



Mount Tabor

UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

**Safe Sanctuaries Policy
Manual Training**

BEFORE YOU BEGIN:

You will need your copy of the Safe Sanctuaries Policy Manual during this training. There will be parts of the training that will require you to review particular portions of the Manual in detail.

Also, there will be a test at the end of the training module. You may use your copy of the Policy Manual to refer to during this test.

WELCOME

We are pleased to have the opportunity to share the work that has been done by the Safe Sanctuaries Committee. This work has been done with the express focus of making the church a safer place for all Youth, Children and Vulnerable Adults as well as raise awareness of the policies to all staff, volunteers and members.

The updated policy details and redesigned forms were effective as of September 1, 2017.

INTRODUCTION

The United Methodist Church Requirement for a Safe Sanctuaries Policy:

The General Conference of the UMC in 1996 and the Western North Carolina Conference (“WNCC”) in 2004 adopted a resolution aimed at reducing the risk of abuse of Children and Youth in the church. The safety and well being of all of our WNCC participants is an essential part of being a good steward of the ministry with which we have been entrusted. “The Book of Resolutions” states in part *“God calls us to make our churches safe places, protecting children and other vulnerable persons from abuse. God calls us to create communities of faith where children and adults grow safe and strong”*.

Make Up of the Safe Sanctuaries Committee (a sub-committee of the Trustees)

- **Ministry Directors (Youth, Children and Vulnerable Adults)**
- **Representative from Trustees**
- **Attorney/Legal expertise**
- **Members with Human Resources or Management experience**

History of Policy at Mount Tabor UMC

Following the mandates of the resolution of The United Methodist Church, Mount Tabor wrote and adopted our first Safe Sanctuaries policies in November 2005. These policies were updated to make them current, add cyber safety policies and add the Jessica Lunsford Act in September of 2012. Our current policy has been rewritten again to update the policy, revise forms and add some new areas. This newest version was approved by the Church Council in July of 2017.

MAJOR TRAINING TOPICS

Review of Policy Manual...Follow along in your copy of the Manual

NOTE: The Policy Manual & all forms referenced in the manual are on the church website under "Policies and Forms".

- There is a Table of Contents beginning on page #1 that you will notice is organized into three main topics of "Church Wide Sanctuaries Policies" beginning on page #4, "Additional Policies for Individual Ministries" beginning on page #11 and "FORMS" beginning on page #18
- On page #3 you will find the "PURPOSE" of the manual
- There is also a list of "DEFINITIONS" used in the manual. Please take a minute to review and familiarize yourself with these definitions
- Page #4 speaks to guidelines for hiring including applications, backgrounds checks, drug tests for staff, references, etc.
- All Volunteers must submit a Volunteer Application Form including references.
- All staff and volunteers working with Children, Youth and Vulnerable Adults must have a background check.
- All staff must consent to having a drug test.
- Prefer CPR and First Aid training for staff and encourage CPR for volunteers.
- Please review "Standards and Expectations for Staff and Volunteers" very carefully.

Procedures for Working with the NC Sex Offender Registry - page #5

- **Under NC law, all sex offenders must register. Mount Tabor UMC gets notices of any offenders living within a 3 mile radius of the church. This information and pictures of the offenders are made available to all staff and volunteers.**
- **The Jessica Lunsford Law was passed 12/01/2008 and provided requirements to be followed with registered sex offenders near a church campus or who may want to attend church. Please review the Law as found on page #17**

Procedures for Working With Vulnerable adults - page #5

- **This section talks about the Vulnerable Adult categories the Policies cover such as Homebound Adults, Hospitalized persons, people served by Stephen Ministries and any other person 18 years of age or older who is or may be unable to take care of themselves or unable to protect themselves against abuse, neglect, or exploitation.**
- **Under this section it is now required that a Confidential Health Form for Adults (page #31) be completed when traveling with a church group or when on a mission trip.**

Procedures for Overnight Trips with Children or Youth – Page #5

- **This section details the policies for lodging, sleeping arrangements and accommodations during overnight trips. These should be reviewed very carefully when adult staff or volunteers are on overnight trips with Children or Youth.**

