

The United Methodist Church of the Resurrection

SAFETY OF CHILDREN AND VULNERABLE ADULTS POLICY

Approved May 18, 2021 by Church Council, effective as of July 1, 2021; amended September 14, 2021

“Teacher, which commandment in the law is the greatest?” He said to him, “‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.’ This is the greatest and first commandment. And a second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.” (Matthew 22:36-40, NRSV). Scripture and United Methodist tradition remind us of the priority God places on human life and how we treat one another. Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults is of highest priority to the United Methodist Church of the Resurrection.

The *Social Principles* of the United Methodist Church state that “... children must be protected from ... physical, emotional, and sexual exploitation and abuse.” (2016 *Book of Discipline*, ¶162C). The *Book of Resolutions* encourages all conferences and churches to become involved in the prevention of sexual abuse of children (2016 *Book of Resolutions*, #3084). The *Book of Discipline* names child abuse, sexual abuse, sexual misconduct, and sexual harassment as chargeable offenses for clergy and lay members (2016 *Book of Discipline*, ¶2702). The United Methodist Church of the Resurrection fully supports these directives. The purpose of this Policy is to set forth the Church’s expectations regarding the prevention of abuse of Protected People.

OUR COMMITMENT. Children and Vulnerable Adults have the right to be safe and protected from harm in any and all environments – home, school, religious institutions, and in the community. The Church is committed to creating and maintaining programs, facilities, and an environment where members, guests, pastors, staff, and volunteers can worship, learn, and work together in an atmosphere free from harassment, exploitation, and intimidation.

It is the intention of the Church to affirmatively model good behavior and to lead and guide the congregation in fulfillment of the standards set by our Christian faith. The Church strongly opposes and prohibits Emotional Abuse, Physical Abuse, Sexual Abuse, Sexual Harassment, Sexual Misconduct, and other forms of exploitation or abuse of Children and Vulnerable Adults. The Church acknowledges the unique position of trust the Church, its pastors, staff, and volunteers hold in the lives of the people they serve.

The Church will take all reasonable steps to create a safe environment for Protected People participating in ministries sponsored by the Church. The Church will take action up to and including denying access to the Church when there is a reasonable concern about a person’s behavior as it relates to the safety of Protected People. The Church commits to a culture of unwavering dedication to education, screening procedures, reporting expectations, independent and thorough investigations, and personal and corporate accountability regarding the safety of Protected People.

SCOPE. The Church expects all people acting under its auspices to review, understand, and comply with the provisions of this Policy. This Policy, together with the implementing procedures, applies to all activities and events sponsored by the Church.

DEFINITIONS. As used in this Policy, capitalized terms not otherwise defined will have the following meanings:

Applicant: a Staff member, interested volunteer, or Governance Committee Member who is not yet Certified.

Best Practices: procedures adopted by the Church’s Executive Team from time to time as guidelines for interacting with Protected People in a variety of settings.

Certified: a current, unexpired certification from Safe Gatherings, a division of U, Inc.

Child, Children: any person under the age of 18, and may include an 18 year-old still enrolled in high school

and living under a parent or guardian's care. This definition includes Youth as that term is used in the Safe Gatherings training program.

Children's Ministries: includes childcare provided by the Church and programs for Children through 5th grade.

Church: United Methodist Church of the Resurrection, including each of its physical locations and the Church's Online Ministries.

Code of Conduct: expectations of the Church for any person interacting with Protected People. See **Exhibit A**.

Covered Volunteer: any person who has Direct Contact with a Protected Person as part of an on-site or off-site ministry sponsored by the Church and as otherwise required by the Great Plains Annual Conference. The term Covered Volunteer does not include a person serving at a one-time or occasional event where the volunteer is under the visual supervision of a Certified person. See **Parent Helper** and **Student Helper**.

Direct Contact: the care, supervision, guidance, transportation, or control of a Protected Person that is expected to occur on a regular or ongoing basis.

Emotional Abuse: mental or emotional injury to a Protected Person characterized by intentional infliction of anguish, distress, or intimidation through verbal or non-verbal acts and may include harm based on sex, age, race, ethnicity, cultural heritage, economic status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or religion.

Governance Committee Member: an elected or appointed member, whether voting or nonvoting, of the Church Council, Board of Trustees, Staff-Parish Relations Committee, Finance Committee, or Nominations Committee of the Church, the Church Foundation Board of Directors, and the lay delegate to the Great Plains Annual Conference.

Online Ministries: programs offered by the Church in a digital or online format, including interactive engagements, apps, and posted materials using any available technology.

