

Safe Sanctuary Policy

Of

Calvary United Methodist Church

**Approved – July 23, 2017**

Safe Sanctuary Policy  
Calvary United Methodist Church  
Johnstown PA

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**Calvary United Methodist Church  
Johnstown, Pennsylvania  
Safe Sanctuary Policy**

**I. Purpose**

1. To help Calvary United Methodist Church provide a caring, safe, and secure environment for children, youth and vulnerable adults in all phases of church life.
2. To help Calvary United Methodist Church reduce its legal risk and liability exposure.
3. To protect our staff (paid and unpaid) from legal risk and liability exposure.

**II. Mandates**

**1. Biblical Mandate**

Calvary United Methodist Church seeks to express God's love of children and provide for their personal wholeness. This caring community seeks to prevent abuse of any form to our children, youth, and vulnerable adults and to be in ministry to families where abuse may occur. The Bible is foundational to our understanding upon which all policies, procedures, and ministries must stand.

*And they were bringing children to him, that He might touch them and the disciples rebuked them. But when Jesus saw it He was indignant and said to them, let the children come to me, do not hinder them; for to such belongs the kingdom of God. Truly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child shall not enter it. And He took them in his arms and blessed them, laying his hands upon them. (Mark 10:13-16.)*

Jesus teaches us explicitly that children have the right and the keys to the Kingdom of God. He demonstrated this through blessing and touch. Our goal in response to this Biblical mandate is to maintain a safe, secure and loving place where children may grow. A place where caregivers, teachers, and leaders (both paid and volunteer) minister appropriately to their needs.

**2. General Conference United Methodist Church Mandate**

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

*Jesus said, "whoever welcomes a child...welcomes me." (Matthew 18:5) Children are our present and our future, our hope, our teachers, our inspiration. They are full participants in the life of the church and in the realm of God. Jesus also said, "If any of you put a stumbling block before one of these little ones, it would be better for you if a great millstone were fastened around your neck and you were drowned in the depth of the sea." (Matthew 18:6). Our children call us to offer both hospitality and protection to the little ones, the children. The Social Principles of The United Methodist Church state that "...children must be protected from economic, physical and sexual exploitation, and abuse."*

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

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

God calls us to make our churches safe places, protecting children and other vulnerable persons from child abuse. God calls us to create communities of faith where children and adults grow safe and strong. (From **The Book of Resolutions of The United Methodist Church.1996.**

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### 3. **Pennsylvania State Mandate**

All volunteers having contact with children, youth, and/or vulnerable adults shall have 1.) Act 33-PA Childline Clearance and 2.) Act 34-PA State Police Criminal background check. *If a volunteer has not been a Pennsylvania resident for 10 years, then they also need an FBI Criminal Background check.* Pennsylvania law states these clearances much be updated every five years.

All paid staff having contact with children, youth, and/or vulnerable adults shall have the following three clearances: Act 33-PA Childline Clearance, Act 34-PA State Police Criminal background check, and FBI Record Check.

The Child Protective Services Law (CPSL) specifies that any individual who comes into contact with children in the course of their volunteer work or professional practice is a **mandated reporter**. These people are considered mandated reporters under Pennsylvania law: 1.) Clergy of any regularly established church or other religious organization and 2.) An individual, paid or unpaid, who, on the basis of the individual's role as an integral part of a regularly scheduled program, activity or service, accepts responsibility for a child; e.g., Sunday School teacher, VBS leader, youth worker, etc. All youth, ages 14-18, are also considered mandated reporters. A mandated reporter must contact **Childline at 1-800-932-0313** directly if abuse is **suspected**.

## III. Definitions

1. Children are birth through sixth grade.
2. Youth are seventh through twelve grade.
3. Vulnerable adults are defined as 1.) mentally or 2.) physically disabled.

## **IV. Types of Child Abuse**

### **A. Definition**

Child abuse refers to an act committed by a parent, caregiver or person (whether an adult or a peer) in a position of trust (even though he/she may not care for the child on a daily basis) which is not accidental and which harms or threatens to harm a child's physical or mental health or welfare.

### **B. Types of Abuse**

#### **1. Physical Abuse**

Abuse in which a person deliberately and intentionally causes bodily harm to a child. Examples include violent battery with a weapon (knife, belt, strap, etc.), burning, shaking, kicking, tickling, choking, fracturing bones, and any of a wide variety of non-accidental injuries to a child's body.

