

First United Methodist Church

121 Wisconsin Avenue,
Waukesha, Wisconsin

Safe Sanctuaries Policy

Prepared by the Staff Parish Relations Committee
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First UMC Safe Sanctuaries Policy

I. Introduction

Our vulnerability places us closer to God, but can also put us at risk. Jesus taught that within the community of believers there must be protection for each of us in our dependence upon God and each other. As followers of Christ, we resolve to protect all individuals in their vulnerability and to learn from each other as we all grow in faith. As much as we do not like to think about abusive and hurtful things happening in the church, it is clear that it is our duty as the church to guard and protect vulnerable individuals, including church staff and volunteers who participate in our ministries as well as our building partners. God calls us to make our churches safe communities of faith where children and adults grow safe and strong. This means that we have a responsibility to protect children and other vulnerable persons from neglect, abuse and threats. The policies outlined in this document are intended to do this.

II. Definitions

The following definitions are used in this document:

Child: A person who is younger than 12 years and has not yet started attending 6th grade.

Youth: A person who is not a child but has not reached September 1st of the year of their high school graduation or equivalent regardless of age.

Minor: A person younger than 18 years.

Adult at Risk: Wis. Stats. 940.285 -> 55.01

(1e) "Adult at risk" means any adult who has a physical or mental condition that substantially impairs his or her ability to care for his or her needs and who has experienced, is currently experiencing, or is at risk of experiencing abuse, neglect, self-neglect, or financial exploitation.

Vulnerable Person: A minor or Adult at Risk.

Adult (supervising): A person who is both at least 18 years old and at least 5 years older than the oldest participant in a supervised activity.

Staff: Paid employees of First UMC (both appointed clergy and non-clergy) or paid employees of the building partners

Volunteers: Unpaid adults serving the First UMC community who have completed a background check (Appendix G).

Adult Leaders: Either staff or volunteers with the responsibility for programs where vulnerable persons may be present.

Abuse: Any of Physical Abuse, Emotional Abuse, Neglect, Sexual Abuse or Ritual Abuse.¹

Physical Abuse ("in which a person deliberately and intentionally causes bodily harm to a person")

Emotional Abuse ("in which a person exposes a child, youth or vulnerable adult to spoken and/or unspoken violence or emotional cruelty")

Neglect ("in which a person endangers a child's, youth's or vulnerable person's health, safety, or welfare through negligence")

Sexual Abuse ("in which sexual contact between a child, youth or vulnerable person and an adult or another older and more powerful youth occurs")

Ritual Abuse ("in which physical, sexual, or psychological violations of a child, youth or vulnerable adult are inflicted regularly, intentionally, and in a stylized way by a person or persons responsible for the child's welfare)

Weapons Please see First United Methodist Church's Weapons Policy.

III. Eligible Activities Covered

This policy covers any First UMC building activity, whether church-related or through our building partners, and any First UMC sanctioned church-related events off premises with Vulnerable Persons. The primary church-related activities will include but are not limited to worship services, Sunday School, nursery, youth events, committee activities, outreach trips, Vacation Bible School, music rehearsals, and Christian formation classes. The primary building partner activities will relate to their building-use contracts.

Building Partners

All community groups and individuals using the First UMC building must adhere to the Safe Sanctuaries Policy for activities occurring on church property. Non-compliance with the policy will be grounds for termination of a building-use contract. The aforementioned groups do hereby agree to indemnify and hold harmless First United Methodist Church Waukesha, its employees agents appointed staff and assigns as and against any claims, demands actions causes of actions, costs, attorney fees or liability arising as a consequence of the failure of the group utilizing the First UMC building to comply with this policy.

Sanctioning

All activities involving **Vulnerable Persons** that utilize the building or grounds of First UMC or activities that are represented as being an official activity sponsored by First UMC require authorization of a staff member or church committee.

¹ Definitions are from *Safe Sanctuaries: Reducing the Risk of Child Abuse in the Church*, J.T. Melton, Discipleship Resources, 1998.

Scheduling:

All activities on church property, sponsored by the church or offered by outside users, which involve **Vulnerable Persons** will be scheduled through the church office and posted on the church calendar located in the main office.

IV. Expectations for the Safety and Care of Vulnerable Persons

A. General

Two Adult Principle:

At least two adults will be required to be present at all activities involving **Vulnerable Persons** in the church building. Although it is preferred that both adults be in the designated activity room, it is permissible for one adult to roam between rooms if more than one area of the church is used. The second adult is not to be counted if in the building but involved in an unrelated meeting or activity.

Church-sanctioned activities involving **Vulnerable Persons** which take place outside the church also require that a minimum of two adults be present. However, the ratio of **adults** to participants must be no less than seven to one for participants who are **youths** or **adults at risk** and no less than five to one for participants who are **children**.

