

What Would Jesus Pack?

Katie Day

On June 17, 2015, a young self-proclaimed white supremacist shot and killed nine members of the Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Charleston, South Carolina, including their pastor, Rev. Clementa Pinckney. The young killer had sat with them for an hour during their regular Wednesday evening Bible study and had opened fire when they bowed their heads in prayer. Although he was a stranger to the church members, they had followed the widespread custom of African American Christians of welcoming persons into their midst. Two days later, the piety of the black Christians affected by this tragedy again caught media attention as several grieving family members of murdered victims attending the shooter's bond hearing tearfully declared they forgave him.

On November 5, 2017, gun violence again ripped through a congregation, this time during Sunday worship. Another young man driven by hate, Devin Patrick Kelley, parked his SUV outside of First Baptist Church in Sutherland Springs, Texas, and, dressed in tactical gear and carrying a semiautomatic rifle, entered the sanctuary during the service and methodically killed twenty-six worshippers and wounded twenty others. He had gone through fifteen magazines, each holding thirty bullets, to end the lives of seven men, ten women (including one who was pregnant), and eight children. One family lost eight members. Kelley's wrath had been directed at his mother-in-law, who was a member of First Baptist, but not in attendance on that Sunday.

There were several points of similarity in these two horrific events. Both of the shooters were angry young white men, driven by hate. They had each purchased their weapons legally, but only because the National Instant Criminal Background Check

System had failed; both had prior offenses that should have prohibited their purchase of guns. Both Roof and Kelley were apprehended through the heroic efforts of regular citizens who tracked them as they attempted to get away. Then, on October 27, 2018, violence struck another congregation as a gunman entered the Tree of Life Synagogue in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, during Shabbat services, killing eleven worshippers and wounding seven others. Like the other two shooters, his guns were legally purchased; and although he was a few years older, he too was consumed with hatred—for Jews and the fact that this congregation helped immigrants. Despite the racial, geographic, and religious differences, all three congregations were forever changed—left struggling with trauma, grief, anger, and the meaning of God's presence and transformation. These three cases raise troubling questions about a culture permeated with violence, about how young men are formed, about how we manage anger, and about our gun laws that are not able to limit the number of gun deaths (over 33,000 last year) by ensuring that guns are easily accessible. These are as much challenges for the church as are the theological questions about the meanings of forgiveness after a shooting, and God's presence and protection before and during one. Although the church must engage all these troubling questions, this article will just focus on the last one: how are congregations making sense of safety and security, theologically and practically, in light of a heightened sense of the threat of gun violence?

We have become accustomed to mass shootings that strike in what are considered "safe" places—schools, movie theaters, gyms, concerts, malls, workplaces. Yet the country and the world were shocked particularly by these three mass shootings because they took place in sacred space. What then

Katie Day is the Charles A. Schieren Professor of Church and Society at United Lutheran Seminary in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

is the meaning of “sanctuary” if people of faith are no longer safe in “God’s house”? The trauma of these three tragedies has rippled throughout faith communities, creating a sense of vulnerability across religious and regional lines. Sadly, this increasing sense of vulnerability among faith communities is well-founded. It is not just the high profile tragedies in Pennsylvania, Texas, and South Carolina: gun violence in churches is worsening. In the twenty-five years from 1980 to 2005, there were 139 church shootings, most of which were not fatal. More recently, in the decade from 2006 to 2016 there were 147 church shootings, more of which involved fatalities. Although violence on church property is very rare—especially homicides (.44 percent of all congregations reporting this)—the fear of such crime is disproportionately high.¹ Churches are increasingly aware that they are not immune from the gun violence afflicting all of American society, and that realization is beginning to find expression in vestry meetings, parking lot conversations, and the private and corporate prayers of the people.

of variables (gender, age, race, region, etc.), but not by religion. Even less attention is paid to how lived religion comes into play as congregations construct a response to the threat of gun violence—or not. We are at the beginning stages of our study, which is taking us to local churches, individual interviews, and various types of training conferences. There is much that is yet to be analyzed. But there are some things we do know and some things we’re just beginning to identify.