Adults Leading Small Groups - page #6

- **This provides guidelines for leading Children and Youth in Sunday School, Bible Studies, etc. Most importantly - *All Children fifth grade and younger must be under the direct supervision of their parents, guardians or the adult program leader at all times. Children are NOT allowed to be at large on church property, in other church areas or on church grounds and must be under direct supervision of an adult at all times. Parents, Guardians or Leaders are asked to monitor the whereabouts of these Children. All Youth sixth grade and older that are at the church attending events with a group should be with that group and NOT at large in other church areas.***

Adult Drivers - page #6

- **Adult leaders who are unrelated to a child or youth may NOT transport youth without written permission from the youth parent or guardian (See “Permission to Ride” form on page #21).**

Procedures for Camps - page #6

- **All camps sponsored by MTUMC for children and youth shall abide by the requirements in this section which should be reviewed. It very clearly defines leadership terms and ages and advises that all workers 18 year of age and older will pass a background check.**

Scouting Programs - page #6

- **All leaders of all levels of Boy/Girl Scout programs may be background checked by their local councils AND will also have a background check run by MTUMC.**
- **Children and Youth should be with their group and are NOT allowed to be at large in other church areas or on church grounds and must be under the direct supervision of an adult at all times. Parents, Guardians and Leaders are asked to monitor the whereabouts of these children and youth .**
- **All other sections in the Policy Manual pertaining to Youth and Children apply to all Scout activities.**

Other Programs – page #6

- **This policy applies to all programming and ministries at MTUMC, whether or not specifically identified herein.**

Cyber Safety - page #7

- **Parental permission MUST be obtained for Children and Youth on the appropriate form for all cyber and social media interactions. This section pertains to all communications with Children and Youth and the details should be carefully reviewed. It covers topics such as photos on websites (See “Likeness Waiver for Minors” in page #27), sending messages to minors (See “Permission For Communication” form on page #26) as well as other requirements for how to safely handle anything in Social Media.**

Photographs - page #8

- **This section lists the guidelines and requirements and again requires parental permission to use photos in any medium, either on line or in print. Please review this section for the important details.**

Safety Measures for Using Social Media - page #8

- **This section should be reviewed by all staff and volunteers to keep our children/youth safe.**

Responding to Allegations of Abuse - pages #8-10

****Reporting of any type of abuse is required by NC State law****

This is 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-101, 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.*

The four sub-sections detail the guidelines, time frames and reporting hierarchy for allegations of abuse against Staff, Volunteers, Pastors and Non-Church Related Individuals. Please review the details in this section when necessary to report an allegation noting the hierarchy of reporting, including the appointing of media spokesperson for any allegation reported and use the “Report of Allegations of Abuse” form which is available on the website.

- Allegations against Paid Staff Members and against Volunteers have basically the same guidelines, reporting requirements (with the exception of contacting Staff Parish Relations Committee Chair for staff).
- Allegations against Senior Pastor or other Clergy on Staff. These requirements and guidelines differ slightly because of the necessity to involve and take guidance from the District/Conference which can affect the reporting time and hierarchy .
- Allegations against Non-Church Related Individual covers abuse of both children or adults that come to the attention of a Program Director, Ministry Director, other staff or a church member. The reporting hierarchy is a little different than earlier reporting for staff volunteers or clergy. Please make yourselves aware of the guidelines and details.

ADDITIONAL POLICIES FOR INDIVIDUAL MINISTRIES



Three-Year-Older - page #11

- The adults that are in a supervisory role must be at least 3 years older than the oldest participant/child/youth they are supervising.
- ****Please see section for additional guidelines and requirements ****

General Volunteer Policies for Children and Youth page #11

- All volunteers working with Children or Youth will have a National Criminal Background Check and Sex Offender Check.
- All volunteer orientations will include information that covers church policies on safe ministry with Youth and Children and will make volunteers aware of the **mandatory** reporting statute of North Carolina concerning **any** Allegations of Abuse.
- All volunteers will wear a MTUMC Volunteer Staff ID tag while working
- A minimum of two adults should be present during any children or youth activity.
- If a volunteer is alone in a classroom with children/youth the door must remain OPEN.
- NO volunteer under the age of 18 will be allowed to work with children/youth without the direct supervision of a “Lead Adult”.
- To be considered a “Lead Adult ”a person must be 18 or older and a high school graduate. Any volunteer between 18 and 22 will be supervised by the program director.
- Children shall not be taken from the church grounds on a church sanctioned activity without the written or electronic permission of their parent/guardian.

