

## CONGREGATIONAL FIREARM & WEAPON POLICY

The Firearm & Weapon Policy of [Insert Church name here], a member congregation of Florida-Georgia District of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, is in place to protect the lives of our members, guests and visitors. The term “Firearm” is defined as [**Florida:** means any weapon (including a starter gun) which will, is designed to, or may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive; the frame or receiver of any such weapon; any firearm muffler or firearm silencer; any destructive device; or any machine gun. **Georgia:** means and includes any pistol, ~~revolver~~, or any ~~weapon~~ designed or intended to propel a missile of any ~~kind~~.] Weapon is defined to mean any firearm or any dirk, bowie knife, switchblade knife, ballistic knife, any other knife having a blade of two or more inches, straight-edge razor, razor blade, spring stick, metal knucks, blackjack, billie club, any bat, ~~club~~, or other bludgeon-type ~~weapon~~, or slingshot, or chemical weapon or device including tear gas (gun or spray), pepper spray (mace), or any flailing ~~instrument~~ consisting of two or more rigid parts connected in such a manner as to allow them to swing freely, which ~~may~~ be known as a nun chahka, nun chuck, nunchaku, shuriken, or fighting chain, or any disc, of whatever configuration, having at least two points or pointed blades which is designed to be thrown or propelled and which ~~may~~ be known as a throwing star or oriental dart, or any ~~item~~ of like ~~kind~~, and any stun gun or taser.

State law makes it is unlawful for any person to openly carry on or about his or her person any firearm or electric weapon or device. It is not a violation of State law for a person licensed to carry a concealed firearm and who is lawfully carrying a firearm in a concealed manner, to briefly and openly display the firearm to the ordinary sight of another person, unless the firearm is intentionally displayed in an angry or threatening manner, not in necessary self-defense.]

[Insert Church name here]’s general policy is to prohibit persons to bring firearms and weapons to church. Our Congregation and its staff are deeply committed to ensure the safety of its members, guests, and visitors. We do not endorse, promote, or require its members and staff to bring firearms and weapons to church. Jesus said, “*Put your sword back into its place; for all who take the sword will perish by the sword.*” Matthew 26:52. [Insert Church name here] does however recognize that every lawful citizen has certain fundamental rights under the Constitution of the United States including the right to bear arms.

Anyone person wishing to carry a concealed weapon into the church must make written application to the Pastor providing a copy of their Concealed Pistol License and stating the reasons for requesting an exemption from [Insert Church name here]’s policy prohibiting firearms and weapons. The Pastor will consult with the Head Elder and the President of the Congregation to make the determination as to the merits of the request and will deny or grant the request in writing with or without reason. The Church Secretary will maintain a secure and confidential file of all requests, and the determination of the leadership of the Church.

No weapons of any kind are permitted [on school property] *or* [in the classrooms] when children are present.

Granted Exemptions will remain in effect until changes in State or Federal law to the contrary, until the exemption is revoked with or without cause, or the concealed weapon license expires or the individual voluntarily withdraw their request for exemption.