Transportation

When activities involve transportation of **Vulnerable Persons**, it is preferable to have two **staff** members/**adult volunteers** present in the vehicle. If only one **staff** member/**adult volunteer** is available to drive, at least two **Vulnerable Persons** must be present. One **staff** member/**adult volunteer** should not transport one **Vulnerable Person**, and all drivers shall be at least 23 years old and have a Driver Information Form (Appendix H) on file in the church office.

Windows and Doors:

All rooms used for activities or other encounters with **Vulnerable Persons** will have doors with uncovered, transparent windows or doors will remain open. When garment changes or toileting needs require privacy, doors can be shut and windows covered only for the time required to complete those tasks.

Preventing Neglect, Abuse and Threats

First UMC will actively work to prevent neglect of, abuse of, or threats to **Vulnerable Persons** in any form. Any person who witnesses or suspects abuse during a church event will report this to a member of the staff or clergy.

Weapons:

All staff and participants are required to follow the First UMC Weapons Policy.

B. Expectations for Staff and Adult Volunteers

It is the responsibility of all staff members and volunteers to ensure the safety of **Vulnerable Persons** engaged in church activities. **All persons who supervise Vulnerable Persons are expected to be familiar with the policies in this document, including the material in the Appendices.** Staff and volunteers who supervise **children** in the church nursery must follow the “Nursery Care Policy” (see Section V below).

Guidelines:

1. Treat all supervisors, co-workers, parents, members of the congregation, and **Vulnerable Persons** with respect and consideration.
2. Treat all persons fairly regardless of race, color, religious belief, gender, disability, creed, national origin or sexual orientation.
3. Use language, behavior, and attitudes that are consistent with the Christian Faith and the vision of First UMC.
4. Never engage in the following conduct in your work as an employee or volunteer for the church:
 - Strike, spank, shake, slap or otherwise physically discipline any person.
 - Humiliate, degrade or threaten another person.
 - Inappropriately touch a **Vulnerable Person**.
 - Flirt with a **youth** or other **adult**.
 - Shame, withhold love, or speak or act with cruelty.
 - Withhold food, water or other basic cares as punishment.
 - Use profanity, tell inappropriate jokes, or share intimate details of your own life.
5. Always follow the “Two Adult Principle” as discussed above.
6. All rooms used for activities involving **Vulnerable Persons** will have doors with uncovered, transparent windows. When you supervise **Vulnerable Persons**, ensure that the space you are using is as visible as possible to other staff and volunteers. Whenever possible, leave doors open when working with **Vulnerable Persons**. Do not cover the windows of an area so as to block the view of the area where **Vulnerable Persons** will be present. When garment changes or toileting needs require privacy, doors can be shut and windows covered only for the time required to complete those tasks. When working with groups of **Vulnerable Persons**, have another adult working with you in your area and if the second **adult** needs to leave for a short time, leave the door open during that time. If you need to have a private conference with a **Vulnerable Person**, ask another **adult** to be in an adjacent area with access to the meeting room via

a window or an open door. Appropriate confidentiality, as well as appropriate safety procedures need to be maintained to protect the **Vulnerable Person**.

7. If a **Vulnerable Person** is capable of using the restroom alone, at least one **adult** should escort the **Vulnerable Person** to the restroom, make sure the restroom is not occupied by any **adult**, and stand outside the door. If you need to assist **Vulnerable Persons** in the restroom at the church, have a second **adult** present and maintain the **Vulnerable Person's** privacy to the best of your ability. If another **adult** is not readily available, prop the main door of the restroom open unless this compromises the privacy of the **Vulnerable Person**. If you are on a field trip away from the church, always have an **adult** check out a single restroom before a **Vulnerable Person** enters and have an **adult** present in a multiple-booth restroom. A **Vulnerable Person** should not enter a public restroom alone. Two **Vulnerable Persons** may enter a public restroom alone if there is an **adult** at the door.

8. Parents, other **volunteers**, and **staff** of the church may visit and observe the program at any time. They must check in with the **adult leader** and wear a nametag.

9. **Vulnerable Persons** participating in church programming must be accompanied into the building and escorted to the designated location for that program by a parent or authorized **adult**. Two **adult leaders** must be present before the parent or authorized **adult** may leave.

10. The **adult leaders** will be present at departures until each **Vulnerable Person** has departed.

11. Registration forms and/or attendance sheets are required for all activities and events involving **minors** unaccompanied by their parents or legal guardians. Registration forms will include space for emergency contact information and are kept in the church office for at least 4 years or as otherwise provided under this policy.