#### **2. Emotional Abuse**

Abuse in which a person exposes a child to spoken and/or unspoken violence or emotional cruelty. Emotional abuse sends a message to the child of worthlessness, badness, and being not only unloved but undeserving of love and care. Children exposed to emotional abuse may have experienced being locked in a closet, being deprived of any sign of parental affection, being constantly told they are bad or stupid, or being allowed or forced to abuse alcohol or drugs. Emotional abuse is often very difficult to prove and is devastating to the victim.

#### **3. Neglect**

Abuse in which a person endangers a child's health, safety, or welfare through negligence. Neglect may include withholding food, clothing, medical care, education, and even affection and affirmation of the child's self-worth. This is perhaps the most common form of abuse.

#### **4. Sexual Abuse**

Abuse in which sexual contact between a child and an adult (or another older and more powerful youth) occurs. The child is never truly capable of consenting to or resisting such contact and/or such sexual acts. Often, the child is physically and psychologically dependent upon the perpetrator of the abuse. Examples of sexual abuse may include fondling, intercourse, incest, and the exploitation of and exposure to child pornography or prostitution.

#### **5. Ritual Abuse**

Abuse in which physical, sexual, or psychological violations of a child are inflicted regularly, intentionally, and in a stylized way by a person or persons responsible for the child's welfare. The abuser may appeal to some higher authority or power to justify the abuse. The abuse may include the cruel treatment of animals or repeated threats of harm to the child, other persons, and animals. Reports of ritual abuse are often extremely horrifying and may seem too grim to be true. Children making such reports must not be ignored.

V. **Reducing the Risk of Child Abuse**

In an effort to create the safest possible environment for children, youth, and vulnerable adults, and to minimize the church's and workers' vulnerability to unwarranted accusation, the following procedures have been adopted and will be enforced:

1. **Six Month Rule**

No volunteer worker will be considered for any ministry involving contact with children, youth, or vulnerable adults until they have been an active participant in the Church for at least six (6) months. Additionally, they will be partnered with a seasoned mentor for the first six (6) months of their assignment.

2. **Screening Procedures**

Prior to consideration for a paid staff position at Calvary United Methodist Church, the candidate must complete and return an Employee Application Form (Appendix A). The application will be reviewed by the Staff-Pastor-Parish Relations Committee to make certain that the candidate will be appropriate for the position, based on information provided. Two references will be required to confirm the information provided. Any information indicating that a candidate poses a threat to others or has any prior history of physical or sexual abuse directed against another person will result in the immediate removal for the candidate from consideration for a position with the church.

All paid staff shall have the following three clearances: 1.) Act 33-PA Childline Clearance, 2.) Act 34-PA State Police Criminal background check and 3.) FBI Record Check.

All volunteers having contact with children, youth and/or vulnerable adults shall have 1.) Act 33-PA Childline Clearance and 2.) Act 34-PA State Police Criminal background check. If a volunteer has not been a Pennsylvania resident for 10 years, then they also need an FBI Criminal Background check. Pennsylvania law states these clearances must be updated every five years.

Leaders of community groups of children, youth, and vulnerable adults who use the church facilities must adhere to all requirements of this policy, including clearances, in order to continue to use the church facilities.

The church requires clearances for the Pastor's spouse and any adult members of the family living in the parsonage.

All documentation information will remain confidential and filed in the Church office.

3. **Staff Training**

Before beginning their first year of service, volunteer workers with children, youth and vulnerable adults will be required to read the church's Safe Sanctuary Policy, complete and sign a Volunteer Covenant Statement (Appendix B) indicating that they have read and understood the policy and agree to abide by it. No one will be permitted to serve until the policy has been read and the form signed. The form shall become part of the permanent record.

A training event, including the church's Safe Sanctuary Policy, will be held annually in the fall for new and seasoned workers. These training sessions will be conducted by the Pastor and the Education Team.

4. **Two-Adult Rule**

There must be at least two adults present at every function, in each classroom, or other closed areas, during every child, youth, or vulnerable adult ministry program. Other church-sponsored or community groups of children or youth who meet at the church must have two or more adults present.

