

Community Congregational Church United Church of Christ Safe Church Policy

Introduction:

“Perhaps the most famous promise in all Christendom is heard in the 23rd Psalm. Here the Psalmist expresses confidence of God’s protection when he ends with: “and I shall dwell in the house of God forever.” It is no coincidence that so many families request this Psalm at the funerals of loved ones. People want and need assurance that there is some place of safety here on earth and beyond. It is no accident that the worship space in a church is called a sanctuary. . . a place of refuge, of hope, of safety. For hundreds of years the church, the sanctuary, was sacred space that could not even be invaded by kings, anyone who entered was safe in God’s hands.

People still need to find sanctuary in God and should be able to find our church is a safe space. All people should be able to “dwell in the house of God forever.”

Deciding to take steps to prevent child abuse is often the first step in the journey to making a sanctuary of your church community.”¹

CCCUC Church members pledge to one another upon becoming members of our congregation the following statement of faith:

United Church of Christ Statement of Faith:

*“We believe in You, O God, Eternal Spirit, God of our Savior Jesus Christ and our God,
and to your deeds we testify:*

*You call the worlds into being, create persons in your own image, and set before each
one the ways of life and death.*

You seek in holy love to save all people from aimlessness and sin.

*You judge people and nations by your righteous will declared through prophets and
apostles.*

*In Jesus Christ, the man of Nazareth, our crucified and risen Savior,
You have come to us and shared our common lot, conquering sin and death and
reconciling the world to yourself.*

You bestow upon us your Holy Spirit, creating and renewing the church of Jesus

¹ Source: Making Our Churches Safe for All: An Introduction to Abuse Prevention for Local Churches, UCC Insurance Board

Christ, binding in covenant faithful people of all ages, tongues, and races.

You call us into your church to accept the cost and joy of discipleship, to be your servants in the service of others, to proclaim the gospel to all the world and resist the powers of evil, to share in Christ's baptism and eat at his table, to join him in his passion and victory.

You promise to all who trust your forgiveness of sins and fullness of grace, courage in the struggle for justice and peace, your presence in trial and rejoicing, and eternal life in your realm which has no end.

Blessing and honor, glory and power be unto You. Amen."

Our church came together to put together the following statement to dedicate ourselves as an open and affirming congregation:

CCCUCC Open and Affirming Statement:

"All are welcomed and affirmed on this journey regardless of race, gender, age, nationality, gender identification, sexual orientation, marital status, economic or social status, physical capabilities or disabilities, or any other circumstance. We believe in the loving Inclusiveness of our God and that we are called to invite, affirm and travel with all who answer God's invitation to journey into this loving and worshipping group of believers."

Our church covenant's together to behave in such a manner that all know we belong to God by:

CCCUCC Communications and Behavioral Covenant:

Because of the love of the church and with the help of God, we affirm our commitment to the following attitudes and behaviors:

- To create a safe environment, I will uphold the dignity of each person in our congregation, including our church leaders. I will consider the impact of my words and actions on others as I seek to make our church a safe place for all.*
- My communication with others will be timely, direct, honest, open and sensitive, even as I may disagree with another's assumptions, opinions, and decisions.*
- I will accept differences and I will embrace the diversity in our spiritual family, imagine other perspectives and be enriched by these differences.*
- I understand that conflict is a part of life, including life in the church, I will accept disagreement and conflict as an opportunity for personal and church growth, I will concentrate on issues and problems, rather than personalities. I will avoid gossip.*
- I understand that our church stays strong as each person is heard and as we*

seek the consensus of all our congregants. I will exercise personal patience and encourage healthful processes to work.

