Episcopal Parish Network
*Where the* Church Gathers

# Summary and Transcript
# *From Sanctuary to Security:*
# *Practical Tools for Faith-Based Safety Planning*
# Originally presented October 20, 2025

## *Summary*

The subject of this workshop was vulnerability assessment for churches, focusing on systematic approaches to security planning, funding opportunities through the Nonprofit Security Grant Program (NSGP), and balancing security with the church's mission of hospitality. Presenters from Kingswood Security Consulting and Allegion provided frameworks for risk assessment, detailed the NSGP application process, and discussed practical and philosophical considerations for implementing security measures in faith communities.

### Key takeaways:

- **Systematic Security Planning is Essential**: Security measures should be based on a thorough, systematic vulnerability assessment rather than ad hoc solutions. This includes asset identification (people, property, data, reputation), threat and vulnerability analysis (internal and external), and risk quantification using a structured framework (e.g., probability and impact scales).
- **Interdisciplinary and Holistic Approach**: Effective security planning requires input from multiple disciplines (operations, IT, facilities, clergy, etc.) to avoid gaps, silos, and conflicting solutions. Involving various stakeholders ensures comprehensive coverage and better integration of security measures.
- **Prioritization and Tiered Solutions**: Risks should be ranked and categorized (red/yellow/green) to prioritize actions. Start with low-cost, high-yield solutions

(e.g., updated policies, training, signage, landscaping), then address capital improvements (e.g., doors, windows), and finally consider high-cost, technical projects (e.g., access control, surveillance).

- **NSGP Grant Process and Strategy**: The NSGP offers up to $200,000 per location (max $600,000 for three locations) for security enhancements. A professional vulnerability assessment is required for application. The grant is reimbursement-based and only covers items identified in the assessment. Applicants should aim for the full amount, as repeat funding is penalized, and only 43% of applicants were successful in 2024. The application window is brief (spring), and planning should begin well in advance.
- **Eligible and Ineligible Grant Uses**: Grant funds can be used for emergency operations plans, access control, surveillance, mass notification, safety film, radios, lighting, and contracted security (not staff). They cannot be used for general signage, construction, operational costs, or retrospective expenses (including the vulnerability assessment itself).
- **Balancing Security and Hospitality**: Churches must navigate the tension between being open and welcoming and ensuring safety. Security should be relationship-based and focused on behavioral threat management, not fear. Training staff and volunteers to notice and compassionately respond to concerning behaviors is key. Collaboration with local law enforcement and EMS is encouraged, but assessments should also include code compliance and broader perspectives.
- **Grant Policy and DEI Considerations**: There may be evolving requirements related to DEI and integration under different administrations, but the core focus of the NSGP remains on terrorism and extremism risk. Applicants should stay informed about policy changes and maintain relationships with their dioceses and local authorities.
- **Practical Tips and Common Pitfalls**: Always apply for the maximum grant amount justified by your assessment. Avoid relying solely on law enforcement for risk assessments due to code compliance issues. Involve your diocese as appropriate, and ensure emergency signage is included in your plans. Start risk analysis by discussing with stakeholders what keeps them up at night to build a culture of safety.

## *Transcript*

Jill Saukulis (EPN)

Alright. Welcome, everyone. My name is Jill Saukulis, and I'm the director of operations at Saint Mark's Episcopal Church in New Canaan, Connecticut, which is in the New York Metro. And I'm also the board treasurer for the Episcopal Parish Network, where the church gathers. We're happy to welcome you to this timely workshop discussing vulnerability assessment with our partners at Kingswood Security Consulting and Allegion.

Jill Saukulis (EPN)

We're also thankful that you are here and hope you will take advantage of the multiple learning opportunities we have here at EPN, the dozens and dozens of free webinars like this one, and most especially our biggest event, our annual conference, which is a wonderful opportunity to meet your colleagues face to face and make new connections. Registration just opened for the annual conference last week. One little word of caution, which is that due to the Amazon Web Services outage that's happening right now, you can't actually register for the conference, which is a little frustrating for us because we're so excited about it. So please don't get frustrated. Maybe just put a little tickler on your calendar to try again tomorrow or the next day and register.

Jill Saukulis (EPN)

You won't regret it. It's a great time and pays dividends all year long. And if anybody needs me to help you talk to your treasurers about how to make room for that in your budget, I'm happy to do that. We hope to see you. That conference is in Charlotte.

Jill Saukulis (EPN)

A couple of procedural items. I can see everybody's already putting their name and their location in the chat so we can see where you're all from, and that's fantastic. As you probably heard when you were logging in, the session is being recorded, and you will receive an email with a link to the recording and, the slide decks that are associated with the talk today. It that'll happen in about twenty four to forty eight hours, again, depending on how much fun we have with Amazon Web Services. But in any case, eventually, they'll be on our website's workshop library as well.

Jill Saukulis (EPN)

The website is episcopalparishes.org. Also know that we do not use the Q&A function for these gatherings, but rather we ask you to pose your questions in the chat like you're doing now with your IDs. And we'll do our best to answer as many questions as we can. And then the transcript of the chat will be available to you afterwards. Often, the answers to the questions include links, which Laura Manley thank you, Laura.

Jill Saukulis (EPN)

It's so awesome about getting in there so that can be useful. Again, thank you all for joining us today. And now I am happy to introduce Timothy Kingsley, vice president of client engagement at Kingswood Security Consulting, who'll start the discussion and introduce the rest of our panel. Tim.

Timothy Kingsley

Oh, wonderful. Thank you. Thank you, Jill. This is fantastic, and thanks so much for moderating today. Joined by Simon Osamoh, who is the founder and president of Kingswood Security Consulting and Christin Kinman, which is a with the Allegion.

Timothy Kingsley

I also represent Saint Mark's Fiscal Cathedral where I currently serve as the provost And, just really happy to be here, Jill. So thank you so much for moderating.

Jill Saukulis (EPN)

Happy to. Alright. So I think we could just get right into this. Christin, why don't we begin with you on the fundamentals of planning? And as everybody can see, Christin is ready, with her presentation here on the screen.

Jill Saukulis (EPN)

So I hope everybody can see that clearly. Christin, how would we go about how the parish would go about determining which security measures should be a priority? What's the process you use to assess the needs and what should come first?