Children's Policies: Infants – 5th Grade

Beginning on page #12

Children's Ministries Staff Policies:

- This section details staff policies pertaining to ratios of children/adults and arrival times.
- Two staff members/volunteers must be in the classroom area.
- Children must be in the presence of an adult at all times and no child will be allowed to go to a different area of the church unsupervised.
- Windows in the doors and walls will remain uncovered at all times.
- If a child needs assistance when using the restroom, the bathroom door must be kept OPEN.

Youth Volunteers Working With Children

- Any Youth who wants to volunteer in the Nurseries must be in at least the 8th grade (or have a parent/guardian keep the nursery with them), Once the Youth enters the 9th grade, they may be put in the Nursery rotation with another adult. Also, the Youth volunteer must meet with the Director of Children's Ministries.
- Any youth who would like to teach/assist in Sunday School or other programs of the Children's Ministries must be in at least the 6th Grade to teach/assist in the 2-4 year old classes or be in at least the 9th Grade to teach/assist in the Kindergarten-5th Grade classes, and have an adult present in the classroom for the time that they are teaching the class. They must also complete a Youth Volunteer Application and meet with the Director of Children's Ministries.

Nursery Drop Off and Pick Up Procedures - page #13

When children are dropped off and picked up, parents are to follow the check-in/check-out procedures:

- Parent/guardian sign children in at the check-in station in the lobby of the Children's Building
- The parent/guardian and child are each given a Name Tag with matching numbers. The person picking the child up **MUST** have the matching Name Tag to the child they are picking up. **NO CHILD WILL BE RELEASED TO ANY PERSON NOT PRESENTING A MATCHING NAME TAG.**
- Each parent/guardian will be given a pager in the event they are needed to come back to the Nursery. The pager should be returned to check-in location.
- If someone other than the child's parent/guardian will be picking the child up the parent/guardian dropping the child off must notify the childcare worker who that person will be, and that person must present the matching Name Tag of that child.
- A photo ID may be required from any person picking up a child who is not the child's parent or legal guardian.

Sunday School Check In/Out Procedures – page #13

When children are dropped off and picked up, parents are to follow the check-in/check-out procedures:

- Parent/guardian sign children in at the check-in station in the lobby of the Children's Building
- The parent/guardian and child are each given a Name Tag with matching numbers. The person picking the child up **MUST** have the matching Name Tag to the child they are picking up. **NO CHILD WILL BE RELEASED TO ANY PERSON NOT PRESENTING A MATCHING NAME TAG.**
- If someone other than the child's parent/guardian will be picking the child up the parent/guardian dropping the child off must notify the childcare worker who that person will be, and that person must present the matching Name Tag of that child.

Procedures For Kids Worship - page #13

- Children will be dismissed for Kids Worship from the Ignite and Traditional Services.
- Children should be accompanied to the Kids Worship space by their parent/guardian or worship leader.
- Children must be picked up from Kids Worship immediately following the end of the service by their parent/guardian.

Procedures For Wednesday Night Children's Programs – page #13

All children fifth grade and younger should be under the supervision of their parents, guardians, or the adult program sponsor at all times. Children are not allowed to roam the building. Parents or guardians are asked to monitor the whereabouts of their children at all times.

- Children should be registered at the Welcome Center desk prior to the start of Tabor Kids on Wednesday
- Children should be brought to their activity area by their parent/guardian or program sponsor.
- Children must be escorted to Tabor Table and to their next activity by their parent/guardian/program sponsor.
- Children must be picked up from their activity at the end of the evening by their parent/guardian.

MTUMC Weekly Preschool Program and MTUMC After School Care groups each have their own policies which can be found on page #14 of the Policy Manual. Please review for a general overview of these policies.

Youth Policies – 6th thru 12th Grades

Beginning Page #14

This section applies to all Youth from the 6th grade through the completion of the summer after the 12th grade involved in a Mount Tabor UMC sponsored activity OR on the campus of Mount Tabor UMC as well as any adults involved in the activity or ministry area.

Adult Drivers:

- Adult Leaders who are unrelated to a youth may NOT transport a youth without written permission from the youth's parent or guardian.
- The Adult Leader shall give the written permission to the Minister/Director of Youth or his/her designee.
- Whenever possible, an adult leader is asked to take another leader of the opposite gender with them as they transport the youth.