Parent Helper: a volunteer parent or guardian of a Children's Ministry, Student Ministry, or Special Needs Ministry participant who is under the visual supervision of a Certified person and is not a Covered Volunteer based on their one-time or occasional event support.

Physical Abuse: any act or omission intentionally inflicted on a Protected Person that poses serious danger to a person's physical health, including punishment that is overly punitive or inappropriate to the individual's age or condition.

Protected Person, Protected People: includes any and all Children and Vulnerable Adults.

Sexual Abuse: any contact of a sexual nature between an adult and a Protected Person and any sexualized behavior or other activity that is intended to arouse or gratify the sexual desires of the adult.

Sexual Harassment: "any unwanted sexual comment, advance, or demand, either verbal or physical, that is reasonably perceived by the recipient as demeaning, intimidating, or coercive. Sexual harassment must be understood as an exploitation of a power relationship rather than as an exclusively sexual issue" (2016 *Book of Discipline*, ¶161J).

Sexual Misconduct: sexual misconduct means a chargeable offense within the meaning of ¶2702 of the *Book of Discipline*.

Special Needs Ministry: any program of the Church offered to children or adults with special needs.

Staff: includes pastors, lay employees, consultants, independent contractors, and interns engaged by the Church, whether paid or unpaid.

Student Helper: a volunteer under the age of 18 who is under the visual supervision of a Certified person and is not a Covered Volunteer based on their one-time or occasional event support.

Student Ministries: programs of the Church offered to Children in 6th through 12th grades.

Vulnerable Adult: any person age 18 and over who is or may be unable to care for themselves, or unable to protect themselves against significant harm or exploitation, due to mental or other disability, age, or illness, including any participant in a Special Needs Ministry. This definition includes Elder Adults as that term is used in the Safe Gatherings training program.

REQUIREMENTS FOR SERVING WITH PROTECTED PEOPLE

Minimum Age. The minimum age for serving in Student Ministries is 18 and the minimum age for serving in Children’s Ministries is 12. In all instances, a Staff member or volunteer must be at least five years older than the oldest Child they serve. The minimum age for serving in Special Needs Ministry is 16.

Any person under the age of 18 must be visually supervised by a Certified individual at least five years older than that person. Any Certified person serving in a supervisory capacity is personally accountable for the actions of the youth Staff or volunteer.

Application. All Staff, Covered Volunteers, and Governance Committee Members will:

- Complete an employment or volunteer application, as applicable
- Authorize a Protect My Ministry background check (ages 16 and up)
- Acknowledge review of this Policy
- Acknowledge the Staff or Volunteer Covenant, as applicable, in the form approved by the Church’s Staff Parish Relations Committee from time to time
- Acknowledge the Code of Conduct – Working with Protected People (see **Exhibit A**)
- Acknowledge the Reporting Suspected Violations of Policies, Laws, and Ethical Standards Policy

The Church’s employment and volunteer applications will include a self-disclosure questionnaire asking about prior convictions, allegations relating to acts against Protected Persons, and other violent, abusive, or disqualifying acts. The responsible Program/Team Director will review volunteer applications, the Human Resources Lead Director (HR Lead Director) will review employment applications, and the Executive Assistant to the Senior Executive Director will review Governance Committee Member applications. If the self-disclosure questionnaire raises any potential safety concerns, the person assigned to review must seek the direction of the Safety, Compliance, and Risk Management Lead Director (SCRM). SCRM will have unfettered access to the Executive Team, the HR Lead Director, Church Governance Committees, and Safe Gatherings staff, as appropriate, to discuss any concerns relating to situations covered by this Policy.

Applications and related acknowledgments will be required for Staff, Covered Volunteers, and Governance Committee Members upon their first application or renewal after the effective date of this Policy. The Executive Team will consider any expansion of the Policy to individuals other than Covered Volunteers.

Background Checks and Safety Education. The Church will use the Safe Gatherings program, developed by the

Great Plains Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church, to screen and train its Staff, Governance Committee Members, and Covered Volunteers. Adult volunteers must have six continuous months of regular online or in-person worship or service to the Church prior to applying for Safe Gatherings Certification or the person assigned to review the relevant application may arrange a meeting between the Applicant and a pastor to review the service opportunity.

The Safe Gatherings program requires an online application, electronic reference checks, four levels of background checks (including county of residence), online abuse prevention and boundary awareness training, and regular re-certification. The Church will cover the cost of all background checks and Safe Gatherings Certification.

Staff and Covered Volunteers who are at least 16 years old are required to complete the Safe Gatherings Certification process. Younger Staff and Covered Volunteers will complete training through Safe Gathering's CongregationU program.

Parental consent will be required to conduct a background check on anyone under the age of 18. Because these background checks include limited information, all people under 18 must be visually supervised at all times by a Certified person while serving Protected People.