Christin Kinman

Yeah. Thanks, Jill. So I'm often asked this question. And as a result of that question, I've tried to put this together in as much of a systematic framework as possible to kind of deconstruct the entire process and also hopefully demystify it. So where to start?

Christin Kinman

And my answer is, well, at the beginning. And while that seems intuitive, in many cases, this is not actually what happens. So very frequently when I'm asked by a parish or a school for assistance, they usually call me out and they say, well, we need to get x or we need to do y. And I usually say, okay. Well, like, how did you determine that that's what you needed to do or that this thing you need to have?

Christin Kinman

And, typically, the process has not, this cycle has not been followed. And what I find is when locations just start implementing solutions, kind of in isolation, what you end up with is a combination of things. Potentially poor decisions, solutions that don't work the way you think they're gonna work, or solutions that are potentially in conflict with other areas that need to be integrated. You also need to really understand your risk. And from there, you need to be able to prioritize your needs based on that analysis.

Christin Kinman

The other thing is I always recommend taking an interdisciplinary approach, and that's really important because when you don't do that, you end up with what I call gaps, silos, and disconnects. Sometimes it's between departments or programs. Sometimes you get a duplication of efforts, or you're just impacting part of the system and not the system as a whole. So we start with asset identification and valuation. And as part of this, what you need to be able to do is to define and understand your primary business functions and processes, identify all of your assets.

Christin Kinman

And by assets, I don't just mean, kind of the typical things, but I mean, identify where your life safety, mechanical, IT, assets are. Because especially for a church, for example, the age of your mechanical system, your air conditioning or heating system, or the age of your roof, that actually really impacts your business, of keeping the doors open and welcoming people. Because so much of what we do when we bring people in on Sundays is also the backbone of funding for how we keep the doors open. So understanding what our limitations are and what needs we might have in these areas is very important. Your assets are always gonna be a form of one of four things, people, property, data, or intangible assets like reputation.

Christin Kinman

And never underestimate the importance of understanding a reputational harm to your facility and what that could do to your operations. And then in terms of the valuation, you wanna be looking at things like, well, what would be the replacement cost if this asset went out or the revenue loss? Do I have backup or redundancy? What would the insurance impact be? Things of that nature.

Christin Kinman

Then you need to be able to determine what your threats and your vulnerabilities are. So threats are something that are external to the system, and they can come in the form of a criminal threat. So that's the clear example, someone intent on doing harm. It could be a natural threat such as a hurricane, tornado, earthquake, fire, anything of that nature. And it can also be geography.

Christin Kinman

So you may be very proximate to critical infrastructure where if that infrastructure failed, it would have a direct impact on your operations, or it could be a specific geographic feature. I actually discovered this, the hard way, in my previous job when I worked for one of the Catholic churches archdiocese. And, I was working with a school principal and talking to him about where would your site reunification be based on the way his site was laid out. There was one way in, one way out. I needed an alternative location.

Christin Kinman

And I said to him, you know, there's this really big manufacturing plant that butts up against your property, and I know some people there. Let me see if we could go get an MOU in place to reunify students, using that facility. So I went and I met with their security manager, the risk manager, and I laid it all out. And, they both took a deep breath and kinda looked at each other, and they shook their heads. Yes.

Christin Kinman

And they said, but that's not why we thought you were here today. And I said, well, why did you think I was here? And they said, well, what we thought you were here to discuss was the high risk dam that abuts your property that our modeling shows would put you under 13 feet of water if, if it breached. And I was utterly stunned because there's no water feature in the back of the property. It's just that when the site was designed, all of the storm water went to the back of the site and they built an earthen dam, and they knew it was a danger of failing.

Christin Kinman

And the Maryland Department of the Environment kept holding up the permitting, and we did eventually have a situation where we were getting hit with a hurricane, the remnants of a hurricane, and that dam almost breached. So knowing your neighbors and knowing the geography is really important in this area. We talk about vulnerabilities. These are gonna be things that are internal to your system. So it could be that aging infrastructure, like aging mechanical or air conditioning heating systems.

Christin Kinman

It could be some form of physical security, like you have inadequate physical security measures or maybe what you do have is outdated or. Nonfunctional. It could come in the form of people, policies, procedures. And I actually would add two things to this, training and compliance. So this is things like having no training or inadequate training on what your policies and procedures dictate or not enforcing compliance.

Christin Kinman

And so having a policy and procedure, but people not following it and still creating a vulnerability. So things like training policies, procedures, and then, that last part of

compliance are really important because they represent a significant vulnerability. From there, what we need to do is you need to be able to quantify and assess your risk. So risk is really a function of two things, the probability that something is going to happen to the likelihood. Okay?

Christin Kinman

And we could grade this on a scale from one to five with rare being a one all the way to almost certain being a five with everything in between. And then what is the impact? So, again, using that scale one to five with one being negligible and impact, a catastrophic impact being scored a five. And so I think, you know, in today's climate right now with a lot of the violence that we have seen perpetrated against houses of worship, what we see in the news very often are really catastrophic events on the order of magnitude of, like, what happened at the school of the annunciation in August or most recently, what we saw at the Michigan attack on the Church of the Latter day Saints. Those are catastrophic events that are also unlikely to happen.

Christin Kinman

And the reason that I call attention to this is because when we are making decisions about what it is that we do in terms of planning for funding, and implementing security, we really need to go through this process of identifying all of the possibilities of things that could happen and ranking them so that we have some form of an unbiased metric to determine what needs to be addressed first all the way down to what is something that's like a wish, but not today. And so if we take that event, like, for example, a vehicle attack or, an active shooter situation, the impact is clearly catastrophic. We would grade that as a five. It's also rare and unlikely. So your risk is gonna range somewhere from five to 10.

Christin Kinman

I'd like to contrast that with something that most people aren't thinking about necessarily, and that is a loss that could be potentially catastrophic due to someone

hacking our critical data infrastructure. The impact of something like that is also gonna be potentially catastrophic. Churches collect all kinds of sensitive information about their parishioners. But in terms of probability, actually, if you look at cybersecurity reports, if you look at information that's been put out by the cybersecurity infrastructure security agency, the number of attacks that are happening on things that are designated as critical infrastructure is exploding daily. So something like that is probably, in terms of a probability, somewhere gonna score between, a four and a five, and that impact is gonna be significant to catastrophic.