- *I will engage in self-reflection and prayer, seeking ways that my presence will serve as a blessing on our church and its people. I will seek God's guidance and grace to listen attentively and to remain open to visions that God holds for us. I will encourage prayer at the beginnings of church meetings and when decisions of the church and its various bodies are made.*
- *As I serve on a board or committee, I will refrain from making decisions that benefit only myself. I will seek decisions that will benefit the entire congregation.*

Policy Prohibiting Abuse, Exploitation and Harassment²

As a community of Christian faith, Community Congregational Church United Church of Christ of New Port Richey is committed to creating and maintaining programs, facilities and a community in which members, friends, staff and volunteers can worship, learn and work together in an atmosphere free from all forms of discrimination, harassment, exploitation or intimidation. All persons associated with Community Congregational Church United Church of Christ should be aware that the church is strongly opposed to Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Harassment and that such behavior is prohibited by church policy. It is the intention of the church to take action in an attempt to prevent and correct behavior that is contrary to this policy and, if necessary, to discipline those persons who violate this policy.

Ministerial Conduct

Consistent with our understanding of the priesthood of all believers, all Authorized Ministers, employees, elected and appointed lay leaders, and authorized volunteers are Ministers to the congregation.

It is important that every Minister to the church be adequately prepared and educated for the ministry in which they serve others, and to understand the ways in which their use or misuse of authority may impact others.

It is the policy of Community Congregational Church United Church of Christ to encourage its Ministers to nurture safety within Ministerial Relationships by being attentive to self-care, education, maintaining appropriate boundaries, and the importance of referring those in need to supportive and helpful resources.

² Taken from the Sample Church Policy and Disclosure Forms from the UCC.org website

Sexual Exploitation or Sexual Harassment of parishioners or others by anyone engaged in ministry on behalf of Community Congregational Church United Church of Christ is unethical behavior and will not be tolerated within this congregation.

Requirements for Commencing and Continuing Ministry

- Before beginning their duties, all Ministers will submit a disclosure form similar to the sample attached here to as Exhibit A.
- Before beginning their duties, all Ministers will be personally interviewed to assess the suitability of their character and qualifications for the position they seek.
- The church will conduct a registered sex offender review for each Minister by searching their name on the Department of Justice website at www.nsopr.gov. This registered sex offender review will be repeated on an annual basis for all Ministers.
- Authorized Ministers of the church will attend all boundary workshops required by Florida Conference, or will attend at least one workshop on this topic every three years, whichever is more frequent.

Additional Requirements for Child and Youth Ministry

Community Congregational Church United Church of Christ is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment in which young people can learn about and experience God's love.

In order to promote this, we have established the following guidelines in addition to the general requirements for ministry to the church.

- We expect that those who volunteer to work with minors will have been members of CCCUCC for at least six months or, if not members, regularly and frequently associated with CCCUCC for at least a year.
- All volunteers who regularly work with children and youth will complete and submit a disclosure document in a form substantially similar to the sample attached here to as Exhibit B.
- Before beginning their duties, all prospective employees will undergo a

background check, including but not necessarily limited to inquiries of references and a criminal history verification by a third party vendor.

- All volunteers and employees who regularly work with children and youth will receive orientation regarding safe church policy and procedures.
- It is the policy of this church to provide adequate supervision and safeguards for youth activities. In situations where participants are not readily visible to each other, there will be no fewer than two unrelated adults present with children. Youth over the age of 18 may assist an unrelated adult in supervising children and youth activities; however, such assistance does not alter the requirement that at least two unrelated adults be present.
- Written consent of one parent or guardian of a minor will be required for all activities off the church property, and any overnight activities.

Definitions

Minister: a person authorized by the church to carry out its ministry. Ministers include elected or appointed leaders of the church, employees, and volunteers, as well as Authorized Ministers.

Authorized Minister: a person who holds ordained ministerial standing or has been commissioned or licensed by the Florida Conference of the United Church of Christ. An Authorized Minister is one type of minister within the meaning of this policy.

Ministerial Relationship: the relationship between one who carries out the ministry of the church and the one being served by that ministry.

Sexual Exploitation: sexual activity or contact (not limited to sexual intercourse) in which a Minister engaged in a ministerial relationship with another takes advantage of the vulnerability of the person being served by causing or allowing that person to engage in sexual behavior with the Minister.

