

THE HERALD

Newsletter of the Orrville Grace Brethren Church

Church Security at Christmas and All Year Long

By Pastor Joshua Steiner

Christmas provides us an opportunity each year to remember God's incredible love for us, demonstrated in sending His Son to be born of the Virgin Mary. Is that your focus amidst the shopping, food, and family gatherings? Jesus is not only the reason for the season, but the reason for our entire life. Therefore we must pattern our lives after His.

As we read through the Gospels it becomes clear that Jesus didn't always have an easy life, people often wanted to kill Him. King Herod was so determined that he had all the male children under the age of 2 killed in Bethlehem and the surrounding country (Matt. 2:16). Very early in Jesus' ministry the people from his hometown of Nazareth were so enraged at His words that they attempted to throw Him off a cliff to His death (Luke 4:29). However, God enabled Him to walk right through the mob unhurt! This kind of response continued throughout His ministry

as the religious leaders tried to figure out how to get rid of Jesus.

Even though there were many people that wanted to kill Him, He faithfully continued His ministry. However, Jesus did use discernment by avoiding certain places at times (cf. John 7:1). In a similar way we need to be wise and discerning as we assemble together multiple times each week.

Over three and a half years ago Pastor Ike wrote an article on the steps we have taken as a church to provide a measure of security during our normal services. Since that time, church shootings and other violent attacks have continued to happen. The world is no safer today than it was 3 years ago. Thus we wanted to bring this topic before you again so that we are all on the same page.

You probably have noticed the piece of cardstock that is inside of the Herald. That sheet provides an overview of what we would like to see happen if there were ever a violent intruder on our property. I would ask you to take some time to review the instructions on the sheet and then place it somewhere where you can refer to it when needed.

The more I have thought about making our church building secure, the more I have

come to realize that it is impossible to plan for everything. There will always be some scenario that we cannot fully prepare for, unless we sell our church building and build a bunker somewhere. However, there are many simple steps that we can take in order to minimize any attack.

As you will notice on the instruction sheet we want each person in our church to maintain general awareness. If you see someone or something that looks a little out of place, please tell one of the elders or a man on the Men's Advisory Council.

Jeff Kowell, director of the life safety ministry at New Life Church in Colorado Springs, Colorado which experienced a deadly shooting following a Sunday service in 2007, advises: "When something or someone is out of place or behaving erratically, we practice 'aggressive friendliness' and engage them in a nonthreatening way — hopefully to productive ends. Many times, this practice is enough to dissuade an individual looking for a place to act out." There are three men, Fred Hodgdon, Isaac Hodgdon and Ben Geiser, who are specifically assigned to this task. However, if for some reason they are not available you can assist by: intentionally engaging the newcomer in friendly conversation as you share your name and get theirs. Tell them "you are so glad they chose to join us and are curious what brought them here..."

This is a good idea, not only for safety reasons, but also from a Christian standpoint as you seek to demonstrate the love of Christ to the person by welcoming them to our church in a friendly and caring manner. But also by your intentionality you will be able to identify possible danger or help the person to

see that we are not an easy target; he cannot just slip in unnoticed and then later do some terrible act.

Up to this point (December 3, 2017) we have only locked the main entrance doors during our 9:30am worship service; however from today (December 10, 2017) our plan is to lock our doors for each service (Sunday School, lunch, Wednesday night, etc.). During the worship service there is a man in the hallway who monitors the doors and is able to let a latecomer in. During all other services, if you come late and need to be let in, there is a doorbell to the left of the main entrance door that you can ring. Just like at home, if you are inside and hear the doorbell ring, make sure you confirm who is on the outside before you let anyone in.

If a violent intruder would happen to get in during a worship service, please follow the directions of the leadership on the stage. If the violent intruder enters during Sunday School or Grace Bible Club and you hear an air horn or gunshots, lock the classroom door by pulling down on the lever, pull the shade, turn off the lights and move away from any windows.

Once again, I encourage you to review the instructions on the sheet and keep it in a safe spot, like your Bible cover. It is our prayer that we will never have to use these instructions. But, if God were to allow something like this to happen I trust that we will be wise and discerning as we continue to trust God through the ordeal.

God has promised that He will never leave us or forsake us (Heb. 13:5). May we keep our eyes focused on Him as we go through all of life.

