



PRESS RELEASE

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Briarwood Presbyterian Church seeks to employ police officers like those at colleges and universities as provided for under Alabama law.

Briarwood and its 40 ministries, including a comprehensive school (pre-school through 12th grade) and a seminary, operate active campuses in Jefferson and Shelby counties and the City of Vestavia Hills. After the shooting at Sandy Hook and in the wake of similar assaults at churches and schools, Briarwood recognized the need to provide qualified first responders to coordinate with local law enforcement who so heroically and effectively serve their communities. Code 16-22-1 of Alabama law provides for the employment of one or more persons to act as police officers at colleges and other private educational institutions. The church seeks to mirror that provision in a special law to be presented to the Alabama Legislature.

Upon obtaining lawful legislative permission, the personnel employed by the church will meet all requirements and be certified by the Alabama Peace Officer Training Commission, and will engage in appropriate continuing education and training provided by law enforcement agencies. The police officers would be restricted to the church's campuses and be able to respond to emergency situations while coordinating with local authorities.

The sole purpose of this proposed legislation is to provide a safe environment for the church, its members, students and guests. While seeking to be responsible, ultimately the church proclaims that its trust is in the Lord of Glory who sovereignly cares and provides for His people. To Him alone be Glory and Honor now and forevermore.

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