Sexual Harassment: repeated or coercive sexual advances toward another person contrary to his or her wishes. It includes behavior directed at another person with the intent of intimidating, humiliating, or embarrassing the other person, or subjecting the person to public discrimination. Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitute sexual harassment when:

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- Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition or circumstance of instruction, employment, or participation in any church activity.
- Submission to, or rejection of, such conduct by an individual is used as a basis for evaluation in making personnel or church-related decisions affecting an individual; or
- Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's performance or participation in church activities or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work or church environment.

Prohibited sexual harassment includes unsolicited and unwelcome contact that has sexual overtones, particularly:

- Written contact, such as sexually suggestive or obscene letters, notes, e-mails, or invitations;
- Verbal contact, such as sexually suggestive or obscene comments, threats, slurs, epithets, jokes about gender-specific traits, sexual propositions;
- Physical contact, such as intentional touching, pinching, brushing against another's body, impeding or blocking movement, assault, coercing sexual intercourse; and
- Visual contact, such as leering or staring at another's body, gesturing, displaying sexually suggestive objects or pictures, cartoons, posters, or magazines.

Sexual harassment also includes continuing to express sexual interest after being informed directly that the interest is unwelcome and using sexual behavior to control, influence, or affect the career, salary, work, learning, or worship environment of another. It is impermissible to suggest, threaten, or imply that failure to accept a request for a date or sexual intimacy will affect a person's job prospects, church leadership, or comfortable participation in the life of the church. It is forbidden either to imply or actually withhold support for an appointment, promotion, or change of assignment, to suggest that a poor performance report will be given because a person has declined a personal proposition; or to hint that benefits, such as promotions, favorable performance evaluations, favorable assigned duties or shifts, recommendations or reclassifications, will be forthcoming in exchange for sexual favors.

Procedures for Handling Complaints of Sexual Exploitation or Harassment

I. Generally

- A. A subcommittee of the Misconduct Response Team with no less than two members, including the Pastor, Moderator and another, will be established each year in preparation for the possibility of hearing complaints under this policy. The subcommittee will have equal gender representation. The subcommittee, hereinafter referred to as “Misconduct Response Team,” will be familiar with the terms of this policy, as well as the established procedures of the church for dealing with a complaint. If case the accused is a part of the team the accused will recuse themselves from service.
- B. Several approaches may be taken in addressing incidents of alleged sexual exploitation or harassment:
1. The complainant can attempt to resolve the matter directly with the respondent, the individual accused of sexual exploitation or harassment.
 2. The complainant can report the incident to a called minister, in an effort to resolve the matter informally.
 3. If an informal resolution of the complaint does not seem wise, appropriate, possible, or does not succeed, the complainant may request that the Response Team institute formal proceedings which shall include the following steps:
 - The Misconduct Response Team shall advise the Senior Minister and Moderator of the receipt of all complaints and shall keep them apprised of ongoing steps and actions taken. If either the Senior Minister or Moderator is the subject of the complaint, this notice requirement shall not apply as to that person.
 - The Misconduct Response Team shall gather statements or other information from the individuals involved in the alleged exploitation or harassment and from others who may have pertinent information, such as qualified professional consultants, and present such information to the Misconduct Response Team or an appropriate subcommittee thereof.
 - The Misconduct Response Team, or an appropriate subcommittee thereof, shall make determinations and take actions appropriate to resolve

the matter. These may include:

A. finding that sexual exploitation or harassment has occurred, and that the appropriate body of the church is called upon to take action accordingly; such action may include one or more of the following:

(i) A formal reprimand, with defined expectations for changed behavior;

(ii) Recommending or requiring psychological or psychiatric assessment, counseling and/or treatment;

(iii) Probationary standing, with the terms of the probation clearly defined;

(iv) Dismissal from employment or authorized volunteer position by, affiliation with, or membership in, the church.

B. finding that sexual exploitation or harassment did not occur.

- The Misconduct Response Team may seek the advice of legal counsel or others to advise it in performing its functions.

C. A written summary of the Misconduct Response Team proceedings in such cases will be maintained.

D. The person(s) toward whom the inappropriate behavior is directed need not be the complainant. Moreover, neither consent nor acquiescence will excuse or exonerate inappropriate behavior. At any time the church may initiate or proceed with the formal complaint process.