5. **No Workers Under the Age of 18**

All workers with children, youth and vulnerable adults must be at least 18 years of age. Children or youth under age 18 can serve as "helpers" in situations such as nursery and Bible School but only under adult supervision and as specified in items #4 and #6.

6. **5-Year Older Rule**

Workers with children, youth, and vulnerable adults must be at least five (5) years older than the students.

7. **Sign-in and Sign-out Procedures**

Workers with children, youth, or vulnerable adults, should arrive at least 15 minutes before a scheduled activity and watch over those in their care until they are dismissed. Workers are to release children in their care only to a parent or a person designated by the parent.

Teachers in the Church school will have information sheets (provided in their curriculum resources) completed by a parent for each student in their classroom. An information sheet will contain names of designated persons to whom a teacher can release a student. In the case of students attending Church School unaccompanied by a parent, the information sheet will be sent home for the parent to complete, designating that a child can be released without a designated adult. At special events such as Bible School or Children's Workshop, a sign-in/sign-out sheet will be utilized.

8. **Classroom Discipline**

All teachers and workers will use the following discipline measures: If a child is behaving inappropriately, the teacher or worker will tell the child specifically what he/she is doing that is not acceptable and state what the expected behavior is, e.g., "We do not throw the blocks. We use blocks for building." If this measure is not effective, the child will be guided to another activity. If the inappropriate behavior continues, the child may be placed at a table to work alone away from the other students or placed in a timeout chair. The church may opt to assign a teacher's aide to work one-on-one with the disruptive child. If the child's disruptive behavior continues after these steps have been taken, the child may be taken to the Office of the Sunday School Superintendents and left under the supervision of the Sunday School Superintendents. No physical punishment or verbal abuse, e.g., ridicule, are to be used at any time. If isolating the child within the classroom or removal of the child from the room becomes necessary, a teacher, Sunday school superintendent or the pastor will discuss the situation with the child's parents or guardian as soon as possible.

9. **Potty Policy**

No youth will be permitted to take children to the bathroom. They can lead children to the bathroom but an adult must be on duty. Allow for complete privacy unless an emergency; get parents if needed. Diapering by an adult other than a parent must be in an open, visible area.

10. **Open Classrooms**

Windows are installed in all children and youth meeting rooms to allow for easy monitoring. Meeting rooms may be visited without prior notice by church staff, parents, or other volunteer church workers, e.g., Sunday School Superintendent. Brief observations of the meeting rooms are to be conducted by the Child Advocate, Sunday School Superintendents, or Pastor during church school hours. An usher or assigned adult will monitor the classrooms of children and youth during the worship service.

11. **Basic Procedures for Ministry in a Virtual World**

- a. All computers in the church will be blocked from access. Only adult supervision will have usernames and passwords, which will be changed when adult supervision changes.
- b. The Computer Lab door will be kept locked when not in use. Children and youth must be accompanied by their adult leaders in order to access the computer lab for resource assignments.
- c. The weekly church bulletin will note that all cell phones and other electronic devices should be set in silent mode during the worship service. Children and youth will be asked to turn off cell phones and other electronic devices during church school or other special events at Calvary United Methodist Church.
- d. An Education Workshop for older elementary and middle school students and parents will be held annually to discuss the appropriate and inappropriate use of social media.
- e. Pastor, employees, volunteers, youth leaders, must sign and adhere to a *Ministry Covenant Regarding the Use of Facebook and Other Social Media*. (Appendix C-F)
- f. Music and video licenses will be renewed annually.
- g. Newsletter/Newsletter subscription will be renewed annually which provides articles and clip arts that can be used legally and easily. Also, there are options within the computer that provide photos and images that are free and legally available for use.
- h. The church will seek permission or pay the necessary fees to use artwork that is copyrighted.
- i. Parents will be asked to sign the Authorization Form for Photo and Video Usage which will give the church guidelines on taking and using photographs of children and youth. (Appendix G).
- j. The Church Child Advocate is assigned the task of checking the “Megan’s Law” in order to discover the names and addresses of offenders in the community and to share that information with those who “need to know” in the church.



12. **Meetings Other than Sunday**

When meetings are held in the church, all outside entrance doors will be locked after everyone has arrived and the meeting has begun. In order to reduce the likelihood that a child, youth, or vulnerable adult could be isolated and targeted by a perpetrator of abuse during special events or removed from the event by an unauthorized individual, a sign-in and sign-out sheet will be utilized.

13. **Transportation and Off-site Procedures**

Children and youth being transported to or from church activities or programs will be accompanied by at least two adults. An exception to that rule would be in the case of caravan-style driving (two or more vehicles traveling together).

No driver under the age of 18 will be used to transport children or youth. A Permission Slip (Appendix H) will be obtained from the parent or guardian when students are being transported to activities beyond the church building.

In the case of church-owned vehicles, there must be a screening and training of drivers. The church must have proper insurance coverage. The two-adult rule will apply and passenger records must be kept on board.

14. **Overnight Events**

Adult leaders will never share a bed with a child or be alone in a room with a child.

The adults must be of the same gender as the students they are chaperoning. In a cabin setting, two adults must be in a large room with multiple bunk beds. Children and youth will not be permitted to have cell phones at the event.

15. **Counseling Sessions**

No counseling appointments will be held off church property with exception: Sessions may be held in public areas, such as restaurants, where others are present. Pastor and Youth leaders will never counsel behind closed doors. Pastor and youth leader will never visit children or youth alone at home. Care should be given in dress, language use, and alcohol/tobacco/firearms activities.

Adult Survivors of Abuse Support: Recognizing that the wounds of child abuse are often reopened when certain circumstances occur when working with children, adult survivors of child abuse will be given special support from Clergy. The pastor will listen and assess the level of involvement that would be appropriate for the survivor.

14. **Building Safety Issues**

The Trustees will annually check the building to ensure its safety for children and youth, ie. evacuation charts, fire extinguishers, safety plugs in outlets, no knives or dangerous items in areas where they could be accessed by children, equipment checked for safety and whether it meets state requirements, etc. Closet areas or areas that have a potential for hiding will be locked.

## VI. Reporting Child Abuse

The Child Protective Services Law (CPSL) specifies that any individual who comes into contact with children in the course of their volunteer work or professional practice (including youth ages 14-18) is a **mandated reporter**. Effective December 31, 2014, these people are considered mandated reporters under Pennsylvania law: 1.) Clergy of any regularly established church or other religious organization and 2.) An individual, paid or unpaid, who, on the basis of the individual's role as an integral part of a regularly scheduled program, activity or service, accepts responsibility for a child; e.g., Sunday School teacher, VBS leader, youth worker, etc. A mandated reporter must contact **Childline at 1-800-932-0313** directly if abuse is **suspected**.

Depending on the urgency of the situation, a call should also be made to Children and Youth Services or a call to 911.

If any allegations are made concerning child abuse at Calvary United Methodist Church, the following procedures, as directed by the Offices of the Resident Bishop and Chancellors of the Western Pennsylvania Conference, The United Methodist Church, will be followed:

1. Treat any allegations of abuse seriously. Do not ignore the allegations in the hope that they will go away.
2. If the allegations in any way concern a member of the clergy, report the alleged incident(s) immediately to the District Superintendent.
3. If the allegations do not concern a member of the clergy, immediately notify the Pastor. The Pastor should notify the District Superintendent and, if the accused is a staff member, the Pastor should also notify the Chairperson of the Pastor-parish Relations Committee.
4. The District Superintendent should notify the Chancellor.
5. The District Superintendent or the Pastor should notify the parents if it appears that they have no previous knowledge of the matter.
6. Report the allegations to the appropriate law enforcement authorities as is required by state law. (Twenty-four hour suspected child abuse number is 800-932-0313.)
7. Either the District Superintendent or the Pastor should immediately notify the church's insurance company. (This notification should also be confirmed in writing.)
8. Everyone involved should observe confidentiality for both the victim and the accused.
9. The accused should be immediately suspended from his or her duties. (Issues of compensation should be dealt with on a case-by-case basis.)
10. All media inquiries should be referred to the Resident Bishop and, if the Resident Bishop is unavailable, to the Assistant to the Bishop.

11. Always show care and comfort for the alleged victims, the accused and their families. Communicate a sincere commitment to their spiritual and emotional well-being.
12. The accused should be advised to seek legal or other counsel.

**VII. Policy Administration**

All aspects and procedures of the Safe Sanctuary Policy shall be administered by Calvary United Methodist Church Child Advocate with Education Team.

**Policy Review**

The Safe Sanctuary Policy of Calvary United Methodist Church shall be reviewed annually by the Staff-Pastor-Parish Relations Committee. If changes are made to the Policy, Church Council must approve.

Reviewed and Revised on July 14, 2017  
Approved at Church Council on July 23, 2017

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Staff-Pastor-Parish Relations Committee Chair

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Chair, Administrative Council

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Pastor

## Employee Application

Position Applied for: \_\_\_\_\_ Date Available to Start: \_\_\_\_\_

**Personal**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
 E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Social Security #: \_\_\_\_\_

Age:  Under 18  18-25  over 25                      Sex:  Male  Female

Marital Status:  Single  Married  Divorced  Widowed

Have you any health problems which may affect your performance of duties?  Yes  No

If yes, explain \_\_\_\_\_

In case of emergency, whom shall we notify?

	Name	Phone
Have you at any time ever:		
Been arrested for any reason?		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Been convicted, or plead no contest to a crime either a misdemeanor or a felony?		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Engaged in, or been accused of, any child molestation, exploitation, abuse, or improper conduct involving a minor.		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

If the answer to any of these questions is "yes", please explain in detail:

\_\_\_\_\_

**Qualifications:**

Academic achievements: (Schools attended, degrees earned, dates of completion)

\_\_\_\_\_

Continuing education completed: (Courses taken, dates of completion)

\_\_\_\_\_

Professional organizations: (List any in which you have membership)

\_\_\_\_\_

First aid training?  Yes  No                      Date completed: \_\_\_\_\_  
 CPR training?  Yes  No                      Date completed: \_\_\_\_\_

**Previous Work Experience:**

List previous employers from the past five years. Include job title, description of position duties and responsibilities, name and address of the employer, name of your immediate supervisor and dates you were employed in each position.

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**Previous Volunteer Experience**

List any relevant ministry or other volunteer positions you have held and list the duties you performed in each position, the name of your supervisor, address and phone number of the volunteer organization and the dates of your volunteer service.

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**Church Activity**

What church or churches have you attended in the past five years?

Church Name	Pastor's name	Years Attended
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What spiritual gifts and talents do you possess that have prepared you for this job setting in the church?

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**References (Other than Relatives)**

Name/Relationship	Address	Phone
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**Applicant Verification & Release**

I hereby certify that the information I have provided on this application for employment is true and correct. I authorize Calvary United Methodist Church to verify the information I have provided by contacting references, employers, or others I have listed. I authorize the references and employers listed in this application to give you whatever information they may have regarding my character and fitness for the job for which I have applied. I authorize Calvary United Methodist Church to obtain a Pennsylvania State Police Criminal Record Check and a Pennsylvania Child Abuse History Clearance. Furthermore, I waive any rights I may have to confidentiality.

I have carefully read the policy and procedures of the Calvary United Methodist Church and in the event that my application is accepted and I become employed by the Church, I agree to abide by and be bound by the policies of the Church and to refrain from inappropriate conduct in the performance of my duties on behalf of the Calvary United Methodist Church.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Applicant

\_\_\_\_\_  
Witness

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Calvary United Methodist Church  
Volunteer Covenant Statement

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Birthdate: \_\_\_\_\_

In which children/youth program(s) are you currently involved? \_\_\_\_\_

What spiritual gifts and talents do you possess that have prepared you to work in this job setting within the church? \_\_\_\_\_

Can you make a one-year commitment to this volunteer role?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Would you be available for periodic volunteer training sessions?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Have you at any time ever:		
Been arrested for any reason?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Been convicted, or plead no contest to, a crime (misdemeanor or a felony)?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Engaged in, or been accused of, any child molestation, exploitation, abuse, or improper conduct involving a minor?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Are you aware of:		
Having traits or tendencies that could pose a threat to children, youth, or others?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Any reason why you should not work with children, youth, or others?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

If the answer to any of these questions is "yes", please explain in detail:

\_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**Applicant Verification & Release**

I recognize that the Calvary United Methodist Church is committed to providing a safe and secure environment for all children, youth, and volunteers who participate in ministries and activities sponsored by the church.

I recognize that the Calvary United Methodist Church is relying on the information contained herein. Accordingly, I attest and affirm that all of the information that I have provided is absolutely true and correct. I further authorize Calvary United Methodist Church to obtain a Pennsylvania State Police Criminal Record Check and a Pennsylvania Child Abuse History Clearance.

I have carefully read the Safe Sanctuary Policy of the Calvary United Methodist Church and agree to abide by all policies and procedures of the Church and to protect the health and safety of the children/youth at all times.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Applicant

\_\_\_\_\_  
Witness

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## Pastoral Ministry Covenant Regarding the Use of Facebook and Other Social Media

As a child of God, a member of the church universal, and a clergyperson in Calvary United Methodist Church, I covenant to use Facebook and other social media in ways that bring honor to God and show respect for self and for all others who might view my postings on Facebook and other social media.

In particular, I covenant to *(initial in the space provided after you have read and agreed to each bulleted item)*:

- be cognizant of all that I post (in writing, image, and links and its reflection on me as a Christian and a leader in the church. \_\_\_\_\_
- recognize and respect that my behaviors and actions are also a reflection on those who are the connectional system of The United Methodist church. \_\_\_\_\_
- be mindful of the ways in which I offer personal information and how that affects my role and identity as a clergy leader and witness of Jesus Christ. \_\_\_\_\_
- take extra precautions to observe appropriate boundaries in my engagement in relationships online both pastoral and personal. \_\_\_\_\_

\* with others and children, this means \_\_\_\_\_

\* in establishing “friendships” with members of the congregation, this means \_\_\_\_\_

- take extra care not to be a hindrance to or cause harm to the pastor or the ministries of any church and congregation I have previously served. \_\_\_\_\_

\* I will not speak negatively or disparagingly about the current pastor or staff or the leadership they provide. \_\_\_\_\_

\* I will absolve myself of all pastoral responsibility and authority regarding any congregation I have previously served. \_\_\_\_\_

\* I will seek permission of the pastor currently appointed before officiating at weddings, funerals, baptisms, or in any formal leadership capacity related to members of former congregations.

\_\_\_\_\_

- recognize and respect the privilege of utilizing social media as a tool for ministry. As such, I will regularly monitor the amount of time I spend on social media, the ways in which AI am utilizing it, and its effects on my ministry and service in Christ’s name. \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Witness: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Social Media Use Policy for Employees

Social networking is quickly becoming integrated into everyday life. Electronic tools aid us in communication, relationships, and information sharing in ways that were never before conceived as possible. The use of social media and networking often also causes lines to blur between work, personal life, and church relationships. In general, what you do in your personal time is a personal decision. However, activities during or outside of work that are shared via social media may have adverse effects on your job performance, leadership ability, and witness of Jesus Christ, and need to be considered carefully. By simply identifying yourself as an employee of Calvary United Methodist Church, either directly or as a part of your user profile, you are creating perceptions about what it means to be a part of Calvary United Methodist Church. As such, this policy is offered to provide official guidelines for social media use for all employees of Calvary United Methodist Church. It is the expectation that all who participate in social media use will understand and follow these guidelines.

As a child of God, a member of the church universal, and as an employee of Calvary United Methodist Church, I covenant and agree to use Facebook and other similar social media in ways that bring honor to God and show respect for self and for all others who might view my posts.

In particular, I covenant to *(initial in space provided after you have read and agreed to each bulleted item)*

- recognize and respect that my behaviors and actions online are also a reflection of how other Christians and people associated with Calvary United Methodist Church may be portrayed. \_\_\_\_\_
- recognize that all my posted words, images, and links are a reflection on me individually, as a disciple of Jesus Christ, and as an employee of Calvary United Methodist Church. Recognizing this, I will refrain from posting anything regarding inappropriate conduct, such as drug or alcohol use or any items that contain profanity, degrading humor of any kind ethnic or racial slurs, personal insults, obscenity, vulgarity, nudity, or pornography. \_\_\_\_\_
- obey the laws governing defamation discrimination, harassment, and copyright and fair use of proprietary or confidential information. \_\_\_\_\_
- work within my assigned ministry to establish appropriate boundaries especially as related to building relationships online with children, youth, parents, and other constituents of Calvary United Methodist Church. \_\_\_\_\_
- be very careful not to be a hindrance or cause harm to the staff, pastor, members, or ministries of Calvary United Methodist Church. \_\_\_\_\_
- speak respectfully in my online posts and communications of and to persons; I will refrain from negative or disrespectful posts as well as posts on objectional or inflammatory topics. \_\_\_\_\_
- respect confidentiality and personal privacy. If I receive confidential or private information regarding a person or family involved in Calvary United Methodist Church, I will not disseminate that information without receiving direct express consent and permission to do so. \_\_\_\_\_
- Respect differences, appreciate a diversity of opinions, and speak and conduct myself in a professional and ethical manner at all times. \_\_\_\_\_
- remember everything I post online is discoverable and can be seen and shared for a very long time. \_\_\_\_\_
- seek advice from the Pastor before posting anything if I have even a small doubt about the reasonableness of the post \_\_\_\_\_
- regularly monitor the amount of time I spend on social media, the ways in which I am utilizing social media, and its effects on my ministry and service in Christ's name. \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Witness: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_



## Social Media Use Policy for Volunteers

Social networking is quickly becoming integrated into everyday life. Electronic tools aid us in communication, relationships, and information sharing in ways that were never before conceived as possible. The use of social media and networking often also causes lines to blur between work, personal life, and church relationships. In general, what you do in your personal time is a personal decision. However, activities during or outside of volunteer work that are shared via social media may have adverse effects on your job performance, leadership ability, and witness of Jesus Christ, and need to be considered carefully. By simply identifying yourself as a volunteer of Calvary United Methodist Church, either directly or as a part of your user profile, you are creating perceptions about what it means to be a part of Calvary United Methodist Church. As such, this policy is offered to provide official guidelines for social media use for all volunteers of Calvary United Methodist Church. It is the expectation that all who participate in social media use will understand and follow these guidelines.

As a child of God, a member of the church universal, and as a volunteer of Calvary United Methodist Church, I covenant and agree to use Facebook and other similar social media in ways that bring honor to God and show respect for self and for all others who might view my posts.

In particular, I covenant to *(initial in the space provided after you have read and agreed to each bulleted item)*:

- recognize and respect that my behaviors and actions online are also a reflection of how other Christians and people associated with Calvary United Methodist Church may be portrayed. \_\_\_\_\_
- recognize that all my posted words, images, and links are a reflection on me individually, as a disciple of Jesus Christ, and as a volunteer of Calvary United Methodist Church. Recognizing this, I will refrain from posting anything regarding inappropriate conduct, such as drug or alcohol use or any items that contain profanity, degrading humor of any kind ethnic or racial slurs, personal insults, obscenity, vulgarity, nudity, or pornography. \_\_\_\_\_
- obey the laws governing defamation discrimination, harassment, and copyright and fair use of proprietary or confidential information. \_\_\_\_\_
- work within my assigned ministry to establish appropriate boundaries especially as related to building relationships online with children, youth, parents, and other constituents of Calvary United Methodist Church. \_\_\_\_\_
- be very careful not to be a hindrance or cause harm to the staff, pastor, members, or ministries of Calvary United Methodist Church.
- speak respectfully in my online posts and communications of and to persons; I will refrain from negative or disrespectful posts as well as posts on objectional or inflammatory topics. \_\_\_\_\_
- respect confidentiality and personal privacy. In the event I receive confidential or private information regarding a person or family involved in Calvary United Methodist Church, I will not disseminate that information without receiving direct express consent and permission to do so. \_\_\_\_\_
- respect differences, appreciate the diversity of opinions, and speak and conduct myself in a faithful and ethical manner at all times. \_\_\_\_\_
- remember everything I post online is discoverable and can be seen and shared for a very long time. \_\_\_\_\_
- seek advice from my Ministry Team Leader before posting anything if I have even a small doubt about the reasonableness of the post \_\_\_\_\_
- regularly monitor the amount of time I spend on social media, the ways in which I am utilizing social media, and its effects on my ministry and service in Christ's name. \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Witness: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Youth Ministry Leadership Covenant

As a leader in youth ministry, you are called to exhibit the highest of Christian values and serve in ways that honor Christ. Students in your care and charge are seeking and searching. They are hungry to discover even more fully what it means to be a Christ-follower. Your examples of servant leadership, compassion, kindness, forgiveness, self-control, patience, and love will serve as signposts throughout their journey.

This covenant is created to encourage your God-giftedness, your unique talents, and your leadership, while also helping you to establish and maintain appropriate and healthy relationships with the youth of our community.

Teamwork always takes precedence over individualism. The goal is community for everyone involved.

You can nurture disciples only as much as you offer yourself as a disciple. Gifted leaders have a passion for God and a desire to share God's love.

Youth will seek you out for advice, personal sharing, and direction. It is important that you respect the confidentiality with which something is shared unless you are required by law to share information you have been given.

It is the expectation that as a leader, our life will reflect a high level of personal and moral integrity.

While it is not prohibited for youth leaders to date one another, it does create an interesting dynamic, especially when a breakup occurs. If you date another youth leader, you are asked to use discretion and Christ-like judgment. It is absolutely prohibited for a youth leader to date or engage in any sexualized behavior with a youth. Sexual misconduct of any type will not be tolerated.

All of us face situations of fear, frustration, and loss in our lives. You are asked to refrain from sharing with youth information pertaining to your personal life issues. You are also asked to use careful and judicious judgment in sharing any past experiences of poor judgment or behavior as a teaching tool.

While it is most appropriate to be friendly to youth at youth group, in the community, and in the church, it is not appropriate to begin a friendship with youth that will spill over into fraternization outside of sponsored youth activities. Again, it is expressly prohibited for youth leaders to date youth. Maintaining appropriate boundaries with youth is an acknowledgment of the power differential that is implicit in your role as a leader. These boundaries will help you gain their respect and will enhance your ability and effectiveness in disciplining or counseling them.

As a child of God, a member of the church universal, and as a volunteer of Calvary United Methodist Church,

I covenant and agree to (*initial in the space provided after you have read and agree to each bulleted item*):

- not abuse alcohol or drugs in any inappropriate or illegal manner, engage in sexual immorality, or participate in the sharing of music that contains language or messages that others may find offensive.
- \_\_\_\_\_  
work as a team and submit myself and my will to the assigned leader of any particular mission, event, or activity. \_\_\_\_\_

- attend to my own spiritual growth through prayer, Bible study, worship, and participation in the community of faith. \_\_\_\_\_
- display exemplary moral character and integrity through my participation in online social media, the appropriate use of my cell phone and other mobile devices, and my engagement with others utilizing these devices. I will abstain from and encourage youth to abstain from sexting, cyberbullying, online harassment, and any type of Internet intimidation. \_\_\_\_\_
- engage with youth and fellow leaders in ways that allow us to build one another up, rather than demoralize, criticize, or demean. This includes the games we play and the jokes we share. \_\_\_\_\_
- be mindful and respectful of the safe spaces I create for youth:

\* I will avoid being alone with any youth behind closed doors, in a vehicle, or in any place where other adults are not present. \_\_\_\_\_

\* I will seek to encourage relationships and conversations in places of community that foster confidentiality, safety, and respect. \_\_\_\_\_

- respect and hold sacred the confidential information youth might share with me. However, I also covenant to operate within the boundaries of the law and will break confidences if legally required to do so. \_\_\_\_\_
- I will establish healthy boundaries in my interactions with youth and other youth leaders. This includes dating and sharing personal experiences and friendships beyond the youth group or counseling relationship. \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Witness: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Authorization Form for Photo and Video Usage

I, \_\_\_\_\_ (printed name of legal parent or guardian), authorize Calvary United Methodist Church to *(please initial in the space provided after each bulleted item that you authorize)*:

- take pictures of my child to be posted inside the church. \_\_\_\_\_
- take pictures of my child for use in printed publications and on the church's website and social media accounts.. \_\_\_\_\_
- include my child in videos that will be used for internal church purposes only (worship, internal communication, and invitation). \_\_\_\_\_
- include my child in videos that will be used on the church's website and social media accounts. \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Field Trip Permission Slip

\_\_\_\_\_ has permission to attend a Field Trip to

\_\_\_\_\_ on \_\_\_\_\_

from \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_.

I give permission for \_\_\_\_\_ to receive emergency medical treatment in case of an emergency.

Contact:

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_