



First United
Methodist Church
Pendleton & Ingalls
Connect. **Grow.** **Commit.** **Serve.**

Safe Sanctuaries Policy Handbook and Contract

(Revised Edition 7/2/20)

Contents

Overview of Safe Sanctuaries Policy	3
Membership Form for First United Methodist Church Safe Sanctuaries Task Force	5
Safe Sanctuaries Participation Covenant Statement	7
Policy on Social Media (Students and Volunteers)	8
Code of Conduct for Volunteers in Children, Youth, and Family Ministries	10
Appendices	11

Overview of Safe Sanctuaries Policy

Introduction

The General Conference of the United Methodist Church, in April 1996, adopted a resolution aimed at reducing the risk of child sexual abuse in the church. The adopted resolution includes the following statement:

Jesus said, “Whoever welcomes [a] child... welcomes me” (Matthew 18:5). Children are our present and our future, our hope, our teachers, our inspiration. They are full participants in the life of the church and in the realm of God.

Jesus also said, “If any of you put a stumbling block before one of these little ones... it would be better for you if a great millstone were fastened around your neck and you were drowned in the depth of the sea” (Matthew 18:6). Our Christian faith calls us to offer both hospitality and protection to the little ones, the children. The Social Principles of The United Methodist Church state that “children must be protected from economic, physical, emotional and sexual exploitation and abuse” (Paragraph 162C).

Tragically, churches have not always been safe places for children. Child sexual abuse, exploitation, and ritual abuse [“ritual abuse” refers to abusive acts committed as part of ceremonies or rites; ritual abusers are often related to cults, or pretend to be] occur in churches, both large and small, urban and rural. The problem cuts across all economic, cultural, and racial lines. It is real, and it appears to be increasing. Most annual conferences can cite specific incidents of child sexual abuse and exploitation within churches. Virtually every congregation has among its members adult survivors of early sexual trauma.

Such incidents are devastating to all who are involved: the child, the family, the local church and its leaders. Increasingly, churches are torn apart by the legal, emotional, and monetary consequences of litigation following allegations of abuse.

God calls us to make our churches safe places, protecting children and other vulnerable persons from sexual and ritual abuse. God calls us to create communities of faith where children and adults grow safe and strong. (From *The Book of Resolutions of The United Methodist Church-2000*, pp. 180-181.)

Thus, in covenant with all United Methodist congregations, we adopt this policy for reducing the risk of abuse of children and youth in our church.

Purpose

Our congregation’s purpose for establishing this Safe Sanctuaries policy and accompanying procedures is to demonstrate our strong and unwavering commitment to the physical safety and spiritual growth of all our children and youth.

Statement of Covenant

Therefore, as a Christian community of faith and a United Methodist congregation, we pledge to engage in the ministry of the Gospel in ways that assure the safety and spiritual growth of all of our children and youth as well as all of the workers with children and youth. We will follow reasonable safety measures in the selection and recruitment of workers; we will implement prudent operational procedures in all programs and events; we will educate all of our workers with children and youth regarding the use of appropriate policies and methods; we will have a clearly defined procedure for reporting a suspected incident of abuse that conforms to the requirements of state law; and we will be prepared to respond to media inquiries if an incident occurs.

Conclusion

In all of our ministries with children and youth, this congregation is committed to demonstrating the love of Jesus Christ so that each child will be "...surrounded by steadfast love, ...established in the faith, and confirmed and strengthened in the way that leads to life eternal." ("Baptismal Covenant II, *United Methodist Hymnal*, p. 44).

Membership Form for First United Methodist Church Safe Sanctuaries Task Force

Pastor

Name: John Groves

Address: [REDACTED]

Phone: [REDACTED]

Associate Pastor

Name: Mary Cloud

Address: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Member of Staff-Parish Relations Team

Name: Brent Schnepf

Address: [REDACTED]

Phone: [REDACTED]

Lay Leader

Name: Steve Schug

Address: [REDACTED]

Phone: [REDACTED]

Director of Youth and Family Ministries

Name: Austin Hauptstueck

Address: [REDACTED]

Phone: [REDACTED]

Director of Growth

Name: Susan Barrett

Address: [REDACTED]

Phone: [REDACTED]

CREW Representative

Name: Merissa Hauptstueck

Address: [REDACTED]

Phone: [REDACTED]

CREW Kids Representative

Name: Robyn Axel-Adams

Address: [REDACTED]

Phone: [REDACTED]

First Kids Representative

Name: Jennifer Black

Address: [REDACTED]

Phone: [REDACTED]

The aforementioned members of the task force may be referred to in place of the term “supervisor” in this handbook should the Director of Youth and Family Ministries and/or the Director of Growth not be present. The members shall in turn report the event reported to them to the Lead Pastor, the Associate Pastor, the Director of Youth and Family Ministries, or the Director of Growth. (Addresses and Phone Numbers in Volunteer Personal Copies Only)

Safe Sanctuaries Participation Covenant Statement

The congregation of First United Methodist Church: Pendleton + Ingalls is committed to providing a safe and secure environment for all children, youth, workers, and volunteers who participate in ministries and activities sponsored by the church. The following policy statements reflect our congregation's commitment to preserving this church as a holy place of safety and protection for all who would enter and as a place in which all people can experience the love of God through relationships with others.