God and Guns: What We Know

We know that there are more guns around. According to a recent Harvard/Northeastern study, handgun ownership grew by 71 percent between 1994 and 2015, even as gun violence was decreasing. This reflects a growing sense of fear and need for protection within society. In fact, Pew data show personal protection is now the primary reason given for handgun acquisition (48 percent); there are an increasing number of female gun owners who feel more at risk. Pew Research Center reports 32

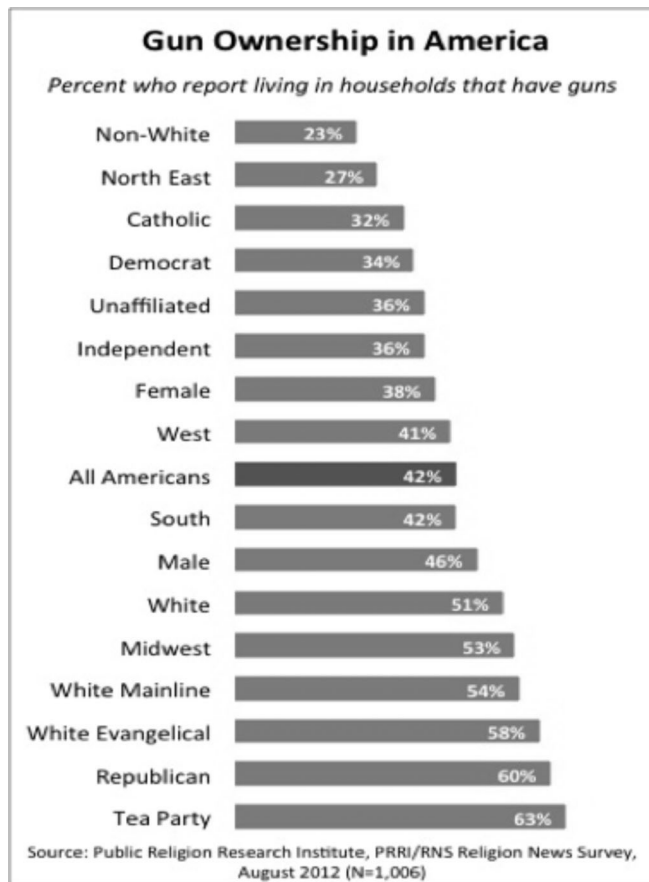
Churches are increasingly aware that they are not immune from the gun violence afflicting all of American society, and that realization is beginning to find expression in vestry meetings, parking lot conversations, and the private and corporate prayers of the people.

Most clergy and church leaders have not been prepared to respond to the threat of gun violence—this is clearly in the category of “things that were never covered in seminary.” As congregations struggle to respond in both fear and faith to growing security concerns, they find few practical and theological resources within their church bodies. Currently I am working on a research project with sociologist David Yamane from Wake Forest University on this very question of how faith communities are processing the issues of safety and security.² Despite the fact that the intersection of religion and guns seems obvious from even an informal observation of American culture, it is a surprisingly understudied social dynamic by sociologists or faith groups themselves. This is largely because of government skittishness of funding research on guns, particularly by the Centers for Disease Control. Large data sets by Pew and others look at patterns of gun ownership and beliefs about gun laws according to a number

percent of men and 12 percent of women own guns (up from 9 percent in 1994).³ While the percentage of individuals owning guns overall is decreasing slightly (down from 25 to now 22 percent), there is a phenomenon of *stockpiling*, with 3 percent of American adults having 50 percent of all guns in circulation—averaging seventeen guns each.⁴ The fear, or at least the reliance on guns, then is not evenly distributed in the public.