Christin Kinman

So now you've got something where your score is 16 to 25 potentially. So I only mentioned this to give you an example of kind of two extremes, and you have to kinda go through all of those scenarios that are particular to your congregation, to your physical location, to your geography so that you can quantify and rank your risk to help you make better informed decisions about how you're going to address it. When we talk about creating the plan, like after you've gone through all of that, what do you do next? Okay. So, you're gonna get a copy of this slide, I'm assuming, or at least you'll get the recording of it.

Christin Kinman

So I'm not gonna go through everything here, but this is sort of my road map that I I work with churches. And I say that kind of this is these are your critical milestones. This is who should be involved. And at the end of each milestone or action, here's what the outcome should be. And if you consider just going through this, like, almost like an s shaped curve.

Christin Kinman

So the first action is identification of assets. The outcome should be a list of targets to address. That moves you to your vulnerability assessment. That leads to the identification of vulnerabilities to address and onwards till you get to the end. This is

sort of, I'd say, a pretty coherent and comprehensive roadmap that can help you get through this process.

Christin Kinman

In terms of analysis prioritization. So based on that risk ranking exercise that you do, you're going to have some break points. And so I would say, you know, when you're looking at this, like, anything that's, you know, one to 10 is gonna be a lower priority, so maybe the green. I'm sorry. I I generally say I want you to categorize these by red, yellow, green with red being the most urgent, yellow being, important to do, and green being something that you will eventually get to, but for now, it's a little bit more of a a want than a than an absolute need.

Christin Kinman

So from that ranking, anything from, a one to 10, that's gonna be, kind of your green. Doesn't need to be addressed immediately. Followed by your yellow, I'd say, like, 10 to 20, that's gonna be kind of the year you should be doing, should be thinking about. And then 2025 is that red. Like, it needs attention immediately.

Christin Kinman

And, so you wanna be able to have that kind of analysis prioritization. And then you wanna look at like, okay, how can I begin to address each of these things in these categories of red, yellow, and green? And I tend to make this triangle that I call, this is like you've heard of Maslow's hierarchy of needs. This is like Maslow's hierarchy of security projects. And I group projects into tiers, tier one, two, and three.

Christin Kinman

And I always say, let's start at the bottom of this triangle at tier three. These are gonna be projects that are what I call your no cost, low cost, high yield solutions. So what do

I mean by that? I mean, what a lot of locations can solve a lot of their security challenges going back to those policies, procedures, training, and compliance. If we can update our policies, update our procedures, we train our key volunteers, we train our staff, and we mandate compliance, that can actually go a very long way in solving a lot of, a lot of security problems.

Christin Kinman

Some other, very low cost, no cost, solutions that give you a big impact are gonna be doing things like maintaining your landscaping so nobody can hide contraband. They can't hide themselves. And, you can look out any window or door and have a very clear line of sight to be able to see what's going on to increase your situational awareness. Also, another really effective thing is signage. I know it sounds kinda strange.

Christin Kinman

Signage is very cheap. Signage does a lot, to guide people through your property, to tell them where they're allowed to be and where they're not allowed to be so that if you see someone in an area where they shouldn't be, you know something's wrong, you can immediately begin to address it. And then also signage is a great deterrent. Like, if you have signage that says this, property is under surveillance, no unauthorized user access. And by the way, if you do do something like that, here is the local ordinance under which we will pursue prosecution.

Christin Kinman

Those kinds of things are great deterrent measures. Your tier two grouping of projects, these are larger projects that have significant capital expenditures, but they're generally lower tech solutions. So in the world that I came from, working for an arch diocese, a lot of our infrastructure was very old. So, things like doors and windows and hardware, to make sure that those doors actually closed, locked, and latched, that all needed to be addressed before we could even begin to think about

something like, for example, access control. Because it doesn't matter how much money you spend and how much access control you put on a door.

Christin Kinman

If it doesn't self close, self latch, and self lock on an exterior door, you really haven't done anything. So these are things like replacing doors with new doors or replacing windows or replacing hardware that's not code compliant that doesn't work and function as it was intended to do. So those are your tier two projects. And then your tier one projects, these are your highest cost projects. They're the most technical in scope.

Christin Kinman

They typically involve coordination with multiple systems, and these tend to be those projects that are in that green to yellow zone in your analysis or I'm sorry, in your risk ranking that you've done prior to this. Okay. So now I'm gonna turn this over to, well, Joe, I'm gonna turn it back to you, and, I'm not sure who you're gonna turn it over to. I'm gonna stop sharing so other people can.

Jill Saukulis (EPN)

Great. Thanks so much for that, Christin. It's great, you know, everybody begins with the question, we don't even know how to begin if they haven't done this before. And so you've provided a really wonderful framework for that. Thank you.

Jill Saukulis (EPN)

And so once people get through that framework, of course, especially for churches, the challenge is often around funding. So, Simon, how can churches and other parachurch and religious schools find funding for security implementation, and what sort of process could they follow?

Simon Osamoh

So I'm gonna take us through the NSGP, FEMA grant program. Can I just confirm that people can see my screen? So excuse me. So I'm gonna do my best in fifteen minutes or less to tell you everything that you need to know about the NSGP. We can do a quick comment in the chat.

Simon Osamoh

There's a lot of people here, see some good engagement. Who has heard of the NSGP program before? Put a yes, if you have put a no, if you haven't. I'd love to see how many of you have heard of the NSGP program, nonprofit security grants. What is the NSGP?

Simon Osamoh

So it was started in 2004 by George Bush Junior. It started as a post nineeleven terrorism grant, where non profits 501c3s could ask for at that time $150,000 but it had to be at high risk terrorism, which for many houses of worship can be difficult to demonstrate we're at high risk of terrorism. In 2019, they added the word other extremist attack. Now my personal opinion is I don't think we've ever lived in a more divided society than we have done the last four or five years. Depending what your view and opinion is, is an armchair warrior online who's prepared to try and shoot down your views, opinions, and we've never just been more challenged.

Simon Osamoh

So adding the words extremism actually made it easier for nonprofits and particularly houses of worship to apply just because our theology is very divisive with some members of society to today. Over the years, the funding has dramatically increased. It doesn't matter if you're a blue state or a red state. Every president since George

Bush Junior started this in 2004 has increased funding. In 2024, the funds did drop down a little bit, you can see here to $274,000,000.