E. In determining whether alleged conduct constitutes sexual harassment or exploitation, consideration shall be given to the record of the alleged incident(s) as a whole and to the totality of the circumstances, including the context in which the alleged incident(s) occurred.

F. Any person bringing a sexual harassment or exploitation complaint or assisting in

investigating such a complaint will not be adversely affected in terms and conditions of employment or church membership or affiliation, or otherwise discriminated against or discharged.

- G. If the complainant or respondent is not satisfied with the disposition of the matter by the Misconduct Response Team they have the right to appeal to the Moderator, or to the Vice Moderator if the Moderator is the subject of the complaint, who shall refer the matter to the CCCUCC Church Council. The subject of any such appeal to the CCCUCC Church Council shall be limited solely to whether the procedures of this policy were followed. The matter will not be reconsidered on the merits and the decision of the CCCUCC Church Council will be the final resolution of the matter. If the CCCUCC Church Council determines that the procedures of this policy were not followed, it will refer the matter back to the Misconduct Response Team to complete the processing of the complaint in accordance with these procedures.

II. Child Abuse

Apart from any legal requirements, the CCCUCC will make a report to appropriate authorities, including but not limited to the Florida State Department of Children and Family Services, if at any time the church has reasonable cause to believe that a minor may be an abused or neglected child. Any Minister of the church who becomes aware of facts or circumstances that child abuse or neglect has occurred or that there exists a substantial risk that child abuse or neglect may occur in the reasonably foreseeable future shall immediately report the matter to the Senior Minister and Moderator so that the church may take appropriate action in a timely manner. The Florida Child Abuse Hotline currently is: 1-800-96-ABUSE or 1-800-962-2873 or <https://reportabuse.dcf.state.fl.us/>

III. Clergy

Apart from any disposition of the matter by the church, all allegations of behavior which call into question the fitness for ministry of any Authorized Minister will promptly be forwarded to the Church & Ministry Committee of the Florida Conference of the United Church of Christ.

The Florida Conference may be contacted at: 407-835-7501 or 800-432-8311 and/or www.uccfla.org.

Florida Conference of the United Church of Christ
9300 University Blvd.

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Orlando, FL 32817

Exhibit A

**(Community Congregational Church
United Church of Christ)
Authorized Volunteer
Application and Disclosure Form**

Name: Last	First	Middle
Address: Street	City/State	Zip code
Daytime Phone	Evening Phone	Email

References: One reference should be related to you and the other references should not be related to you.

Name		
Address	City	State Zip code
Telephone		Email

Name			
Address	City	State	Zip code
Telephone		Email	

Name			
Address	City	State	Zip code
Telephone		Email	

Q. I have been a member of this church since

Q. I have been a friend of this church since

I have never been convicted of, nor pled guilty or no contest to, a crime. (Exclude convictions that have been sealed, expunged or legally eradicated, misdemeanor convictions for which probation was completed and the case was dismissed, or offenses about which inquiry is not permissible in this state)

Q True

Q Not True

If not true, please briefly describe the nature of the crime(s), the date and place of conviction and the legal disposition of the case. The church will not deny a position to any applicant solely because the person has been convicted of a crime. The church, however, may consider the nature, date and circumstances of the offense, as well as whether the offense is relevant to the duties of the position applied for.

Is there any fact or circumstance involving you or your background that would call into question your being entrusted with the responsibilities of the position for which you are applying?

Q Yes

Q No

If yes, please provide a brief explanation.

The covenants between persons seeking authorized volunteer positions in the church require honesty, integrity, and truthfulness for the health of the church. To that end, I attest that the information set forth in this application is true and complete. I understand that any misrepresentation or omission may be grounds for rejection of consideration for, or termination of, the position I am seeking to fill. I acknowledge that it is my duty in a timely fashion to amend the responses and information I have provided if I come to know that the response or information was incorrect when given or, though accurate when given, the response or information is no longer accurate.