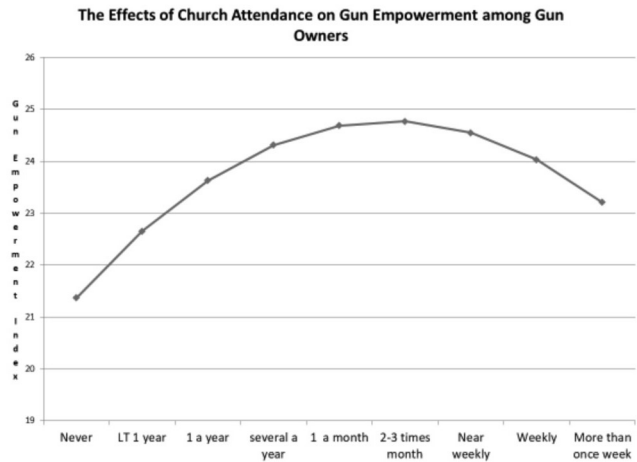
Different patterns of gun ownership emerge by race. Pew data from 2013 show 31 percent of whites as opposed to 15 percent of African Americans personally own guns.⁵ Similarly, the 2015 Harvard/Northeastern data put the percentage of handgun ownership at 25 percent among white individuals, but only 14 percent for African Americans.⁶ Other data identify gun ownership by household, but the trends of lower rates in African American households remain consistent; nonwhites have less than half the proportion of gun-owning households of whites

(23 percent versus 51 percent). Only in the last few years has research begun to consider religion as a variable, so sources are few. Consider these 2012 findings from the Public Religion Research Institute (PRRI) displayed below.⁷ When the data is sorted by religious groups, Protestants show higher rates of gun ownership, and evangelicals have the highest level of any religious group shown here—58 percent compared to 42 percent of all sampled. Other research has backed this up: evangelicals are more likely to own guns, especially handguns.⁸ The PRRI data also found the Catholic rate is well below national rates, at 32 percent. However, Dan Cox of PRRI reported that when separating out ethnic groups, white Catholics look much like the national sample (at 43 percent), but Latino Catholic households are much less likely to own guns (24 percent).⁹ So we can see that religion—as well as race, gender, political party, and region—makes a difference in who owns guns; and within religious groups there can be variation.



Besides religious affiliation, there is some evidence that religious participation has an impact on gun practices. In research coming out of Baylor

University focusing on evangelical men,¹⁰ findings show that as economic anxiety increased, so did attachment to guns. Attendance at worship also had an affect: the more frequently they attended—up to 2 to 3 times a month—the more their “gun empowerment” level increased. However, that attachment was dampened as worship attendance increased to near weekly or weekly.



Through quantitative research we know that religion affects patterns of gun ownership and beliefs, both by the religious identification and by participation. What we don't know is why and how these occur. Why would evangelicals own more guns than Catholics? (One recent study links adherence to “Christian nationalism” and opposition to gun control laws, but this cultural orientation is not exclusive to evangelicals.¹¹) Why would African Americans and Latinos (arguably more vulnerable and in need of protection) be less inclined to own firearms? What is going on in attending church more frequently that would lead evangelical men—even those anxious about their economic security—to feel less attached and reliant on their guns? Finally, how does this all get woven into the dynamics as congregations begin to discern their understandings of safety and security and construct responses? To better understand what is going on, we turn from mining the slim offerings from quantitative studies to exploring how congregations are making sense, making meaning, and taking action by conducting our own ethnographic research. Through participant observation and in-depth interviewing, we hope to develop the proverbial “thick description” of congregations at work, as they are going into new territory to create uncharted responses.

A Spectrum of Responses

It is clear that there is a range of responses that congregations are taking at this point. There are few resources from denominations, publications, or seminaries upon which to draw, and that vacuum can invite the loudest voices. Such open, unscripted space can be uncritical space, so congregational discernment should be, and often is, intentional. This is complicated by the reality that contemplating gun violence in one's house of worship is terrifying and confusing, even if it is rare. Further, sentiments around guns are strong and tend to become more strident when there is a shooting (or even an imagined one), a potential church conflict. Both of these—fear of violence and fear of division—complexify clear-headed discernment by a congregation and are present to different degrees throughout the range of responses.

There have been seven distinct responses that fall along a spectrum, from the most passive to the most aggressive (flight to fight). It should be reiterated that without a lot of quantitative data there is no way to know the actual distribution of congregational responses for some of these responses on the spectrum, nor is it possible to track shifting trends; this analysis is largely based on interviews and observations with clergy and lay leaders reflecting racial and denominational diversity, as well as attendance at training conferences. I will identify each response and consider the implications for the lived theology and worship for their congregations.