Simon Osamoh

However, in the sort of second half of the year, they released additional funding. I think it was around $224,000,000, something like that. So it took the pool for 2024 to be just short of around $550,000,000. So you could be there Simon, we don't know about grants, we don't have a grant writer on staff, we can't afford to hire you, so is this a grant for us? Well on FEMA's data from 2024, forty three percent, yes, forty three percent of people that applied were successful.

Simon Osamoh

Now I also know from FEMA, there were only 7,800 applications. Now, if you're like me and you're fascinated by the use of AI, artificial intelligence, I've done lots of research to try and work out how many nonprofits there are in The United States. And the best answer seems to be it was around $2,000,005.00 one(three). So 7,800 applied in 2024, forty three percent of those were successful. So just by taking positive action today, you have close to a fifty fifty chance of being successful.

Simon Osamoh

So most often it is me who's actually educating people about the grant so that they can apply. So how does a process work? Christine spoke about this somewhat briefly, but enough to give you some insight as to what a vulnerability assessment is. To apply for the grant, you need to have had a vulnerability assessment completed. There's various different ways that you can do that.

Simon Osamoh

There's some online free algorithms and sort of aggregate data and will give you some answers to difficult questions about trying to find your vulnerabilities. You can reach out to your local police department. They might give you one or two pages that'll come on-site and have a look at your house of worship and find vulnerabilities. Or you can do what FEMA and the Secure Community Network do is recommend having a professional vulnerability assessment. Even outside of the grant, having a professional assessment is advantageous for you because it allows you to identify what are all the risks and vulnerabilities and prioritize those vulnerabilities to train a roadmap going forward.

Simon Osamoh

So some people look at it and say, we just need a grant, we just need a vulnerability assessment to apply for the grant. Often I'm saying to houses of worship, let's be intentional first. Let's make sure we know our risks and vulnerabilities, so you're actually applying for funding for the right things. Each state has their own position, which is called the SAA, state administrative agency officer. That is the person that administers the grant.

Simon Osamoh

They may say it's a FEMA grant. They may say the decision isn't mine. I've been doing this for over five years. I've helped nonprofits get over $18,000,000. The SAA is the gatekeeper.

Simon Osamoh

So it's really important. If you just Google NSGP, non-profit security grant program, SAA, you'll find that point of contact for your state. I'd encourage you to reach out, ask them what information and guidance they have. They are the gatekeeper. They downplay their role, but they are the gatekeeper.

Simon Osamoh

How else does the process work? To apply, you must be a five zero one c three nonprofit. I've only ever come across one house of worship that'll ask me to help them with a grant but didn't have that designation with the IRS. Most people do, so you've to be a five zero one(three) designation. And basically the state that you are in, they will gather all the applications, they will grade them, determine on who is at high risk of member terrorism, difficult to articulate extremism, easy to articulate, warehouse of worship.

Simon Osamoh

They will grade all the applications, and the ones that receive the high grades get put forward towards FEMA for security grant funding. I'm going to talk a little bit more about that in a few moments. So as I mentioned, the vulnerability assessment is the heartbeat of the application. You can ring out your local police. You can go online and do a CISA free review, or you can engage someone to do a professional assessment.

Simon Osamoh

The Secure Community Network and FEMA both offer guidance that it should be a professional assessment. What they're trying to make sure you know and understand is all your risks and vulnerabilities. There are ways to cut corners in safety and security, absolutely. And you can do the online one. Is it going to help you long term?

Simon Osamoh

They're really looking for organizations that want to be intentional. The great thing about this grant is that you can apply for $200,000 per location. Most SAAs, the state of emergency, breached different states. They determine a location to be a different street address. So if you are an Episcopal church, you have two or three locations, but different buildings have a different street address, You can actually do a vulnerability

assessment for each location, and then you could ask for $200,000 per location capped out at $600,000 What could your nonprofit do if someone gave you $600,000 towards security?

Simon Osamoh

You'd be a lot more secure, that is for sure. A couple of things about the NSGP grant. It is a reimbursement program, which means accepted into the grant. The items that you've asked for within your vulnerability assessment, you'll be refunded only for those items. Now some people, their priests, their father, their reverend, whoever it is might say, oh, we've got this $200,000 for grant funds.

Simon Osamoh

We need some new speakers in our worship area. We need to do some more work in the kids area. This grant is for two things only, for those at high risk of terrorism or extremism. The only people that I see get in trouble with this grant are when they try to spend the money on other areas. You must spend it on what you identified to FEMA as being your vulnerabilities.

Simon Osamoh

It's a reimbursement program. Once you've been accepted into the program, they will refund anything going forward. They will not refund retrospectively going backwards for anything that you need. Most often, it's thirty to forty five days after you have applied. So who can apply?

Simon Osamoh

So I talked about this. You must be a five zero one c three. You must have that designation by the IRS. Like I mentioned, I've only come across one church before that didn't have it. It's almost an amazing thing in today's world to see a church that

doesn't have the five zero one c three designation because of all the tax benefits that Caesar gives as the law of the land to churches.

Simon Osamoh

So most people have this, but you must be a five zero one c three designated by the IRS. How do you know how much you can apply for? So I touched on this. You can apply for up to $200,000 per location. Remember, most often, each SAA, state administrative agency, whatever state you're in will have one.

Simon Osamoh

They will determine generally by street address. If you have three different locations, if you have a vulnerability assessment for each location, identifying what your vulnerabilities are, you could ask for up to $200,000, have it sort of maxed out at $600,000. The only real criteria here is that you meet the definition of street address, and then you've got a vulnerability assessment at each location. But you can apply for up to 200,000 max at six. So let's talk a little bit now about what you can actually apply for.

Simon Osamoh

So these are the most common things that people seek with grant funding. The ones that are slightly bigger text are the most common that I see. So depending where you are, you may or may not have an emergency operations plan. And if you don't, you are not alone. I do a lot of work with churches and nonprofits across The US.

Simon Osamoh

I would say 70 to 80% of the nonprofits I interact with don't have an emergency operations plan. You can use these funds to engage someone to help you write an emergency operations plan. On the technology side with our partners at Allegion,

with Kristin on this webinar, people often use it for technology. Access control, if you're concerned about locking down your church or buildings. Surveillance systems, if you don't have a surveillance camera on every door, or every corridor, or every room.