Youth Drivers:

- Prior to driving a personal vehicle to or from any sanctioned youth event, a copy of their automobile insurance coverage and driver's license must be on file with the Youth Ministries office.
- No youth is allowed to drive a personal vehicle to or from any sanctioned youth event, unless given prior written approval by their parent/guardian on "Permission for Youth Drivers Form".
- The Minister/Director of Youth may either accept or decline the permission.
- The Minister/Director of Youth shall maintain copy of the written permission form along with his/her written approval.

Youth Riding With Youth:

Youth may NOT ride in the personal vehicle of another youth for any Youth events except in the following circumstances:

- The youth driver must have completed and submitted the appropriate paperwork to the Youth Ministries office for approval on “Permission for Youth Drivers Form”.
- Prior to driving another youth, the driving youth must have a copy of their automobile insurance coverage and driver’s license on file with the Youth Ministries Office.
- The youth driver has presented written consent from their parent/guardian to the Youth Ministries office allowing the youth driver to transport other youth.
- The youth rider has presented written consent from their parent/guardian on a “Permission for Youth to Ride with Youth and Adult Leaders Form” to the Youth Ministries office allowing him/her to be transported by another youth or adult leader.

Personal Space Boundaries:

Relational ministry often means an embrace or hug to show the Youth is welcome, loved and cared for. However,

- No youth is allowed to sit on the lap of an adult leader of the opposite gender for an extended period of time.
- No adult leader will ever be allowed to engage in a physical relationship with a youth.

Leadership:

Youth are encouraged and nurtured to help lead other youth in small groups and Bible studies. This grows a young person’s leadership potential and abilities. However,

- No youth will be allowed to be in a prolonged, direct supervision role of another youth.
- An adult leader will be assigned to help in this process.

College Students in Volunteer Leadership Roles:

- All college-aged volunteers will successfully pass a Criminal Background and Sex Offender Check.
- The prospective college volunteers will be approved or disapproved by Director of Youth or their designee and the Staff Parish Relations Committee.
- No college-aged Youth will be in prolonged, direct supervision of youth without the assistance of an approved adult leader.

Counseling Youth

- The one-on-one counseling of a youth by a member of the Youth ministries staff should be attempted to be done during regular business hours in the Youth Ministries or office area of MTUMC.
- If this is not possible and emergency counseling must be done at a moment's notice and/or at an odd hour, the Youth ministries staff is asked to notify another staff member or pastor of MTUMC of the counseling session, location and gender of the youth being counseled.
- A public place for this session should be secured.
- The Youth Ministries staff member may not counsel a youth for more than 5 sessions. If the reason for counseling is not resolved within that period, the Youth ministries staff member is to refer the youth to another counselor.
- If counseling is done by a Youth Ministries volunteer, that volunteer must make the Minister of Youth aware of the counseling being done.
- The Youth Ministries volunteer may not counsel a youth for more 5 sessions. If the reason for counseling is not resolved within that period, the Youth ministries volunteer is to refer the youth to another counselor and communicate referral information to a Youth Ministries Staff member.

Safe Sanctuaries Forms –

Please make yourself familiar with all forms on pages 19 through 32, paying special attention to the newest forms as follows:

- Report of Suspected Incidence of Abuse – page #23/24**
- Reference Check Form – Staff and Volunteers – page #28**
- Volunteer Application – page #29/30**
- Permission – Medical Treatment – Adults -- page #31**

Key Take Aways

If a Safe Sanctuaries Policy issue or infraction is observed, please speak up by contacting a Ministry Director, one of the Pastors, the Chair of Safe Sanctuaries or a committee member.

Hierarchy of Reporting for Non-Compliance of Policy:

- Individual - When an infraction is observed, the Ministry Director, Pastor or Safe Sanctuaries Chair will first speak to the individual to reinforce the proper practice.**
- Supervisor – In the future if the same infraction occurs again, the issue will be discussed with the individuals supervisor or director of ministry area.**
- SPRC/Program Director – If the non-compliance continues, it will be reported to SPRC or Ministry Director for further action. Take this information seriously and be vigilant**

- We are ALL responsible for making our campus SAFE!**

- Future questions about the Policy Manual should be directed to Safe Sanctuaries Committee Chair**

Add directions on how to go to link for
taking test