Medical Emergencies

In a life or death situation, needed medication or other authorized medical intervention may be administered by the **adult leader** if preauthorization is given by the parent or legal guardian. The **adult leader** will call 911 when needed medication or other authorized medical intervention is administered. A current, signed Permission/Medical Release Form (see Appendix E) must be provided by the parent along with instruction for the **adult leader** on the administration of needed medication or other authorized medical intervention.

Substances/Illegal Materials:

If a staff member becomes aware that a **minor** participant in a church activity is in possession of an illegal substance or weapon or is illegally using a controlled substance, he or she will report this event to the parents or legal guardian of the participant and to the appropriate authorities. If an **adult** volunteer becomes aware that a **minor**

participant in a church activity is in possession of an illegal substance or weapon, he or she will report this event to a **staff** member. The **adult** who observed or received report of the event will complete an Incident/Complaint Report (see Appendix D)

Disruptive Behavior:

An **adult** who witnesses disruptive or illegal behavior on the part of **minor** participants will complete an Incident/Complaint Report (see Appendix D).

Exceptionally Egregious or Problematic Behaviors:

Behavior problems that demand a formal response from First UMC will follow the format outlined by the Critical Incident Report Process (see Appendix C). Examples include behaviors that could result in physical harm, property damage or that may otherwise violate the law.

Discipline:

First UMC views corrective action for inappropriate behaviors of **Vulnerable Persons** to be within the responsibilities and rights of any **adult leader** for any First UMC activities. To this end, the church endorses the use of verbal correction (without abusive content), removal of offending individuals from the activity, distraction from inappropriate behaviors via engagement in constructive participation, structuring activities to minimize boredom and conflict, and reinforcement of appropriate behaviors via reasonable verbal or other more tangible reward to promote appropriate behaviors. Corporal punishment is strictly prohibited.

If you must use physical restraint on a **Vulnerable Person** because that individual is in imminent danger or is presenting a substantial risk of danger to the health and/or safety of another person or themselves, you may take the minimum steps necessary to carry out the restraint. If possible, remove the person to another environment. Be sure there is another **adult** with you and the individual being restrained. If removal from the room is not possible, take reasonable precautions to remove the rest of the group or class by whatever measures are safe, reasonable and appropriate. Report any such action to the staff person in charge of the program or directly to a clergy person as soon as possible.

Counseling of Vulnerable Persons:

One to one counseling sessions between **adult leaders** and **Vulnerable Persons** at First UMC or at First UMC sponsored activities will not be behind closed doors. All effort should be made to ensure that the risk that conversations will be overheard is to be minimized (i.e.: in a low traffic area or with a radio outside the room to mask conversations).

Youth Events and Off-Premise Activities

1. Permission Forms: A general Permission/Medical Release Form (Appendix E) will be used to cover **youth** activities that are overnight or away from the church grounds. This form will be completed once per year (all renewed at the beginning of September) and parents or legal guardians will be responsible for making sure

the form is updated if changes occur. The form will be kept in a confidential, secured file and will be taken to all covered activities. Activities off the premises of First UMC which require transportation or those occurring on the premises involving an overnight stay will require an additional and specific Event Release Form (Appendix F) to be signed by parent or legal guardian. Authorized **adult** activity leaders will take both forms to the activities. All information on the forms will be kept confidential.

2. Transportation: When activities involve transportation of **Vulnerable Persons** it is preferable to have two **staff** members/**adult volunteers** present in the vehicle. If only one **staff** member/**adult volunteer** is available to drive, at least two **Vulnerable Persons** must be present. One **staff** member/**adult volunteer** should not transport one **Vulnerable Person** and all drivers shall be at least 23 years old and have a Driver Information Form (Appendix H) on file in the church office.
3. Overnight Activities: Careful consideration should be given to lodging conditions with events that include **youth** or **adults at risk**. The following guidelines are to be used for lodging either on or off-site.
 - Under no circumstances should non-familial **youth** and **adults** be rooming together in a small room (e.g. hotel). If a large group is sharing sleeping space (e.g. on a church floor), there are additional considerations for lodging:
 - If multiple rooms are available, then participants should be grouped based on the self-identified gender that **youth** indicate on their Event Release form. If alternative accommodations are requested by a parent/guardian or **youth** based on orientation, self-identified gender identity, medical issues, etc., all efforts will be made to accommodate unless housing circumstances prevent us from doing so. **Adult** chaperones will be housed in separate rooms from students whenever possible.
 - If there are not sufficient rooms for separate **adult** rooms from student rooms, then **adult** chaperones will room in the same room as **youth** based upon self-identified gender, but will make efforts to create separate sleeping 'areas'. If there is only one **youth** and one **adult** of a particular self-identified gender, than alternative arrangements need to be made as to prevent a **youth** and **adult** being put in a vulnerable situation. Some options include: **adults** sleeping outside the **youth** sleeping room or in a hallway, all participants sharing common sleeping space but with self-identified gendered sides, etc. These options are not considered ideal or the norm, but are permissible in the case where other options are not available (i.e. mission trip, lock-ins or events sponsored and organized by outside groups where an agreement on Safe Sanctuaries policies cannot be reached.)
 - **Youth** under 18 should generally not be roomed with **youth** 18 or older, to avoid putting **youth** over 18 into a legally unequal situation. **Youth** who

are 18 years or older still should not room with young **adults**, especially older young **adults**.

