

‘God Was There’: AG Church Erupts in Flames, Dog Alerts Neighbor to Call 911

In the dead of night, Kim Lewis awoke to the fervent barking of her dog, Bear.

Quickly shaking the sleep from her eyes, she saw out her window the neighboring church, Yorktown Assembly of God, going up in flames.

She immediately dialed 911, and then alerted neighboring staff members to vacate their home in case the fire spread.

Upon arriving, the fire chief told Lewis to “buy a raffle ticket because it’s incredible that this is how minor the damage is. ... Five or ten more minutes without the 911 call, and the entire building would have been engulfed.”

The church knows, however, that luck had nothing to do with it. “It was God’s protection over His church and people,” its Facebook announcement says.

“We know God was there tonight protecting our building,” the ministry wrote.

“We want to thank God first and foremost followed by, the countless first responders that came to help, and finally, Bear, the BEST dog in the world for keeping us from experiencing a devastating loss here at the church,” the statement reads.

The fire started on the building’s exterior and traveled through to the attic. Barring water damage, firefighters said the sanctuary was damaged far less than they would have expected had not Lewis contacted them when she did.

Congregants flocked to the social media comments to thank God and the 4-year-old German shepherd hero.

“Thank you, Jesus, for everyone’s safety and that the damage was minimal. Good job, Bear!” one user wrote.

Another user commented on the palindrome at play: “Dog spelled backwards is God,” he wrote.

Authorities have discovered an electrical shortage sparked the fire, which caused an estimated \$50,000 in damage.

“There is extensive damage to the roof and exterior wall of the building, as well as water damage in the sanctuary and to our instruments, but we are so thankful as it could have been so much worse,” says Jason Graham in the GoFundMe account description.

Donations made to the fund have reached \$5,732 of the \$50,000 goal.

According to ABC7 NY, congregants had questions about Bear for church administrator Lisa Wain: “What’s his favorite toy? What’s his favorite snack?”