

Securing the Pulpit: Preventing Ideological Violence



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Theological Framework

- ▶ God is our fortress and security (Psalm 18 / Psalm 46 / John 10:11-15 / Romans 12:9-21)
- ▶ Church should be open and safe
- ▶ Duty to Care (Mark 12:38-43 / Luke 10:25-37)



Homicides in Churches 2000-2024

- ▶ 2000-2025 = 399 incidents with 512 killed (213 injured) in about 330,000 Houses of Worship
- ▶ 399 incidences =
 - ▶ 23% domestic violence
 - ▶ 22% escalation of a dispute
 - ▶ 16% robbery
 - ▶ 9% mental health related
 - ▶ 5% ideological
- ▶ 24% occurred on Sunday
- ▶ 88% when facility open to the public
- ▶ 63% of perpetrators were:
 - ▶ church member
 - ▶ family of church member
 - ▶ friend
 - ▶ pastor
 - ▶ former employee
 - ▶ or lived on/near the church property ...
- ▶ in other words, someone likely known to the church

Pathway to Violence

Thoughts

Grievance

- A wrong exists that the subject believes they must address

Ideation

- Subject imagines that violence is justified and effective to address grievance

Research

- Subject researches methods and means to plan / carry out an attack against their target

Preparation

- Subject collects resources / skills for the attack (could include "goodbyes," manifestos, etc.)