Social Media & Email/Texting:

Social media: **Adult** leaders are to carefully consider interactions with **youth** in a social media setting (i.e. Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, etc.). **Youth** may have access to 'friends' or 'followers' and content shared by contacts of **adult leaders** may not always be appropriate. **Adults** are encouraged to limit private messaging or chatting within social media sites or playing games one-on-one within a site; this behavior can be compared to being in a room with a door closed. It is appropriate, however, to set up or participate in a group Facebook page for a **youth** activity (such as a Sunday school class or youth mission trip) where many are invited to participate, including **youth** and **adults**. This can be a good way to share information, photos, etc. Privacy settings should be set, whenever possible, to limit access to the page or postings in order to protect **Vulnerable Persons**.

Email/Texting: **Adult leaders** are encouraged to limit one-on-one messaging with **youth**. Instead, they are encouraged to send group emails or texts or cc a parent. **Adult leaders** should save all communication with **youth**. If abuse is divulged electronically, **adult leaders** are to follow standard reporting procedures.

C. Additional Expectations for First UMC Adult Volunteers

In order to ensure the safety of all participants in church events, First UMC requires that **volunteers** are active at First UMC for a minimum of six months prior to working with **Vulnerable Persons**. All adult volunteers must complete the following forms every two years in order to serve in programming which includes **Vulnerable Persons**:

- Background Check Release Form (Appendix G)
- Driver Information Form (Appendix H)(If applicable)
- Acknowledgement of Receipt of Safe Sanctuaries Policy (Appendix I)

The background check results are reviewed by First UMC clergy. Results of background checks will be kept confidential and any concerns will be discussed with the applicant. However, First UMC reserves the right to bar applicants from serving in positions involving supervision of **Vulnerable Persons** based solely on the judgment of clergy. **Adults** who are required to participate in background checks shall have a continuing obligation to self-report to the church office any citation or charge made against them involving offenses alleging injury to person.

Non-compliance with the Safe Sanctuaries Policy and procedures will result in dismissal from any role involving the supervision of **Vulnerable Persons**.

D. Additional Expectations for Staff

Enforcement of this policy is the responsibility of the **staff**. The **staff** will ensure that **volunteers** who supervise **Vulnerable Persons** have completed the required forms

- Background Check Release Form (Appendix G)
- Driver information Form (Appendix H) (If applicable)
- Acknowledgement of Receipt of Safe Sanctuaries Policy (Appendix I)

The completed forms will be stored in the church office for no less than 4 years or as otherwise provided under this policy. If a potential or active **volunteer** is found to be ineligible to supervise **Vulnerable Persons** for any reason, a **staff** member will inform that person of the situation and will ask them to refrain from serving in that capacity.

Background Checks:

All **adults** who regularly interact with **Vulnerable Persons**, including **staff** and **volunteers**, must have a completed background check every two years. Background checks for church-related activities will be conducted by the business manager or a clergy person appointed to First UMC. The findings will be kept confidential and stored securely in the church office. Background checks will be completed through the Wisconsin Department of Law Enforcement if the **volunteer** has always lived and worked within the state of Wisconsin. For those who have lived or worked out-of-state, a national background check through the NICS (National Instant Criminal Background Check System) must be completed. **Volunteers** must be active at First UMC for a minimum of six months prior to working with **vulnerable persons**. Background screening may also include contact with previous church affiliations. **Volunteers** will be required to fill out the Background Check Release Form (Appendix G) every 2 years if they wish to serve in programming which includes **Vulnerable Persons**. Volunteers who will be driving vulnerable persons must have a Driver Information Form on file in the church office (Appendix H). **Adults** who regularly interact with **Vulnerable Persons** shall also be subject to the terms of the Church's Sex Offender Policy (see Section VI below).

Building partners are responsible for conducting and paying for background checks every two years for **adults** regularly interacting with **Vulnerable Persons**, including **staff** and **volunteers**, as well as keeping documentation. If needed, assistance in conducting these background checks will be provided by First UMC staff.

Record Keeping:

Staff will ensure that the following records (electronic or hardcopy) are kept in the office for a minimum of 4 years or as otherwise provided under this policy:

- Incident/Complaint Report (see Appendix D)
- Permission/Medical Release Form (Appendix E)
- Event Release Form (Appendix F)
- Background Check Release Form (see Appendix G)
- Driver Information Form (see Appendix H)

- Registration and attendance forms involving **minors**

In the event that the form documents an incident where there is any injury or illegal activity, said records shall be maintained until destruction is authorized by the Church's insurer or legal counsel.

All personal information on the forms will be kept confidential. The forms will be kept in a confidential, secured file in the church office. Appropriate forms will be made available so that they can be taken to activities off church property.

Substances/Illegal Materials:

If a **staff** member becomes aware that a **minor** participant in a church activity is in possession of an illegal substance or weapon, he or she will report this event to the parents of the participant and to the appropriate authorities. The **adult** who observed or received report of the event will complete an Incident/Complaint Report (see Appendix D)

Abuse Reporting:

All First UMC **staff** regulated by Wisconsin State Law regarding reporting of **child abuse** will comply with applicable statutes, for example Wisconsin Statute Section 48.981 as amended. In the event that abuse is identified, the First UMC staff will follow the Safe Sanctuaries Recommended Abuse Response Guidelines. (Appendix A).

E. Expectations for Parents

First UMC strives to make church events educational, fun and safe. To ensure the safety of all involved, we expect participants in church sponsored events to follow these guidelines. If your child uses the church nursery, please see the "Nursery Care Policy" below.

Permission/Medical Release Forms:

A general Permission/Medical Release Form (Appendix E) is used to cover **youth** activities that are overnight or away from the church grounds. The form is renewed annually (each September) and must be submitted before a youth can participate in these church activities. Parents or legal guardians will be responsible for making sure the form is updated if changes occur.

Parents or legal guardians are responsible to have the appropriate registration forms submitted for **children** participating in Sunday school, Vacation Bible School, and other programs specially designated for **children**. These forms are available from staff or program volunteers.

Parents may need to provide specific authorization for some events.

Arrivals/Departures:

Participants being dropped off for church activities should arrive only shortly before or at the scheduled program start time(s). If a participant is being picked up, his or her ride should be available at the scheduled end time.

Those bringing **Vulnerable Persons** to church activities are responsible for accompanying them to the designated location and confirming that the activity is occurring as planned and that the minimum required **adult** supervision is present before leaving their **Vulnerable Person(s)**.

First UMC cannot be responsible for the transportation arrangements made for participants coming to or departing from sponsored activities. Consequently, it is the responsibility of the parent or legal guardian of each **minor** to inform the **minor** and **adult leader** of any restrictions they have imposed on their **minor** for transportation to and from activities. The **adult leader** will be present at departures until each **minor** has departed.

F. Expectations of Participants

First UMC strives to make church events educational, fun and safe. We covenant with each other to insure the safety of all, to make our time together most meaningful, and to care for the facility which we share. Any person who violates the spirit of this commitment by inappropriate conduct, offensive disrespect to another, lack of participation, significant and willful disruption of activities, willful damage to property, verbal or physical assault on another, possession of a weapon or illegal substance, or any other illegal activity will be asked to leave the activity in custody of her or his parent or guardian or, if warranted, in the custody of the police. The individual may be barred from participation in future events or activities.

To ensure the safety of all involved, we expect participants in church sponsored events to follow these guidelines:

- Leave vehicles parked and unoccupied.
- Remain on the program site unless having been given permission to leave.
- Attend all activities including meals.
- On overnight activities, observe scheduled curfew by being in rooms, quiet and not disturbing others. Never enter the room of someone of the other gender.
- Not use or possess tobacco products, electronic cigarettes, illegal drugs, or alcohol or illegally use controlled substance of any kind.
- Not bring animals, weapons, illegal substances, explosives, fireworks, or dangerous materials.
- Respect the person, property and equipment of others.
- Respect people regardless of race, age, ethnicity, religion, gender, physical differences and orientation.
- Use language, behavior, and attitudes which are consistent with the Christian faith.

V. Nursery Care Policy

The church nursery is a place for **children** from birth to age three. We strive to provide a positive and nurturing environment for each **child** so parents and caregivers can participate in worship, engage in Christian formation and share their spiritual gifts in ministry.

The nursery is a vibrant place that offers an array of toys and activities to keep **children** actively engaged. We strive to keep the **children** in our care safe and secure. Our nursery toys are sanitized and carpets are regularly cleaned to provide as clean an environment as possible.

Nursery hours begin 15 minutes prior to scheduled worship, program or event and will end 15 minutes following the scheduled ending of above named events. A pager system is used to provide communication between the nursery staff and parents utilizing the nursery. Infants will be signed in and out by an authorized person. Authorized individuals will be listed in the registration book/form. Infants must be picked up by an authorized person before a volunteer or staff person is permitted to leave the area.

All registration records will be kept in the church office for at least 4 years or as otherwise provided under this policy.