Simon Osamoh

Mass notification, if heaven forbid, the worst case scenario happens from a lost child or active assailant or severe weather, how are you gonna notify people that they need to stay safe? Mass notification is something that we're seeing is really becoming more important in and around churches and houses of worship. And then the safety film, we saw the Presbyterian Covenant school shooting in 2023, and armed Salem with little experience of a firearm, purchase a firearm, within two weeks they go to a school, they shoot through the glass, and within twenty seconds they gain entry to the school. Safety film isn't bullet resistant, but it slows down the assailant trying to get through that door. So it almost goes a little bit like spaghetti and it becomes more challenging.

Simon Osamoh

These are some of the common things that people apply for. It was started as a terrorism grant. So a lot of technology controls are there. I'm going to make a few assumptions about some people on this webinar, perhaps you're not really even locking your doors, you don't have training and plans in place. I would put cyber security to aside for one time and make sure that people aren't propping our doors open and we're doing training.

Simon Osamoh

We have good technology. We have good planning. We have good radios. I would generally start there. But you can see some of the other things that you can apply for, doors, gates, fencing, lighting, generators, radios.

Simon Osamoh

And you can use it for contracted security personnel. This must be non church employees. They can't be p the funds cannot go to persons on staff. This would be, we want to engage a private security firm to do security at our house of worship. One thing when it comes to contractor security personnel, the challenge is everything else on the list has a bit of a lifespan.

Simon Osamoh

Right? You get access control, surveillance cameras, mass notification radios. That is something tangible. When the money is gone for security personnel, the money is gone. And then they may ask questions to say, we give you $50,000 to have security at your house of worship, what happens when the money runs out?

Simon Osamoh

So we tried to steer you towards both tangible items to remove a lot of the questions that they have. So these are some of the things that you can apply for. Some of the things you cannot apply for, people often say, well Simon, if you come and conduct a comprehensive vulnerability assessment, can we claim that money back? A couple of reasons. The first is no, because remember you'd be accepted into the program, and you can claim funds back going forward from when they say, Welcome to St.

Simon Osamoh

Marks Episcopal Church in Minneapolis. We've accepted your application. You can then claim anything back going forward to spend, but you cannot go predate their notifications. So paying with someone to conduct a vulnerability assessment would be outside of that because that would be a pre pre accepted into the program expense. Other things that people are a bit surprised about, and I am myself, because it's a terrorism grant, they don't like things like facial recognition software.

Simon Osamoh

They don't like license plate recognition. It is unusual because this is a terrorism grant, and they would be great tools to help identify danger. But anything that has facial recognition or license plate recognition, they tend to not like that. Operational organ organizational costs. Another common question that we get from people is if we need to do construction costs, will this grant be suitable?

Simon Osamoh

The answer is no. You have to use it for security measures, and we really recommend technology generally because that's so expensive. So there's some things that you can't apply for. And there's these things that you can, and hopefully that gives you a little bit of an indication as to what this grant would look like. The next question that people ask about the non profit security grant program is when do we get the funds?

Simon Osamoh

This is a great program. If you're saying Simon, an incident happened and we need cameras now, this might present the grant for you. If you have an incident where your doors have been propped open, you want access control to know if the doors have been propped open and how long for, this mode probably isn't the grant for you. If you need things now, as in we cannot wait, I would say, sorry, this moped isn't the grant for you. If you can say, have some very expensive items.

Simon Osamoh

We know that we're not where we need to be on access control. We're not where we need to be on emergency planning. We're not where we need to be on surveillance cameras. We're not where we need to be in a mass location device, but we have some time to figure this out. This is a great grant for that.

Simon Osamoh

Generally, this grant will open in the spring. So we take 2026 as an example. This grant would open in the spring, April, May ish time. The time to do the work is beforehand because most states close their applications within two to four weeks. So they open in the spring, April, May.

Simon Osamoh

It'll close three to four weeks after that date. Then your states will review the applications, grade the applications, work out which ones we're gonna put forward for funding. Remember, asking for $200,000 FEMA really rubber stamps the process. FEMA's role is to really make sure that your state has conformed to their guidelines. That is what FEMA's role is. And then they will look at the selections made by the state, and they will confirm the awards that they're going to make.

Simon Osamoh

That normally results in notification around September, October 2026 that you'll be told. And then most realistically, you'd be spending the money in January 2027. So that is a timeline. Opens in the spring. The time to do the work is before you apply.

Simon Osamoh

You gotta have your vulnerability assessment. You gotta work out what items you're gonna apply for. You gotta have your grant written. You gotta be ready for submission that will happen in the spring, April, May. Close most probably in June.

Simon Osamoh

Each state has a different closing deadline. And then in the fall, September, October, is when FEMA really rubber stamped the process. You'll be notified you've been successful, you're unsuccessful, and then most realistically, you'll be spending the money in January 2027. So these, if you have high ticket items, obviously the money on offer is great. You know the rewards are high, forty three percent of those that applied in 2024 were successful.

Simon Osamoh

This is something that I would strongly encourage you to do. Forty three percent odds of having $200,000 from security enhancements is not a bad thing for most people. This grant, however, is becoming more well known, and it's becoming more competitive. However, remember in 2024, they only received 7,800 applications. Most of you on this call in some way are connected to the Episcopal Church.

Simon Osamoh

There's most probably 10 times that of the Episcopal Church buildings in The US. So you can see it's a small fraction of people who would actually apply for this grant. Hopefully we should have a little bit of time for questions. I have given you a sort of ten minute overview of what I normally do in a ninety minute webinar where I give people the steps. If you scan this QR code, you will get my full teaching deck, which has around 60 slides, which tells you exactly what you need to do and how to complete the application if you scan that QR code.

Simon Osamoh

Part of my role is to make sure that people are educated and that they understand that this grant exists. So I give all my information away free as to how to try and apply for the grant. If you want to come and listen to me live, talk through one of these webinars, we already have our calendar from November to May of next year. If you go

to our training academy, which is worshipsecurity.org/nspgrantwebinars, you will see our entire calendar from November to May. Wordsworthsecurity.org and you will see the grant webinar.

