

MT. CALVARY LUTHERAN CHURCH CONGREGATIONAL FIREARM POLICY PREAMBLE

The members of Mount Calvary Lutheran Church strive to live according to the inspired Word of God as given to us in the Holy Bible. We look forward to our eternal life in Heaven while living each day here in His Creation.

While we are in our earthly bodies, we require the daily necessities of food, shelter, clothing, health, etc. Another requirement is safety at home, work, school, when we travel, etc. Our safety at Church is no different.

In recent years, violence seems to be in the headlines every day. The Church has not been immune to that trend. Churches across the country have been the scene of violent incidents, either as direct targets or as targets of opportunity. We, at Mount Calvary, have not experienced any violent incidents to date. But, we must have the necessary plans and procedures in place to be prepared if that changes.

Georgia State law makes it unlawful for any person to carry on or about his or her person any firearm in a house of worship without the express permission of the controlling authority. Additionally, the law in Georgia states that deadly force is authorized to protect yourself or others from great bodily harm or to prevent the commission of a forcible felony, i.e. murder, aggravated assault, rape.

1. Code Section 16-3-21. Use of force in defense of self or others; evidence of belief that force was necessary in murder or manslaughter prosecution
 - a) A person is justified in threatening or using force against another when, and to the extent that, he or she reasonably believes that such threat or force is necessary to defend himself or herself or a third person against such other's imminent use of unlawful force; however, except as provided in Code Section 16-3-23, a person is justified in using force which is intended or likely to cause death or great bodily harm only if he or she reasonably believes that such force is necessary to prevent death or great bodily injury to himself or herself or a third person or to prevent the commission of a forcible felony.
 - b) A person is not justified in using force under the circumstances specified in subsection (a) of this Code if he:
 - 1) Initially provokes the use of force against himself with the intent to use such force as an excuse to inflict bodily harm upon the assailant;
 - 2) Is attempting to commit, committing, or fleeing after the commission or attempted commission of a felony; or

- 3) Was the aggressor or was engaged in a combat by agreement unless he withdraws from the encounter and effectively communicates to such other person his intent to do so and the other, notwithstanding, continues or threatens to continue, the use of unlawful force.

MT. CALVARY CONGREGATIONAL FIREARM POLICY

The Firearm Policy of Mt. Calvary Lutheran Church, 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” as defined in Georgia means and includes any pistol, revolver, or any weapon designed or intended to propel a missile of any kind.

Mt. Calvary’s firearm policy is to prohibit persons from bringing firearms 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 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. Mt. Calvary 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 firearm into the church for personal protection must make written application to the Life Safety Team for an exemption to the Church Firearm Policy and provide a copy of their Concealed Pistol License and information pertaining to their firearms safety training. The Life Safety Team will make a determination, based upon policy as stated in Mt. Calvary Exemption Request Form, 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 Life Safety Team.

Each individual shall be required to follow the specific guidelines and directives contained in Mt. Calvary Exemption Request Form and sign said document indicating their concurrence. Granted exemptions will remain in effect until changes in State or Federal Law to the contrary, until the exemption is revoked due to non-compliance with the provisions of the Mt. Calvary Exemption Request Form, the concealed weapon license expires, or the individual voluntarily withdraws their request for exemption. Notification of exemption revocation will be in the form of written correspondence to the affected person and a copy of this document will become part of the permanent file maintained in the Secretaries Office.

MT. CALVARY FIREARM EXEMPTION FORM

I, _____, the undersigned do hereby make request that I be permitted to carry a concealed firearm upon and within the property of Mt. Calvary Lutheran Church located in Warner Robins, Georgia for the purpose of personal protection. I fully understand that this exemption to the standard Church policy is incumbent upon me to have and keep current a State of Georgia Weapons Carry License (WCL) and that I must at all times comply with the below list of requirements and that failure to comply will result in immediate revocation of my exemption.

1. Firearms must be secured in a concealed holster or other device that protects the weapon from loss, accidental discharge, or unauthorized access.
2. If the firearm is carried in a purse, weapons rug, or other similar device that item (along with the weapon) must be in personal control of an authorized person at all times.
3. The firearm shall not be displayed, either briefly and/or openly, within the ordinary sight of another person except for that necessary for self-defense.
4. Standard firearms safety practices shall be observed at all times.
5. Approved firearm safety training must be completed prior to approval of this request. Approved training can either be military, approved civil, or law enforcement training. Below is a list of some training sources. Each applicant shall present the required documentation for training.

A. **Non military or non-prior military** personnel may submit copies of any of the following documents that confirm experience with a firearm.

- 1) Any hunter education or hunter safety course approved by the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission or a similar agency from another state.
- 2) Any National Rifle Association firearms safety or training course.
- 3) Any firearms safety or training course or class available to the general public offered by a law enforcement agency, junior college, college, or private or public institution or organization or firearms training school, using instructors certified by the National Rifle Association, or Criminal Justice Standards and Training Commission.
- 4) Any law enforcement firearms safety or training course or class offered for security guards, investigators, special

deputies, or any division or subdivision of law enforcement or security enforcement.

- 5) Any firearms training or safety course or class conducted by a state-certified instructor or by an instructor certified by the National Rifle Association.

B. **Active-duty military** personnel may submit copies of any of the following documents that confirm experience with a firearm gained during service:

- 1) Current Military ID Card.
- 2) Military orders including call to active-duty letter
- 3) A statement of military service that identifies you and provides your date of entry on your current active-duty period (it must be signed by, or at the direction of, the adjutant, personnel officer or commander of your unit or higher headquarters)

C. **Former military** personnel can submit a Retired Military ID Card or DD Form 214 reflecting honorable discharge from military service.

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(PRINTED APPLICANT NAME & DATE)

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(APPLICANT SIGNATURE)

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(GEORGIA WEAPONS CARRY LICENSE #, ISSUE DATE & EXPIRATION DATE)

MT. CALVARY LIFE SAFETY TEAM ACTION: APPROVED DISAPPROVED

LIFE SAFETY TEAM MEMBERS SIGNATURE:
