



Safe Sanctuaries: Policies, Procedures & Guidelines Manual

CONCERNING CHILDREN, YOUTH AND VULNERABLE ADULTS

SUN PRAIRIE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

SUN PRAIRIE, WISCONSIN

This document was most recently updated by Director of Family Ministries, Daniel Taylor on the 23 July 2026, updates requested via audit at or by the 27th of May 2026 meeting of the Safe Sanctuaries team at Sun Prairie United Methodist Church. Following the completion of updates, this document was presented to the Accountable Leadership Board for review and approval of updates on the 23rd of July 2026. Previous versions of this document have been archived for our records and may be referenced. Trainings done using previous versions of this document are still valid, until 3 years after the training was complete, though this document should be referenced for any questions regarding current policies and best practices. Highlights of important updates have been provided to all staff and relevant volunteers. All new trainings and re-trainings, after the 1st of August 2026 should reference this version of the document until the next update following audits that will be performed on or by May 2027.

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SPUMC Mission Statement

Sun Prairie United Methodist Church's mission is to invite and welcome people to be committed and compassionate followers of Jesus Christ through worship, through spiritual growth, through fellowship and through service to others.

SPUMC Vision Statement

To be a welcoming home where we share God's love.

Safe Sanctuaries Vision Statement

Our vision is to join together as a family of Christians at the Sun Prairie United Methodist Church ("SPUMC" or "Church") for the purpose of providing a nurturing environment that promotes the physical safety and the emotional and spiritual well-being of all of God's people.

SPUMC Reconciling Statement

Our welcome knows no boundaries. The people of the Sun Prairie United Methodist Church open our doors and our hearts to all God's children. We celebrate the diversity of God's creation. We answer Jesus' call to 'love your neighbor' by embracing every person as a full participant in our church family, including people of all ages, nations, races, abilities, sexual orientations, and gender identities.

We proclaim this statement of welcome especially to anyone who has known the pain of exclusion or discrimination through religion or in society. The people of the Sun Prairie United Methodist Church strive to love as God loves and welcome all to grow in their relationship with God.

Introduction

Some people brought their children to Jesus so that he could bless them by placing his hands on them. But his disciples told the people to stop bothering him. When Jesus saw this, he became angry and said, “Let the children come to me! Don’t try to stop them. People who are like these little children belong to the kingdom of God. I promise you that you cannot get into God’s kingdom, unless you accept it the way a child does.” Then Jesus took the children in his arms and blessed them by placing his hands on them. (Mark 10:13-16, CEV)

This scripture reference speaks of the value our Lord placed on children and the example of faith that they provide for the rest of us. As followers of Jesus, we understand that children/youth are inherently valuable members of Christ’s community.

An individual’s vulnerability places us closer to God but also can put us at risk. Jesus was teaching 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 also learn from each other as we all grow in faith.

Our culture appears to be experiencing an increase in the incidence of abuse and neglect. 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 the children and other vulnerable individuals, including church staff and volunteers who participate in our ministries.

The General Conference of the United Methodist Church first adopted, in April 1996, a resolution aimed at reducing the risk of child sexual abuse in the church. The resolution was amended and readopted in 2020. The resolution includes the following statement: “Children must be protected from economic, physical, emotional, and sexual exploitation and abuse.”

God calls us to make our congregations safe places, protecting children and other vulnerable persons from sexual and ritual abuse.

Such incidents are devastating to all who are involved: the child, the family, the local church and its leaders. Increasingly, churches are torn apart by the legal,

emotional, and monetary consequences of litigation following allegations of abuse.

God calls us to make our churches safe places, protecting children and other vulnerable persons from sexual and ritual abuse. God calls us to create communities of faith where children and adults grow safe and strong. (From the Book of Resolutions of the United Methodist Church-2016, pg.181-182.)

Since the time of the Resolution, then Wisconsin Bishop Sharon Rader strongly encouraged all United Methodist Churches to develop and implement a Safe Sanctuary program. The following guidelines, procedures and documents have been developed in response to this resolution and the Bishop's recommendations.

The Safe Sanctuaries Manual

The congregation of the SPUMC is committed to providing a safe and secure environment for all children, youth, vulnerable people, staff and volunteers who participate in ministries and activities sponsored by the Church. The following manual reflects our Congregation's commitment to preserving this Church as a holy place of safety and protection for all who enter and as a place in which all people can experience the love of God through relationships with others. This manual covers all Church directed and Church sponsored activities, regardless of the location of the activities. Locations covered under this manual include but are not limited to the Church building and the Wesley House.

Safe Sanctuaries Policies

Policies are procedures that will be followed for every individual who wishes to work with and/or volunteer with children, youth and vulnerable individuals at SPUMC as well as at Church directed activities and Church sponsored activities. Policies have been put into place by the Safe Sanctuaries Committee in order to best assure the safety and well-being of participants, volunteers and staff.

Exceptions to the policies will be reviewed by the Safe Sanctuaries Committee and documented as situations arise.

Volunteer Training Policy

All volunteers will be required to attend Safe Sanctuaries training in person or online and sign a form stating they have completed the required Safe Sanctuaries training every three years.

Volunteer Application and Background Check Policy

Each volunteer must have completed and signed a Volunteer Application Form and agree to have a completed background check at least every three years. No one may work as a volunteer with children, youth or a vulnerable person until a background check has been completed and the results are in compliance with the Safe Sanctuaries policies.

Any individual whose background check returns with a criminal history which is not in compliance with Safe Sanctuary policies will be referred to a

Pastor to determine when and how each person can be utilized as a volunteer. An individual convicted of certain crimes under Wisconsin State Statutes including, but not limited to, Chapter 46 (Social Services); Chapter 48 (Children's Code); Chapter 940 (Crimes against Life and Bodily Security); Chapter 944 (Crimes against Sexual Morality) and Chapter 948 (Crimes against Children) will not be permitted to work with children, youth and/or at risk individuals because those people are not in compliance with the Safe Sanctuaries policies. If a potential volunteer has been convicted of any similar crimes in other states, the individual will be referred to a Pastor to determine when and how the individual can be utilized as a volunteer.

Information regarding the implementation plan and process of background checks can be found in a later part of this manual.

Background Check Policy Process

Implementation Plan

The Safe Sanctuaries Committee has established an account with the ACS Realm who partners with Verified First and has designated two staff members to run background checks. The staff members will use the account appropriately or be removed from the position. The account is password protected.

Background checks on all clergy will be conducted through the Wisconsin Annual Conference.

It is the recommendation of the Staff Parish Relations Committee (SPRC) that all program staff, all non-program staff, such as the organist, the accompanist, the custodians, and other such staff and all clergy staff have a background check performed every three (3) years. A statement to this effect should be included in the Employee Guidebook. Each volunteer working with children, youth or vulnerable adults must have completed and signed a Volunteer Application Form, agree to have a completed background check and complete the Safe Sanctuaries Training at least every three years. Staff information will be reviewed during staff evaluations each year to see if staff members are due for training and background checks.

Every three (3) years, the pastor will conduct a background check on the Church Staff Members serving in the background check role. If these background checks are returned with any criminal history, one of the pastors will immediately notify the Church Staff and SPRC and remove Church Staff from this position and find a replacement.

The responsibilities of the Church Staff are to perform the background check in a timely manner and forward information on any background check with a criminal history that is contrary to the Safe Sanctuaries policies to the pastor; to approve an applicant whose background check is returned as “No Record;” and to notify the staff person in charge of the activity of the acceptance or non-acceptance of an applicant. The Church Staff does not evaluate the background check information on any record with a criminal history. They are only to conduct the background check and relay the results to the pastor.

Obtaining Background Check Information

Volunteers will be emailed a secure link from Realm and will be asked to fill out their information. Realm will then release an electronic copy of the volunteer’s background information to the designated staff person(s). Staff will not have access to the information given to Realm for the background check such as the volunteer’s social security number. The Church Staff then notifies one of the pastors of the results of the check. If the applicant’s criminal history is negative, meaning in full compliance with Safe Sanctuaries policies, the individual can begin working with children, youth and at-risk individuals. If a criminal history is found that is contrary to Safe Sanctuaries policies, further review and consultation of the pastor and staff person in charge of the activity will occur. They will determine if and where the individual can volunteer in the church.

On an annual basis, the program staff will notify the volunteers when it is time for them to attend Safe Sanctuaries Training and/or have their background checks run again. Letters will be sent to the volunteers with the appropriate form and/or links. The volunteers must complete and return the form(s)/links within a week of receiving the request. If the forms and links are not completed and returned within one week and if the background check is

not conducted, the individual will not be able to volunteer. If staff has notified the volunteer in writing twice and the volunteer does not return the form to Church, the pastor will inform the volunteer that the individual is not able to work with children, youth or at-risk individuals until the background check has been conducted and the volunteer is in compliance with Safe Sanctuaries policies. All reasonable efforts will be made by the staff; however, the responsibility is on the volunteer to be in full compliance with Safe Sanctuaries policies.

If a volunteer or staff member has an arrest or a conviction that is relevant to our safe sanctuaries policies and guidelines between the times of a three-year check, it must be reported to the Pastor within a week of the incident.

All information will be held in a secure file at the Sun Prairie United Methodist Church. Maintaining confidentiality and privacy of the volunteer's information is of the utmost concern to the Church. A locked filing cabinet will be kept in the locked work room. In the case of a clergy background check, the chair(s) of the SPRC will have access rather than the pastor. The pastor will review the plan for the filing system, and consult persons deemed appropriate for implementation.

Registered Sex Offenders

- 1) Staff may become aware that a registered sex offender is attending the church through a background check, through reliable public information such as the National Sex Offender Registry, or through communication with the individual.
- 2) Registered sex offenders will be asked by the Pastor and the chair of the Staff Parish Relations Committee to enter into a covenant relationship with the church by reading the guidelines and signing the Safety Covenant Agreement in the back of this manual.
- 3) Any registered sex offender refusing to sign the Safety Covenant will be prohibited from attending worship or any other church programming where children and youth will be present.
- 4) A registered sex offender who does sign the agreement may, at the careful and appropriate discretion of the pastor and the chair of the Staff-Parish Relations Committee, be allowed to serve as an assistant or

volunteer working with children and youth only under the following conditions:

- a. The registered sex offender will not be placed in leadership of church programming. The registered sex offender will never be left alone with children or youth. There will always be a second adult present.
- b. The registered sex offender will not work in the nursery.
- c. The registered sex offender will not transport children and youth.
- d. The registered sex offender will not participate in overnight activities or programming.
- e. The leader of the church programming at which the registered sex offender is assisting or volunteering will be made aware of the registered sex offender's Safety Covenant Agreement and will provide extra supervision.

SPUMC Safety Covenant Agreement

These guidelines pertain to registered sex offenders, who wish to attend any church functions. They may be adapted based on individual circumstances.

Sun Prairie United Methodist Church affirms the dignity and worth of all persons. We are committed to being a religious community, open to those who wish to worship with us, especially in times of personal trouble. We recognize that people make mistakes, and that repentance and new life are possible in Jesus Christ. However, based on your background and personal history, we have concerns about your contact with children, youth, and vulnerable adults in our congregation. Your participation in church programming will be limited to ensure the safety of these persons and reduce risks to you. You agree to act within the following guidelines:

1. You will comply fully with all restrictions and requirements placed upon you as a result of any legal actions - past, present, and future.
2. You will not be alone at any time with any child, youth, or vulnerable adult.
3. You will participate in a personal accountability group all the time you are involved with the church.
 - a. Your accountability group will consist of yourself, the pastor, a member of Staff-Parish Relations Committee (SPRC), and at least one member of the congregation. At least one of these people will be the same gender as you.

- b. Your accountability group will meet with you regularly to offer support, discuss issues you may be experiencing, and pray with you. Monthly meetings are suggested, at least initially.
 - c. The schedule for your participation in church programming, and your assigned partner(s), will be determined at your accountability group meeting and kept in the church office.
4. When you are on church property, or participating in church programming, you must have a partner from your accountability group with you at all times. This requirement may be waived as noted below.
- a. When you arrive at church, go directly to the office and wait for your accountability partner. You must sign in, and your partner must initial, on your participation schedule before leaving the office. If the church programming is off-site, you must prearrange a public meeting point.
 - b. Your accountability partner will remain in close proximity with you at all times.
 - c. If you need to use the restroom, you must use the unisex bathroom by the staff offices. Your accountability partner will wait in the hallway.
 - When you are done participating in your scheduled church programming, you must sign out on your schedule in the office and your accountability partner must initial. You must then leave church property or the church-sponsored event immediately.
 - If your accountability partner is unable to meet you or has to leave early, you must leave church property or the church-sponsored event immediately.
 - You are not allowed in the nursery at any time, even with your accountability partner.
 - d. Prior to your involvement with the church, terms of this covenant will be reviewed with your probation/parole officer, counselor, and any other person involved in your aftercare or treatment.
 - e. Prior to your involvement with the church, this covenant must be signed by the pastor, the Staff- Parish Relations Committee member of your accountability group, and anyone listed under item (4.d.). (See **Forms Information**)
 - f. This covenant will remain on file in the church office and will be available to members of the church. It will be shared with all staff and assistants working directly with children, youth, or vulnerable adults at the church.

- g. This covenant will be reviewed annually by your accountability group and updated as appropriate. Church Leadership Board is responsible for making sure this happens on an annual basis.

Safe Sanctuaries Guidelines

This manual also provides guidelines to the congregation, volunteers and staff when working with children, youth and vulnerable individuals. *These Guidelines are defined as preferred practices that we always strive to follow in the best interest of the safety for participants in Church activities.* However, we recognize that not all situations and circumstances will allow for these practices to be observed. Exceptions can and will occur which we cannot possibly address in totality within this manual. We expect all involved parties to strive to follow the guidelines described in this manual and to make a good faith effort to follow God's laws. Common sense and discretion should be used at all times. No one shall be put in a situation where they are uncomfortable. If you are unable to follow Safe Sanctuaries in a certain situation, please notify the staff person in charge of the area you are volunteering in.

Free Will Assistance versus Church Directed Volunteering Guideline

SPUMC cannot be held liable for any actions taken by a member of the Church if the activity involved was done under the free will of that member rather than having been individually solicited and actively agreed to volunteer by the Church or any member of the staff. In other words, if a Church member offers to assist, of their own free will, to meet a need of someone in the Church or community at large, then that Church member is solely liable for anything that the Church member may do that might harm or injure themselves, another person or any property. This Manual refers to the acts of volunteerism and not to free will assistance or generosity of our congregation.

SPUMC has an insurance policy from **Guide One Insurance**. For more information about this policy and its coverage, please contact the Pastor.

Christian Education Guidelines

At the SPUMC, we are blessed with the ability to provide many opportunities for our children and youth to grow with God. Below is a brief

description of some of the Christian education programs we offer and the corresponding Safe Sanctuaries guidelines.

Nursery Guidelines and Practices

The nursery is available during most of the church sponsored activities and training sessions. Please contact the Church office at least forty-eight (48) hours in advance of a church sponsored activity that is not during worship services when the need for nursery care arises. The rules and policies of the nursery vary depending on the church activity being sponsored.

We ask that the parent/guardian consult with nursery staff if any child(ren) over the age of 13 requires care. The nursery is not equipped for children of that age or older. Please see the appropriate section below for the specific nursery policies. For additional nursery questions, please contact the nursery staff directly.

General Nursery Guidelines

- Regardless of which activity the parent/guardian is participating in, children who have been sick, vomiting or had a fever or diarrhea in the past 24 hours may not be brought to the nursery. This is necessary in order to support the health and safety of the other children.
- Our nursery is a Gluten/Nut free zone. Drinks must be clearly labeled with the child's first and last name. There is not a microwave or refrigerator accessible to the nursery.
- Regardless of which activity the child(ren) are attending and for what reason the parent/guardian is bringing them to the nursery, every participating child(ren) are required to have a registration on file with the church, either with a physical form (see: **Forms Information**) or online through the church website under the "Grow in our Faith" tab.

These forms are to be updated yearly, or as requested by church staff. Additional forms may be needed for specific events at the church.

- Parents/Guardians (or another designated responsible adult) are required to be at sign-in for the use of the nursery. For children who's first-time it is at the nursery and for children whom have not yet registered through the means mentioned above, the sign-in person must be a legal parent/guardian of the child(ren) until

another designated responsible adult has been established by written means.

- Anyone of any age maybe designated as a “responsible person” for sign-out from the nursery, including (but not limited to) older siblings through written consent from a legal parent/guardian.

Worship Services Practices (Sunday Mornings & Special Services)

- Only children 2nd grade and under are permitted in the nursery during worship services.
- Each child brought into the nursery will have a registration form on file, updated yearly. Parents/guardians of guest and visitors will be given this form at the first sign-in to complete and return at sign-out and must provide a phone number before returning to worship.
- The child(ren) may not be dropped off in the nursery more than 10 minutes prior to the worship service that the parent/guardian/caregiver is attending.
- No food or drink is permitted in the nursery during worship services.
- Bottles may be brought for children who are not mobile and who must be held by the volunteer or staff member in the nursery to feed them. The bottles must be clearly labeled with the child’s name, be pre-made by the parent/guardian/caregiver and must not need refrigeration or reheating.
- Parents/guardians will be contacted via cell phone to change the diapers of their child(ren).
- Parents/guardians must remain in the building at all times while the child(ren) is in the nursery.
- Only parents/guardians or authorized individuals may remove the child(ren) from the nursery.