As part of the Certification process, Safe Gatherings requires an Applicant to submit the name of one clergy reference and one lay reference, each of whom have known the Applicant for at least two years. If the Applicant is an active professional minister, the clergy reference must be a District Superintendent of the Methodist Church. Retired clergy must name a minister of the church they are currently attending. If the Applicant does not personally know a clergy member who can serve as a reference, upon notice, the HR Lead Director or their designee (as vendor managers of the Church's Safe Gathering engagement) may contact Safe Gatherings to discuss alternative references, which could include a teacher, coach, or employer who has known the Applicant for at least two years.

The Safe Gatherings Certification process may take several weeks to complete. As an additional safeguard, the Church will run a Protect My Ministry background check on every new Staff member, Governance Committee Member, and Covered Volunteer age 16 and up. Safe Gatherings re-Certification is required every four years. The Church will ensure that background checks are conducted every two years either through Safe Gatherings or Protect My Ministry as long as the individual continues to serve in Church ministries.

Based on the results of the self-disclosure questionnaire, the background and reference checks conducted by Safe Gatherings and through Protect My Ministry, and any other information brought to its attention regarding the fitness of an individual to serve Protected People, the Church may decline a person for service as Staff, a nominee for Governance Committee, or as a volunteer, and must take other action required under this Policy for the protection of Children or Vulnerable Adults, including enforcement of the sexual or violent offender provisions of this Policy and prohibiting the individual from any contact with Protected People.

If a person is found to have been involved in any activity where they abused or exploited children, youth, or adults from vulnerable populations, they will not be hired or approved for service. For positions that require Safe Gatherings Certification, the Church is also required to comply with the direction of the Safe Gatherings program which may exclude a candidate for other reasons.

Staff and Volunteer Covenants. Staff and Volunteer Covenants describe the Church's expectations regarding Christian service and personal moral fitness to serve in a leadership capacity. Every Covered Volunteer will be required to acknowledge the Volunteer Covenant as part of the application process and every four years thereafter. The Staff Covenant is included in the Employee Handbook and will be acknowledged when service begins and annually thereafter.

CERTIFICATION PROCESS

The Church will use the Safe Gatherings program developed and administered by the Great Plains Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church to conduct background and reference checks for all Staff, Governance Committee Members, and Covered Volunteers. Certification requires successful completion of all online safety and boundary awareness training modules selected by Safe Gatherings to satisfy the Annual Conference's expectations regarding the safety of Protected Persons. Renewal of Certification is required every four years. Staff supervisors are responsible for ensuring active Certification of their Staff. It is the responsibility of the Executive Assistant to the Senior Executive Director to confirm active Certification is in place for Governance Committee Members and that Certification does not lapse. It is the responsibility of each Program/Team Director to ensure active Certification of every volunteer that may be reasonably expected to have Direct Contact with a Protected Person. A Program/Team Director will not permit a Covered Volunteer to have Direct Contact with a Protected Person if Certification has lapsed.

- **HR Lead Director.** With respect to Staff, the HR Lead Director or their designee is responsible for obtaining an initial application for employment, reviewing the results of the application and referring any concerns to SCRM, requesting a Protect My Ministry background check, directing the applicant to begin the Safe Gatherings process, obtaining acknowledgment of this Policy, the Staff Covenant, the Suspected Violation of Policies, Laws, and Ethical Standards, and Code of Conduct, and confirming Certification as part of the new hire on-boarding process. The HR Lead Director is also responsible for the Church's Employee Handbook which includes the Staff Covenant. The Director will periodically review and update the Staff Covenant and is responsible for annual acknowledgement of the Employee Handbook by all Staff. Upon notice from a supervisor that a Staff member has not completed initial Certification within 30 days of hire or that Certification has lapsed, the HR Lead Director will document in the Staff member's permanent file and determine appropriate employment consequences.
- **Staff Supervisors.** Staff supervisors are responsible for confirming Certification status in Arena before permitting Staff under their supervision to have Direct Access to any Protected Person. Supervisors will check Arena on a weekly basis to determine the status of their new hires. In the event Certification has not been achieved within 30 days of hire, the supervisor will notify the HR Lead Director. Staff supervisors are also responsible for reviewing monthly reports circulated by the Security Specialist to identify Staff whose Certification will be expiring within the next two months. Staff supervisors are responsible for working with Staff to obtain re-Certification through Safe Gatherings prior to expiration. Staff supervisors will notify the HR Lead Director upon receipt of any report that a Staff member under their supervision has allowed their Certification to lapse. Staff supervisors will prohibit Staff from having Direct Access to any Protected Person in the event Certification has lapsed.
- **Staff.** Staff must complete the re-Certification process prior to expiration. Staff will be removed from any position of Direct Contact with Protected People if Certification lapses. Failure to complete the process when required may result in corrective action, up to and including termination.
- **Program/Team Directors.** Program/Team Directors or their designees are responsible for ensuring each Covered Volunteer completes a volunteer application, reviewing the results of the application and referring any concerns to SCRM, requesting a Protect My Ministry background check for Covered Volunteers, directing Covered Volunteers to begin the Safe Gatherings application process, confirming the Certification status of every Covered Volunteer, and obtaining acknowledgment of this Policy, the Volunteer Covenant, the Suspected Violation of Policies, Laws, and Ethical Standards Policy, and the Code of Conduct for all volunteers. Program/Team Directors are responsible for reviewing monthly reports provided by the Security Specialist to identify Covered Volunteers whose Certification will be expiring within the next two months. Program/Team Directors are responsible for working with Covered Volunteers to obtain re-Certification through Safe Gatherings prior to expiration. Program/Team Directors may not schedule any Covered Volunteer in a role