1. No adult who has been convicted of child abuse (either sexual abuse, physical abuse, neglect, emotional abuse, or ritual abuse) shall volunteer to work with children or youth in any church-sponsored activity.
2. Adult volunteers with children and youth shall observe the "Two Adult Rule" at all times so that no adult is left alone with an individual child or youth on a routine basis.
3. Adult volunteers with children and youth shall attend regular training and educational events provided by the church to keep volunteers informed of church policies and state laws regarding child abuse.
4. Adult volunteers shall immediately report to their supervisor and only their supervisor any behavior that seems abusive or inappropriate. They shall also report to their supervisor and only their supervisor any behavior of a child or youth which appears to have undergone abuse.

Please answer the following questions:

1. As a volunteer in this congregation, do you agree to observe and abide by all church policies regarding working in ministries with children and youth? Yes No
2. As a volunteer in this congregation, do you agree to observe the "Two Adult Rule" at all times? Yes No
3. As a volunteer in this congregation, do you agree to participate in training and education events provided by the church related to your volunteer assignment? Yes No
4. As a volunteer in this congregation, do you agree to promptly report abusive or inappropriate behavior or child/youth behavior which is indicative of abuse immediately and exclusively* to your supervisor? Yes No
5. As a volunteer in this congregation, do you agree to inform a minister of this church if you have been convicted of child abuse? Yes No

*Exclusively means not to any other person not listed in the Report of Suspected Incident of Child Abuse

Policy on Social Media (Students and Volunteers)

In general, First United Methodist Church: Pendleton + Ingalls views social media sites (i.e. Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc.), personal websites, and blogs positively and respects the right of children, youth, and adult volunteers to use them as a medium of self-expression. Children, youth, and adult volunteers involved in our church chooses to identify themselves on such internet venues, some readers of such media, websites, or blogs may view the student/volunteer as a representative or spokesperson of the church. In light of this possibility, our church requires, as a condition for continued participation in the youth and family ministry, that students and volunteers observe the following guidelines when referring to the church, its programs or activities, its members/attendees/students, and/or employees and volunteers, on social media.

1. Students and volunteers must be respectful in all communications related to the church, its employees, other volunteers, and other members/attendees/students of the church.
2. Students and volunteers must not use obscenities, profanities, cursing, or vulgar language.
3. Students and volunteers must not use social media, personal websites, or blogs to disparage the church, its employees, other volunteers, or other members/attendees/students of the church.
4. Students and volunteers must not use social media, personal websites, or blogs to harass, bully, or intimidate other members/attendees/students, volunteers, or employees of the church. Behaviors that constitute harassment and bullying include, but are not limited to, comments that are derogatory with respect to race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, color, or disability; sexually suggestive, humiliating, or demeaning comments; and threats to stalk, haze, or physically injure/kill another person.
5. Students and volunteers must not use social media, personal websites, or blogs to discuss engaging in conduct that is prohibited by church policies, including, but not limited to, the use of substances which are illegal (either simply because of age or the illegal status of the substance itself), sexual behavior, sexual harassment, and bullying.
6. Volunteers must not post pictures of students, other volunteers, or employees without obtaining written permission.
7. Volunteers using a virtual meeting platform (Skype, Zoom, Google Meet, etc.) for church-sponsored activities/purposes must have two adults in the meeting at all times OR be recording the meeting and have the ability to send the recording to the supervisor upon request. It is highly recommended that all virtual meetings be recorded anyway. This tenet serves as an addendum for the “Two Adult Rule” when circumstances require virtual meetings for church-sponsored activities/purposes.
8. Text messaging (through any source that allows for direct messaging) that involves an adult and volunteer must have a second adult included in the conversation. If a student sends a direct message to one volunteer/adult leader, the volunteer/adult leader is responsible for ensuring the messaging to continue in a group context.

Any student or volunteer found to be in violation of any portion of this Policy on Social Media will be subject to immediate disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

Code of Conduct for Volunteers in Children, Youth, and Family Ministries

Listed below are general rules for volunteers involved with Youth and Family Ministry of First United Methodist Church: Pendleton + Ingalls.

