



## ***Prohibiting Firearms in Churches, Organizations***

### **Keeping Our Churches and Organizations Safe**

The Episcopal Diocese of Michigan does not permit any person, including clergy, staff, clients, students, volunteers and visitors, to carry a weapon on the premises of any property or facility owned or operated by a church. This prohibition does not apply to certain exceptions as allowed by law.

The following are guidelines for keeping our churches and organizations safe:

1. Churches and organizations should post notice at every entrance to a building or campus.
2. Churches and organizations may hire off-duty police officers. These officers are trained in how to respond to threats to safety, including from armed intruders, and understand the degree of force necessary in various situations. When an officer responds, at whatever level, he or she is serving in the capacity of a law enforcement professional, with the legal safeguards that apply.
3. Churches and organizations may consult with local police departments to learn what measures should be taken to prepare for emergency situations, including when an intruder enters the building or threatens harm. The police can assist in the development of a contingency plan including periodic safety drills.

In all instances, churches and organizations should be mindful of safety measures that can minimize the risk of harm to persons entrusted to their care, and should undertake a careful review of applicable policies.

### **Rationale:**

We firmly believe that guns have no place in our churches and other Episcopal-affiliated organizations. It is our responsibility as the church to promote peace and safety in our communities. The presence of firearms on church property is inconsistent with our vision of God's dream for all creation.

*Approved by Diocesan Council  
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