Midweek Programs Practices

- Each child in the nursery must have a registration form on file before their parents/guardians can go to other areas of the church to volunteer, participate in a church ministry, or leave the church for any reason.
- Children ages birth through 4K are permitted in the nursery during midweek programs.

- The child (ren) may not be dropped off in the nursery more than 10 minutes prior to the ministry area in which the parent/guardian/caregiver is participating.
- Parents/guardians must disclose on the registration form if their child needs help with diaper changes and/or toileting and sign an additional release allowing nursery caregivers to do so.
- Parents/guardians must provide appropriate supplies including (but not limited to) diapers/training pants/an extra set of clothes.
- If children are young enough to need a safe place to nap such as a pack-in-play this must be provided by a parent/guardian and should be labeled with a family name. Any additional information about the use of this item should be given in written instruction.
- Bottles may be brought for children who are not mobile and who must be held by a nursery caregiver to feed them. Bottles must be clearly labeled with the child's name, be pre-made by a parent/guardian and must not need refrigeration or reheating.
- Additionally, parents/guardians may provide a water bottle/sippy cup with a lid and/or a nut-free + gluten-free snack for their child to eat if the program provided snack is not age appropriate for their child. Snacks and drinks must be clearly labeled with child's first and last name. Refrigeration is not available for snacks.

Nursery

caregivers are not the persons responsible for preparing the program provided snack. Snacks are not eaten in the nursery.

- Only a parent/guardian or authorized individual may remove the child from the nursery.

Nursery Practices during Kids Night Out

- Each child at Kids Night Out must have a registration form on file before their Parents/guardians/caregivers leave the church.
- Parents/guardians must disclose on the registration form if their child needs help with diaper changes and/or toileting and sign an additional release allowing nursery caregivers to do so.
- Parents/guardians must provide appropriate supplies including (but not limited to) diapers/training pants/an extra set of clothes.
- If children are young enough to need a safe place to nap such as a

pack-in-play this must be provided by a parent/guardian and should be labeled with a family name. Any additional information about the use of this item should be given in written instruction.

- Bottles may be brought for children who are not mobile and who must be held by a nursery caregiver to feed them. Bottles must be clearly labeled with the child's name, be pre-made by a parent/guardian and must not need refrigeration or reheating.
- Additionally, parents/guardians may provide a water bottle/sippy cup with a lid and/or a nut-free + gluten-free snack for their child to eat if the program provided snack is not age appropriate for their child. Snacks and drinks must be clearly labeled with child's first and last name. Refrigeration is not available for snacks.

Nursery

caregivers are not the persons responsible for preparing the snack provided for this event. Snacks are not eaten in the nursery.

- Only a parent/guardian or authorized individual may remove the child from the nursery.

Nursery Practices during Other Church Sponsored Activities Not Listed Above

- Each child in the nursery must have a registration form on file before their parents/guardians can go to other areas of the church to volunteer, participate in a church ministry, or leave the church for any reason.
- Children 14 and older are not permitted in the nursery during other church sponsored activities not listed above; including (but not limited) to Vacation Bible School (VBS)). Except those serving as volunteer caregivers who must go through the appropriate checks and trainings *and* must be scheduled by a member of staff before being permitted.
- Parents/guardians must disclose on the registration form if their child needs help with diaper changes and/or toileting and sign an additional release allowing nursery caregivers to do so.
- Parents/guardians must provide appropriate supplies including (but not limited to) diapers/training pants/an extra set of clothes.
- If children are young enough to need a safe place to nap such as a

pack-in-play this must be provided by a parent/guardian and should be labeled with a family name. Any additional information about the use of this item should be given in written instruction.

- Bottles may be brought for children who are not mobile and who must be held by a nursery caregiver to feed them. Bottles must be clearly labeled with the child's name, be pre-made by a parent/guardian and must not need refrigeration or reheating.
- Additionally, parents/guardians may provide a water bottle/sippy cup with a lid and/or a nut-free + gluten-free snack for their child to eat if the program provided snack is not age appropriate for their child. Snacks and drinks must be clearly labeled with child's first and last name. Refrigeration is not available for snacks.

Nursery

caregivers are not the persons responsible for preparing the activity provided snack. Snacks are not eaten in the nursery, except in the case of longer sessions of care, in which an appropriate time and setting for food and drink will be discerned by the nursery caregivers on schedule.

- Only a parent/guardian or authorized individual may remove the child from the nursery.

Guidelines and Practices for Ministry with God's Children ages kinder through Grade 5 (when in programs not in the nursery)

Ministry Programs for Children ages kindergarten through 5th Grade will be offered by the church. Updates about programs and timelines can be found on the church website under the "Grow In Our Faith" tab.

Children's Church Guideline

Depending on the time of year, Children's Church maybe offered during worship. When it is offered, Children's Church will start following the designated children's time during worship. During Children's Church, a staff member or volunteer will read a Bible story and the children will do a project based on the story. If the children finish the project prior to the conclusion of worship, the children may watch a video, play games, or have free choice time.

- When invited, children 5th grade and under may leave the sanctuary and participate in Children's Church which takes place

in classrooms along the Education Wing of the church including both the chapel and multipurpose room.

- Children who have been sick, vomiting or had a fever or diarrhea in the past 24 hours may not be brought to Children's Church. This is necessary in order to support the health and safety of the other children.
- Any participating child(ren) are required to register either with a physical form (see: **Forms Information**) or online through the church website under the "Grow in our Faith" tab.
- For children who's first-time it is in Children's Church and for children whom have not yet registered through the means mentioned above, registration must be completed by a legal parent/guardian prior to the child(ren) being checked out from their classroom for the first time; or if all parents/guardians and designated responsible adults are leaving the church property, a registration form must be completed prior to exiting the church building
- Attendance records will be kept and maintained.
- Anyone of any age maybe designated as a "responsible person" for sign-outs from the classroom, including (but not limited to) older siblings through written consent from a legal parent/guardian.

In the case of special circumstances children 3rd grade and older may be given written permission from a legal parent/guardian to sign themselves out, this permission must be communicated to the Director of Family Ministries prior to a child attending.

Sunday School Guideline

Depending on the time of year Sunday School may be offered following worship. The curriculum is based on the Bible and is taught through stories and activities. Sunday School will take place in the classrooms along the education wing of the church, including the multipurpose room. Snacks in the classroom may be restricted based on active allergies and at the discernment of the staff and volunteers helping lead the curriculum.

- Children who have been sick, vomiting or had a fever or diarrhea in the past 24 hours may not be brought to Children's Church. This is necessary in order to support the health and safety of the other children.
- Any participating child(ren) are required to register either with a physical form (see: **Forms Information**) or online through the church website under the "Grow in our Faith" tab.
- For children who's first-time it is in Sunday School and for children whom have not yet registered through the means mentioned above, registration must be completed by a legal parent/guardian prior to the child(ren) being checked out from their classroom for the first time; or if all parents/guardians and designated responsible adults are leaving the church property, a registration form must be completed prior to exiting the church building.
- Attendance records will be kept and maintained.
- Anyone of any age maybe designated as a "responsible person" for sign-outs from the classroom, including (but not limited to) older siblings through written consent from a legal parent/guardian.

In the case of special circumstances children 3rd grade and older may be given written permission from a legal parent/guardian to sign themselves out, this permission must be communicated to the Director of Family Ministries prior to a child attending.

Other Church Sponsored Activities

Additional programs may be offered throughout the year at Sun Prairie United Methodist Church for children Kindergarten through Grade 5, including (but not limited to) midweek programs, kids' night out, and vacation bible school. Information about these events is available on the church Calander and under the Family Ministry section of the "Grow In Our Faith" tab of the church website.

- Children who have been sick, vomiting or had a fever or diarrhea in the past 24 hours may not be brought to these events. This is

necessary in order to support the health and safety of the other children.

- Any participating child(ren) are required to register either with a physical form (see: **Forms Information**) or online through the church website under the “Grow in our Faith” tab.

Additional registration forms or information may be required for certain events and will be made available digitally and from the church office as need arises.

