

Christ United Methodist Church Safe Sanctuaries Policy Manual

Purpose

Christ United Methodist Church, located in Greensboro, North Carolina, is committed to providing a safe environment for all children, youth, and vulnerable adults who enter the doors of our church and/or participate in any Christ UMC ministries. The policy will give guidelines and procedures to those individuals and ministries who work with those children, youth, and vulnerable adults as the church continues to strive to provide an atmosphere which fosters physical, mental, and spiritual growth as well as safety.

Christ United Methodist Church will work to educate all clergy, staff and volunteers in regard to the policies and procedures that clearly define the standards and expectations of those in ministry to children, youth, and vulnerable adults. Christ UMC will work within the guidelines and requirements of the law of the state of North Carolina and will be prepared to respond to any and all allegations and incidents that may occur.

Definitions

Abuse: A non-accidental injury or pattern of injuries to a child, youth, or vulnerable adult. This includes physical abuse, emotional abuse, neglect, sexual abuse, and ritual abuse.

Adult: Any person 18 years of age or older and not in High School.

Child: Any person between birth and fifth grade.

Emotional Abuse: Expressing attitudes or behaviors toward a child, youth, or vulnerable adult that creates serious emotional or psychological damage.

Neglect: any serious disregard for a juvenile's or vulnerable adults supervision, health, education, care or discipline.

Physical Abuse: Examples of physical abuse included, but not limited to: beating, harmful restraint, use of a weapon or instrument, or actions that result or could result in serious physical injury.

Ritual Abuse: Abuse in which physical, sexual, or psychological violations of a juvenile or adult are inflicted regularly, intentionally, and in a stylized way by a person or persons responsible for the person's welfare.

Sexual Abuse: Any sexual behavior imposed on a child, youth, or vulnerable adult.

Staff: Any person who is full-time, part time, or retained or contracted as an employee of Christ UMC.

Three Year Older Rule: The adults that are in a supervisory role must be at least 3 years older than the oldest child or youth participant they are supervising.

Volunteer: Any person who performs volunteer assistance for Children, Youth, or Vulnerable Adult programs or activities.

Vulnerable Adult Abuse: Any knowing, intentional or negligent act by a caregiver or any other person that causes harm or serious risk of harm to an older or vulnerable adult. Types and forms of abuse are usually physical abuse, emotional abuse, financial exploitation, abandonment, and neglect.

Youth: Any person from the sixth grade through completion of the summer after the twelfth grade

Implementation

All ministry areas are responsible for having these policies in place. Training is the responsibility of each ministry area in coordination with the Safe Sanctuaries Committee. In addition, any outside group (including Scouts, the Childhood Enrichment Center, and Kids Ahead) using the Christ UMC facilities will be made aware of this policy and will meet the standards set forth in this policy. If anyone has questions about the manual, please contact Katey Galyon, Pastor to Families with Children & Youth.

Policies Pertaining to Children and Youth

General Volunteer Policies for Children and Youth

This section applies to all children and youth from infants through those who have completed 12th Grade ministered to by Christ United Methodist Church and all staff and volunteers involved in ministry with children.

- 1.) All volunteers working with children and youth will have a National Criminal Background Check and Sex Offender Check. The results from the checks will be recorded in the volunteer file when received. Long-term volunteers will be re-background checked every 3 years.
- 2.) If sex offender registry status is discovered, the individual cannot be permitted to volunteer with children or youth. Any adult who has been convicted of any crime involving a minor will not be permitted to work with children or youth.

