

TLP:CLEAR

[FB-ISAO Current Threat Level](#)

FB-ISAO Physical Threat Level: **ELEVATED**

FB-ISAO Physical Threat Level for US Faith-Based Organizations:
"ELEVATED."

FB-ISAO's definition of the Physical Threat Levels, "ELEVATED" means FB-ISAO is unaware of any specific events. Still, there is a concern that an event is more likely than normal.

FB-ISAO Cyber Threat Level:
ELEVATED

FB-ISAO has assessed the general Cyber Threat Level for US Faith-Based Organizations as "ELEVATED."

FB-ISAO's definition of the Cyber Threat Levels, "ELEVATED" means FB-ISAO is unaware of any specific events. Still, there is a concern that an event is more likely than normal.

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Event Security Considerations



Faith-Based Organizations regularly host services, religious holidays, festivals, and community gatherings that bring together large numbers of congregants in open and accessible environments. Recent federal guidance from the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA), including the **Venue Guide for Security Enhancements**, provides voluntary, practical frameworks to help Faith-Based leaders and security volunteers assess and reduce physical security risks at events. Additionally, CISA's **Venue Guide for Mitigating Dependency Disruptions** highlights how reliance on critical services - such as electricity, water, communications, and transportation - can affect safety and continuity during religious gatherings.

[CISA's Venue Guide for Security Enhancements](#) is particularly relevant to FBOs because it emphasizes flexibility and proportionality based on congregation size, location, event profile, and historical threat patterns. For houses of worship, this may include evaluating access points during high-attendance services, visibility around entrances, volunteer usher roles, and emergency communications.

Managing Dependency Risks and Religious Events. FBOs often depend on external services to operate safely during services and events. CISA's *Venue Guide for Mitigating Dependency Disruptions* encourages organizations to identify how outages or disruptions in electricity, water, heating and cooling, communications, or transportation could affect worship services, religious schools, or holiday celebrations.

For example, power outages can compromise lighting and security systems, while transportation disruptions may affect attendance and emergency response. Understanding these dependencies allows faith leaders to plan contingencies and coordinate with local providers.

FBOs can enhance safety and resilience by adopting layered, community-appropriate security measures informed by federal guidance and local partnerships, such as:

- **Conduct Event-Specific Risk Reviews:** Use CISA venue guidance to assess risks unique to worship services, religious holidays, and community events, accounting for crowd size and visibility.
- **Plan for Utility and Service Disruptions:** Identify dependencies on power, water, communications, and transportation, and establish basic contingencies for disruptions during services or events.
- **Train Volunteers and Staff:** Provide basic training on recognizing concerning behavior, emergency procedures, and communications during incidents.

Digital-Driven Protest Risks

Protest activity in recent months illustrates how social media has become a primary accelerant for mobilization, narrative shaping, and target selection. Unlike traditional protest dynamics that focused on fixed government locations, online coordination enables rapid shifts toward private-sector organizations based on perceived association, symbolism, or proximity. This environment reduces warning time, increases uncertainty for facility operators, and challenges static security planning models, requiring organizations to adapt to protest risks that evolve in near real time.

Faith-Based Spaces and Protest Disruption. Faith-based organizations have also been directly affected. For example, in Minneapolis, protesters disrupted worship services at a church, leading to arrests and federal charges, as reported by [NBC News](#) and [The Guardian](#).

These incidents illustrate how Houses of Worship (HOWs)—often open, accessible, and community-facing—can become protest venues or disruption points when social movements frame them as morally or symbolically relevant to broader political issues. In the Minneapolis case, protesters specifically targeted Cities Church because [one of its pastors also serves as the acting director of the ICE St. Paul field office](#), a dynamic that heightened the perception of symbolic and personal association with contested federal enforcement actions.

Organizations can anticipate that social media can rapidly transform facilities into protest focal points, even absent direct involvement in controversial events. Preparedness may emphasize adaptability and awareness rather than static security postures.

- **Monitor Social Media for Location-Specific Signals.** Track emerging narratives that reference facilities, leadership, or perceived affiliations to identify early indicators of protest redirection.
- **Engage Local Law Enforcement Proactively.** Maintain established liaison relationships to support information sharing and coordinated responses when demonstrations emerge near facilities.
- **Prepare Staff for Protest Encounters.** Train staff and volunteers on de-escalation, lawful protest considerations, and when to escalate concerns to security or authorities.
- **Review Access and Continuity Measures.** Assess how protest activity could affect entry points, services, or scheduled events, and plan contingencies accordingly.
- **Communicate Clearly and Early.** Prepare messaging for congregants, guests, or customers to address disruptions, reinforce safety priorities, and counter misinformation.

Spotlight: More FB-ISAO Education!

If you haven't participated in any FB-ISAO education sessions for members, please consider joining the 2026 series on **Building and Intelligence Function for Houses of Worship**. Our sessions are recorded and made available to all members. However, there's no substitute for being part of the conversation where you can share your own experiences, ask questions, and most importantly engage with the community of your peers grappling with similar challenges!!

- This most recent [event](#) series kicked off in January and continues through June. Please consider joining as we delve into how a deeper understanding of the intelligence process better informs resilience-building activities. [Register here](#).
- Previous series discussed [FireArms in the House](#) and [Standing Up Teams](#).
- Our recording library is available to members on the FB-ISAO Slack workspace.

Thank you for sharing this newsletter with a friend!