- For children who’s first-time it is at a given event and for children whom have not yet registered through the means mentioned above, registration must be completed by a legal parent/guardian prior to the child(ren) being checked out from their classroom for the first time; or if all parents/guardians and designated responsible adults are leaving the church property, a registration form must be completed prior to the responsible adults exiting the church building.
- Attendance records will be kept and maintained.

Youth Ministry Guidelines and Practices

Ministry programs for our youth are typically offered for both Middle School and High School Youth together, though there are opportunities for more peer focused gatherings.

Middle and High School Youth Programs and Guidelines

High School and Middle School Youth Group takes place on Sunday evenings beginning at the end of September and ending in May. Youth learn about their faith, develop community with one another, and deepen their relationship with God. Youth Group usually consists of two parts: a faith development activity and a recreational activity divided by time for a snack. Youth Group is taught by the Director of Family Ministries along with a team of volunteers. Families will be encouraged to register after the second visit.

Additional opportunities for Middle and High School youth to meet to learn about faith, develop community with one another, and deepen

their relationship with God may be offered to coincide with Sunday School and mid-week programs

Confirmation is also offered for select age groups during the school year.

During the Summer months Youth Group meets once a month for campfire games to grow in fellowship together and build meaningful relationships with one another. These games take place on church grounds but outdoors by the Wesley House firepit, unless impeded by weather in which case activities will be moved inside the church utilizing the youth room, multipurpose room, and fellowship hall.

- Youth who have been sick, vomiting or had a fever or diarrhea in the past 24 hours may not be brought to any youth ministry programs. This is necessary in order to support the health and safety of the other youth.

- Any participating youth are required to register either with a physical form (see: **Forms Information**) or online through the church website under the “Grow in our Faith” tab.

Additional registration forms or information may be required for certain events and will be made available digitally and from the church office as need arises.

- For youth who’s first-time it is in a youth program at Sun Prairie UMC and for youth whom have not yet registered through the means mentioned above, registration must be completed by a legal parent/guardian prior to parents/guardians and designated responsible adults leaving the church property.
- Attendance records will be kept and maintained.
- Youth ages 16+ and with a valid driver’s licenses cannot be granted permissions to drive other youth or children off of the church property unless the person(s) they are driving are a close relative, or legal parents/guardians of all parties are present and consent, in which case it is no longer a decision or responsibility of the church.

- Youth who sign themselves out of a youth ministry program early may not return to an event later in the day without written documentation and prior approval from a legal parent/guardian, doctor, or other responsible adult.

Stephen Ministry Guideline

Stephen Ministry is a complete system for training and organizing lay people to provide one-to-one Christian care to hurting people in and around our congregation.

Our congregation has many needs for care: the hospitalized, those who are grieving, people suffering loneliness or discouragement, divorced or separated, those who are dying and the individual's families and friends, unemployed persons – the list goes on!

Caring for people in need or crisis is at the heart of a congregation's ministry. Pastors and church staff don't have enough hours in a week to care for all the members who are hurting. The pastor provides immediate care at the onset of a crisis but Stephen Ministers will provide on-going follow-up care.

Persons who feel God is calling them to Stephen Ministry will apply for consideration for this volunteer position, be interviewed and if accepted will participate in 50 hours of intensive, biblically based, psychologically sound, but highly enjoyable training in care giving.

After training and consecration, Stephen Ministers are assigned to a care-receiver. Stephen Minister and care-receiver will meet for an hour each week until both decide the relationship can end. The Stephen Minister will participate in a twice monthly peer accountability and supervisory group. Everything in the relationship between care giver and care receiver is held in strictest confidence. Even the supervisory group will not know the name of the care receiver. In fact, only the pastor and supervision leader will know that. In assigning a care giver to a care receiver, gender identification and/or sexual orientation may be taken into consideration if known by Pastor and/or Supervision Leader.

People who receive care receive quality, Christ-centered, confidential care for their hurts and needs. Individuals find hope, healing, and a new sense of self-worth through the support of a Stephen Minister. Individuals know they are remembered and supported by their congregation in times of personal difficulty. Individuals receive ongoing care for continuing needs long after the onset of a crisis, when many others have forgotten about them. And individuals grow in a deeper relationship with God as each person experiences God's unconditional love for them through their Stephen Minister.

Stephen ministers are expected to submit to a criminal background check every three years. Stephen Ministers undergo extensive training exceeding the requirements of Safe Sanctuaries; therefore, Safe Sanctuaries-specific training is not needed.

Supervision of all of God's People Guideline

The following procedures will be observed by Safe Sanctuaries trained staff and volunteers when in ministries with children, youth and vulnerable individuals:

- Children and youth of all ages must be supervised during ministry programming, worship services, and/or other opportunities where they are under the supervision of staff and volunteers. Vulnerable persons shall be supervised if the need is apparent to the staff person and volunteer supervising the activity.
- Staff will not be present to provide supervision more than ten minutes prior to the commencement of the church activity. Therefore, it is ESSENTIAL that parent/guardian/caregivers not bring or permit child(ren) or vulnerable individuals to be present in the building without direct parent/guardian/caregiver supervision more than ten (10) minutes prior to the beginning of the program.
- If a parent/guardian brings their child(ren) to church or permits their child(ren) to be unsupervised more than ten (10) minutes before the start of the program, a pastor will contact the parent/guardian and request that they return to the church immediately to supervise their child(ren). If vulnerable persons are brought or permitted to be unsupervised more than ten (10) minutes before the start of the

program the pastor will contact the caregiver and request that they return to the church immediately to supervise.

- Treat all supervisors, co-workers, parent/guardian/caregivers, members of the congregation, children, youth and vulnerable people with respect and consideration.
- Treat all children, youth and vulnerable people fairly regardless of race, color, religious beliefs, gender, disability, creed, national origin, sexual orientation and gender identity.
- The need for context-based discipline may arise. In these situations, volunteers are encouraged to seek guidance from church leadership. Under no circumstance will volunteers or any staff engage in the following conduct in the church
 - Strike, spank, shake, slap, or otherwise physically discipline anyone
 - Humiliate, degrade, or threaten others
 - Touch anyone inappropriately
 - Shame, withhold love, or speak or act with cruelty
 - Withhold food, water, or other basic cares as punishment
 - Use profanity, tell inappropriate jokes, share intimate details of your own life

In an effort to assure a safe environment, all church sponsored activities involving children, youth and at-risk people will be supervised. Whenever possible, SPUMC will strive to have at least two adults or an adult and a helper present for all activities involving children, youth and at-risk people. If this is not possible, volunteers and/or program staff may serve as rovers during programming. Rovers walk through areas where ministry is happening, peeking in on each classroom and providing assistance if needed. We will attempt a ratio of two caregivers to ten children, with the ratio of 1:5 for any more than ten children whenever possible.

When groups travel offsite the two adults in the above-mentioned ratio MAY NOT be co-habitants.

As volunteers supervise children, youth, and at-risk individuals, they should attempt to make the space they are using as visible as possible to other staff and volunteers. Whenever possible, leave doors open when working with children, youth or at-risk individuals. Never cover the windows of an area or

the door to block the view. When working with groups of children, youths or vulnerable individuals, it is best to have at least two adults or one adult and one helper working together. If two adults or a helper and an adult are working together, and if either the helper or the adult leaves the environment or classroom, the door shall be left open. If only one adult is with a child, youth or vulnerable person, never leave the room without another staff or adult coming to replace you. If a private conference with a child, youth or at-risk person is needed, ask another adult to be present or in an adjacent area with any and all doors open throughout the meeting with the individual.

Appropriate confidentiality as well as appropriate safety procedures must be maintained to protect the child, youth or vulnerable person and the adult that is doing the supervising.

Image Use, Online Connections and Internet Privacy Guidelines

In a world where these areas are constantly shifting, growing, and changing we will continue to strive to keep everyone in the life of our church safe when it comes to technology. Social media has become a routine and integral part of our lives as a society. It covers an ever-evolving collection of programs and devices like email, texting and social media. It might be tempting to dismiss these new technologies. It is important that we continue to learn and grow as these tools and others like them are used more and more in the ministries of the church.

Not all individuals choose to have their image or name or their child's image or name posted in a public manner. The Church is sensitive to these issues and has developed the following guideline to help ensure that privacy is respected as best we can. Following this guideline does not guarantee that a picture will not be taken and published to the internet or in church materials; however, we as a Church will continue to strive to protect privacy whenever possible and to the best of our ability.

Sun Prairie United Methodist Church uses video and images gathered in worship and all other ministry settings both online and in other publications. If a parent/guardian/caregiver would prefer not to have the picture, image or name of a child, youth or vulnerable person posted to the internet, social media, church publications or internal church materials they

will need to fill out the media opt out form found on the Sun Prairie UMC website. It is the family's responsibility to communicate the wish to not have images or names posted with church staff through the media opt out form. Staff will document and track these requests.