Do Nothing

Like many Americans, many congregations—perhaps most—feel that gun violence is far from a possibility they will ever encounter and so they *do nothing*. After all, the unconscious assumption that harm will not come to us enables us as individuals to live our lives, and as congregations to gather for worship. We pray for the families of victims, while assuring ourselves that this tragedy is far away. Worship can enable the insulation through avoidance and reassurance.

Trauma research has shown that when confronted with a live threat, we tend to freeze rather than escape, because our brains are not programmed with a catalogue of threats and a repertoire of the necessary behaviors to deal with them. Hence, victims and witnesses often say, “I thought it was fireworks,” because gunfire is not in their memory banks. We do not challenge the walls of this womb

because the threat is too terrifying to contemplate and perhaps because we feel helpless to know how to respond. Here, the freeze response in an actual situation of violence is echoed in the avoidance instinct in anticipation of one. Nonengagement is understandable but finally reinforces the sense of powerlessness.

Rely on God's Protection

Other congregations are all too aware of the reality of gun violence but affirm their faith in *God's protection and sovereignty*. One pastor of a large suburban African American congregation had had lively conversations in his congregation after events like the shootings of Trayvon Martin and the nine church members in Charleston. There is a liturgical tradition of “armor bearers” to protect the pastor in many black churches, a ceremonial practice proposed but discounted by this pastor as clericalism and incompatible with the priesthood of all believers. When considering the safety of the whole congregation, the idea of having armed security came up in his congregational conversation. One member compellingly argued, “Pastor, you tell us to walk by faith,” and the reliance on God precluded putting faith in firearms. This theological understanding of “walking by faith” here is not a naïve belief of guaranteed physical safety. Rather, it reflects the conviction that in fact *security* means something more fundamental than *safety*. One AME pastor (who actually owned a handgun he did not bring to church) expressed it this way: “They [guns] might protect you but they won't save you. Ultimately, God is in control.”

This theological frame is also reflected in some mainline Protestant churches that have been putting posters at entryways to the building warning that guns are not allowed in the church. For “carry anywhere” states, such signage is legally required as well as being a theological statement. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has produced eye-catching signs stating “No Guns in God's House.” A Baptist pastor from Texas whose church posted such signs recognized that it did create some concern that the church was advertising that it was a “soft target.” There is also an argument that such posters would not stop someone intent on doing harm. Still, the intentional statement recognizes the reality of violence while making a faith claim of trust in God.

Offer Active Shooter Training

A Lutheran synod in a Midwest city reported that congregational safety and security was the “number one call” they were receiving in the bishop’s office in 2017–18. The staff consulted with legal counsel and were advised not to institute any programs or policies that could be interpreted as guaranteeing safety, which could make them legally liable after a tragedy. They would have stayed in this very intentional “do-nothing” position had not the calls persisted. They responded with what they felt was the minimal program they could offer—to offer *active shooter training*. Their training attracted forty-five participants from nine of their congregations. These grim exercises are now commonplace in schools (including seminaries), hospitals, businesses, and government offices as well as churches. The Department of Homeland Security offers these trainings, and there is a growing industry in the private sector of companies now providing this service.

Those faith communities that do have active shooter trainings are “preparing for the worst, and praying for the best.” There is recognition that the church is not immune from the gun violence that has afflicted American society. By training people to run, hide, and barricade, participants are given a sense of nonviolent agency rather than a posture of passivity within a potential victim situation.

Enhanced Security Systems

There was speculation in the weeks following the tragedy in Charleston that African American churches would move toward having armed protection in worship.¹² According to journalistic accounts and my own research, African American churches did make changes toward securing worshipers, but these have largely involved *enhanced security systems* rather than turning to guns. Indeed, the AME denomination issued a statement after the shooting at Mother Emanuel in Charleston, encouraging all of its congregations to review their security systems. Security enhancement might include installing more security cameras, alarm systems, outdoor lighting, locked doors, audio speakers and video cameras at every entrance, and professional security guards. Larger congregations, and those with more resources, have instituted more elaborate security upgrades accounting for an increasing proportion of the budget.