Breach

- Subject may test existing security or boundaries at the target location

Attack

- Perform the violent attack in their quest for satisfying grievance

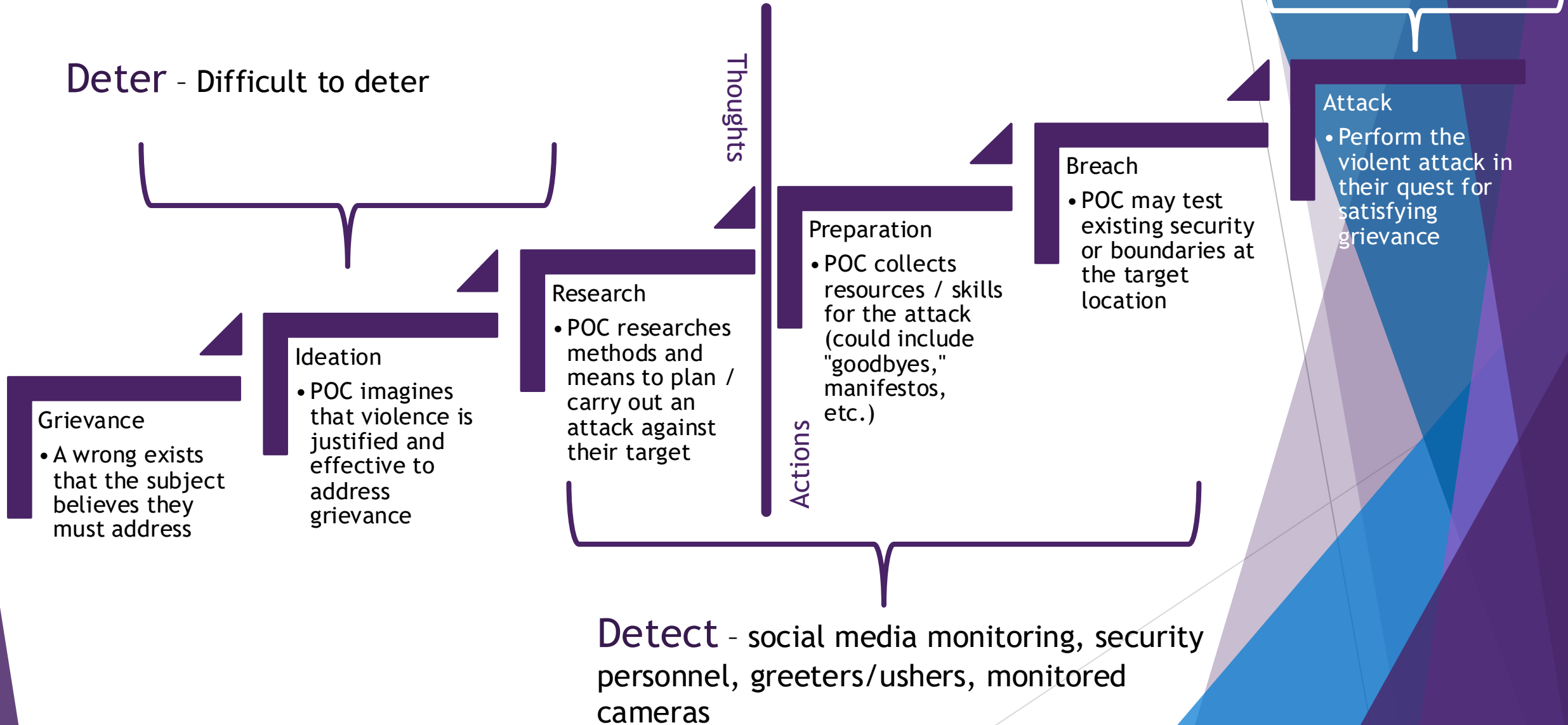
Actions

Targeted Violence / Mass Violence: Awareness and Early Identification



Prevention of Ideological Violence

Deter - Difficult to deter



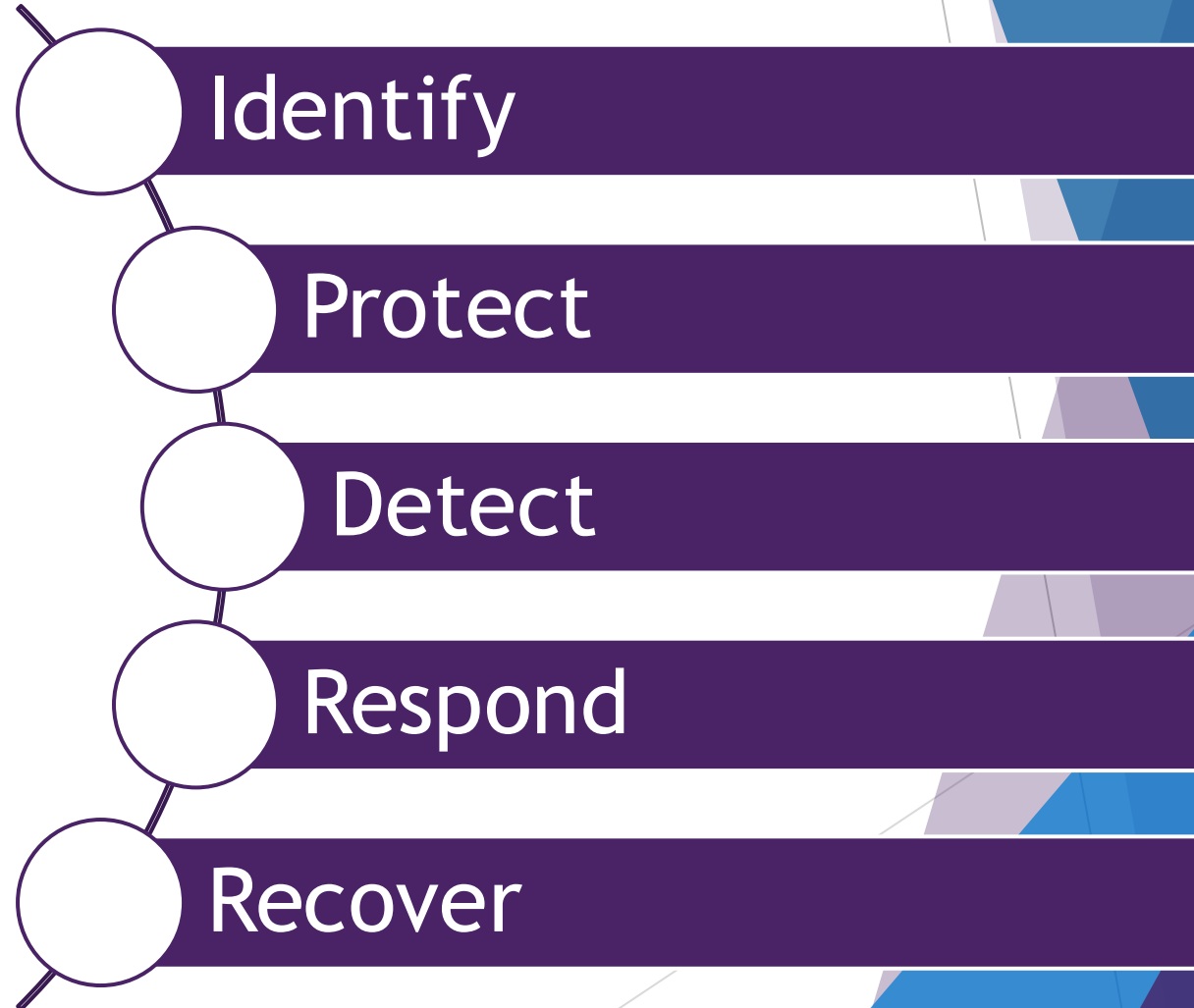
Understanding Threat: Vulnerability and Response

Natural Disaster / Violent Weather

Health / Safety

Targeted Violence (including mass violence)

Cybersecurity



Emergency Action Plans

Severe weather / tornado

Smoke / fire

Threatening behavior

Mental health crisis

Accident / injury / health emergency

Active assailant / active shooter / vehicle ramming

Bomb threat

“Bullhorn attack”
(protesting at the church)