Each Program Director for child, youth & vulnerable person activities will include a statement in the applicable registration form/materials reminding parent/guardian/caregiver of the media opt out form and encouraging them to use it if desired.

Volunteers will be trained to not take pictures or post to personal social media accounts while volunteering at Church activities unless 1) the person is designated by the Program Manager(s) to take pictures for the activity; 2) the person is the parent/guardian/caregiver of individuals in the picture.

Program Managers are responsible for checking the media opt out list before posting images or names. Program Managers may designate volunteers to take pictures during activities and to assist with screening pictures to honor requests prior to use of pictures. Program Managers will discuss with participants (children, youth, vulnerable persons) the need to respect others' privacy when taking personal pictures or posting to social media during Church activities. Program Managers have the ability to ask any individual volunteer or participant to refrain from taking pictures during that particular program event.

We understand the need for adults to text youth at different times and for different reasons. Program staff will ask the adult family member or guardian responsible for each youth during the registration process if they may have permission to text youth. There should be at least three people on a text message. It is preferable that texts include at least two adults. We highly encourage as much group texting as possible.

All transcripts from online communications and all text messages should be saved whenever possible. All youth and adults should be informed that any communication that is sent via digital means (email, social networking sites or post, etc.) is not confidential and may be reported or shared with others.

Screenshot or screencap any individual communication that may have been sent via non-traceable means, particularly if the content is potentially questionable.

Employees who have social media accounts may want to consider having personal pages and “ministry professional” pages. If staff or volunteers have social media accounts, they should refrain from posting degrading or disparaging comments about the church, its staff, or its volunteers. The staff parish relations committee and/or clergy staff may monitor employee social media accounts. SPRC will discern if postings from staff are violating the above-mentioned guideline. SPRC and Clergy staff will be responsible for following up with staff members regarding these postings.

Adults (staff and/or volunteers) should NEVER initiate friend requests with youth on social media. However, if a youth reaches out first this contact may occur.

We strongly recommend private groups be used, when possible, for all online ministry. Online ministry groups should have at least two safe sanctuaries trained adults in attendance. If possible, they should co-host these gathering times.

Different ministry areas within the church are encouraged to provide social media covenants to youth who are participating at different times. Youth should be educated about appropriate postings for the ministry they are involved in before an outing or event. It will be at the discretion of the program staff what other guidelines need to be in place for each ministry.

Any inappropriate material that is not covered by “Mandatory Reporting” laws should be deleted from the site. Any material that is covered should immediately be shared with the pastor, documented for church records and then deleted from the site.

Any content that details inappropriate behavior (outside of the bounds of the established covenants) during a church sponsored event/activity should be addressed by authorized staff and/or volunteers, youth, and adult family members.

Limitations on Assisting Children, Youth and Vulnerable Persons Guideline

No staff member or volunteer will assist a child, youth or vulnerable person with the regular activities of daily living. The activities of daily living include, but are not limited to, dressing and undressing, bathing, self-grooming (brushing teeth, hair combing, etc.), and getting in and out of a bed or chair. Additionally, no staff member or volunteer will dispense any prescription or over the counter medication to another person without written permission from a parent or guardian.

Restroom Protocol Guideline

If younger children need assistance in the restroom at the church, it is preferable to have at least two (2) adults or an adult and a helper accompany the child, youth or vulnerable person into the restroom. The adult and/or helper can verbally assist the younger children with going to the restroom. They can provide verbal directions and tell the child, youth or vulnerable person what to do. The adult and/or helper should use their discretion and common sense when in the restroom with a child or vulnerable person. If another adult is not readily available, prop the main door of the restroom open.

If child (ren) are on a field trip away from the church, have an adult check out a single restroom before a child enters and have an adult present in a multiple-booth restroom. Never allow a child (ren) to enter a public bathroom alone unless it is a single stall restroom. Two children may enter a restroom alone if there is an adult at the door. No volunteer or staff member will assist anyone, including a vulnerable or at-risk person, in using the restroom. The individuals must be able to use the facilities themselves. The vulnerable or at-risk person must be either independent in their toileting abilities or have a personal attendant present. The comfort level of the adult and the child, youth or vulnerable person must be considered. No one is required to do something or be in a situation where they are uncomfortable.

When offsite, youth must let an adult know before they head to a bathroom. When we are at a public space offsite (i.e. a rest stop, amusement park, concerts, NOT when we are in another church building

serving at the food pantry or some other fairly controlled space), groups of two or more youth should go to the bathroom together and should wait to return until all are ready.

Release of All Children, Aged Birth through Grade 5 Guideline

Children ages birth through grade 5 will be signed in and out by a parent/guardian/caregiver or an authorized person. Authorized individuals will be listed on the program registration form. These individuals will be authorized by the parent/guardian/caregiver. All participants of a program must be picked up by a parent/guardian/caregiver or an authorized person before a volunteer or staff permits the child to leave the program. The authorized person may be required to show a photo identification if a staff member or volunteer does not know the authorized person personally. With written authorization, children may be able to leave the building on their own.

Travel off the Church Premises Guideline

As ministries call people to locations not at the Church, the staff and volunteers will try, with all reasonable effort, to have at least two (2) adult staff/group leaders or volunteers with the children, youth and at-risk individuals at all times. Although there may be circumstances when this is not possible, the staff and volunteers will do their best to have at least two (2) adults with the children at all times. However, the children, youth and at-risk individuals will never be left alone in an unsafe or unfamiliar environment. At least one (1) other person will be with the children, youth and/or at-risk persons at all times. Staff/group leaders will always assign designated meeting locations and times to check in and perform a head count. Any time the group enters or exits a vehicle, the staff/group leaders will make sure everyone is present. The entire group will not leave the area until everyone is there.

Any person who will be transported by a church staff member or volunteer must be ambulatory. The staff member or volunteer must not have to assist the individual in entering or exiting the vehicle; nor will the staff member or volunteer be required to lift heavy objects, e.g. wheelchairs, into the vehicle.

When multiple vehicles are used for an event, a single volunteer, per car, may drive if all the vehicles travel together. Each driver/vehicle should be equipped with the destination address(es) for the trip and an emergency contact number for a church leader not traveling with the group. Vehicles should attempt to leave at the same time and should not make extra stops without having a non-driver communicate any emergency/extra stops to other vehicles. Occupants of vehicles shall wear seatbelts. Buses not equipped with seatbelts are exempt. Children ages twelve (12) years and younger shall not sit in the front seat of vehicles with air bags. As the situation requires, the SPUMC will obtain a rider to its insurance policy to protect the participants.

Consideration for Persons who Identify as LGBTQ

Policies & Procedures

a. The United Methodist Church voted at the 2020 General Conference (held in 2024 due to COVID) to change language in both the Book of Discipline and the Social Principles that allows for full inclusion of all LGBTQIA+ persons in the life and ministry of the church.

The following are best practices and procedures to allow accommodations to assure that each person is included in our community:

1. Make no assumptions about a person's sexual orientation or identity. Identity can be fluid, especially with Children and Youth, so approach each conversation open and unassuming.
2. Do not enforce or reinforce gender stereotypes. Avoid using language that emphasizes a gender binary. (For example, instead of saying "boys and girls", you could say "friends").
3. An individual's preferred name and pronouns will always be acknowledged and celebrated.
4. Respect an individual's privacy. If an individual shares their sexual orientation or gender identity with you in confidence, honor that confidence by sharing this information only with those who need to know this information to care or minister to them. You may share this information with the appropriate Staff member if they are a Child or Youth to best provide care for them, but do not share with other leaders, students, or parents.

5. If a Child or Youth shares their sexual orientation or gender identity privately with you, do not assume others know, including their parents. Encourage them to share with their parents, but keep their confidence unless they are at risk, as described under “Signs of Abuse and Neglect.”
6. Be intentional about creating a safe environment and culture by awareness and include in leaders training around homophobic language and bullying. There will be no tolerance for exclusivity or language that is homophobic, bullying, judgmental or dismissive by a Child, Youth, or Personnel.

Overnight and Trip Rules Guideline

In overnight programming, particular attention will be given to historically excluded or unrecognized people, such as LGBTQ+ and differently-abled individuals. In a situation of unequal power and safety, preferences of these individuals merit additional consideration, accommodation, and action to ensure:

- Participant privacy;
- Maximization of social integration of all participants;
- Equal opportunity to participate; and
- Safety of all participants.

These guidelines are subject to the organization’s rules and guidelines that we may partner with on these trips.

