bell Room.
- Police inside and outside find suspect crouched behind hand bell tables and take into custody after a brief scuffle.
- Suspect is removed from OSP site in handcuffs and all clear is given to SST members
- Kevin makes announcement over PA System and Team Leader comes to Sanctuary to inform congregation of event.
- Doors are unlocked and situation returns to normal.

#### **Results of Actions:**

- Glass and Window Frame Damage to 1 window, estimated repair cost \$500.00
- Broken Tables in Hand Bell room due to scuffle with suspect. Estimated cost \$200.00
- Numerous hand bells are on floor and damaged .Cost to replace unknown
- Alarm Company calling primary contacts due to alarm not being secured after entrance to room.
- SST members gather after event to discuss situation, actions and areas of improvement. No SST member sleeps that night.

#### **Aftermath:**

- SST conducts hands on training session “On what to do if suspect had come out of room prior to Police arrival on site”.
- SST conducts situation debrief of all members involved. Debriefing showed we have a camera blind spot on back side of Sunday School Wing. Need additional cameras installed in this location.
- Debrief also showed that on the initial contact team only 1 member had a flashlight and 1 member was unarmed. No armed backup team was ordered to the area by the team leader.
- Debrief described the congregation as quite, reserved and attentive to the situation.

#### **Facts & Liability:**

- Church was properly secured for the known situation. All doors were locked & guarded by armed personnel using proper discretion as not to traumatize the congregation.
- Radio Communication between SST members kept all team members aware of changing events.

- SST worked in conjunction with Police and communication was established between the 2 groups.
- Glass breakage alarms are installed in hand bell room. Glass breakage did notify the alarm company, which tried to notify church members of possible break in.
- Expect some younger members to be traumatized by the event and may require some minor counseling by parents or Pastor.
- News Crews from all local stations and papers converge on site for news stories. SST members should decline comment and refer reporters to Newton Police and Pastor. If cleared by them, then SST can comment. News interviews last for several days.
- Maintenance budget will receive expense to repair damage. Church will have to replace damaged bells. Not sure if insurance will cover cost.
- Other than repairs to church facility and replacement of bells, OSP has no other liabilities.