- 3.) All volunteer information will be maintained by the Office Administrator in a file accessible only to the relevant staff, SPRC Chair, and Safe Sanctuaries Committee Chair.
- 4.) All volunteer orientations will include information that covers the church's policies on safe ministry with children and youth. This orientation will also make volunteers aware of the Mandatory Reporting Statute of North Carolina concerning Child Abuse. North Carolina law requires everyone to report suspected child abuse or neglect.
- 5.) All volunteers will wear a Christ UMC Volunteer name tag while working with children and youth.
- 6.) As often as possible, a minimum of two adults should be present during any children's activity. We will strive to not have a teacher working alone with children.
- 7.) If a volunteer is alone in a classroom with children, the door to the room will remain open.
- 8.) Windows on doors will remain uncovered for the protection of the children, youth and volunteers.
- 9.) Another adult will be in the hallways whenever teachers are teaching children. This person will act as a visible presence in support of teachers, as well as a deterrent of any potentially harmful situation for children or youth.
- 10.) No youth under the age of 18 will be allowed to work with children without the direct supervision of a lead adult.
- 11.) To be considered the lead adult when working with children or youth, a person must be 18 years or older and a high school graduate. Any volunteer ages 18-22 will be supervised by the Minister/Director of the specific program or his/her designee.
- 12.) Children or youth shall not be taken from the church grounds on a church-sanctioned activity without the written or electronic permission of their parents or guardians.
- 13.) Relational ministry often means an embrace or a hug to show that a child or youth is welcomed, loved, and cared for. However,
 - a.) No child or youth is allowed to sit on the lap of an adult leader for an extended period of time.
 - b.) No adult working with children or youth will ever be allowed to engage in a physical relationship with a child.
- 14.) To provide a safe and secure environment for children the following ratios should be observed (children/adults)
 - a.) Infants/Toddlers: (10/2)
 - b.) Two's: (11/2)
 - c.) Three's (12/2)
 - d.) Four's: (16/2)
 - e.) Kindergarteners: (19/2)
 - f.) First-Third Graders: (25/2)

- g.) Fourth-Fifth Graders: (30/2)
- 15.) Staff and volunteers should arrive 15 minutes before the scheduled start of the event or activity and remain until all children are picked up.
 - 16.) Children must be in the presence of an adult at all times. No child will be allowed to go to a different area of the church facility unsupervised.
 - 17.) If a child needs assistance when using the restroom, the bathroom door must be kept open.
 - 18.) The one-on-one counseling of a child or youth by a member of the Discipleship ministries staff should be attempted to be done during regular business hours in the church office area of Christ UMC. If this is not possible, and emergency counseling must be done, the Discipleship Ministries staff should notify another staff member of Christ UMC of the counseling session including information about the location of counseling, gender of those being counselled, and time of counseling session. A public place should be secured for this session.
 - 19.) The Discipleship ministries staff may not counsel a child or youth for more than 5 sessions. If the reason for counseling is not resolved within that period, the Discipleship ministries staff should refer the child or youth to a professional counselor.
 - 20.) If one-on-one counseling is ever done by a volunteer, that volunteer must make the relevant Discipleship ministries staff aware of the counseling being done.

Check-in/Check-Out Procedures for Children

When children are dropped off or picked up from all ChristKids event, the following procedures must be followed

- 1.) When children are dropped off at an event, each child must be checked in via the provided check-in method (electronic, name tag, sign-in sheet, or otherwise)
- 2.) Parents/Guardians are asked to fill out an "Authorized Pick Up" form which denotes what adults are authorized to pick up their children. Relevant leaders are given access to the "Authorized Pick Up" list. If a parent has not filled out the Authorized Pick Up form, they will be prompted to do so at drop off.
- 3.) The adult picking up a child must be listed on the Authorized Pick Up list. No child will be released to an adult who is not on their Authorized Pick Up list.
- 4.) If someone who is not on the Authorized Pick Up list of a specific child will be picking up a child from an event, the Director of Children's Discipleship should be contacted prior to the event.

Procedures for Overnight trips
Transportation Policies
Cyber Safety

Three Year Rule

The adults that are in a supervisory role of youth must be at least 3 years older than the oldest participant they are supervising.

- 1.) As it relates to Youth Ministry, 18-19 year old college students that are at least 3 years older than the oldest 8th grader may be in a supervisory role with middle school youth.
- 2.) For 18-22 year olds who are no longer in high school and wish to be in ministry with youth, especially high school youth, they can serve in addition to an adult that is in a supervisory capacity over the high school youth.
- 3.) Young adults that are within 3 years of age of the oldest student they are leading may be a small group leader in situations where there is still supervisory oversight and presence of an adult that is beyond 3 years older than the students.
- 4.) As it related to a college intern working with Youth Ministries for the summer, the college intern should be an assistant to the Youth staff and would be included in the adult leader count only when there is 3 years or more age difference between them and the oldest student they are engaging in ministry with for any particular activity. Otherwise, the intern would be an additional staff person who is able to assist, lead, plan, and direct under the guidance of the Director of Youth, or his/her qualified designee, who must be in attendance at the activity. This requirement in section f is not applicable if the intern is paid staff.