- There will always be at least two (2) adults. The total number of adults on each trip will be adjusted according to the number of children and youth participating in the planned activities. The ratio of adults to children and youth shall be approximately one (1) adult to every six (6) children and youth.
- Completed permission slips must be on file prior to departing for the trips.
- If prescription medication is, or may be needed, while on the trip, the medication must be in the original packaging from the pharmacy and be given to the staff member or volunteer in charge of the trip prior to departing for the trip. The staff or volunteer must be aware of the medical condition and how and when to administer the medication ahead of time. If over the counter medication is necessary or needed during the trip,

the parent/guardian/caregiver should consult with the staff member in charge of the activity prior to leaving the Church.

- The safe use of restrooms and showers by all participants requires congregations and other organizations to consider numerous factors, including, but not limited to: age, sex, gender identity and expression, and privacy. Adults should have separate showers or separate times for showers. Persons who identify as transgender may use the restroom of their choice. Persons who identify as non-binary, gender-fluid, or non-gender conforming may use the restroom of their choice if a non-gendered restroom is not available. When possible, we will strive for single stall shower accommodations.
- Overnight programs shall provide safe, supervised sleeping arrangements.
- No bed, cot, air mattress, or sleeping bag shall have more than one person sleeping in it.
- Supervision by two unrelated adults is required in any space where one or more youth are sleeping.
- It is acceptable for all participants to sleep in the same open area when dressing rooms and bathrooms provide appropriate privacy.

Best practice guidelines for hotel stays

- One child or youth per bed, including cots, pullouts or murphy/hide'a beds, and rollaway beds;
- At least 2 children or 2 youth in each room, except for when a parent/guardian/caregiver and youth request a private room and are willing to cover the financial difference. No adults share rooms with children or youth unless they are related.
- Adult supervisors or chaperones have rooms on the same floor, scattered among the rooms with children or youth, and at least one adult room is by the stairs or elevators.
- Adult leader assigns rooms, beds and room occupants.
- If individual requests from parents/guardians/caregivers for sleeping accommodations are made in advance with program staff the church will strive to meet those accommodations.

Visitation and Observation Guideline

Parent/guardian/caregiver, volunteers, and staff of the church may visit and observe the program at any time so long as they have an affiliation or connection to the activity and participants.

Visitation and Observation of Unknown Persons on Premises Guideline

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

Either the staff member in charge of the program or program area or an adult volunteer should:

- Approach the unknown individual with care and concern inquiring about their needs, observing characteristics that help you get a description of the person, if needed. Contact the police (call 911) immediately if you have reason to believe the person is an immediate threat.
- If an unknown individual states their concern or need, the staff member or volunteer shall escort the unknown individual to the staff member in charge of the church activity or a pastor and allow them to help the individual meet his needs or concerns.
- If the unknown individual does not have a valid concern or need, the staff member or volunteer will ask the unknown individual to leave the church and its property immediately and notify the staff member in charge of the church activity or pastor immediately. The staff member in charge of the activity or pastor will make sure the individual has left the premises.
- If the unknown individual states that they are just waiting for someone, escort that person to the staff member in charge of the church activity or pastor who will then have the individual wait in an “identified area.” The identified areas change depending on the activity at that time. The pastors and/or staff members will identify the areas as needed.
- The unknown person cannot wander around the church when children, youth or at-risk persons are present. The unknown person

should be supervised at all times until the person leaves the premises. Any adult who is not participating in the program, including parents, should have a defined area to meet their children/youth during or after the program.

Inappropriate Behavior Guideline

If children, youth or vulnerable persons are behaving inappropriately, staff members and volunteers will use techniques of guidance, redirection, positive reinforcement and encouragement to change their behavior. They will not foster competition, comparison, or criticism among youth or children, instead the volunteers and staff will work with the children and youth to set up guidelines and create an environment that minimizes the need to discipline children, youth or vulnerable persons. If the behavior is repeated, if the behavior is harmful to the individual, others or property, or rises to the level of disrupting the safe environment we are attempting to create, the volunteer and/or staff member should complete a Behavioral Report form. Forms are available with staff members overseeing the program. The completed form should be given to the Program Coordinator. A copy of the completed report should be given to the parent/guardian/caregiver.

Physical Restraint Guideline

If physical restraint must be used on an individual because that person is in imminent danger to the health and safety of themselves or another person, the volunteer or staff member will take the minimum steps necessary to carry out the restraint. If possible, at least two (2) volunteers or staff members or a combination of staff and volunteers will move the individual to another environment. If moving the individual is not possible, the staff member or volunteer will take reasonable precautions to move the rest of the participants, or take whatever measures are safe, reasonable, and appropriate for the circumstances. The volunteer or staff member will report any such action to the staff person in charge of the church activity or to the pastor as soon as possible. If physical restraint has occurred, a behavioral report must be completed by the staff member in charge of the program or the volunteer who restrained the individual.

Additional Safe Sanctuary Guidelines

Conceal and Carry Law Guideline

To avoid a situation that potentially could place at risk, the safety of our employees, congregation, visitors and others who come into the church building, the Church's policy is to prohibit weapons of any type from the workplace or working areas where employees are located. A valid concealed carry permit does not authorize our employees, visitors and others to carry a weapon of any kind into the Church's buildings.

Employees, congregation, visitors and others who possess a valid concealed carry weapons license may keep a firearm inside their privately owned locked and secured motor vehicle when their vehicle is parked on Church property in the designated parking areas.

Disaster Response Guideline

In case of fire, staff and/or volunteers should take their class and quickly leave the building through the nearest exit. Please see the map placed around our building for best exit routes during a fire. The fire alarm should be pulled as the groups exit the building if it is not already activated. Once outside the building, call 911 using a cell phone or the phone of a neighboring home. Once outside, go to the grassy area between the church and the Wesley House near the Sun Prairie Nursery School playground area. Staff and volunteers should stay with their class. Teachers need to have a count of all children in their care at all times and must recount them when they are situated outside.

When the local disaster siren sounds, all building occupants should go to the "Tornado Spot" assigned to the appropriate room in a quick and orderly fashion. Maps of best routes and "tornado spot" locations are placed in each room for you to follow. These routes are indicated in blue. Once inside the designated area, the individuals will kneel along the walls and stay there until notified that it is safe to return to the other areas of the building. If there is not enough room in the designated area, the pastor and/or staff will instruct certain classes to go to other areas of the building, depending on what time of the day it is and who is in the building.

Before fall programming and ministries begin each year, a church staff member and/or a member of the safe sanctuaries team will walk the building making sure up to date disaster maps are still posted in each of the rooms. If they are not, new maps will be posted before fall programming and ministries begin.

Accidents and Emergencies Guideline

First and foremost, call 911. Telephones are located in the hallway outside the kitchen, the nursery and in the office suites. An automated external defibrillator (AED) is located in the narthex near the fellowship hall door. Directions for how to use the AED are located inside the unit.

First Aid kits are stocked at minimum with the following items: scissors, gauze, tape, bandages antiseptic wipes, first aid cream/ointment, gloves

First Aid kits are found in almost every room of our church building minus the restrooms and a few staff offices.

Please complete an Accident Report if an injury occurs. Forms are located on clipboards in each room near or on the doors. The completed form should be given to the Program Coordinator. A copy of the completed report should be given to the parent/guardian/caregiver.

For all church activities, if there is an emergency, contact the police first by calling 911.

It is best to get out of the building in an emergency but always discuss where to meet outside the building ahead of time.

Volunteers are encouraged to carry their cell phones with them in the building. Program staff will share their cell phone numbers with leaders so they can be reached in case of an emergency throughout the building.

Volunteers in different ministry areas will also be encouraged to set up group text for emergency purposes.

Once a year, the church Administrative Assistant will be responsible for checking the batteries in the AED. This church staff member will order a new battery for the machine approximately two months before the

expiration date of the current one. In addition, this person will check the expiration dates on all pads inside the machine on a yearly basis and order new pads two months prior to expiration as well. Each month, the machine will be checked by this church staff person to make sure the green light is still glowing.

Temporary Restraining Orders

Inform the Pastor that one is in place so that they can best determine steps to be taken. Consider:

- Pastor keeps a copy of the order in a secure place in the church office.
- Obtain a picture of the person who is to be no contact (usually comes as part of the order) to share with need-to-know people (staff/select persons)
- Identify a person who will stand by when the person arrives and leaves the building to their car.
- The only role of this person is to observe and summon help if needed. They are not to confront the aggressor or do anything to put themselves in danger.
- Allow person to park close to an entrance during the period of the order to limit possibility of a confrontation
- Plan together with the person where they will go (safe space) if the aggressor comes on site
- Develop a way to notify person and staff if the plan needs to be activated
- Notify law enforcement

Active Assailant Plans

Volunteers will follow the Active Assailant Plan that is available as a hardcopy in the church office. Volunteers and staff are informed of and trained on this plan frequently.

