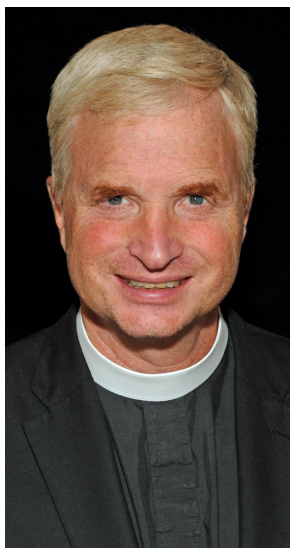




St. Luke's East Hampton Reflections from Fr. Ben

Oct. 2, 2025



Last week, there was yet another tragedy, this time at an LDS Church in Grand Blanc Township, Michigan. This Sunday, we will be praying for the victims, their families, and the members of that congregation. We will also be praying for the strength and courage to work to end gun violence once and for all.

For peace of mind, this is a helpful time to remind you that St. Luke's has a Disaster Plan which covers topics such as medical emergencies, fire, hostile intruder, extreme weather, and the protection and rights of immigrants who are using our space. Copies are available in the office and by the tower entrance of the church. This is a work in progress, and we are currently working to schedule a meeting with the East Hampton Police Department and St. Luke's staff to review and update the Plan.

In case of an emergency, each staff member has a specific area of responsibility. Oscar Giles, our Verger, is the Incident Coordinator. If the verger is not available, the lead usher will be the incident coordinator. The Incident Coordinator is responsible for calling 911, for notifying other groups in the building (people in Sunday School or Hoie Hall), and for interacting with the police/fire/ambulance. Assisted by the ushers, the verger will identify and guide worshipers to safe exits or emergency personnel to the person in need of help. As rector, I am responsible for accounting of worshipers, organization and operation at offsite muster area. (Windmill next door to the church, Front Yard by Home Sweet Home.) Bobby Peterson, our musician, is responsible for choir, acolytes and other people in the altar area. Colleen Stonemetz, our Christian Education Director, will evacuate program participants in the upper and lower halls, nursery, and Sunday school rooms. During the week, Tara Brinka, Parish Administrator serves as Incident Coordinator and with the rector is responsible for those in the building. Roles are also specified for ushers and vestry members.

Note that there are fire extinguishers throughout the building. There are first aid kits at the tower entrance, in the kitchen, and in the second-floor hallway. All staff have been trained in CPR, the use of the AED, and the administration of Narcan (stored with the AED), which is by the tower entrance to the church. All staff and key volunteers have received Safe Church Training (prevention of sexual misconduct, abuse, and harassment). I have been trained in Active Shooter response, have passed levels 100 through 800 of Incident Command Systems, and with the leadership of East Hampton Town have attended a Suffolk County Emergency preparedness briefing (which among other things let me know that the church is not at flood risk during a hurricane.) Our spaces and systems are regularly inspected and are well known by the East Hampton Police and Fire Departments, which are always quickly available at 911.

The responsibility for safety belongs to all of us. As you enter the church, note the location of exits, of fire extinguishers, and first aid equipment. Pay attention to those around you who might need assistance. If you see something or someone who is struggling, say something, tell an usher or

verger, or find someone who can help. If something happens, remain calm, follow directions, and do what you can to keep yourself and others safe. If you are a medical professional or have other skills and are willing to help respond to an emergency, please let us know so that we can put your name in the plan.

Thank you for your part in making St. Luke's a safe and welcoming place for all.