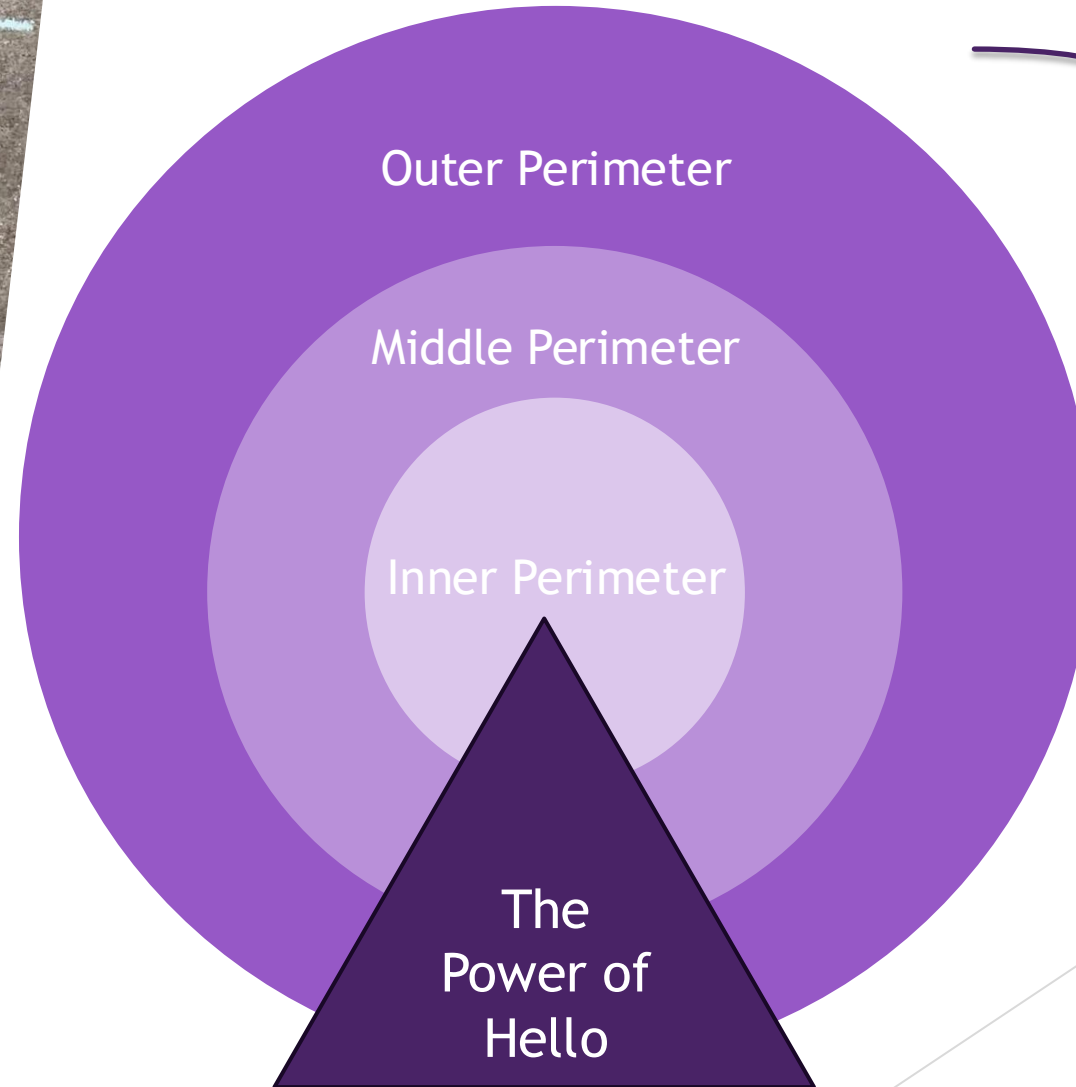
Security breach / break-in / vandalism

I / P / D / R / R

Ideological Attack EAP

- ▶ **Identify Threat:** Someone entering the property to disrupt or act violently based on opposition to female clergy
- ▶ **Protect** = plans and advance actions (preparation)
 - ▶ Discover: how will we know someone intends to act up? How can we create lead time for response?
 - ▶ Deny: how can we deny entry if we discover someone intending to act up?
 - ▶ Delay: how can we increase the time it takes for someone to breach the building in order to act up?
 - ▶ Defend: what is our response to attack/violence (hands on? prayer? silent witness?)
- ▶ **Detect:** what will set off our response plan? how will detect someone with bad intentions?
- ▶ **Respond:** deny + delay + defend actions we have planned
- ▶ **Recover:** what is necessary to return to safety? What could be done differently next time?

Targeted Violence / Mass Violence: Security Planning



Vulnerability Assessment

For all EAP planning...

- ▶ Plan-Do-Check-Act
- ▶ Clear Roles and Responsibilities
- ▶ Schedule for Trainings and Drills
- ▶ Process for Review
- ▶ Local Relationships



Questions, weirdness, or
support ...call Jay

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