1. Volunteers shall not use of alcohol, tobacco, vapes, and/or illegal drugs on the church campus, in/on a motorized vehicle with a child/youth or other volunteer/employee, or at church-sponsored activities.
2. Volunteers shall not use obscenities, vulgarities, curses, or profanities in the presence of children or youth involved with the Youth and Family Ministry nor shall they use them on the church campus or at church-sponsored activities.
3. Volunteers shall not wear inappropriate clothing or visible tattoos which are deemed inappropriate on the church campus or at church-sponsored activities. Clothing or tattoos which are deemed inappropriate by the supervisor must be removed or covered up at the discretion of the supervisor.
4. Volunteers shall not be engaged in a romantic/sexual relationship with any child or youth involved with the Youth and Family Ministry.
5. Volunteers shall not be engaged in a romantic/sexual relationship (which has not already been established as married) with any volunteers or employees of the church without disclosure to the immediate supervisor. The supervisor may use his/her discretion to determine if the volunteer is eligible to continue volunteering if the volunteer is in a non-marital, romantic/sexual relationship with another volunteer or employee of the church.
6. Volunteers shall not bring in infants to Youth and Family Ministry locations, activities, or events without the explicit permission of the supervisor.
7. Volunteers shall not be allowed to volunteer without a background check conducted by the church which may be redone every 2 years.
8. Volunteers shall not discuss, permit, demonstrate, or provide access to pornographic material to any child or youth involved with the Youth and Family Ministry nor shall they discuss, permit, demonstrate, or provide access to pornographic material any volunteer or employee of the church on the church's campus or at any church-sponsored activities.
9. Volunteers shall report any instance of suicidal behavior*, bullying*, abuse*, violation of Policy on Social Media*, accident involving serious injury, or inappropriate relationship of a student(s) and/or volunteer(s)* which occur on the church campus or during church-sponsored activities immediately and exclusively** to the supervisor via report form, direct speech, phone call, email, and/or text message.

*Not limited to occurring on church campus or during church-sponsored activities, but upon immediate knowledge acquired by the volunteer(s).

**Exclusively means not to any other person not listed in the Report of Suspected Incident of Child Abuse or the Accident Report Form

Any volunteer found to be in violation of any portion of this Code of Conduct for Volunteers in Youth and Family Ministry will be subject to immediate disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

Appendices

(All appendices are to be removed and turned into the supervisor when applicable)

Report of Suspected Incident of Child Abuse (5 Copies)

Accident Report (5 Copies)

Covenant to be signed and returned to the Supervisor

Report of Suspected Incident of Child Abuse

1. Name of worker (paid or volunteer) observing or receiving disclosure of child abuse:

2. Victim's Name: _____

Victim's age/date of birth: _____

3. Date/place of initial conversation with/report from victim:

4. Victim's statement (give your detailed summary here):

5. Name(s) of person(s) accused of abuse: _____

Relationship (paid staff, volunteer, family member, friend, etc.) of person(s) accused to victim (listed in same order as names above if more than one):

6. Reported to pastor or ministry director: _____

Date/time: _____

Summary:

7. Call to victim's parent/guardian (if the parent/guardian is not the accused abuser):

Date/time: _____

Summary:

8. Call to local children and family service agency: _____

Date/time: _____

Spoke with: _____

Summary:

9. Call to local law enforcement agency: _____

Date/time: _____

Spoke with: _____

Summary:

10. Other contacts' name(s)*: _____

Date(s)/time(s): _____

Summary:

*The fewer people contacted the better. It is best to report directly and exclusively to the supervisor unless they cannot be reached immediately.

Signature of Incident Reporter Date

Report of Suspected Incident of Child Abuse

1. Name of worker (paid or volunteer) observing or receiving disclosure of child abuse:

2. Victim's Name: _____

Victim's age/date of birth: _____

3. Date/place of initial conversation with/report from victim:

4. Victim's statement (give your detailed summary here):

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8. Call to local children and family service agency: _____

Date/time: _____

Spoke with: _____

Summary:

9. Call to local law enforcement agency: _____

Date/time: _____

Spoke with: _____

Summary:

10. Other contacts' name(s)*:

Date(s)/time(s): _____

Summary:

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Signature of Incident Reporter Date

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4. Victim's statement (give your detailed summary here):

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Relationship (paid staff, volunteer, family member, friend, etc.) of person(s) accused to victim (listed in same order as names above if more than one):

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Date/time: _____

Summary:

7. Call to victim's parent/guardian (if the parent/guardian is not the accused abuser):

Date/time: _____

Summary:

8. Call to local children and family service agency: _____

Date/time: _____

Spoke with: _____

Summary:

9. Call to local law enforcement agency: _____

Date/time: _____

Spoke with: _____

Summary:

10. Other contacts' name(s)*: _____

Date(s)/time(s): _____

Summary:

*The fewer people contacted the better. It is best to report directly and exclusively to the supervisor unless they cannot be reached immediately.