that is reasonably expected to have Direct Contact with a Protected Person if the volunteer's Certification has expired. Program/Team Directors are required to report any recommendation that a volunteer be removed from their position to the Executive Team member overseeing Programming and Ministries. If the recommendation results from a suspected violation of policy, law, or ethical standards, the Program/Team Director must also notify SCRM.

- **Executive Director/Lead Director/Location Pastor.** Executive Directors, Lead Directors, and Location Pastors are responsible for ensuring that annual and any additional training appropriate for their ministry or program area, including review of the Church's Best Practices, is provided to Staff and volunteers.
- **Security Specialist.** As part of the onboarding process of any Staff member or Covered Volunteer, and as otherwise required, the Security Specialist (Security) or their designee will run a background check through Protect My Ministry upon receipt of authorization. Security will enter every report of initial or re-Certification received from Safe Gatherings in Arena. Additionally, Security will pull monthly Safe Gatherings reports listing all Staff, Governance Committee Members, and Covered Volunteers with Certification expiring in the next two months. Security will promptly distribute these reports to the appropriate Staff person and their supervisor (for Staff), Program/Team Director (for Covered Volunteers), or the Executive Assistant to the Senior Executive Director (for Governance Committee Members).

Governance Committee Members and Covered Volunteers may perform their duties pending Certification provided they have authorized a Protect My Ministry background check and are visually supervised at all times by a Certified individual. Staff are not considered employed until the results of a Protect My Ministry background search have been reviewed by Security and communicated to the HR Lead Director or their designee. Thereafter, Staff may train for their position prior to Certification but only under the visual supervision of another Certified Staff member.

VIOLENT AND SEX OFFENDERS

Any person convicted of a violent or sex-related crime, including child pornography, is required to contact a Church pastor prior to worshipping at or attending any activities sponsored by the Church, whether in-person or online. Every offender known to the Church must execute a form of limited access agreement substantially in the form attached as **Exhibit B** and comply with the supervised attendance and other requirements of the Church governing their right to participate.

Any Staff member or volunteer who has information that an offender has or plans to engage in Church sponsored worship or activities must immediately notify SCRM or the applicable Location Pastor. There is no exception to this requirement. Convictions are not confidential and the pastoral ethic of confidentiality does not extend to keeping secrets that could harm others.

At least annually, Security will conduct a zip code search on the National Sex Offender Public Website and any state violent offender registry for a state in which the Church has a physical location and create a list of registered offenders who reside in proximity to any Church location. Security will cross-check the results of the search against the Church's Arena database and will flag the profile of any registered offender. Security will notify SCRM and the applicable Location Pastor of the results.

Upon receipt of notice from any source, the Location Pastor will contact an offender who has or intends to participate in in-person or Online Ministries to schedule a face-to-face meeting with the offender and at least two other staff members (at least one of whom is a pastor and both of whom are Safe Gatherings Certified). During the meeting, which must be held before any further participation by the offender, the pastor will explain the Church's protocols regarding violent or sex offenders and discuss the offender's ministry needs. The offender will be required to sign a limited access agreement.

The agreement will include information regarding the nature of the conviction and consent for the Church to contact the offender's parole officer. The offender must provide the Church with all information and documents they are otherwise required to provide to an employer. A copy of the agreement will be provided to the Senior Executive Director, the Executive Director of Locations and Care, the Church Council Chair, and each chaperone named in the agreement.

The offender may not have access to Protected People and must agree to be accompanied by designated persons at all times while at the Church or a Church-sponsored event. The offender and the person appointed to accompany the offender will meet on a regular basis to monitor the implementation of the agreement which will remain in place for so long as the offender attends the Church.