Public Health Safety Expectations

In conjunction with Dane County and Wisconsin Council of Churches, we will create and follow health guidelines and best practices to create safe environments as needs arise.

Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) Activity Procedures

There are no longer limits on 'sensitive locations' like schools, hospitals and churches. ICE must still comply with the 4th and 5th Amendments of the U.S. Constitution.

1. 4th Amendment: Protects against unreasonable searches and seizures by the government.
2. 5th Amendment: Guarantees the right against self-incrimination, allowing individuals to remain silent.

Without a warrant, ICE can stop and interrogate persons based on 'reasonable suspicion' or 'probable cause.'

1. A Judicial Warrant: Signed by a judge. A judicial warrant allows ICE to arrest a person anywhere.
2. An Administrative Warrant: Signed by an ICE officer or employee, and not by a judge, does not give authority to search a person's home or place of business. An administrative warrant only provides authority to arrest in public places.

Public & Private Spaces in the Church Building

- Public Spaces: Areas that are open and accessible to the public during designated times, such as worship services and community events.
- Private Spaces: Areas that are restricted to authorized individuals, including church staff, volunteers and designated personnel. Pastor and staff office areas and Nursery are designated with signage as 'Private Area.'

If ICE Comes to the Church

- The senior pastor and/or Chair of the Leadership Board will be spokespersons for the church. The spokesperson will communicate with ICE.
- Ask for identification (name, badge number and agency affiliation).
- Request a warrant then verify that it is signed by a judge and specifies the name(s) of the individual(s) and area(s) to be searched.
- Verbally deny access to private areas unless a judicial warrant explicitly permits entry.
- Help individuals be informed of their rights to remain silent, to decline to answer questions without a lawyer, and to sign nothing without legal advice.
- Legal counsel will be contacted.

- Avoid providing any information to ICE about individuals unless legally required. Do not lie or give misleading information.
- Document details of the interaction including date, time and location, names and badge numbers of agents, and any documents presented or actions taken.
- Take photos or videos without interfering with agents. Video with phone horizontally to capture as much as possible. Narrate what you're seeing and be as detailed as possible. Focus on filming the actions of the agents. Do not share footage publicly without permission of the person(s) being detained.
- If ICE has a signed judicial warrant the designated authorized person(s) will accompany ICE throughout the building.
- If ICE detains anyone in the building, ask where they are being taken. This information will help the person's family and/or lawyer find them.

After ICE Leaves

- Support affected individuals with emotional and spiritual support.
- Connect affected individuals with immigration attorneys or legal aid organizations.
- Provide space to regroup.
- Debrief with staff and volunteers and document the event.

ICE Emergency Hotline: 800-427-0213

Documentation when Unable to Meet Safe Sanctuaries Guidelines

We realize there may be times when these Safe Sanctuaries guidelines may not be able to be followed due to circumstances beyond our control. If this happens, contact the staff person in charge of the area you are volunteering in ASAP. That staff person needs to fill out the digital form called "Circumstances when Safe Sanctuaries Guidelines are unable to be followed" to keep on file indicating the reason. These forms will automatically go to the Senior Pastor, and staff is encouraged to have additional discussions with the Pastor detailing the circumstances.

Definitions

“Abuse” Any mistreatment of a person that results in harm or injury and that has no "reasonable" explanation. Abuse is generally divided into several categories including physical, sexual, emotional, and neglect.

Physical Abuse

Includes:

- Physical beatings
- Slapping
- Hitting
- Burns
- Strangulation
- Human bites

Sexual Abuse

Non-touching sexual offenses include:

- Frank discussions about sexual acts
(especially when intended to arouse a child's interest)
- Obscene telephone calls
- Exhibitionism
- Voyeurism
- Pornography
- Allowing children to witness or hear sexual acts

Touching sexual offenses include:

- Rape
- Incest
- Touching of breasts
- Attempted intercourse
- Fondling of the genitals

Emotional Abuse

A pattern of behavior that attacks the person's emotional development, their spirit and self- concept and makes them feel unloved, un-loveable and worthless.

- Constant criticizing, belittling, insulting rejecting, withholding love, support or guidance
- May be the most common form of abuse, as it usually accompanies other forms of abuse and has the longest lasting effects.

Neglect

Failing to provide for a person's well-being and not meeting their needs for:

- proper food
- medical care
- hygiene shelter
- clothing
- education
- love and attention
- supervision and setting limits

“Adult” means a person over 18 years of age or older. However, if the person is 18 and is participating in a youth church activity, then the person is not an adult for the purposes of this Manual.

“Ambulatory” means able to walk about and not be bedridden.

“At Risk Individual” means any person who has experienced, is currently experiencing or is at a higher likelihood of experiencing abuse, neglect, self-neglect or financial exploitation than the average person. Also see “vulnerable person.”

“Child” means any person under the age of 18 or an individual who is 18 and is participating in a church program as a youth.

“Children’s activities” means any activity or program in which children are under supervision of staff persons or volunteers.

“Helper” means anyone who aids in ministry. The helper must be at least three years older than the individuals with whom they are working.

“Persons required to report child abuse” means persons, who, in the course of their employment, occupation, or practice of their profession, come into contact with children. Such persons include, but are not limited to, medical professionals, school administrators, teachers and nurses, social services workers, day-care center workers, mental health professionals, peace and law enforcement officers.

“Private Groups” in the context of online meeting spaces refers to groups in which only individuals with the link, password, or server information, or who have been invited by a moderator (generally a staff person or trained volunteer) may access the group, these spaces operate under the same safe sanctuaries’ guidelines found throughout this handbook wherein children, youth, or vulnerable persons are in attendance. This is opposed to “public groups” where anyone could access the meeting space online and interact with the attendees in any manner.

“Staff person” means any person employed by Sun Prairie United Methodist Church.

“Staff person in charge of a church activity” means the church employee responsible for the activity. In the case of non-church programs operating on church property, the duties of the “staff person in charge of the children’s activity” shall be carried out by the non-local church lead staff or volunteer.

“Volunteer” means any adult who assists in conducting church activities under the supervision of a staff person.

“Vulnerable person” means anyone whose mental or physical condition makes them susceptible to abuse. The person may temporarily or permanently be considered a vulnerable or at-risk individual. The individual may be particularly vulnerable to persuasion, coercion, undue influence, or physical control from those who have power, authority and leadership over them.

“We” means the congregation of the Sun Prairie United Methodist Church.

“Youth” means any person 18 years or younger and is participating in a church activity.

Due to the nature of every evolving and changing definition around those in the LGBTQ Community, our Reconciling Ministries has provided a list of online definitions and terms that is updated. To learn more about these terms and their meanings please visit:

<http://www.hrc.org/resources/glossary-of-terms>

Forms Information

All forms for program registrations and volunteer application are available on our website or in the Church Office.

Website: <https://www.sunprairieumc.org/about-us/safe-sanctuaries/>

702 North St
Sun Prairie, WI
608-837-5554

SPUMC Safe Sanctuaries Volunteer Code of Conduct and Verification of Training Agreement

Volunteers in our church must uphold Christian values and conduct. The public and private conduct of volunteers can inspire and motivate people. Responsibility for adherence to this code of conduct rests with the individual.

As a volunteer, I agree to:

- Treat everyone with respect, loyalty, patience, integrity, courtesy, dignity, and consideration.
- Keep focused only on my particular area of expertise.
- Be supervised by and bring any problems, questions, or concerns to the supervisor or pastor.
- Not engage in physical, psychological, written or verbal harassment or discrimination towards any involved in church activities nor tolerate such behavior by others.
- Respect and maintain confidentiality which pertains to anyone involved with the church; including not taking and/or posting pictures of participants to social media or internet unless designated to do so by the program director
- Be diligent and responsible towards my spiritual health.
- Be competent and proactive in seeking out education and training commensurate with my role and responsibilities.
- Exercise responsible stewardship of resources.
- Read the Safe Sanctuaries Manual and follow it as I have been trained to do.
- Submit the required information to the criminal background check volunteer for a background check when asked.
- Report any changes to my status that may affect my ability to meet Safe Sanctuaries expectations within one week to the Pastor.

When working with children or other vulnerable people, I shall:

- Make every attempt to avoid situations where I am alone in the building with children, youth and/or vulnerable people at church sponsored activities.
- Support the rights and roles of parents/guardians.
- Use positive reinforcement rather than criticism, competition or comparison.

