



ELIOT UNITARIAN CHAPEL
General Emergency Guidelines
(updated July 2022)

****At all times, be aware of your surroundings!**

How to evacuate in any emergency:

- **Before Emergencies Occur:** Familiarize yourself with your surroundings, the building exits, and each room's evacuation plan, which is located by the entryway into each room.
- **For Group Leaders:** If you are leading a group, be aware of how many individuals are present in your group. Make sure everyone is accounted for prior to evacuation, if possible. Alert emergency crews if you are unable to account for all of the individuals in your group.
- **Your Safety FIRST:** Make sure you and those in your care (if applicable) are safely evacuated BEFORE calling 911 or providing first aid to others, if needed.

For Religious Education & Youth Group:

1. Familiarize yourself with your **classroom's evacuation plan**, which is located by your classroom door.
2. Begin each morning by **taking attendance** and be sure to note any children/youth that arrive late. Use your **attendance roster** on the clipboard to keep track of how many children or youth are in class. This will be significant in case of an emergency.
3. If you must evacuate your classroom or move to another area during your activities:
 - A. One adult leader should take the attendance roster and begin gathering children at the door.
 - B. The other leader should check the bathroom (if necessary) and make sure all children and youth are accounted for.
4. Once all children/youth are accounted for, **follow the evacuation procedure** posted near the classroom door.
5. Once you are in your evacuation location, be sure to count the children/youth to ensure everyone is accounted for. **Use the attendance roster as your guide.**
 - A. Alert emergency crews if you are unable to account for all of the children/youth.



Fires

- **Remain calm.** Follow all of the above steps, exiting the building according to your room's evacuation procedure (located inside the door to every room in the church), OR by following the instructions of the worship leader, if an evacuation is necessary during a worship service.
 - If it's safe to do so, walk across the back parking lot to the grassy area by the far eastern parking lot (the "back meadow") to await further instructions from the minister or staff leader in charge. **This is the congregational gathering place in the event of a Sunday morning fire evacuation.** This is also where RE staff members will take children for pickup (assuming it's safe to do so). If you are unable to safely gather at the back meadow, use your discretion in finding another safe location to gather with your group until further instructions from emergency personnel or Eliot staff can be given.
 - **NEW:** The downstairs rooms (001-006) are equipped with **portable ladders** that can be used for exiting the building via the large windows in the rooms, if needed. If window-exit is necessary, once everyone is evacuated through the window, proceed to the back parking lot via the instructions noted above (assuming it's safe to do so). These ladders will be kept in plastic totes near the window along with scissors for cutting open the screens (if needed).
- **DO NOT USE THE ELEVATOR when evacuating during a fire.**



Earthquakes

Note: This information was obtained and adopted from the [American Red Cross's Earthquake Safety Checklist](#) in September 2021.

During an earthquake:

1. **Remain calm.**
2. **If you are inside when the shaking starts:**
 - A. Drop, cover and hold on.** Move as little as possible. A safe place could be under a piece of furniture or against an interior wall away from windows, bookcases or tall furniture that could fall on you. Cover your head and neck with your arms if possible.
 - B. Stay away from windows** to avoid being injured by shattered glass.
 - C. Stay indoors until the shaking stops and you are sure it is safe to exit.** If you must leave the building after the shaking stops, use stairs rather than an elevator in case there are aftershocks, power outages or other damage.

3. If you are outside when the shaking starts:

A. Find a clear spot and drop to the ground. Cover your head and neck with your arms if possible. Stay there until the shaking stops (away from buildings, power lines, trees, streetlights, etc.).

After an earthquake:

1. **If you have children or youth in your care:** Be sure to have parents/guardians sign out their children as usual, so you know who is no longer in your care.
2. Stay away from downed power lines or objects touched by the lines.
3. Check yourself for injuries and get first aid, if necessary, before helping individuals who are injured or trapped.
4. Expect and prepare for potential aftershocks. Each time you feel an aftershock, drop, cover and hold on. Aftershocks frequently occur minutes, days, weeks and even months following an earthquake.



Tornadoes

Note: This information was obtained and adopted from the [American Red Cross's Tornado Safety Tips](#).

Key Definitions (Source: American Red Cross-Tornado Safety Checklist)

Tornado Watch: Tornadoes are possible in and near the watch area. Discuss your emergency plans, and check supplies and your safe area. Be ready to act quickly if a warning is issued or you suspect a tornado is approaching.

Tornado Warning: A tornado has been sighted or indicated by weather radar and is already occurring. Tornado warnings indicate imminent danger to life and property. Go immediately underground to a basement, storm cellar or an interior room (closet, hallway or bathroom).

If a local tornado watch is issued, OR if threatening weather approaches:

1. Remain calm.

2. Review your emergency plans (noted on the evacuation plan by each classroom door).
3. Be prepared to act quickly IF a tornado warning is issued, OR you suspect a tornado or other threatening weather is approaching.

If a local tornado warning is issued or threatening weather occurs:

1. Remain calm.
2. Move into the designated ***tornado safe area** as indicated on the evacuation plan by each room's entryway or, alternatively, to another safe underground or basement area.
 - *The safest area in Eliot Chapel is the basement hallway and restrooms outside Room 003. This is where Religious Education leaders should take children & youth if at all possible.
 - *The next safest location is the interior hallway and restrooms by the elevator.
3. Stay away from windows and remain in the interior of the room or hallway on the lowest level of the building (if possible). If strong wind and flying debris occur, crouch down and cover your head and neck, if possible.
4. **If you have children in your care:** Be sure to have parents/guardians sign out their children as usual, so you know who is no longer in your care.

These procedures were updated on July 14, 2022