The same process will be followed if the Church is otherwise made aware of a situation where violent or sexual offenses were committed.

MONITORING AND REPORTING

Once Certified, continuing supervision and accountability are required to ensure the safest possible environment exists. In accordance with Safe Gatherings training and the Church's Code of Conduct – Working with Protected People, the Church prohibits Staff, volunteers, and any other person acting under its auspices to be alone with a Protected Person in a private setting except in emergency or approved situations. In accordance with the Church's Best Practices for Online Ministries, electronic communications follow the same guidelines as in-person activities. Procedures implementing this Policy will address situations where private counseling is requested, a Vulnerable Adult is in a care setting, and other unique situations.

Staff, volunteers, members, and guests are encouraged to warn each other when questionable behavior is displayed.

The Church, through SCRM, will report to law enforcement when a crime is alleged or it appears a crime may have been committed. The Church will cooperate fully with law enforcement regardless of the status of the Church's internal investigation.

The Church does not tolerate the abuse of a Protected Person by another Protected Person. In the event the Church becomes aware of peer-to-peer misconduct among Children or Vulnerable Adults that would otherwise be prohibited under this Policy, the Church will provide an incident report to each parent or guardian of the individuals involved. The Church will make any report required as a mandated reporter and cooperate with parents or guardians in the course of action they elect. The Church will cooperate in any investigation undertaken by criminal or civil authorities.

Event Reports. Within one business day of each regularly recurring **event** serving Children or Vulnerable People, as defined in the Procedures implementing this Policy, the Staff person in charge of the event or the Program/Team Director must file an electronic report with a count of the number of Staff, volunteers, and participants in attendance and indicate whether there were any reportable incidents under this Policy or any other Policies of the Church. Any report that indicates a suspected violation of law, policy, or ethical standards should be routed to SCRM for investigation under the Church's Reporting Suspected Violations of Policies, Laws and Ethical Standards Policy.

Internal Reporting. SCRM will review all incidents, accusations, or suspected violations of this Policy. Any allegations relating to Physical, Emotional, and Sexual Abuse or Sexual Harassment of Protected People participating in any ministry sponsored by the Church will be investigated in accordance with the Church's Reporting Suspected Violations of Policies, Laws, and Ethical Standards Policy.

Mandatory Reporting. The Church is a mandated reporter. The Church, through its pastors, counselors, teachers, and

others providing childcare services, will make all reports required by law. Failure to report is a crime.

Staff, Governance Committee Members, and volunteers are required to immediately report concerns to supervising Staff or Program/Team Directors who will assess the reporting requirements in consultation with the appropriate Executive Team member. Any questions regarding whether an incident should be reported may also be confidentially reviewed with a Church pastor. Any **suspected violation of policy, law, or ethical standards** must be reported immediately to SCRM.

In Kansas and Missouri, good faith reports of abuse are immune from liability.

Kansas. Anyone has the right to report suspected child or adult abuse, neglect, or exploitation directly to the State of Kansas at 800-922-5330 24 hours a day, or in an emergency situation, to 911. For more information see www.dcf.ks.gov.

Missouri. A report of child abuse, neglect, or exploitation may be made in the State of Missouri by calling 800-392-3738 24 hours a day, or in an emergency situation, to 911. Anonymous reports are accepted from individuals who are not mandated by occupation to report. For more information, see www.dss.mo.gov/cd/can.htm. Elder abuse and neglect may be reported at 800-392-0210. See www.health.mo.gov/safety/abuse.

RIGHTS OF THE PEOPLE INVOLVED IN REPORTING

The primary and most important purpose of this Policy is to prevent harm to Protected People. A secondary purpose is to protect the integrity of the Church by defining the expectations of Church Council regarding the actions of Staff, volunteers, congregants and the public as they relate to the Church's desire to do no harm. Every allegation of abuse or violation of this Policy will be taken seriously. Every alleged violation of this Policy will be reviewed under the Church's Reporting Suspected Violations of Policies, Law, and Ethical Standards Policy.

Both the accuser and the accused will be treated with care, dignity, and support throughout the investigative process. The Church will exercise discretion in the conduct of an investigation, and to the extent possible, protect the privacy and good name of the individuals involved pending resolution.

Rights of Person Making an Allegation.

SCRM will ensure that any person alleging abuse of a Protected Person is provided with prompt acknowledgement of the claim and investigation of the allegation. The reporting person will receive an explanation of the Church's overall process and specific procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse of Protected People, including the Church's policy on reporting to civil and criminal authorities, all in accordance with the Church's Reporting Suspected Violations of Policies, Laws, and Ethical Standards Policy. The person making a report will be notified when the investigation is closed.

