

Dear friends,

Today and tomorrow, we're scheduled to have the new security system I mentioned last week installed in the building. (There was an old joke in the military that the order to "secure the building" meant different things to the different branches of service, ranging from attacking and capturing it, to posting guards around it, to turning out all the lights and locking all the doors when you leave it, to taking out a long-term lease on it.)

Since the building is ours already, we're not planning to capture it or lease it, but we will be posting a guard of sorts and locking the external doors in a more sophisticated way, among other things. And the truth is that we have been enhancing our security for some time already.

Recently, we installed a new fire alarm system throughout the building. (You may have noticed the control box on the wall in the foyer.) We also changed our normal operating procedures so that the external doors are locked during the week, except when people are entering for meetings or activities. We have a team of our members conducting roving security patrols every Sunday morning during our worship services, a process that began in our early days at O'Neal.

This week, technicians will be installing an alarm system that will be continuously monitored electronically by a professional security firm. Once the system is "activated," entering the building "after hours" without turning off the system will set off the alarm and automatically call the police. During normal business hours, the alarm will be shut off, but entry will still be monitored and regulated, unless classes, meetings or other group activities are being held, in which the front doors will be unlocked as usual.

As a part of the upgrade, traditional door keys will be replaced with electronic key cards (like they use in hotels) or "fobs" (the little "gizmos" that let you unlock your car and even start some of the newer ones). These devices will be provided to the staff and to a few others whose responsibilities require them to be in the building when the office is not open. For everyone else, there will be a doorbell installed at the main entrance and the Fellowship Hall door, and

using a new close circuit camera system, we will be able to "buzz you in." (The outside door to the Administrative Assistant's new office will no longer be an entrance).

All this new technology may sound daunting, but there will be more training provided than just this letter, and we will have a while to practice our new procedures before the system goes "operational." The goal is to provide all of us-and our loved ones and friends who participate with us in the ministries in our building-a high degree of physical security in an increasingly unpredictable world-as we enjoy and offer to others the absolute and eternal spiritual security our God has "installed" through Jesus Christ, for us and all who believe in Him Who guards our souls and keeps us "safe and secure from all alarms."

God bless you,

Pastor Al