Beginning such relationships with an open exchange of relevant information builds the foundation for a continuing and healthy covenant between volunteers and the church they seek to serve. To that end, I authorize CCCUCC and/or its agents to make inquiries regarding my character and qualifications, including all statements I have set forth above. I also authorize all entities, persons, former employers, supervisors, courts, law enforcement, and other public agencies to respond to inquiries concerning me, to supply verification of the statements I have made, and to comment on and state opinions regarding my background, character, and qualifications. To encourage such persons and entities to speak openly and responsibly, I hereby release them from all liability

arising from their responses, comments, and statements.

CCCUCC authorized volunteer recruitment process involves the sharing of information regarding applicants with those persons in a position to recruit, secure, and supervise both the position I am seeking to fill and program I am seeking to participate in. To that end, I authorize CCCUCC and its agents to circulate, distribute, and otherwise share information gathered in connection with this application to such persons for these purposes. I understand that CCCUCC will share with me information it has gathered about me, if I request it to do so.

I acknowledge my receipt and understanding of the CCCUCC Safe Church Policy.

(PRINT NAME & SIGN)

DATE

(PRINT NAME & SIGNATURE OF PARENT OR GUARDIAN FOR APPLICANTS UNDER 18)

DATE

- Sex Offender Registry (www.nsopr.gov) review performed on

- Personal interview conducted by staff on

- Reference inquiries completed on

ADDRESS

CITY

STATE

ZIPCODE

TELEPHONE

EMAIL

Q. I have been a member of this church since

Q. I have been a friend of this church since

I have never been convicted of, nor pled guilty or no contest to, a crime. (Exclude convictions that have been sealed, expunged or legally eradicated, misdemeanor convictions for which probation was completed and the case was dismissed, or offenses about which inquiry is not permissible in this state)

Q True

Q Not True

If not true, please briefly describe the nature of the crime(s), the date and place of conviction and the legal disposition of the case. The church will not deny a position to any applicant solely because the person has been convicted of a crime. The church, however, may consider the nature, date and circumstances of the offense, as well as whether the offense is relevant to the duties of the position applied for.

No civil lawsuit alleging actual or attempted sexual discrimination, harassment, exploitation, or misconduct; physical abuse; child abuse; or financial misconduct has ever resulted in a judgment being entered against me, been settled out of court, or been dismissed because the statute of limitations has expired.

Q True

Q Not True

If not true, give a short explanation of the lawsuit. (Please indicate the date, nature, and place of the incident leading to the lawsuit; where the lawsuit was filed; and the precise disposition of the lawsuit.)

I have never terminated my employment, professional credentials, or service in a volunteer position or had my employment, professional credentials, or authorization to hold a volunteer position terminated for reasons relating to allegations of actual or attempted sexual discrimination, harassment, exploitation, or misconduct; physical abuse; child abuse; or financial misconduct.

Q True

Q Not True

If not true, give a short explanation. (Please indicate the date of termination; name, address, and telephone number of employer or volunteer supervisor; and nature of the incident(s) leading to your termination.)

Do you have a valid drivers' license?

Q Yes

Q No

With respect to my driving record, I have not had my license suspended or revoked within the last five years due to reckless driving or driving while intoxicated and/or under the influence of a controlled substance.

Q True

Q Not True

Is there any fact or circumstance involving you or your background that would call into question your being entrusted with the responsibilities of the position for which you are applying?

Q Yes

Q No

If yes, please provide a brief explanation.

The covenants between persons seeking authorized volunteer positions in the church require honesty, integrity, and truthfulness for the health of the church. To that end, I attest that the information set forth in this application is true and complete. I understand that any misrepresentation or omission may be grounds for rejection of consideration for, or termination of, the position I am seeking to fill. I acknowledge that it is my duty in a timely fashion to amend the responses and information I have provided if I come to know that the response or information was incorrect when given or, though accurate when given, the response or information is no longer accurate.