Rights of the Accused.

SCRM will ensure that a person accused of violating this Policy will receive timely investigation and resolution of the allegation. The Church will explain its overall process and specific procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse of Protected People, including the Church's policy on reporting to civil and criminal authorities, all in accordance with the Church's Reporting Suspected Violations of Policies, Laws, and Ethical Standards Policy. The accused will be provided an opportunity to comment on the allegation as part of the investigative process and will be notified when the investigation is closed.

Following notification of civil and criminal authorities by SCRM, where appropriate, the HR Lead Director will notify the accused of limitations on their duties as Staff or a volunteer during the investigation. The information provided to

the accused will be limited to that which is sufficient to enable them to respond to the allegation. Under no circumstance will information be shared that would compromise the investigation.

The accused will be notified that the Church will cooperate with authorities and expects the accused to do the same. The Church will not provide legal counsel to the accused. Based on the nature of the allegation, the accused may be prohibited from visiting any Church property or attending any in-person or online event sponsored by the Church pending investigation of the allegation and resolution of the complaint. The accused will be advised that they are not to contact or attempt to contact an alleged victim or the victim's family.

If Staff, Governance Committee Member, or any volunteer admits guilt or does not contest guilt, or there is a finding of guilt in a criminal court or liability in a civil court, the individual's role with the Church will be terminated immediately. The HR Lead Director will include this information in the permanent file of Staff and records of the investigation for a volunteer and inform the Great Plains Annual Conference to protect against the reemployment or ability of the individual to volunteer in any other capacity as determined by the Conference.

False Allegations.

The Church recognizes the significant trauma experienced by abuse victims. The Church understands that there may also be harm and trauma in false accusations and will strive to minimize any adverse personal or professional consequences of unsubstantiated allegations against those falsely accused. The Church will work with the wrongly accused to restore their good name and, with their consent, inform the Church community of the outcome of the investigative process and the need for spiritual support and restorative justice in the wake of unsupported allegations.

INVESTIGATIONS

Investigations relating to allegations of abuse of Protected People and violations of this Policy will be conducted by SCRM in accordance with the procedures implementing the Church's Reporting Suspected Violations of Policies, Laws and Ethical Standards Policy, as approved from time to time by the Church's Executive Team.

Any information that indicates a crime may have been committed will be promptly reported to law enforcement regardless of the stage of the Church's investigation. The Church will cooperate in any investigation conducted by authorities.

The Church will create and retain accurate records of allegations received, whether supported or not, and all actions taken in connection with any investigation relating to suspected violations of this Policy. Records will be kept on file in strict and secure confidence. Copies of original statements provided to authorities will be retained.

CONFIDENTIALITY IN REPORTING CONCERNS

Ensuring an independent and confidential investigation and review process is critical to protecting the privacy and rights of all parties involved, conducting meaningful analysis, and reaching a determinative conclusion. Pastoral ethics do not extend to keeping a secret that could harm a Protected Person. Any suspicion of abuse must be brought to the immediate attention of a Staff supervisor, Program/Team Director, or event coordinator by Staff, volunteers, and any other person who observes or learns of facts that indicate a violation may have occurred so the Church can initiate an investigation. Reporting to any of these parties is a confidential communication. It is critical that information is only shared through appropriate channels and not, for example, posted to social media. Failure to observe procedural controls can jeopardize the value and integrity of the investigative process.

If reporting to a Staff supervisor, Program/Team Director, or event coordinator is not appropriate due to their potential involvement in a situation of concern, a report may also be brought to a Church pastor, HR Lead Director, Chair of the Staff-Parish Relations Committee, or SCRM.

Any person with relevant information should report a suspected violation of law, policy, or ethical standards to SCRM. The Church has adopted a documented investigative and reporting process that may involve the interview of relevant witnesses, public and private records, and engagement of third-party experts. The results of the investigation will be provided to the Executive Team, Governance Committee Members, and the District Superintendent, where appropriate.

PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS

Any media contact regarding an investigation or alleged violation of this Policy must be referred to the Church's Communications and Public Relations Lead Director. Protecting the privacy and confidentiality of all individuals pending resolution of an investigation is critical to conducting an independent review of the facts.

The Church will not comment on allegations or investigations. The Church will not attempt to resolve matters through social media. The Church will strictly comply with the expectations of this Policy and follow its documented investigative procedures.

POLICY MANAGEMENT

Management of this Policy is the responsibility of the Church's SCRM. In carrying out the duties and responsibilities of this Policy, the Church may utilize and rely on certain policies and procedures, including background screening, reference checks, and training courses recommended or endorsed by the Great Plains Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church. The Church, in relying upon any such assistance, acknowledges that the Conference does not assume any responsibility for the actions of the Church with respect to the implementation and enforcement of this Policy.

The Church has appointed SCRM as the owner of this Policy. A current version of this Policy will be posted on the Church's website. Recommendations for enhancement, identified areas of weakness, and most importantly, any **suspected violation of policy, law, or ethical standards** must be immediately reported to SCRM.

EXHIBIT A
CODE OF CONDUCT – WORKING WITH PROTECTED PEOPLE

The following Code of Conduct is intended to assist pastors, staff, and volunteers in making decisions about interactions with children and vulnerable adults. For clarification of any guideline, or to inquire about behaviors not addressed here, contact the Safety, Compliance, and Risk Management Lead Director.

Church of the Resurrection (Church) provides children and vulnerable adults (together, Protected People, as defined in the Church’s Safety of Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy) with the highest quality services available. We are committed to creating an environment for Protected People that is safe, nurturing, empowering, and that promotes growth and success.

No form of abuse will be tolerated and confirmed abuse will result in an immediate termination of any employment or volunteer relationship with the Church. All reports of suspicious or inappropriate behavior relating to Protected People or allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and reviewed under the Church’s Reporting Suspected Violations of Policies, Law, and Ethical Standards Policy. The Church will fully cooperate with authorities if allegations of abuse are made that require investigation.

This Code of Conduct outlines specific expectations of all pastors, staff, and volunteers who interact with Protected People as we strive to accomplish our mission together.

1. Protected People will be treated with respect at all times.
2. Protected People will be treated fairly regardless of sex, age, race, ethnicity, cultural heritage, economic status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or religion.
3. Pastors, staff, and volunteers will adhere to the Best Practices outlined by the Church in procedures supporting the Safety of Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy.
4. Pastors, staff, and volunteers will adhere to uniform standards of appropriate and inappropriate verbal interactions as outlined by the Church.
5. Pastors, staff, and volunteers will not stare at or comment on Protected People’s bodies.
6. Pastors, staff, and volunteers will not date or become romantically involved with any Protected Person.
7. Pastors, staff, and volunteers will not use or be under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs in the presence of Protected People.
8. Pastors, staff, and volunteers will not have sexually oriented materials, including printed or online pornography, on Church property or Church devices.
9. Pastors, staff, and volunteers will not have secrets with Protected People and will only provide gifts when given to all Protected People in the same setting.
10. Pastors, staff, and volunteers are prohibited from working one-on-one with Protected People in a private setting except in accordance with Church procedures.
11. Pastors, staff, and volunteers will not withhold food, water, or shelter from or abuse Protected People or otherwise abuse or neglect Protected People in any way, including:
 - a. *Physical abuse* – hitting, spanking, slapping, unnecessary restraint
 - b. *Verbal abuse* – degrading, threatening, cursing
 - c. *Sexual abuse* – inappropriate touching, exposing oneself, sexually oriented conversations
 - d. *Mental abuse* – shaming, humiliation, cruelty

12. The Church will not tolerate the mistreatment or abuse of a Protected Person by another Protected Person and will take steps necessary to eliminate such actions or behavior when made aware of such events.
13. The Church will not tolerate any behavior that is classified as bullying, and when aware of such actions, will take steps to eliminate such behavior.

Bullying is aggressive behavior that is intentional, repeated over time, and involves an imbalance of power or strength. Bullying can take on various forms, including:

- a. *Physical bullying* – when one person engages in physical force against another person, such as hitting, punching, pushing, kicking, pinching, or restraining another
- b. *Verbal bullying* - when someone uses their words to hurt another, such as by belittling or calling another hurtful name
- c. *Nonverbal or relational bullying* – when one person manipulates a relationship or a desired relationship to harm another person. This includes social exclusion, friendship manipulation, or gossip. This type of bullying also includes intimidating another person by using gestures.
- d. *Cyberbullying* – the intentional and overt act of aggression toward another person by way of any technological tool, such as email, instant messages, text messages, digital pictures or images, or website posting (including blogs). Cyberbullying can involve:
 - i. Sending mean, vulgar, or threatening message or images
 - ii. Posting sensitive, private information about another person
 - iii. Pretending to be someone else in order to make that person look bad
 - iv. Intentionally excluding someone from an online group
 - v. Hazing or other activity that expects a person to engage in humiliating, degrading, abusive, or dangerous behavior
 - vi. Sexualized bullying, including sexting, innuendos, threats relating to or exposure of body parts

Anyone who sees an act of bullying and then encourages it is also engaged in an act of bullying.