Standards and Expectations of Volunteers

- 1.) No use of tobacco or vapor products in the presence of Youth during an event, trip, or outing.
- 2.) No use of illegal drugs at any time.
- 3.) No consumption of alcohol immediately before or during any event, trip or outing.
- 4.) No use of profanity at any event, trip, or outing.
- 5.) No use of ethnic or racial slurs at any event, trip, or outing,
- 6.) No joining in the watching of any movie rated above PG13, and all PG13 movies must be screened and deemed appropriate by the Director of Youth Discipleship.
- 7.) No intentionally exposing personal body parts.
- 8.) All Christ Church staff must wear photo ID's at all times in the church building.

**Programming Procedures
Procedures for Overnight Trips
Transportation Policies
Cyber Safety
Other Program Compliance**

Policies Pertaining to Vulnerable Adults

- I. General Volunteer Policy
- II. Standards and Expectations
- III. Procedures for Screening Volunteers
- IV. Training of Staff and Volunteers
- V. Homebound Ministries
- VI. Hospital Visits
- VII. Stephen Ministries
- VIII. Adult Trips and Mission Trips

Policies Pertaining to Sexual Offenders

- I. General Policy (include something about getting email alerts)
- II. Jessica Lundsford Act
- III. Covenant Agreement

Responding to Allegations of Abuse

Explanation

Against a Clergy Member

Against a non-Clergy Staff Person

Against a Volunteer

Against a Non-Church Related Individual

Appendix: Forms (To be added)

**Responding to Allegations of Abuse
Explanation**

Here follows an excerpt from the Department of Social Services website and is not a "suggestion" and not open to change by the individual institution. North Carolina's reporting law, found at statute NCGS 7B-301, applies to every person and every institution in the state. It requires "any person or institution who has cause to suspect that any juvenile is abused, neglected, or dependent or has died as a result of maltreatment" to make a report to the county Department of Social Services. This scenario applies to situations where a child/youth shares information with a staff member/volunteer and/or a staff member/volunteer suspects abuse or neglect. It also applies to Vulnerable Adults who may have been subjected to Elder Abuse.

Against a Clergy Member

- 1.) If there is cause to suspect any form of abuse has occurred or is continuing to occur to a child, youth, or a member of a vulnerable population that is ministered to by Christ UMC, you must complete a "Report of Suspected Incident of Abuse" form. Forms are available on the church website under the Safe Sanctuaries Section.
- 2.) Give the "Report of Suspected Incident Abuse form to the Chair of the Safe Sanctuaries Committee or member of the Pastoral Staff (not the offender).
- 3.) The recipient of the report will contact the Chair of the SPRC.
- 4.) Once the SPRC Chair has been notified of the allegation, the Northern Piedmont District Superintendent will be contacted.
- 5.) The Chair of SPRC, in consultation with the District Superintendent of the Northern Piedmont District will remove the alleged offender from contact with children, youth, and vulnerable adults anfr from all Christ UMC activities until the allegation is investigated and resolved.
- 6.) Following the leadership of the District Superintendent, the SPRC Chair and appropriate clergy will determine the appropriate next steps, in keeping with the North Carolina Law, as it pertains to pastoral care for all parties involved, legal responsibilities and requirements and resolutions. As part of this process, a report will be filed with the Department of Social Services.
- 7.) The Chair of SPRC or designee will appoint a media spokesperson at the church for immediate response to any media inquiries. This person should immediately contact the Communications Liaison for the Western North Carolina Conference.