Simon Osamoh

The difference may probably, the difference between me and a lot of the SAAs and a lot of the webinars is that they cannot give you a competitive advantage, so they are limited on what information they can share. As I mentioned, we've achieved over $18,000,000. I think we're about to revise that to $20,000,000 that we've had from twenty twenty five awards, and we operate in twenty twenty five states doing these grants. The advantage of one of my webinars is that I can give you a lot more well rounded information, and I can say things that FEMA and others or other state departments cannot do because they cannot give you a competitive advantage over someone who might not be on the webinar. So we see a lot of trends.

Simon Osamoh

We see what SAAs, the state administration, the gatekeeper, we see what they like, we see what they dislike, and we see the trends at a national level. So I'd encourage you to download that full guide and take a look yourself or join me on one of the live webinars where I'll do a deep dive for about ninety minutes and take you through everything I've said in a lot more detail. So a lot of information there, but I'd really encourage you to review this grant and strongly consider it. 43% of a non-province that applied in 2024 was successful, and FEMA only received 7,800 applications. That's why I'm one of the big advocates for this grant, because there's a lot of money on offer to support your house of worship.

Simon Osamoh

So I will pause there for any questions and the rest of the panel to offer any opinion.

Jill Saukulis (EPN)

Thanks so much for that, Simon. There are a few questions, but what I'd like to do if everybody doesn't mind is let's go to Tim next, but save a little time for questions at the end because some of those questions might be answered by Tim. And then, you know, then we won't have duplication. Although, I will just say one thing, which is out of courtesy to Christian who's been so kind offering her time here, her firm does is a firm that you can contact for a vulnerability assessment if you wanna get an outside firm to do that. You know?

Jill Saukulis (EPN)

So, anyway, having said that, you know, we are all here in churches and things like locking doors and things like that feel contrary to our overwhelming desire to be open and welcoming. And, Tim, I know that that's a tension that you well understand, you know, that churches wanna be open, welcoming places for us all to participate in. So can you say a bit about how we navigate all of this in a way that honors both that idea of welcome while addressing security concerns?

Timothy Kingsley

Absolutely. And I'm thankful for both the panelists on the call here today. I mean, the reality is if we have an opportunity to, first of all, name and define our vulnerabilities through doing a risk assessment that Christin articulated. And then in some of the things that Simon shared with regard to some of the things that come out of the opportunities of the grant process, such as writing emergency action plans, identifying mitigation technology, and so on and so forth. We have an opportunity to be brave enough to name our threats, name our hazards, but more importantly, the conversation to say what needs to be present for those to exist.

Timothy Kingsley

How do we get upstream? How do we work with our culture to get upstream with these relevant threats? All of our sacred spaces, hospitality is at the core of everything we do. We've stood as places of solace. We've stood at places of refuge, open to those that are seeking peace, they're seeking healing, a simple place to belong.

Timothy Kingsley

Yet that openness carries attention. And that tension is how do we be open and continue to always welcome the stranger even knowing those strangers are showing up with brokenness and oftentimes distress. Hebrews reminds us, do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers. For by doing that, some have entertained angels without knowing it. So how do we hold that tension?

Timothy Kingsley

The conversation, being brave enough to have the conversation, how do we just stay open and welcoming? It's my belief that the understanding and awareness of behavioral threat management is the beginning. Our goal is not to be fear based. It's to be relationship based and aware. A sacred space is unlike any other building.

Timothy Kingsley

It's ancient. It's alive. It's quiet. It's bustling. It's deeply personal and fully public.

Timothy Kingsley

People arrive with their stories, joy, grief, confusion, sometimes delusion. Our task is not to judge who comes through the doors, but to truly see them. We may have heard the words to seek and serve in some of our covenants. To seek means to see. Seeing

requires attentiveness, noticing behaviors that communicate distress, potential harm, not appearance, not rumor.

Timothy Kingsley

This is where our understanding of behavioral threat truly begins. The theory of behavior there is about getting upstream. It's about preventing escalation before it becomes a crisis. Not profiling fully, not predicting fully, but it's observing, assessing, and responding wisely to the behaviors that we see. The government put out post 09/11 to see something, say something, and I think that was a tremendous statement that the government could put up.

Timothy Kingsley

But what they failed to do at that time was teach us what we were looking for. That's important. To identify, to notice the favors that are disruptive, unusual, or suggest distress within our internal body, gathering context, asking the question, is this new? Is this outside our norm once you define your relative norm? All of our contexts are different.

Timothy Kingsley

Engage, coordinate the right response, whether it be pastoral, a medical response, or protective response. Remember, in building an emergency action plan, not only do we wanna teach people to respond to the crisis, but be brave enough to know what needs to be present before the crisis can exist. That's why I add things like medical or severe weather in my conversations. They do have a higher probability of occurring. But do we take the time to name what needs to be present before those events can cause harm?

Timothy Kingsley

If we do so, we're the better apt to lean into the more egregious acts that have the highest probability, the lowest probability of occurring, but the highest impact should they occur, like that of an act of violence, active shooter, and so on and so forth. The goal is not exclusion, but connection, bringing people into the care that they need before their breaking point, and that requires us to see them. Every encounter begins with presence over panic, non anxious presence. Security ministry starts with spiritual discipline, truly noticing those who walk in the door, truly noticing those that walk through the door. Then ask yourself, how are you showing up?

Timothy Kingsley

Those who ultimately engage in violence rarely snap. They move what's called a move along what's called a pathway to violence. A series of observable steps, if I may. Internally, that may start with a grievance or externally for that matter. A perceived wrong or humiliation takes hold.

Timothy Kingsley

An ideation, dreaming, or manifesting an opportunity to harm. Violence is imagined. Then there's research and planning, testing boundaries or gathering information. And then finally, the preparation, rehearsing actions, acquiring symbols of power, which also equates to access and means. And then there's the implementation, the act itself.

Timothy Kingsley

Our focus normally is on the first two stages where the grievance grievance and ideation presents itself. Pastorally, that's our opportunity to see if we can still reach a person, seek connection, build relationships. Research and planning are tools of interruption. That is our opportunity for are we noticing things that are outside the contextual norm in our environment? Are we noticing somebody that's pushing boundaries?