14. Pastors, staff, and volunteers must follow mandatory reporting requirements and be aware of legal and ethical guidelines to recognize and report suspicions of mistreatment and abuse. They will:
 - a. Be Safe Gatherings certified when required by the Church, including completion of training to recognize symptoms of child abuse and neglect, including physical, sexual, and emotional abuse.
 - b. Understand the Church’s Safety of Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy.
 - c. Report suspected abuse or neglect of a Protected Person to the appropriate authorities under mandatory reporting laws when required.
 - d. If not a mandatory reporter, report suspected abuse or neglect to a Church pastor, program/team director, or staff supervisor.
 - e. Report any suspected violation of policy, law, or ethical standards to the Church’s Safety, Compliance, and Risk Management Lead Director.
 - f. Cooperate fully with authorities in the investigation of any case of alleged abuse. Failure to do so may be grounds for termination of an employment or volunteer relationship with the Church.
15. Pastors, staff, and volunteers who work with Protected People may not have engaged in or been accused or convicted of abuse of a Protected Person, indecency with a Protected Person, or injury to a Protected Person.

**EXHIBIT B
LIMITED ACCESS AGREEMENT**

Name of Adult (Sample Agreement)

Location Attending: _____

Name of Chaperone(s): _____

Chaperone Contact Information: _____

Nature of conviction: _____

Church of the Resurrection is committed to being open to those who wish to worship with us, especially in times of personal troubles. However, [concerns have been raised] [we have been made aware of the conviction referenced above and this conviction raises concern] regarding your participation in Church ministries. These concerns present a challenge for the Church in creating a welcoming and safe environment, especially for minors and vulnerable adults (together, protected people) and their families.

Therefore, the following guidelines are required to reduce the risk to both you and to vulnerable people of an incident or accusation. We welcome you to our congregation and our membership, however, your participation will be limited in order to safeguard protected people and to protect you from becoming the subject of allegations.

Within these guidelines, the Church welcomes your participation. For purposes of this Agreement, protected people includes any person under the age of 18 and any person aged 18 and over who is or may be unable to take care of themselves, or unable to protect themselves against significant harm or exploitation, due to mental or other disability, age, or illness.

Restrictions:

1. You are to avoid all contact with protected people on Church property and at Church-sponsored events. You will not be allowed to volunteer at or attend events designed for protected people.

2. The following activities marked "Yes" are activities that we feel are appropriate for your participation:

Participation in weekend worship services	Yes / No
Participation in an adult Bible study.....	Yes / No
Participation in adult meeting without protected people present	Yes / No
Volunteering in ministry where protected people will not be present.....	Yes / No
Participation in intergenerational church activities, other than worship	No
Meet in the building with clergy or staff	Yes / No
Participation in social, programming, or worship activities in other Church members' homes with protected people present.....	No

3. Additional restrictions:

- Under no circumstances are you permitted to enter those sections of any Church building that serve children, students, or protected people.
- When arriving at the Church, you are to immediately contact one of the chaperones named in this agreement. The chaperone will escort you to the sanctuary or other meeting space. When the activity or service has concluded, you must wait for the chaperone to meet you and escort you to your vehicle. You will leave the Church immediately and depart the Church property without delay. Do not loiter on the premises or in the parking lot. Avoid being at the Church without a chaperone present with you at all times.
- If you become involved in a program or Bible study, you are to disclose the restrictions in this *Limited Access Agreement* to the program leader to ensure their awareness of the conditions of your involvement.

- When on the Church campus, you may only use the following restroom: _____. You are restricted from entering all other restrooms on campus.

Covenant Agreement:

- I have reviewed this Limited Access Agreement, understand it, and agree to abide by its provisions.
- I accept that Church leaders and participants may be told of my circumstances in order to protect protected people involved in the church.
- I will never allow myself to be in a situation where I am alone or in conversation with protected people.
- I will sit where directed in the Church and will not place myself in the vicinity of protected people.
- I understand I must carry a copy of this Limited Access Agreement while attending any Church-sponsored activity.
- I will provide the Church with a copy of all documentation that now exists or may in the future be provided or amended that I am otherwise required to provide to an employer.
- I understand that representatives of the church will review this agreement as needed and that it will remain in effect for so long as I attend the Church or its sponsored activities.
- I understand that if I violate this agreement, I will be denied access to future involvement with the Church.
- The Church is authorized to contact my parole officer _____[Name] _____[Phone] to discuss the nature of my conviction and terms of my probation.

(Signature) (Date)

(Location Pastor) (Date)

(Location Director of Operations) (Date)

(Safety, Compliance, and Risk Management Lead Director) (Date)

(Security Specialist) (Date)