- Report to the appropriate church authorities any suspected abuse of children, youth or other vulnerable populations and cooperate fully in any investigation.
- Not smoke or use tobacco products, vape, use illegal drugs or alcohol, in the presence of vulnerable populations and will not procure any of these products for them.
- Not pose any health risk to the vulnerable populations (i.e. fevers or other contagious situations.)
- Not use profanity in the presence of children, youth or vulnerable populations.
- On overnight trips, I will ensure that children and/or youth will never be left alone in an unsafe or unfamiliar environment.

Please answer these questions from the Safe Sanctuaries manual. If incorrect answers are given; you must reread the manual and correctly answer this questionnaire along with 3 others.

1. True or False: I can take photos while volunteering with children, youth, and/or vulnerable adults at SPUMC and post them directly to my personal social media.

2. What should I do if there is an unknown person in the building or near a program/ministry?

3. Name one tornado safe place in the SPUMC building.

By signing this, I have confirmed that I have read the Safe Sanctuaries manual, I understand it and will follow it. I also agree to the Volunteer Code of Conduct above. I confirm that I agree to accept full responsibly for my actions and inactions; I understand that I am responsible for following all the safe sanctuary policies. I understand that I assume the risks of participating and I agree to not hold the church responsible for any injury or accident or harm the results in participating in this activity.

Print Name: _____

Date: _____

Signature: _____

SPUMC Church Safety Covenant Agreement for Registered Sexual Offenders

These forms and guidelines pertain to registered sex offenders, who wish to attend any Sun Prairie United Methodist Church sponsored function. They may be adapted based on individual circumstances.

Name (print): _____

ACCOUNTABILITY GROUP MEMBERS: _____

ACTIVITY APPROVAL: Upon review of your accountability group, you are approved to participate in the following activities. The SPRC representative on your accountability group should initial all that apply.

_____ Only specific church programming which has been individually reviewed and approved with your accountability group.

-OR

_____ Worship services.

_____ Church programming with adults only (i.e. bible study, small groups, fellowship activities).

_____ Church programming where children, youth or vulnerable adults may be present along with adults.

_____ Church programming intended primarily for children, youth, or vulnerable adults (**Only upon the careful and appropriate review and approval of the pastor and chair of the staff parish relations committee.** *See the Safe Sanctuaries Policy section (H4) for more details*).

ACCOUNTABILITY PARTNERS: Upon review of the pastor and chair of the Staff-Parish Relations Committee, requirement (4) to always have an accountability partner with you.

_____ IS IN EFFECT

_____ HAS BEEN WAIVED UPON APPROVAL OF PASTOR and SPRC CHAIR

Reason for waiver: _____

SPUMC Church Safety Covenant Agreement for Registered Sexual Offenders

These forms and guidelines pertain to registered sex offenders, who wish to attend any Sun Prairie United Methodist Church sponsored function. They may be adapted based on individual circumstances.

SIGNATURES

Covenant Participant: _____ Date: _____

By signing this covenant, I agree that if any item of this covenant is suspected of being broken, I will meet with my Safe Sanctuaries accountability group. I agree that all decisions of the accountability group are final. I agree that if the accountability group finds that any item of this covenant was broken, I will immediately discontinue attendance at church programming. I understand and agree that all church members may be aware of this covenant and any violations thereof. I agree that all violations of this covenant will be shared with my accountability group, probation/parole officer, counselor, and any other person involved in my after-care or treatment. Any violation that is illegal in nature will be reported immediately to the appropriate authorities. I agree that I am aware that this covenant must be reviewed and renewed annually with my accountability group.

Pastor: _____ Date: _____

SPRC Representative: _____ Date: _____

Parole/Probation (4.d.): _____ Date: _____

Counselor (4.d.): _____ Date: _____

Other (4.d.): _____ Date: _____

Nursery Registration Form

Child's Information

Child's Full Name: _____ Date of Birth _____

Nickname: _____

(What they like to be called/if they have one)

Notes (Allergies, relevant medical/behavioral conditions, etc.):

Family Information

Parent/Guardian Name(s): _____

Parent/Guardian Cell Numbers(s): _____

Home Address: _____

Mailing Address: _____

(if different from _____

Home Address) _____

Home Phone: _____

Additional Ways to Contact: _____

Additional Individuals Authorized to sign-out/pick up child other than
parent/guardian (Name, relation to child, optional cell)

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

Children's Ministry Registration Form

Student Participant Name _____ Date of Birth _____

Student Nickname (Optional) _____

1 Parent/Guardian Name _____

Parent/Guardian Email _____

Parent/Guardian Cell _____

2 Parent/Guardian Name _____

Parent/Guardian Email _____

Parent/Guardian Cell _____

Additional Emergency Contact (Name, Cell Phone, Relation to Student Participant):

Additional Responsible Persons for pick-up (Name, Relation to Student Participant):

Children 5th Grade and under must have a parent/guardian/responsible person present at the end of the event, unless other arrangements have been confirmed with the Director of Family ministry or written permission has been provided for said child(ren) to leave the classroom on their own. *Permissions must be re-provided seasonally and per event registered for.*

_____ (Initial)

Please list any known allergies, behavioral needs, and on-site medications of the student participating:

Youth Ministry Registration Form

Student Participant Name _____ Date of Birth _____

Student Nickname (Optional) _____

1 Parent/Guardian Name _____

Parent/Guardian Email _____

Parent/Guardian Cell _____

2 Parent/Guardian Name _____

Parent/Guardian Email _____

Parent/Guardian Cell _____

Additional Emergency Contact (Name, Cell Phone, Relation to Student Participant):

Additional Responsible Persons for pick-up (Name, Relation to Student Participant):

Please list any known allergies, behavioral needs, and on-site medications of the student participating:

Event and Travel Permission Slip

Name of Student _____ Phone _____
Caregiver Name(s) _____ Phone _____
Caregiver Name(s) _____ Phone _____

Additional Contact(s) incase caregivers cannot be reached:

I, _____, grant permission for _____ to
Print Caregiver Name *Print Student Name*
participate in the _____ on _____ sponsored by the Sun
Event *Date*

Prairie United Methodist Church. Sun Prairie youth group leaders, chaperones, and mentors will be the individuals in charge. Van/car transportation may be used for events not taking place at Sun Prairie United Methodist Church (702 North St). Snacks and meals may be provided or donated to our youth and volunteers.

_____ Initial here to warrant that your child is in good health.

_____ Initial here to agree to indemnify the Sun Prairie United Methodist Church from any claims or lawsuits brought against the Sun Prairie United Methodist Church by myself, my child or others that arise out of any behavior by my child during this. I also agree to pay reasonable attorney fees or expenses incurred by the Sun Prairie United Methodist Church in defense of such a claim/lawsuit.

_____ Initial here to indicate your understanding that Sun Prairie United Methodist Church Safe Sanctuary Policy allows students above 5th grade to sign themselves in and out of events for which the caregivers have registered or signed permission slips for. In addition, the policy of this group is such that once signed out students must provide additional documentation to return to events. *In the case of overnight events students cannot leave after 10pm or before 6am without a caregiver present. In the case of multiple days of travel and overnight stays at a location other than Sun Prairie United Methodist Church students must be committed to staying with the group and cannot leave on their own except in documented circumstances.*

_____Initial here if your child will be providing their own transportation to and from the event site. Note: *Students are not allowed to transport non-(immediate)family members to or from church sponsored events. Sun Prairie United Methodist Church must be notified of expected delays in arrival to events and if siblings will be arriving together.*

_____Initial here to confirm that you have gone over relevant rules and itinerary details with the student named in this form for the event indicated above.

FOR MEDICAL USE

Participant Legal Name_____Participant Date of Birth_____
Participant Address_____

Insurance Name_____Phone_____
Policy #_____Group #_____
Primary Insurance Holder_____
Insurance Holder Address_____

Participant Primary Physician_____Clinic Phone_____

List any food allergies or dietary restrictions/requirements:

List any health concerns, medical conditions, and current medications:

The adult chaperones may give my child (check all that are okay)

_____Acetaminophen
_____Ibuprofen
_____Over the Counter Cold Medications
_____Bug Spray
_____SPF

Anything else that we should know about the participant:

Student Code of Conduct and Commitment Statement

I, _____, understand that I have a responsibility to the Sun
Student Name

Prairie United Methodist Church Youth Group to act in accordance with church policy at all church sponsored events in such ways that reflect the teachings and love of Jesus Christ to all of creation; and that my presence and participation should reflect that responsibility. I commit to my faith, formation, and this group through my prayers, presence, service, gifts, and witness.

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

Student Signature

Date

Building Map



Final Page