Against a Non-Clergy Staff Person

- 1.) If there is cause to suspect any form of abuse has occurred or is continuing to occur to a child, youth, or a vulnerable adult that is ministered to by Christ UMC, you must complete a "Report of Suspected Incident of Abuse" form. Forms are available on the church website under the Safe Sanctuaries Section.
- 2.) Give the "Report of Suspected Incident of Abuse" form to the Senior Pastor or designee.
- 3.) The Senior Pastor or designee and Chair of Staff Parish Relations Committee will immediately remove the alleged offender from contact with children, youth, or vulnerable adults and from all Christ UMC until the allegation is fully investigated and resolved.
- 4.) If the allegation involved a Youth, Child, or Vulnerable Adult, the Senior Pastor or designee will contact the Department of Social Services.
- 5.) The witness will be informed by the receiver of the form that he/she may also contact the Department of Social Services.
- 6.) The Senior Pastor of designee will contact the Northern Piedmont District Superintendent.

- 7.) The Senior Pastor or designee will appoint a media spokesperson for immediate response to any media inquiries. This person should then immediately contact the Communications Liaison for the Western North Carolina Conference.
- 8.) All appropriate contacts will be made within 24 hours of the alleged abuse occurring.

Allegation Against a Volunteer

- 1.) If there is cause to suspect any form of abuse has occurred or is continuing to occur to a child, youth, or a vulnerable adult that is ministered to by Christ UMC, you must complete a "Report of Suspected Incident of Abuse" form. Forms are available on the church website under the Safe Sanctuaries Section.
- 2.) Give the "Report of Suspected Incident of Abuse" form to the Senior Pastor or designee.
- 3.) The Senior Pastor or designee will immediately remove the alleged offender from contact with children, youth, or vulnerable adults and from all Christ UMC until the allegation is fully investigated and resolved.
- 4.) If the allegation involved a Youth, Child, or Vulnerable Adult, the Senior Pastor or designee will contact the Department of Social Services.
- 5.) The witness will be informed by the receiver of the form that he/she may also contact the Department of Social Services.
- 6.) The Senior Pastor or designee will contact the Northern Piedmont District Superintendent.
- 7.) The Senior Pastor or designee will appoint a media spokesperson for immediate response to any media inquiries. This person should then immediately contact the Communications Liaison for the Western North Carolina Conference.
- 8.) All appropriate contacts will be made within 24 hours of the alleged abuse occurring.

Against a Non-Church Related Individual (Parent/Caregiver/Other Individual)

This section covers the procedures for handling alleged abuse of children, youth, and vulnerable adults (by a person other than those mentioned in previous sections) that comes to the attention of a Christ UMC Staff member or ministry volunteer. This alleged abuse includes the results of adult domestic violence that may be observed.

- 1.) Any witness of suspected abuse of children or youth must be reported to the Pastor to Families with Children & Youth. Any witness of suspected abuse of vulnerable adults must be reported to the Senior Director of Discipleship Ministries. These individuals must fill out a "Report of Suspected Incident of

Abuse" form. Forms are available on the church website under the Safe Sanctuaries Section.

- 2.) Completed forms should be given to the Senior Pastor or their designee.
- 3.) If the allegation involved a youth or child, the Senior Pastor or their designee will contact the Department of Social Services.
- 4.) If the allegation is against a parent and the Department of Social Services is contacted, DO NOT notify the parent(s) about the call to DSS.
- 5.) If the allegation involved a Vulnerable adult, the Senior Pastor or their designee will contact the Department of Social Services.
- 6.) If this allegation involves adult domestic violence, the Senior Pastor will contact law enforcement

Appendix: Forms (To be added)

Policies for Hiring, Recruiting and Screening Paid Staff of Christ UMC

The following will take place in order for any person to be hired at CUMC

- 1.) Paid staff refers to all employees, salaried or exempt, part-time, full-time or Interns, of CUMC
- 2.) The following will take place for any person to be hired at CUMC:
 - a.) Completely fill out and submit an Application for Employment and provide a resume.
 - b.) Successfully pass a National Criminal Background Check and Sexual Offenders Check
 - c.) Successfully pass a drug test
- 3.) Provide three (3) references which will be checked prior to employment with appropriate documentation of the reference discussions to be retained with the application. National Background Checks and Sexual Offender Checks will be conducted by the Office Administrator using an approved vendor.
- 4.) SPRC will oversee this process for all paid staff members.
- 5.) PreSchool and After School Care teachers are hired by their respective Boards and have their own hiring practices which must include the CUMC requirements regarding background checks and drug tests referenced above.

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