Timothy Kingsley

Are we noticing somebody that is testing or probing in environments that are not contextually normal in our places of worship. Most perpetrators do not begin with malice, though. They begin with pain. In addition to the grievance, many of them suffer from places of deep, deep trauma, loss, rejection, humiliation, marginalization. Their behaviors are often the time to seek validation, to be seen, to have their suffering acknowledged and witnessed.

Timothy Kingsley

If we get an opportunity to get upstream and build a relationship with individuals that come into our dorm that may be bringing that brokenness to the church, just maybe, maybe we have an opportunity to interrupt violence. And if we can't bring grace to that conversation, it might be an indicator that we need to pay attention to how they're presenting. When the need goes unmet, procession turns to harden that grievance turns harden. Understanding that trauma often underlines helps us to stay compassionate and well grounded. Before violence manifests itself, people often display indicators such as symbolic gestures, rehearsed language, seeking script and validation.

Timothy Kingsley

Who am I in this environment? Do you see me? If you're not going to see me, I will make you see me. A fixation on a particular person, environment, ideology. These behaviors are often communications identified with pain.

Timothy Kingsley

Recognizing them early allows for a compassionate response. Internally or externally, when approaching somebody, how are you showing up? Are you showing up with a

calm, welcoming presence? How can I be most helpful to you today? What brings you to St.

Timothy Kingsley

Marks? I'm so glad you're here. Would you like to sit in the chapel privately if it's safe to do so? Validating feelings and affirming their behaviors, but recognizing those behaviors are indicators and who else should be in this conversation with you. We do not do it alone.

Timothy Kingsley

We do not meet strangers alone, especially when they're identifying behaviors that may be indicative of something that may be present before violence can exist. Safety in our sacred spaces comes from a layered awareness, a layered approach to security. Do your risk assessments. Build your emergency action plans. Train your people.

Timothy Kingsley

Be brave enough to have the conversation. Those are layers in security. Whether it be your threshold ministries of ushers and greeters, front desk people, administrators, or your clergy, No one carries this alone. We all work together. Ensure open communication and make it honest and available and actually required to communicate what you're observing and make it safe to do so.

Timothy Kingsley

Security is a ministry. Jesus practices holy security each and every day. Seeing those that are ignored, hearing pain before it becomes danger. I believe we're called to spiritual vigilance, soft hearts with sharp eyes. Our work is about protecting as much as preventing harm.

Timothy Kingsley

We are called to balance vigilance and grace, seeing the stranger, meeting the difference, and greeting them with bears both of need and the dignity of all persons to seek and serve and respect the dignity of all people. If I may, I will take liberty. Dear lord, grant us the eyes to see clearly, hearts to love boldly, and the wisdom to act rightly that all who enter may find peace and safety within our walls. Amen.

Jill Saukulis (EPN)

Thanks so much, Tim. That was a really wonderful way to put all of this conversation in the context that we all live in. There were a few questions, and I'm gonna just ask if we can jump to the one that I think is probably on the minds of a lot of folks here, related to things that folks have been reading about, new requirements in the letter, related to these grants. Simon, are you able to comment on the commitments that organizations make in order to receive a grant related to DEI and integration?

Simon Osamoh

Yeah. So I think there's obviously, there's a lot of concern with the current administration. And what I would say is that when the current president was in power the first time, he didn't get rid of a grant. He didn't really change the grant, but obviously a few things have changed in some of the policies that they have. Last year, I think we had two or three Episcopal parishes that actually went through and got the grant.

Simon Osamoh

Slightly different now under sort of the Republican. Will there be some guidance? Perhaps. Is it known what that is right now? No.

Simon Osamoh

I mean, some of some of the things that have been coming out on, you know, what we know our current president believes in. He believes in two genders, you know, man and woman. Is that going to be reflected in any grants? Obviously with DEI, a lot of organizations have changed. So I think there will be some guidance.

Simon Osamoh

It's mostly a bit too early, Jill, to make any determinations. But it does seem logical and probable that there might be some guidance where someone has to say that they're at the very least conforming to a lot of these executive orders. That's more my speculation having worked in it, but it seems probable that there will be some stuff. But I would say, and Tim knows this, we've been very successful with Episcopal churches before. So the basis of the grant is for two things, terrorism and extremism.

Simon Osamoh

And that is one thing that our president is very focused on is terrorism and and domestic extremism. So just just keep that to heart as well. The grant is designed to help you enhance your safety and security. Yeah.

Timothy Kingsley

You know, if I could add real quick, I couldn't agree more. And the other thing that our current administration is a big proponent of is being a relationship with your local law enforcement. And I saw a question that asked whether or not law enforcement should be involved in risk assessment and planning. I'd say absolutely. And if nothing else, just to be in relationship with that local law enforcement agency.

Timothy Kingsley

I know that comes with some challenges, and I know that comes with concerns depending on your experience with law enforcement personnel. But if you can also document that you are in the right relationship as far as response with your local law enforcement, and that bodes well in risk assessment and emergency planning.

Christin Kinman

Yeah. Can I add on to that as well?

Jill Saukulis (EPN)

Please.

Christin Kinman

So I would echo everything that Tim just said. The only caveat and and I firmly believe that you should be inviting EMS and law enforcement to your campus at least one time a year so that they can get familiar with your layout, if you've done any renovations or additions or changes that they familiarize themselves with. I do wanna just offer one perspective. Everybody comes to a risk assessment using a different set of lenses. Right?

Christin Kinman

So, law enforcement is gonna be concerned about stopping an active threat. Fire is gonna be concerned about things related to fire. It is incredibly important to not solely rely on them to do your assessments because the one thing that they do not understand is code. Okay? So, like, I got called to a school, pre k to grade eight school, to do an assessment and was walking around into the classrooms and noticed all the classrooms had sliding deadbolts.

Christin Kinman

And I said, where did these come from? And the principal said to me, well, we have this student whose dad is a Baltimore City police officer, and he came and did an assessment and told us that we needed these cause we couldn't lock the doors from the inside. So from the perspective of keeping someone out, that's a double edged sword. You are keeping an intruder out. You're also creating the potential for a barricade.

Christin Kinman

You're in violation of the ADA, and you're also in violation of the international building code and NFPA life safety codes. So it's really important that you kinda have that 360 degree view. So I'm fully supportive of, involving, you know, the local SWAT commander, your local fire captain. But if you're gonna do that, you need to have some other people there to kinda counterbalance it to make sure you're addressing everything.

Timothy Kingsley

Couldn't agree more. Absolutely.

Jill Saukulis (EPN)

100%. Tim, another question came that you may know the answer to, and I think it probably varies. But someone asked whether a parish would need the endorsement of their diocese to apply.

Timothy Kingsley

You know, I certainly make sure I never speak for another diocese and bishop, but, it has not been my experience where I've had the episcopate want some sort of management rights over risk assessment planning or work or seeking a grant. Again, notice how cautious I'm being. I'm not speaking for your respective bishops. Right. So it's worth bringing up the conversation.

Timothy Kingsley

If nothing else, it is above water to say, bishop, could we talk about this in our diocese? Because it's it could be a healthy conversation in not only your ministry, but the faith community's ministry.

Jill Saukulis (EPN)

Yeah. And indeed, in the Episcopal Church in Connecticut, which is my diocese, they actually offer grants to parishes to do some of this. Brilliant. So yeah. God bless It's definitely a conversation to have with your diocese.

Jill Saukulis (EPN)

One is a straightforward question. Simon, on the list of things that you can use the grants for, Christian had mentioned the value of signage. Is signage a thing that could be a grant project?

Simon Osamoh

Yes. And signage is tied into safety and security. So evacuation signage, you know, you might have an evacuation location in your parking lot. You could have wall signage. You could have emergency operations plans on how to get out the building.

Simon Osamoh

That signage, yes. But for general signage, you know, here's the parish office. Here's the restroom. That would be no. But one of the things I'd like to leave with to say is that I go to so many churches, and the basic thing they don't have on the wall is an evacuation.

Simon Osamoh

So when I walk in as a guest visitor for the first time, how do I know how to get out of the building quickly? So that signage would be paid for by the grant. And that's a great way not only to do the God's word to keep people safe, but also limit some of your liabilities. Because if you've got a lot of visitors and guests inside your churches, if they don't know how to get out, how do they stay safe? So it can be used for emergency signage, not for general way finding.

Jill Saukulis (EPN)

Okay. Excellent. Thank you. And then one other question, a straightforward question. Is there a minimum amount for the grants?

Simon Osamoh

No. So me as a businessman as well, if someone can allow you to ask for $200,000, I would say, ask for the $200,000. Don't sell yourself short. So I'm sure most parishes and churches can find $200,000 of technology or things they're spending on. So my advice would be to get close to $200,000. Don't cut yourself short.

Christin Kinman

Yeah. And I'll add on to that. I actually worked with a parish that decided to kinda go it alone, if you will. And, they didn't really understand exactly, like, what Simon is saying. First of all, it's really hard to get this money.

Christin Kinman

You know, there are a lot of people that are competing for it. And I've never worked with any parish or school that hasn't had a minimum of $200,000 worth of work to be done. So go for broke. This parish that I worked with asked for, like, I think it was, $38,000. And they got fully funded, and then they, like, shot themselves in the foot for getting future grants because most organizations are not getting repeated year over year allocation.

Christin Kinman

So go for the full amount.

Simon Osamoh

And just one quick question. I know we're wrapping up, but Laura raised a question about if you can apply if you did not apply and get a full 200,000, can you apply again? If you're successful, you can still apply, and if you're unsuccessful, you can still apply. But to add to what Christine said, BMA gives guidance for point systems out of 40. If you're a successful BMA, ask for state to penalize you 15 points.

Simon Osamoh

So that's why it's crucial that you actually go for the full amount because as Christine said, if a church could have asked for 200,000, they asked for 38,000. The state, if they apply the following year, the state is gonna penalize them 15 points, and you're

only being scored out of 40. So is it possible I could get funding again? Yes. But they're being heavily penalized for being successful because what FEMA is saying is, we want this to go to new nonprofits.

Simon Osamoh

We want to go to new organizations for safety. There's a danger there as well. So yeah, make sure you're getting close to that $200,000.

Timothy Kingsley

And I can't help Brad, and I know that we're trying to get off the call. We've, you know, honored everybody's call, but I can't help but want to answer James. I see James has got there. How do you know, how do we analyze risk? How do we sit down and analyze risk?

Timothy Kingsley

Because, you know, there could be a meteor, and I can appreciate that. I can appreciate that. But every context is different and your people are different. And if you're trying to create a culture and you're trying to create stakeholders, start with just simply the conversation around a table of what keeps us out of the night, folks.

Simon Osamoh

Mhmm.

Timothy Kingsley

Have a conversation. Pray about it. And I think you're gonna find the risks that have the highest probability of occurring are gonna bubble to the surface. Most of us will have severe weather. We like to burn things in our churches, so we may have a fire.

Timothy Kingsley

We're gonna have a medical emergency. If we have an elevator, there may be an entrapment. Now what needs to be present for those to exist? And once we get brave enough to name what needs to be present for those to exist to get upstream, we can take on what needs to be present for an act of violence or, god forbid, a meteor. But I'm not saying the meteor is not important.

Timothy Kingsley

What I'm saying is sit around a table and as the body, name your vulnerabilities together. That's how you're gonna create a culture. That's how you're gonna create stakeholders, and the body's gonna grow together in a community of safety.

Jill Saukulis (EPN)

Excellent. Thanks so much, Tim. This has been a great panel. It's been really informative for me and my work, so I really thank you for being here. Christin, Simon, and Tim from Kingswood Security and from Allegion, we really appreciate it.

Jill Saukulis (EPN)

For everybody who's attending today, I just can't help myself. I gotta make a pitch. If you found this useful and your parish is not yet a member of the Episcopal Parish Network where the church matters, I hope you will consider becoming a member because the members are what make it possible for this to be offered to the whole

church in the same way that your stewardship program in your parishes that you're undertaking right now makes it possible for you to offer your church to the whole world. So please consider it if you possibly can and join us at the conference if you possibly can. Thanks, everybody.

OBJ Jill Saukulis (EPN)

Does anybody have a last word? Otherwise, we are a little bit overtime, so I'll let everyone go.

OBJ Christin Kinman

Thanks, Jill.

OBJ Jill Saukulis (EPN)

Take care, everyone. Bye bye.