



INTRODUCTION

In the early 2000s in East Flatbush, the murder rate ranked highest among the 5 precincts in the city, accounting for 25% of all violence in NYC. As a result of the high numbers of murders and the lack of community response to these incidents, clergy mobilized to address this urgency and created the 67th Precinct Clergy Council, reputedly known as “The GodSquad”.

Formally established in 2010 with the full cooperation of the 67th Precinct, the GodSquad has been a valued partner in the fight against gun violence. We adopted a holistic approach to help to lower youth involvement in senseless gun violence and build safer and more peaceful communities.

Our Mission is to heal and empower communities impacted by gun violence using a holistic, faith-based model.

Our Vision is of a GodSquad that responds, rebuilds, and restores hope for safe communities beginning with dignity for all.

Our Values are focused on being **S.A.F.E**

- **SUPPORT** families impacted by gun violence
- **ADVOCATE** for support and resources to rebuild communities
- **FORGE** community partnerships
- **EMPOWER** individuals through personal development

We respond to numerous calls concerning gunshot victims and their families with hospital visits, counseling sessions, prayer vigils, community walks, gun violence forums, and victims’ services earning the trust of our community as a credible voice of hope and resolve. All we need to end gun violence in our city is faith that it can be done, the will to act, and the resources to bring about change. It can be done! It will be done! It must be done!



SAFE SUMMER 2023

Recognizing that public safety is a shared responsibility, the 67th Precinct Clergy Council (GodSquad), is pleased to announce our #SafeSummer2023 Campaign. Summer has almost typically been a time that has been plagued with violence, community trauma and mental health ordeals. Together with our local precincts, CMS service providers, clergy councils, faith-based organizations and elected officials, this comprehensive community plan is designed to help decrease the involvement of young people in street gangs, gun violence and other criminal activity in the upcoming months.

This plan embodies a holistic approach, along with the necessary resources to help reduce gun violence in Brooklyn and beyond. We believe that through community partnerships we can create safer and more peaceful neighborhoods for all.

TARGET AREAS

The 67th Clergy Council catchment area constitutes the entire geographical area of the 67th Precinct. Within the local confines of our precinct, historically, we have seen an increase and trends of gun violence in various neighborhoods. Since the start of 2023, the 67th Precinct has had 12 shootings, with 5 fatalities. As a consequence, we will be targeting specific “hot spots” within the catchment:

- Church Avenue from East 32nd to East 35th
- Church Avenue from East 45th to East 56th
- Rockaway Parkway Corridor - East 98th to East 93rd
- Flatbush Gardens



CLERGY-LED ENGAGEMENT

Our plan will include a variety of anti-gun violence strategies, such as increasing presence in high-risk areas, implementing programs that will foster conflict resolution and mental health support, while promoting wellness in our neighborhoods.

- Occupy the Corners (OTC) - Friday nights
- Community Walks (Every Tuesday)
- Block Takeovers
- Community Dinners
- Community Sports/Arts Engagement
- Back to School Fair
- Gun Violence Youth Summit
- Shower Bus
- Community Baby Shower
- Roll Calls at the Precinct
- Food Pantries
- Displaced Communities (Family residence shelters)
- Clergy Crisis Mobile Response Unit (Our mobile command center on location within the 67th Precinct and surrounding neighborhoods at the immediate scene responding to crises and returning to the area within 24-48 hours following the incident to provide support and resources to the trauma-impacted community).

We will also be working more closely with other precinct clergy councils across Brooklyn (67, 69, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, 83, 90) to help build capacity and reinforce the “no-to-gun-violence” messages over the summer. We will continue to “pray with our feet” as we help promote civility, order, and non-violence while maintaining a semblance of community.

THE TEAM

- Clergy - The GodSquad recognizes the critical role clergy plays in helping to ensure safety in our streets. To help strengthen this initiative, we have formed an Engagement, Recruitment & Spiritual Care Team.



This team seeks to mobilize and optimize the general efforts of all community engagement and operations within 67th Precinct Clergy Council (The GodSquad). The Engagement and Recruitment Team has the important task of strategically placing clergy in areas of interest to develop clergy monthly assigned activities that work in the best interest across all our programs and projects.

- Support To Families - Provide comforting care to families as a source of healing.
- Spiritual Care (Counseling & Bereavement Services) - Spiritual Care is an inner source network within the GodSquad for family, clergy, and children that have fallen victim to gun violence. This unit focuses on counseling & therapeutic relationships as it relates to those affected by the trauma of gun violence.
- Community Organizing
 - Recruit youth and clergy to participate in community organizing activities.
 - Coordinate outreach events to engage community members and promote community organizing efforts.
 - Attend community board meetings to stay informed and connected to the community.
 - Assist in facilitating workshops related to community organizing and social justice.
- Flatbush Leadership Academy and NextGen Alumni/SYEP - Peer to peer engagement through our youth from our two youth programs as well as our youth from SYEP. - Our plan will include providing summer employment for 85 youths throughout the summer and to create opportunities for them to plan and execute summer initiatives.
- Survivors of Violence - Mothers For Safe Cities - a healing and empowerment network of mothers and families of homicide victims who will be given the platform to share their stories as a form of intervention. They will also lead community engagements as part of their personal commitment to turning their pain into purpose.



SOCIAL MEDIA

Creating social media content promulgating anti-gun violence, anti-hate, anti-bias messaging. Content will include our youth, clergy, and survivors of gun violence, hate and biased attacks, aimed to bring awareness and a call to action as we do our part in combating violence in our community.

- Photography
- Videography
- Short Films
- Documentaries
- PSA's
- Reels

J'OUVERT & LABOR DAY CELEBRATIONS

The 67th Precinct Clergy Council Inc. "The GodSquad" will continue to engage in Labor Day, J'ouvert and West Indian Day Parade Celebrations, along with dedicated community partners. We are coordinating efforts with the Mayor's Office of Criminal Justice (MOCJ) and law enforcement to create a peaceful and safe experience for all participants. The GodSquad will maintain a positive community presence with dignity and decorum, providing appropriate faith-based services that will promote, and ultimately produce civility, order, and a non-violent atmosphere.

Over the Labor Day Weekend, the GodSquad will occupy designated locations and vigilantly walk through areas along the parade route identified as "hot spots." We will identify any early signs of violence or behaviors that can escalate toward the same. We will pray for, and tactfully pray with residents, encouraging them toward the targeted goals of peace, safety, and non-violence. We will respond appropriately to the various levels of severity and contact GodSquad Leadership and/or NYPD as deemed necessary.



PARTNERS

Our street engagements are a holistic approach that involves our various partners and affiliates in achieving a significant reduction in gunplay incidents. We believe that public safety is a shared responsibility and **Together Everyone Achieves More.**

- Community Boards
- Community Based Organizations
- Crisis Management System Organizations
- Department of Education
- Elected Officials
- Kings County District Attorney's Office
- NYPD

ANTICIPATED OUTCOME

The Safe Summer 23 plan is expected to result in a reduction of gun violence incidents and make the summer months safer for all members of the community. By implementing these measures, the plan aims to reduce the number of shootings, injuries and deaths caused by gun violence during the summer season. The initiative is also expected to improve community relations with law enforcement, increase awareness of the dangers of gun violence, and promote a culture of peace and safety.

In addition to these direct outcomes, the safe summer anti-gun violence plan will also have broader, long-term impacts. By reducing the incidence of gun violence, the plan will help to decrease the fear and trauma associated with gun violence in the community. This, in turn, will improve overall quality of life and lead to numerous opportunities for economic development and other community advancements.