The Scheitle study cited earlier had a large and diverse sample of congregations responding in 2015, before Charleston, Sutherland Springs, and Pittsburgh. Findings indicate that 40 percent of congregations had experienced some type of crime. About the same proportion had invested in four or more types of security systems. Still, “a majority did not have much of any security measures in place.”¹³ But interviews with clergy and congregation members have confirmed that members of congregations with security systems do feel safer when gathered for worship or meetings.

However benign increased surveillance might seem, theological tensions arise. One Unitarian minister decided to follow the advice of the local police chief and lock doors as worship began. But congregation members challenged the move as being incompatible with their commitment to hospitality. Even screening strangers through video cameras and preventing them from entering can challenge the biblical commands to welcome strangers and those who are among “the least and the lost.”

The issue of security is particularly poignant for the Jewish community, with synagogues being the most frequent targets of vandalism and hate crimes. One rabbi from Philadelphia, whose synagogue had recently been a target of anti-Semitic graffiti, talked about how some of the earliest rabbinic debates focused on whether or not weapons should be worn on Shabbat. Balancing the real threat with the teachings of his tradition he said, “We have this big security presence during the week, but on Shabbat all doors are open. No guards. This is because of the rabbinic teaching that all visitors are welcome on Shabbat. So, during the week, we’re a fortress. On the Sabbath, we’re an open book.” As with the African American congregations cited earlier, there is a faith commitment that transcends even personal safety—the need to stay true to the religious tradition. Ironically, Jews and African Americans are more vulnerable in our society, with more legitimate reasons to fear for their safety. Although there are some exceptions, our research is finding that these faith communities are not turning to guns for security, but they do have significantly higher levels of employing security systems.¹⁴

Congregants Wearing Guns

As “conceal carry” becomes legal in more states, parishioners are increasingly *wearing guns* hidden by shirt tails or blazers. Again, without quantitative data it is hard to know how prevalent this is. But some early patterns are emerging through ethnographic interviews.

It is apparent that for those who are packing in worship, this is a personal, voluntary decision. These are, for the most part, men who carry their gun throughout the week. One recurring rationale is that “it would take too long for the police to get here” in the case of an emergency, and they want to be ready. For others, however, having guns in church is a jarring image. But for these armed worshipers, there is not a conflict with one’s faith. “God has given me life and he means for me to protect it,” one Presbyterian elder from an affluent suburban church said. Personal protection extends to family and community, and can be founded in religious values of love and sacrifice. This elder did not know how many others might be carrying in the congregation, but when asked about the possibility he said, “God, I hope so!” Yet he assumed that the pastors would not approve. This presumption that clergy would have a different stance on guns in worship is a recurring theme heard in interviews, revealing a cultural divide between clergy and these laypeople, at least on this issue. Clergy, in fact, are ambivalent about the practice in most Protestant churches. Further, they do not want to know who is carrying weapons in the pews.¹⁵

Only four in ten preachers had addressed the topic—less than had focused on racism, LGBTQ issues, white privilege/supremacy, and Islamophobia, among others.

Clearly, this is something to which most clergy have not been prepared to respond in their theological training. Nor do they seem eager to address it from the pulpit. In a recent survey of active clergy in mainline Protestant denominations, gun violence ranked thirteenth in a list of thirty-eight public issues they had preached about in the previous year.¹⁶ Only four in ten preachers had addressed the topic—less than had focused on racism, LGBTQ

issues, white privilege/supremacy, and Islamophobia, among others. Even though “gun violence” is a less controversial topic than “guns in society,” follow-up comments by respondents indicated that there is unwillingness to engage an issue that could offend hunters in the congregation and others who are part of a gun culture. It has been argued that guns occupy a sacred status in American culture,¹⁷ a third rail for preachers, or at least in mainline Protestant traditions. White evangelicals are more likely to be gun owners than any other faith group or even the country overall (41 percent compared to 30 percent), and most gun owners carry their handguns with them.¹⁸ And not all clergy are uncomfortable with knowing their parishioners might be armed. Robert Jeffress of First Baptist Church of Dallas said it makes him feel safer. “I’d say a quarter to a half of our members are concealed carry. They have guns, and I don’t think there’s anything wrong with that [that they bring them to church].”¹⁹

A question for future research would be how the presence of armed worshipers affects the experience of those in the pews, whether evangelical, mainline Protestant, or members of other faiths. Is this awareness a source of comfort, anxiety, or indifference? Anecdotally, we know it could be any of the three.

Armed Church Security Teams

Farther along the spectrum are those congregations that do not rely on safety training, surveillance systems, or voluntary carrying, but take it to the next level by organizing armed “*church security teams*.” These are volunteer groups within the congregation who (usually) receive training to take action on a variety of threats including sexual assault, weather-related events, and active shooter situations. There are a number of organizations that provide training, such as the Sheepdog Seminars and the National Organization of Church Security and Safety Management. At a recent training conference of the N.O.C.S.S.M. in Frisco, Texas, the eighty attendees were overwhelmingly white, male, and from evangelical churches. However, there were not the usual rituals of evangelical gatherings—opening prayers, singing, and frequent Bible citations. Rather, the program was pragmatically oriented, with two days filled with speakers (all white men) who focused on building the skills and equipment needed to keep congregations safe from violence.

What generated the most attention and energy was preparing for an active shooter. Although this is statistically rare, the story referred to the most (almost as an origin myth for the organization) was an incident in Colorado Springs, Colorado, in 2007. A gunman attacked a youth gathering, killing two, then went to a mega church across town, New Life Church, and killed two more people. He was confronted and shot by a member of the church security team and later died (although there is still lingering debate whether his death was finally suicide). New Life has around ten thousand members and a church security team of seventy-five. The recently retired head of their team was a featured speaker at the N.O.C.S.S.M. training conference in Frisco, and he framed his team's work as a ministry of the church. He emphasized the rigorous discipline and ongoing training for the members of the team who could not earn their "A-badge" (i.e., armed) until after one year of service. There was a paramilitary feel to the whole conference exemplified by this speaker. Although he did have references from both Hebrew and Greek Scriptures to support the need for the use of force to protect the people of God, more frequent was the use of militaristic lingo: meetings are "briefings," information is "intelligence," people are "deployed," suspicious people ("Don't Look Right" or DLRs) become "targets," active shooter events are "Black Swan events," and other "tactical" references frame church security as warfare. In references from speakers and conversations with participants, it was clear that the security teams often felt that the congregation and sometimes the clergy did not understand them. These bands of brothers (almost entirely men) provided a space within a congregation for those with military backgrounds. Unlike secular insurrectionist groups, they respected the police and military and saw their role as stabilizing violent situations until the police arrived on site. Given the numbers of groups offering such training, it is predictable that more congregations will be organizing security teams if other strategies do not offer a sense of security for worshipers.

Given the numbers of groups offering such training, it is predictable that more congregations will be organizing security teams if other strategies do not offer a sense of security for worshipers.

Worshipers Openly Carrying Guns

There is a difference in optics and meanings when *guns are openly carried*, that is, when they are visible on the owner. Currently, open carry is allowed in forty-five states, with some variation in licensing and regulation. While concealed carry is more likely, there are some communities of faith where worshipers are allowed, even encouraged, to wear their weapons to services. In fact, there is interesting history of open carry in the American colonies. An openly carried gun connotes readiness against attack and, for these congregations, can be a reassuring presence (even as the idea can be anathema to other faith communities). There have been some churches that have had "2A Sundays," celebrating the Second Amendment and the right to bear arms. Here there is a confluence of authority—divine and political. Recent research on Christian nationalism has found that "Christian nationalists may perceive guns as a sacred God-given right because they see the Constitution, along with other founding documents, as inspired by the Christian God."²⁰ The symbols of cross and gun have equal weight for them. The researchers argue that this dynamic of "God and guns" is located within the culture wars that reproduce differing meanings of morality, threat, and nation.

Remaining Questions

This brief summary of the different ways that faith communities are making sense of the issues of safety and security is limited in its development. As observed, quantitative data would go far in enabling us to know the prevalence of different responses and the shifts that might be occurring. Ethnographic study, which is just beginning, helps

us to understand the internal social processes that create such responses. Obviously, as with any typology, the types are not always so clearly delineated. Congregations can employ multiple approaches at once (active shooter training and surveillance strategies, for example). They could move from one to another.

The larger question is the impact that any of these responses have in the formation of faith identity. Does seeing guns in worship (or knowing they are there) elevate fear? Does it contribute to social bonding or the deterioration of trust? Does it change how we understand and relate to God? Are congregations microcosms of our larger society, both in its threats and responses, or do they have something to contribute in the public discourse about the meanings we bring to both “safety” and “security”? The presence that guns occupy in American culture and experience is clearly unique among the nations and is not abating. How congregations engage this issue, finally, is not just about them. It is located in the larger fabric of the public well-being.

Notes

1. Christopher Scheitle, “Religious Congregations’ Experiences with, Fears of, and Preparations for Crime: Results from a National Survey,” *Review of Religious Research* 60 (October 2017): 95–113. Scheitle found that 2.32 percent of congregations in his study feared murder occurring on their church property.
2. We are grateful to the Louisville Institute for a Collaborative Inquiry grant for our study, “The Body Armor of Christ: Constructing Safety and Security in Communities of Faith.”
3. Pew Research Center, “Why Own a Gun? Protection Is Now Top Reason,” March 14, 2013, accessed November 18, 2016, people-press.org/2013/03/12/why-own-a-gun-protection-is-now-top-reason/.
4. Ibid.
5. Pew Research Center, “Gun Ownership Trends and Demographics,” March 12, 2013, accessed November 18, 2016, people-press.org/2013/03/12/section-3-gun-ownership-trends-and-demographics/.
6. Lois Beckett, “Gun Inequality: U.S. Study Charts Rise of Hardcore Super Owners,” September 19, 2016, accessed November 18, 2016, theguardian.com/us-news/2016/sep/19/us-gun-ownership-survey.
7. Daniel Cox and Robert Jones, “A Slim Majority of Americans Support Passing Stricter Gun Laws,” August 15, 2012, accessed October 18, 2016, prii.org/research/august-2012-prii-rns-survey/.
8. David Yamane, “Awash in a Sea of Faith and Firearms: Rediscovering the Connection between Religion and Gun Ownership in America,” *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 55, no. 3: 622–636.
9. Additional data provided to author by PRRI from their 2012 data set, November 5, 2015.
10. F. Carson Mencken and Paul Froese, “In the Valley (the Grip?) of the Gun: Assessing the Sources and Strength of America’s Gun Culture,” (lecture, Society for the Scientific Study of Religion, Indianapolis, IN, November, 2014); also see their “Gun Culture in Action,” *Social Problems* (November 20, 2017), <https://doi.org/10.1093/socpro/spx040>.
11. Andrew Whitehead, Landon Schnabel, and Samuel Perry, “Gun Control in the Crosshairs: Christian Nationalism and Opposition to Stricter Gun Laws,” *Socius* 4 (July 23, 2018): 1–13.
12. See Tariro Meewa and Jessica Dinapoli, “African Americans Are Changing Their Views on Gun Control after the Charleston Massacre,” Reuters (July 15, 2015); Tyler Pager, “After Charleston, Black Churches Straddle Fine Line Between Security, Openness,” *USA Today* (August 16, 2015); Tamara Audi, “Pastors Say Black Churches Need to Review Security,” *Wall Street Journal* (June 18, 2015).
13. Scheitle, “Religious Congregations’ Experiences,” 111.
14. Ibid., 110.
15. Megan Butler, “Pistols in the Pews: Church Security and American Gun Culture” (unpublished paper, April 30, 2018).
16. Leah D. Schade, “Preachers Addressing Gun Violence: Data from 2016 Survey, ‘Preaching About Controversial Issues’” (unpublished paper, November 25, 2018).
17. See James E. Atwood, *America and Its Guns: A Theological Expose* (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2012) and *Gundamentalism and Where It Is Taking America* (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2017).
18. Kate Shellnutt, “Packing in the Pews: The Connection between God and Guns,” *Christianity Today* (November 8, 2017), christianitytoday.com/news/channel/utilities/print.html?type=article&id=140372, accessed November 14, 2017.
19. Ibid.
20. Whitehead, Schnabel, and Perry, “Gun Control in the Crosshairs,” 9.