Signature of Incident Reporter

Date

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3. Date/place of initial conversation with/report from victim:

4. Victim's statement (give your detailed summary here):

5. Name(s) of person(s) accused of abuse: _____

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Date/time: _____

Summary:

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Date/time: _____

Summary:

8. Call to local children and family service agency: _____

Date/time: _____

Spoke with: _____

Summary:

9. Call to local law enforcement agency: _____

Date/time: _____

Spoke with: _____

Summary:

10. Other contacts' name(s)*: _____

Date(s)/time(s): _____

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Signature of Incident Reporter

Date

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2. Victim's Name: _____

Victim's age/date of birth: _____

3. Date/place of initial conversation with/report from victim:

4. Victim's statement (give your detailed summary here):

5. Name(s) of person(s) accused of abuse: _____

Relationship (paid staff, volunteer, family member, friend, etc.) of person(s) accused to victim (listed in same order as names above if more than one):

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Date/time: _____

Summary:

7. Call to victim's parent/guardian (if the parent/guardian is not the accused abuser):

Date/time: _____

Summary:

8. Call to local children and family service agency: _____

Date/time: _____

Spoke with: _____

Summary:

9. Call to local law enforcement agency: _____

Date/time: _____

Spoke with: _____

Summary:

10. Other contacts' name(s)*: _____

Date(s)/time(s): _____

Summary:

*The fewer people contacted the better. It is best to report directly and exclusively to the supervisor unless they cannot be reached immediately.

Signature of Incident Reporter

Date

Accident Report Form

(Please print all information)

Date of accident: _____ Time of accident: _____

Name of child/youth injured: _____ Age: _____

Address of youth/child: _____

Location of accident: _____

Parent(s) or guardian(s): _____

Name of person(s) who witnessed the accident:

_____ Phone: _____

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Describe accident: _____

Signature of Accident Reporter

Date

Accident Report Form

(Please print all information)

Date of accident: _____ Time of accident: _____

Name of child/youth injured: _____ Age: _____

Address of youth/child: _____

Location of accident: _____

Parent(s) or guardian(s): _____

Name of person(s) who witnessed the accident:

_____ Phone: _____

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Describe accident: _____

Signature of Accident Reporter

Date

Accident Report Form

(Please print all information)

Date of accident: _____ Time of accident: _____

Name of child/youth injured: _____ Age: _____

Address of youth/child: _____

Location of accident: _____

Parent(s) or guardian(s): _____

Name of person(s) who witnessed the accident:

_____ Phone: _____

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Describe accident: _____

Signature of Accident Reporter

Date

Accident Report Form

(Please print all information)

Date of accident: _____ Time of accident: _____

Name of child/youth injured: _____ Age: _____

Address of youth/child: _____

Location of accident: _____

Parent(s) or guardian(s): _____

Name of person(s) who witnessed the accident:

_____ Phone: _____

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Describe accident: _____

Signature of Accident Reporter

Date

Accident Report Form

(Please print all information)

Date of accident: _____ Time of accident: _____

Name of child/youth injured: _____ Age: _____

Address of youth/child: _____

Location of accident: _____

Parent(s) or guardian(s): _____

Name of person(s) who witnessed the accident:

_____ Phone: _____

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Describe accident: _____

Signature of Accident Reporter

Date

Contract

(To be signed and returned to supervisor)

1. As a volunteer in this congregation, do you agree to observe and abide by all church policies regarding working in ministries with children and youth? Yes No
2. As a volunteer in this congregation, do you agree to observe the “Two Adult Rule” at all times? Yes No
3. As a volunteer in this congregation, do you agree to participate in training and education events provided by the church related to your volunteer assignment? Yes No
4. As a volunteer in this congregation, do you agree to promptly report abusive or inappropriate behavior or child/youth behavior which is indicative of abuse immediately and exclusively* to your supervisor? Yes No
5. As a volunteer in this congregation, do you agree to inform a minister of this church if you have been convicted of child abuse? Yes No
6. As a volunteer in this congregation, do you agree to uphold and obey all the policies and codes given within the document, **Safe Sanctuaries Policy Handbook and Contract (Revised Edition 7/2/20)**? Yes No

*Exclusively means not to any other person not listed in the Report of Suspected Incident of Child Abuse

By signing this contract, I ensure that I have read and understand this **Safe Sanctuaries Policy Handbook and Contract**, and I agree to observe and abide by the policies set forth throughout.

Signature of Applicant/Volunteer

Date

Print Full Name