Beginning such relationships with an open exchange of relevant information builds the foundation for a continuing and healthy covenant between volunteers and the church they seek to serve. To that end, I authorize CCCUCC and/or its agents to make inquiries regarding my character and qualifications, including all statements I have set forth above. I also authorize all entities, persons, former employers, supervisors, courts, law enforcement, and other public agencies to respond to inquiries concerning me, to supply verification of the statements I have made, and to comment on and state opinions regarding my background, character, and qualifications. To encourage such persons and entities to speak openly and responsibly, I hereby release them from all liability arising from their responses, comments, and statements.

CCCUCC authorized volunteer and employee recruitment process involves the sharing

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of information regarding applicants with those persons in a position to recruit, secure, and supervise both the position I am seeking to fill and program I am seeking to participate in. To that end, I authorize CCCUCC and its agents to circulate, distribute, and otherwise share information gathered in connection with this application to such persons for these purposes. I understand that CCCUCC will share with me information it has gathered about me, if I request it to do so.

I acknowledge my receipt and understanding of the CCCUCC Safe Church Policy.

(PRINT NAME & SIGN)

DATE

(PRINT NAME & SIGNATURE OF PARENT OR GUARDIAN FOR APPLICANTS UNDER 18)

DATE

- Sex Offender Registry (www.nsopr.gov) review performed on _____
- Personal interview conducted by staff on _____
- Reference inquiries completed on _____
- Church membership for 6 mos. or association for 1 year confirmed on _____
- Safe church awareness training and policy orientation performed on _____

Additionally, if considered for employment:

- Criminal History Verification (Oxford Document Management) together with Fair Credit Reporting Act notices, completed on _____

All UCC Pastors comply with the following Background Screening Consent and Information Form through the Florida Conference, UCC.

Background Screening Consent and Information Form

Applicant should complete all relevant information and sign and date the form.

Applicant's Full Name:

Maiden Name or Other Names Used:

Social Security Number: Date of Birth"³

ADDRESSES FOR THE PAST 10 YEARS

Please list all states and counties of residence since turning age 18:

Please circle any of the following states in which you have lived: CA, CO, DE, LA, MA, SD, VT, WV, WY.

I, _____, authorize the Florida Conference UCC (THE PRINCIPAL) and/or its agents to make an independent investigation of my background, references, character, [past employment, education, credit history, adult criminal or police records, and motor vehicle records including those maintained by both public and private organizations and all public record for the purpose of confirming the information contained on my Application and/or obtaining other information which may be material to my qualifications for service now and, if applicable, during the tenure of my service with THE PRINCIPAL.

I release the United Church of Christ Insurance Board, and THE PRINCIPAL and its agents and any person or entity, which provides information pursuant to this authorization, from any and all liabilities, claims or law suits in regards to the information obtained from any and all of the above referenced sources used.

The name above is my true and complete legal name. All information provided is true and correct to the best of my knowledge:

Signature of Applicant:

Date:

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³ NOTE: The above information is required for identification purposes only, and is in no manner used as qualifications for employment, internship, or service as a volunteer. The United Church of Christ Insurance Board and The Florida Conference UCC (THE PRINCIPAL) abides by all applicable state and federal employment laws.

Ministerial Ethics

UCC Ministerial Code of Ethics: ⁴

All persons with ministerial standing in the United Church of Christ are expected to abide by the UCC Ministerial Code.

“I acknowledge as the Church’s sole Head, Jesus Christ, Son of God and Savior, and as kindred in Christ all who share in this confession. I will look to the Word of God in Scriptures, and to the presence and power of the Holy Spirit, to prosper its creative and redemptive work in the world.⁵

Affirming that I have been called by God to be a minister of the Lord Jesus Christ and granted ministerial standing by the United Church of Christ, I agree to preach and teach the gospel, to administer the sacraments and rites of the Church with integrity, and to exercise pastoral care and leadership in covenant with others.

Relying on the grace of God, I . . .