All community groups utilizing the First UMC nursery will be required to follow all nursery policies.

A. Nursery Expectations for Staff and Adult Volunteers

Nursery **staff** people are paid employees over the age of 18 with completed background checks who report to the designated clergy or **staff** member. At least two **adults** are scheduled in the nursery when it is in operation. When nursery **staff** people are not available, **adult volunteers** with completed background checks may be scheduled. Currently, the Minister of Formational Discipleship and the Volunteer Nursery Coordinator schedule staff and volunteers, facilitate equipment cleaning, and keep records.

B. Nursery Expectations for Parents

1. Fill out a registration form for your **child**(ren) when first using the nursery. Update as needed.
2. Each Sunday, sign in your **child**(ren) and take a pager, recording the number on the sign-in sheet.
3. Label all of your **child's** items.

4. If dietary needs require you to bring a snack, please communicate this need with the staff on duty.
5. Change **children** in diapers prior to drop off in the nursery. Nursery **staff** will attend to diaper changes as well as assisting with the toileting needs for toddlers.
6. Be aware that no medication will be administered by any nursery **staff**.
7. Alert nursery staff of any special instructions for your **child** at the time of drop off.
8. Please be prompt in picking up your **child** following worship/event.
9. Return pager before departing the nursery.

Your **child** may cry when he/she is left in the nursery. Our **staff** understands this to be a normal, healthy response to a new environment and a time of transition. If your **child** cries for an extended time, the **staff** will notify you. We want you to feel confident in our management of every aspect of your **child's** stay in the nursery and able to worship/participate without concern.

Please keep your **child** at home if he or she has any of the following symptoms:

- Any rash
- Fever
- Diarrhea
- Vomiting
- Pink eye--or any eye that is reddened with matting and yellow drainage.

Nursery workers who see any of the above symptoms will immediately alert parents so the **child** can be picked up from the nursery.

Please feel free to ask questions concerning the policies or procedures for care of **children** here at First UMC. We are happy to answer any of your questions or concerns and we welcome your comments.

VI. Sex Offender Policy

First UMC welcomes all persons to participate in the life of the church as means of furthering their spiritual and personal growth. However, to ensure the safety of all participants, we ask that anyone with a history of sex offense report their status to a member of the appointed clergy. This information will not be made public but will allow us to inform these persons of any possible restrictions on their activities and to notify them of the consequence of failing to abide by those restrictions.

Any person with a history of sex offense will not be allowed to supervise **Vulnerable Persons**.

The following guidelines will be followed if a person wishing to participate in church events is known to have a history of sex offense:

- a. A member of the office staff will check WCCA (Wisconsin Circuit Court Access Website) to determine whether the person is under supervision. If the person is under supervision, a member of the **staff** will contact the appropriate authorities to determine the conditions of their supervision.
- b. A member of the office **staff** will meet with the person and provide them with information on the Safe Sanctuaries policy, ask them whether they are under supervision and if so what the terms of their supervision are. The information will be kept on file in the church office but will be treated as confidential.
- c. If a person with a history of sex offense is under supervision, and the terms of their supervision would limit their participation in church activities, a member of the staff will inform the person that they should not participate in those activities and that observed violations of the terms of their supervision will result in the **staff** contacting the appropriate authorities.
- d. If a person with a history of sex offense is under supervision and the terms of their supervision do not limit their participation in church activities, they may participate normally in corporate worship services; however as to other activities they will be assigned one or more members of the congregation to accompany them when they are on church premises.
- e. If a person with a history of sex offense is under supervision, and if they are found to be violating the terms of their supervision while on church property or while participating in church sanctioned events, a member of the **staff** will report the violation to appropriate authorities.

Please contact a member of the **staff** or clergy if you have questions regarding this policy.

Appendix A

Abuse Response Guidelines

First United Methodist Church
Waukesha, WI

Purpose: To provide guidance for the church, its staff, and responsible committees in responding to verified or strongly indicated abuse of a **Vulnerable Person**.

1. Provision of Emergency Care: Medical attention for abused minors will be obtained as soon as abuse is observed or strongly suspected.
2. Parental Notification: The pastor or other designated staff person will notify the parent(s) of the abuse immediately.
3. Legal Notification: The pastor or other designated staff person will notify the police of the incident immediately.
4. Protecting Evidence: The staff and church administration will make every effort to secure evidence of abuse to assist with the police investigation and to prevent subsequent tampering with/or destruction of evidence. This will include soliciting input from the police.
5. Media Communication: All media inquiries will be directed to the Conference office. Local staff and church administration will offer no information about the incident to the media.
6. Documentation: Dated and signed records will be kept by relevant staff and church administration to document each contact with anyone immediately involved in the incident, the reporting of the incident and/or subsequent disposition of the incident. Decisions related to the disposition of the response to abuse will also be documented. This documentation will be confidential and kept in a single file in a central, secured (locked), file cabinet.
7. Disposition of the Abuser: Every effort must be made to prevent continuing contact between the abuser and any potentially at-risk individuals or situations.
8. Staff Cooperation: An emergency meeting of church staff will take place within 48 hours of notification of the event to plan the staff's continued response to the situation.
9. Pastoral Care for the Victim and Family: The pastor(s) will offer resources and recommendations for pastoral care for the victim and victim's family as warranted. The church will keep a list of external resources qualified to provide competent pastoral care for victims of abuse in case circumstances demand an outside resource.
10. Pastoral Care for the Family of the Abuser: The pastor(s) will offer resources and recommendations for pastoral care for the family of the abuser as warranted. The church will keep a list of external resources qualified to provide competent pastoral care for abuse situations in case circumstances demand an outside resource.

Appendix B

Response Plan for Unknown Persons on Premises

First United Methodist Church
Waukesha, WI

If during a regularly scheduled program for **Vulnerable Persons**, an unknown person enters the program area (including but not limited to the entire building/property) certain responses should be followed.

When an **adult** identifies a person who is either unknown to them or not clearly identified, the **adult** should:

1. Approach the individual with care and concern inquiring about their needs.
2. After the individual has stated his/her concern/needs, escort them to the **adult leader** or **staff** person and allow them to help the individual.
3. If the person states no specific need or reason for being in the building or on the premises, escort them to the **adult leader** or **staff** person who will then escort the individual to a common space for further assistance as needed.
4. If threatening or violent language/actions are witnessed, ask the person to leave the building/premises immediately. If the person refuses to leave; contact the police immediately.

Any person who is not with the program should not be allowed to wander around the area when **Vulnerable Persons** are present. They should be supervised at all times until they leave the premises. Designated waiting areas for **adults** not participating in the program should be provided. If possible, this area should be visible to the program leader for monitoring purposes.

Appendix C

Critical Incident Reporting Process

First United Methodist Church
Waukesha, WI

Purpose:

To attain resolution and healing for those involved in reportable critical incidents at First United Methodist Church.

Process:

1. The initial report or incident report is received by a **staff** member. If the report is not in the form of an incident report, the **staff** member will complete one.
2. The incident is shared with the lead pastor as well as other pastoral and program **staff** as soon as possible. If the incident is a criminal act, or if the reporting party requests it, law enforcement will be notified immediately. If the **staff** members are unclear about the law, law enforcement will be consulted.
3. The lead **staff** person and the clergy will meet with all parties who may be accused of wrongdoing (and parents/guardians if the accused party is a minor) as soon as possible to report the incident and begin moving toward resolution.
4. The reporting parties will be kept informed of progress on the process.

Additional Reporting:

1. If warranted, the lead pastor will call the District Superintendent as soon as possible to report the incident.
2. The District Superintendent will inform the Bishop of the incident.
3. The Staff-Parish Relations Committee will be informed of the incident as well as how the process is progressing. Names of the accused and victims will be withheld except as significant extenuating circumstances may dictate.

Confidentiality:

1. Unless the safety of the congregation or members of the congregation is threatened by withholding the information, the circumstances of the incident and the names of any accused and/or victims will be kept confidential.
2. Documentation, including the incident report and any other records relevant to the incident will be kept in a secured metal cabinet in the church office for a period of 4 years from the date of the incident or as otherwise required under this policy.

Appendix D
Incident/Complaint Report Form

First United Methodist Church
Waukesha, WI
(please print all information clearly)

Name(s) and Age(s) of minor(s) involved:

Date of incident: _____ Time of incident: _____

Name and Address of Parent or Guardian:

Description of incident: (include location, names of all involved or who witnessed the incident, any evidence of injuries or property damage, how resolved)

Witnesses:

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Person completing report (Print) _____ Phone: _____

Signed: _____ Date: _____

(see other side)

This Incident/Complaint Form should be completed anytime an adult observes or receives a report of inappropriate conduct including:

- * Possession or use of illegal substances, the illegal use of controlled substances, or underage use of alcohol on the grounds of First UMC or at a First UMC sponsored or sanctioned activity.
- * Significant and willful disruption of activities, willful damage to property, verbal or physical assault, or offensive disrespect to another.
- * Non-segregated sleeping space for minors of opposite sex during an overnight activity.

If unsure if this form should be completed, check with a staff person.

When complete, turn Incident/Complaint Form into a clergy person. If the grievance is against a clergy person, turn it into the District Superintendent and the chairperson of Staff-Parish Relations Committee.

Appendix E
Permission/Medical Release Form

First United Methodist Church
Waukesha, WI

Participant: _____ Date: _____

Family email: _____

This form is to ensure informed parental consent for activities that are sponsored by First United Methodist Church of Waukesha off-site or overnight. This form is valid until August 31st after the date above. It provides consent for treatment of minors who become ill or injured during the course of activities. We will make every effort to contact the person(s) named below. An additional Event Release Form (Appendix F) will be required for each specific event.

Please sign and date both sides!

Emergency Contact Information

First Contact Name: _____

Relationship to participant: _____

Phone numbers: _____

Second Contact Name: _____

Relationship to participant: _____

Phone numbers: _____

Insurance Information

Name of insurance company : _____

Full name of insured cardholder: _____

Birth date of insured cardholder: _____

Policy I.D. number: _____

Customer service phone number on back of card: _____

***Please have a copy of your health insurance card on file at First UMC.**

I, the undersigned parent or guardian, do hereby give my permission for my child or legal ward, _____, to participate in First United Methodist Church activities. In order for my child or legal ward to receive necessary medical treatment from medical staff and/or physicians in a medical clinic or hospital in case of illness or injury, I hereby authorize the activity leaders to obtain and consent to medical treatment for such illness or injury during the above specified activity or activities. I hereby release, discharge and hold harmless on behalf of myself and my child, First United Methodist Church of Waukesha and its designated leadership, agents and employees from any and all debts, claims, demands or costs, including attorney fees, all causes of action or suits of any kind which may arise or be occasioned as a result of my child's participation in this activity or activities. I understand and acknowledge that by participating in this activity, there is the possibility of illness, injury or death and that my child or legal ward and I are assuming the risk for such illness or injury by her/his participation. I realize that I am ultimately responsible for paying any medical bills.

Signature of **Parent/Guardian**

Date: _____

Signature of **Participant**

Date: _____

Health History:

Date of birth: _____

Allergies/special health concerns/dietary needs: _____

Medication(s) you can **NOT** take: _____

Medication(s) being taken: _____

Any medical history that needs to be noted: _____

Any special educational needs/concerns (ADH, autism, etc.): _____

What adults are authorized to pick up your child/ward from an event/class (please list all names): _____

Program Participant Behavior Covenant

(*To be signed by children, youth and adult participants.)

As representatives of Christ and the Church, we, the participants in the First UMC Youth Program/vulnerable adult program, take seriously our responsibility to care for one another. This covenant represents our affirmation of our concern for the well-being of the total community. We covenant with each other to insure the safety of all, to make our time together most meaningful, and to care for the facility which we share.

In addition to our general concern for our community, we agree specifically to:

- Leave vehicles parked and unoccupied.
- Remain on the program site unless having been given permission to leave.
- Attend all activities including meals.
- On overnight activities, observe scheduled curfew by being in rooms, quiet and not disturbing others. Never enter the room of someone of the other gender.
- Not use or possess tobacco products, electronic cigarettes, illegal drugs, alcohol or drugs of any kind.
- Not bring animals, weapons, illegal substances, explosives, fireworks, alcohol, or dangerous materials.
- Respect the person, property and equipment of others.
- Respect people regardless of race, age, ethnicity, religion, gender, physical differences and orientation.
- We will use language, behavior, and attitudes consistent with the Christian faith.

I agree to follow all of the above because I want to represent Jesus in a positive manner at all times.

Participant Signature

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

Appendix F
Event Release Form
First United Methodist Church
Waukesha, WI

Participant Name: _____

Parent/Guardian Name: _____

Event Name: _____

Event Date and Time: _____

I have a current Permission/Medical Release form on file at the church. The contact and medical information on that form is still accurate.

I (parent/guardian) give permission for my son/daughter/ward to participate in the event listed above. I understand that I will be contacted in case of medical and/or behavioral problems and, in extreme circumstances, may be asked to pick up my child.

If my child/ren/ward becomes ill or injured during the course of the above named event, I (parent/guardian) give permission for the adult leader/s providing supervision of this event to seek medical treatment as deemed appropriate.

Permission to Transport Youth or Vulnerable Person with One Adult in the Vehicle:

I, the undersigned parent or guardian, do hereby give permission for my child,
_____, to be transported to and/or from this event by
_____.

Special Circumstances (ex: I will pick up my son/daughter/ward early, I give permission for another parent to pick up my son/daughter, I have an alternate phone number for the evening, etc.):

Signed: _____
(signature of parent/guardian)

Date: _____

Appendix I
**Acknowledgement of Receipt of
Safe Sanctuaries Policy**

First United Methodist Church
Waukesha, WI

By my signature below, I acknowledge that I have received and read a copy of the Safe Sanctuaries Policy (including the Sex Offender Policy and Weapons Policy) of First United Methodist Church of Waukesha. I will abide by the rules and policies of this document.

Print name: _____

Signed name: _____

Date: _____