Auditorium Improvement

By Pastor Del Miller

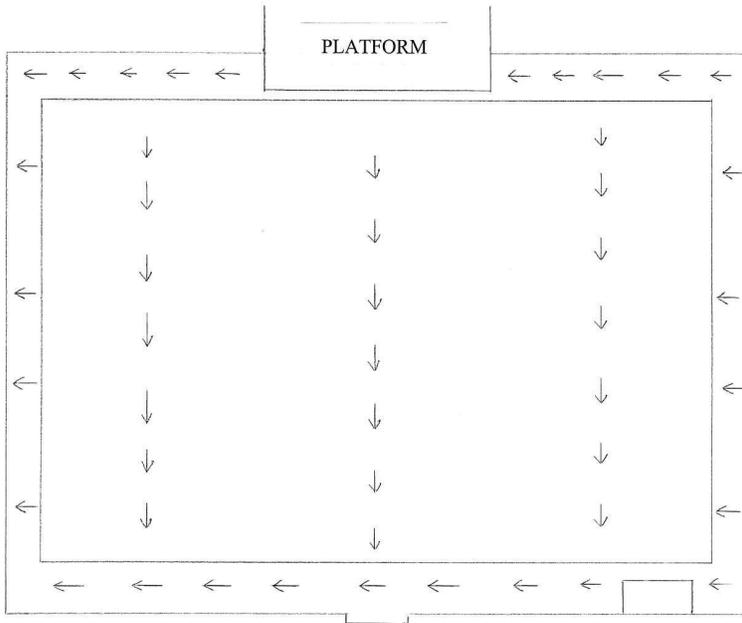
The saints of the Orrville Grace Brethren Church have been anticipating some more improvement in our main meeting area for a number of years. Many of you can remember the front wall improvement that was accomplished in 52 days in 2003 right before Resurrection Sunday. Our late brother Virgil Martin was a significant worker in that effort. Many others helped as well. Some of you remember the team work required to get 4 x 14 foot sheets of drywall into place. I can still see that event quite vividly in my mind's eye.

Another great opportunity for team work in on the calendar. The installation of the new carpet in the auditorium is scheduled to begin on Feb. 5th. We can save approximately \$2,000.00 by tearing out the old carpet with our own crew of volunteers. Yes that is the right amount of zeros in that number. We are talking about two thousand dollars that can be saved. Saturday, Feb. 3rd is our carpet removal "party" date. We need lots of willing hands working together to pull carpet, scrape carpet residue, roll carpet, and carry carpet to the dumpster. Feeling ambitious is about the only prerequisite to help. Please consider putting that event on your calendar. It is less than 2 months away. The event will start at 8 or 8:30 AM and go until completion. It is hard to know how long it will take since we have never done this before. With lots of energy to focus on the project we should be able to get it done in less than a full day's work.

Carpeting has been selected by our committee. It has been ordered and the rolls have arrived to the Orrville warehouse. In the near future the small platform that sits next to the sound board will be covered with the new carpet. That will give us a preview of what is coming on Feb. 5-9 to the auditorium.

In addition to new carpet there are a number of other things that will be improved in the coming months. Research is being conducted regarding better lighting, new chairs, and a new sweeper to clean the new carpet. Any time there is a project of this size, much research is needed in order to make good decisions about the materials and products used. There is also actual experimentation going on with the floor at this time. A free remnant of vinyl is taped in place by the kitchen serving window. The concept of an easy to clean surface where beverages are served should prove to be a very helpful idea. Experimentation has also been conducted regarding the game markings for Bible Club use. You may have noticed markers signifying a circle centered in the room.

The drawing on the back shows the way in which an outline will be established for the games area. The carpet over the auditorium floor, steps and platform will be the same pattern. The outline will be formed because of the direction that the nap and pattern are turned. The center portion will have the pattern running front to back (north and south) and the perimeter will run from side to side (east and west). The arrows on the drawing show that concept. The difference will be subtle but helpful.



The amount of permanent game set up markings will be greatly reduced. There will be a small number of them to assist with setting up chairs, setting up for Grace Bible Club games, or setting up for other recreational ministries. Pastor Joshua has been very involved in the experimentation for this. He will be glad to answer questions you have.

With any project of this magnitude there will be diversity of preferences when it comes time to process details. With that thought in mind, consider the following

concepts that provide a mindset for how we should move forward with this significant project:

1. It is our desire to embark on an auditorium improvement project that will have a positive, God honoring, impact on our church family, our young people, and the people of the community. (1 Cor. 10:31)
2. It is our desire to achieve versatility, flexibility, and attractiveness with this improvement. (Phil. 2:3-4)
3. It is our desire that the project be an encouragement, a blessing, and an effort around which the church family can rally and work together. (1 Thess. 5:11)

In other auditorium related news, the ceiling has been repaired and painted. Make sure you look up next time you walk in! That part of the project went quicker than anticipated. A big thanks to those people who altered their schedules to help provide mobility to the one man repair and paint crew who needed help with scaffolding movement. We thank the Lord for yet another good example of teamwork!

FUNNIES

One night a Viking named Rudolf the Red was looking out the window when he said, "It's raining."

His wife, after looking outside for herself, said, "No, certainly that is snow."

He replied, "It is certainly rain."

His wife, knowing that in order to prove it, they needed to go outside, so they went outside to see, and sure enough, it was rain.

Rudolph, not wanting to be rude, but

wanting to prove his point, turned to his wife and said, "Rudolf the Red knows rain, dear."

When a father asked his little boy what he wanted for Christmas, the boy replied, "A baby sister!"

As it turned out, the wife was pregnant, and delivered on Christmas Eve. On Christmas day she brought home a brand new baby sister for their son.

The next year, when the father asked his little boy what he wanted for Christmas, the boy said, "If it wouldn't make mommy too uncomfortable, I'd like a pony."