Covenant with God to:

- Lead a life worthy of the calling to which I have been called.
- Demonstrate a sincere yearning for connection with the triune God, expressed in prayer, worship, Bible study, retreat, and other spiritual practices.
- Affirm the importance of discernment in relationship to my call and, using the Marks of Faithful and Effective Authorized Ministers, will continue to discern the nature of my call in community.
- Grow in faith, knowledge, and the practice of ministry through intentional continuing education, study, and devotional life.
- Cultivate a culture of call by nurturing the gifts of others in the Church and joining their gifts with mine in seasons of change and continuity for the sake of the mission of Jesus Christ and the health of the Church.
- Honor the diversity of God’s creation and work for the unity of the body of Christ (John 17:21)
- Recognize the communal nature of God, ensuring that ministry does not happen in isolation.

Covenant with Self and Family to:

- Attend to my physical well-being by adopting a healthy life style including diet,

⁴ Source: A Sure Foundation: Resources for the Relationship Between Pastors and Congregations from the UCC.org website

⁵ Preamble to the United Church of Christ Constitution.

exercise, and rest, setting aside time for Sabbath and vacation.

- Steward my time, talents, and personal financial resources responsibly.
- Accept responsibility for all debts that I incur.
- Refrain from abusive behavior including abusive behavior toward others; the abuse of alcohol, drugs, or any other substance; to seek appropriate care for physical and mental health concerns; and to avoid addictive behaviors.
- Engage in sexually healthy and responsible behavior.
- Honor my family commitments, including my family's need for privacy and time together.
- Develop and maintain meaningful personal relationships outside of my ministry setting.

Covenant with the United Church of Christ to:

- Actively participate in the covenantal life and work of all settings of the United Church of Christ.
- Adhere to all requirements for maintaining ministerial standing as set forth by my Conference and abide by the terms of call agreements and covenants with energy and vitality.
- Seek the counsel of others, including Conference staff should divisive tensions threaten my relationship with those with whom I minister.
- Serve as an ambassador for the United Church of Christ, and participate in activities that strengthen its mission, vision and purpose.
- Advocate for fair standards of compensation for all ordained and lay employees of the Church and honor the search and call process of the United Church of Christ.
- Seek to know, understand and respect the diversity of opinions and people within the United Church of Christ, affirming that all settings of the UCC speak to the church and not for it.
- Encourage and participate in the evaluation of my ministry, understanding and demonstrating that ministry is of and for the Church as it seeks to advance God's mission in the world.

Covenant with My Ministry Setting to:

- Preach and teach the gospel without fear or favor, regarding all persons with equal respect and concern, and undertaking to minister impartially.
- Honor all confidences shared with me; telling only those who need to know, what they need to know, when they need to know it.
- Steward church funds and property faithfully, while overseeing the administrative tasks of ministry with integrity.
- Speak the truth in love, not using my position, power, or authority to exploit any

person nor using my position for unwarranted personal gain, including financial gain.

- Assess with care the implications of accepting gifts from congregation members.
- Not perform pastoral services within a congregation or for a member of a congregation, without the invitation of the current pastor of that congregation.
- Neither interfere with nor intrude upon the ministry of my successor upon my departure from a ministry setting; and to deal honorably with the record of my predecessor and successor.

Covenant with All Ministers to:

- Work cooperatively and collegially, with intercultural awareness.
- Stand in mutual relationships with colleagues in ministry, offering and receiving counsel and support with intentionality.
- Use technology and social media responsibly.
- Act to prevent and to report known or suspected cases of physical or sexual abuse or neglect.
- Attribute the sources of words and ideas that are not my own.
- Accurately represent my professional qualifications, education, experience and affiliations, acknowledging that limitations of my office, abilities, skills and competencies, and making referrals when necessary and/or appropriate.
- Maintain appropriate boundaries and practice self-differentiation in both my personal and professional life, including within the Local Church where I hold membership.

CCCUCC in Relation to our Pastor

The Ministry

CCCUCC recognizes itself as a part of the people of God and fulfills its purpose as it becomes a community for ministry and mission. We recognize our pastor as a person called by God who has attained particular skill and competence in leading our local church in fulfilling its mission and ministry.

