

71-Year-Old Who Took Down Church Shooter in 6 Seconds Is 'Thankful to God'

More than two people would likely have died during the Texas church shooting this past Sunday, Dec. 29, had deacon Jack Wilson not shot the gunman as quickly as he did.

The horrific event was over in six seconds, but that was enough time for the shooter, 43-year-old Keith Thomas Kinnunen, to kill two people: 64-year-old Anton "Tony" Wallace and 67-year-old Richard White. Both victims were on the security team at West Freeway Church of Christ.

Wilson, who serves as head of security at the church, gives God the credit for being able to take down the shooter so quickly.

"I just want to thank all who have sent their prayers and comments on the events of today," he wrote on Facebook. "The events at West Freeway Church of Christ put me in a position that I would hope no one would have to be in, but evil exists and I had to take out an active shooter in church. I'm thankful to GOD that I have been blessed with the ability and desire to serve him in the role of head of security at the church. I am very sad in the loss of two dear friends and brothers in CHRIST, but evil does exist in this world and I and other members are not going to allow evil to succeed. Please pray for all the members and their families at this time."

Wilson says Kinnunen was disguised in a fake beard, a wig and a toboggan. He felt something about the gentleman was suspicious, especially since Kinnunen seemed to be hiding his left hand until he began shooting.

Wilson is a strong supporter of the Second Amendment and of President Donald Trump. He also is running for county commissioner of Hood County, according to his Facebook page.

His training as a firearms instructor and former deputy sheriff came in handy, he says:

"My training says if I see a weapon, especially in that scenario, because that is my job. I am the deacon in charge of security at the church. And the people on the security team, we have spent numerous hours training and working on just this kind of scenario, hoping it never happens."

The church's pastor, Britt Farmer, says Kinnunen had visited the church before that morning.

"I had seen him," he says. "I had visited with him. I had given him food. I had offered him food at other occasions that he had been to our building."

Kinnunen had been reportedly homeless for some time before the shooting occurred. He was arrested and convicted multiple times in the past 10 years on various charges, including misdemeanor deadly conduct and misdemeanor theft.

Kinnunen's younger brother, Joel, used to live with him on the streets. Joel died by suicide in 2009. Sunday, Dec. 29, was reportedly his birthday, according to Kinnunen's sister, Amy.

Farmer says the attack "destroys his heart" and says the two men who died that day left a great legacy, which happened to be the topic of his sermon that morning.