

**Ramsey County:** Two low-income housing administrators exit jobs after investigation. **A2**

**St. Paul:** University of St. Thomas offers preview of new Lee and Penny Anderson Arena. **A3**

**Health:** FDA approves updated COVID-19 shots, but limits their use for many Americans. **A4**

**Sports:** In trade with Carolina Panthers, Vikings bring receiver Adam Thielen back home. **B1**



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★ South Minneapolis

## ‘WE LOST TWO ANGELS TODAY’

2 students killed, 17 people wounded in morning shooting at Catholic school      Police: Shooter fired through church windows during Mass, died by suicide      FBI is investigating the attack as domestic terrorism and a hate crime



LIAM DOYLE — NEW YORK TIMES

A woman carries a child as members of law enforcement gather at the scene of a shooting at the Annunciation Catholic Church and School in South Minneapolis on Wednesday morning. Two children were killed and 17 people injured when a gunman opened fire through the windows of the church while students were attending Mass.

By Mara H. Gottfried  
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Within seconds of a person opening fire into a Minneapolis church where children were gathered for Mass, teachers acted as heroes, Annunciation Catholic School’s principal said Wednesday.

**INSIDE:** School attack was the 4th deadly shooting in Minneapolis in just over 24 hours. » **PAGE A10**

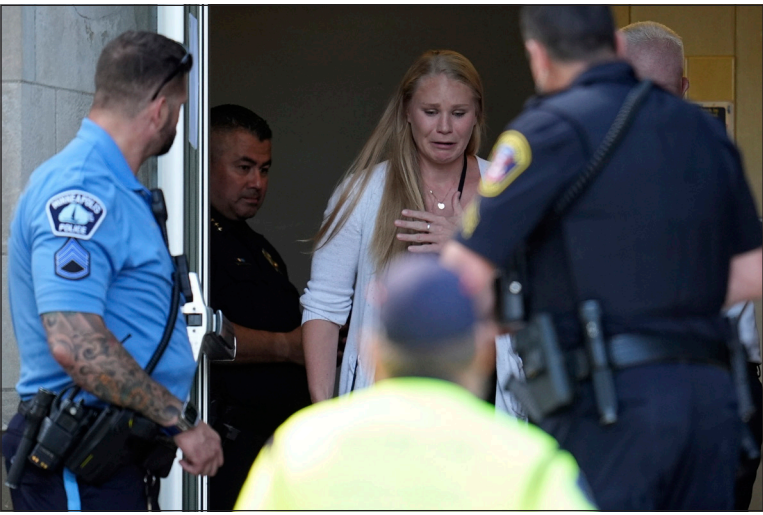
“Children were ducked down,” said Matt DeBoer. “Adults were protecting children. Older children were protecting younger children. ... It could have been significantly worse without their heroic action.”

Still, “we lost two angels today,” he said of two students, ages 8 and 10, who were killed.

The suspect wounded an additional 17 people before dying by suicide in the back of the church, said Minneapolis Police Chief Brian O’Hara.

The shooter was identified by O’Hara as Robin Westman, 23. The mother of a person of the same name and age as Westman previously worked at the site of the shootings, Church of the Annunciation. O’Hara said he could not confirm a relationship between the suspect and the church, “but that’s obviously something we’re looking very closely at.”

Robin Westman had a manifesto and had timed it to be released on YouTube. It appeared to show Westman “at the scene and included some disturbing writings,” O’Hara said. With the assistance of the FBI, the content has since been taken down and



ABBIE PARR — ASSOCIATED PRESS

A woman walks out of Annunciation Catholic Church as police respond to the shooting.

“it now remains under active review by our investigators,” the police chief said.

O’Hara didn’t provide information about the manifesto and added: “I have no information to share on a motive,” he said.

FBI Director Kash Patel said on X (formerly Twitter) that the shooting is being investigated as an act of domestic terrorism and a hate crime targeting Catholics.

Homeland Security Secretary Kristi Noem, also writing on X, said: “This deeply sick murderer scrawled the words ‘For the Children’ and ‘Where is your God?’ and ‘Kill Donald Trump’ on a rifle magazine.”

### ‘Deliberate act of violence’

Westman was outside the South Minneapolis church and shot through the windows, O’Hara said. The two children killed were sitting in the pews.

“This was a deliberate act of violence against innocent children and other people worshipping,” O’Hara said. “The sheer cruelty and cowardice firing into a church full of children is absolutely incomprehensible.”

At Annunciation Catholic School, which resumed Monday after summer break, there was Mass to mark the first week of school. It was toward the beginning, so some children had already filed in and were seated, while others were coming in, O’Hara said. There were dozens of children present.

Westman, armed with a rifle, shotgun and a pistol and outside the building, fired all three weapons toward children sitting in the pews about 8:30 a.m., O’Hara said. Westman had no prior criminal history and had recently lawfully purchased the weapons, according to the police chief.

**MINNEAPOLIS SHOOTING » PAGE 10**



JOHN AUTEY — PIONEER PRESS

People hug outside Annunciation Church and School in Minneapolis after the deadly shooting there Wednesday.

### REACTION

## ‘Minnesota is heartbroken’ by the shooting, Walz says

Governor, president order flags at half-staff as other officials weigh in

By Alex Derosier  
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In the wake of a shooting that took the lives of two children and injured 17 other people at a Catholic school in South Minneapolis on Wednesday, local and national figures have offered their sympathies.

President Donald Trump ordered U.S. flags to be flown at half-staff at the White House, military bases and other public properties

in respect “for the victims of the senseless acts of violence.”

Minnesota Gov. Tim Walz has also issued a half-staff order for state buildings.

“Minnesota is heartbroken by the senseless shooting that took place this morning,” Walz said in a statement. “I’m praying for our kids and teachers whose first week of school was marred by this horrific act of violence. To the officers and first responders, the clergy and teachers providing comfort, and the hospital staff saving lives — thank you. We will get through this together.”

**SHOOTING REACTION » PAGE 9**

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**SECTION A »** Local, News, Obits, Opinion, Business

**SECTION B »** Sports, Weather

**SECTION C »** Eat, TV, Advice

### WEATHER

H: 77 L: 56  
Full report on » B4



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