We have called our pastor to preach and teach the gospel, to administer the sacraments and rites of the Church, and to exercise pastoral care and leadership. As we expect the pastor to be responsible in preaching and teaching the gospel and in administering the sacraments and rites, so will we be responsible for receiving and heeding the Word of God that comes through the proclamation of the gospel and the celebration of the

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sacraments and for responding to the pastoral care and leadership offered.

Partnership in Ministry

We believe that the ministry and mission of the Church are given to all baptized Christians. We will nurture and join our gifts for ministry with those of the pastor in the Church and in the world.

In all matters pertaining to the life, organization, and mission of CCCUCC, we will work cooperatively and collegially with the pastor. We recognize that our church and our pastor are part of the larger faith community that is the United Church of Christ, and we will be and will support our pastor in being responsible participants of our Conference and the United Church of Christ.

We recognize that our church and our pastor are part of the Church Universal, and we will be and will support our pastor in being responsible participants in ecumenical activities in order to strengthen the unity, witness, and mission of the Church everywhere.

The Ethics of Ministry

We will regard all persons with equal respect and concern and will support and expect our pastor to undertake to minister impartially. We will not discriminate against any person, group or organization on the basis of race, gender, age, sexual orientation, faith, nationality, ethnicity, marital status, or physical, mental, or emotional disability.

We recognize that we have called our pastor as the pastoral leader of this church, and we will not invite other pastors to provide pastoral services within this church or to members of this church without our pastor's consent.

We recognize and respect that our pastor receives confidential and privileged communication. We will establish policies regarding baptism, communion, marriages, funerals, and the use of church facilities and personnel in consultation with our pastor and will honor them in our life as a local church.

We respect the privacy of the pastor's family and the family's right to time together without interruption.

We do not expect the pastor's family to assume roles of leadership or levels of involvement beyond the family's wishes.

We recognize that conflict or tension between our pastor and CCCUCC can arise.

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Should divisive tensions threaten our life together, we will seek the counsel of the Florida Conference.

Commitments in Ministry

We recognize the many and diverse expectations we have of our pastor, and we will offer our support through prayer, encouragement, and partnership in ministry of this church.

We recognize our responsibility to provide our pastor with adequate compensation and fringe benefits. We will make these decisions in consultation with our pastor and in light of the compensation guidelines established by our Conference. We will provide for an annual review of compensation that considers effectiveness, cost of living, ministerial competence, and years of service.

We recognize our pastor's need for physical and spiritual renewal, and we will provide adequate time and resources for study, devotion, leisure, vacation, and sabbatical.

Relying on the grace of God, we will lead lives worthy of the calling to which we have been called.”

Internet Safety Guidelines⁶

Introduction:

“The emerging “digital age” has presented the Church with a new and evolving set of communication tools which offer great promise for developing and deepening ministries of relationship. Social networking sites, on-the-spot communication devices, and “old fashioned” email can facilitate faith sharing and inquiry, organization for mission, and pastoral care. Their rapid manifestation raises anxieties as well. People legitimately feel discomfort with the unfamiliar. They certainly experience confusion when confronted with new tools to accomplish customary tasks. And they feel out of place in new communities that emerge around new communication technologies.

We offer this document as a guidepost to emerging technologies and hope that it provides an opportunity for local church leaders to engage in conversation. The Church of Jesus Christ and the tradition of the United Church of Christ use the practice of covenanting to healthy, faithful communities. We hope this document will aid local church leaders to give expression to their own groups' covenants, Safe Church

⁶ Source: Internet Safety Guidelines of the Connecticut Conference, Hartford, Connecticut, 860.233.5564, www.ctucc.org Written by the Rev. Eric S. Anderson, the Rev. Kim Hoare, Marji Hughes and the Rev. Da Vita D. McCallister.

policies, and ministry practices in the new world of electronic communication.

Where we offer advice about specific practices, we make it from a hope that these practices are more likely to produce strong, healthy relationships in the Body of Christ, and not from a legislative impulse or an attempt to proffer legal advice. That which builds relationship is a more exacting standard than public statutes. The whole United States Code may not be summed up in the commandment “you shall love your neighbor as yourself,” yet it still serves as a sound guide for Christian praxis.

The apostle Paul embraced the technologies of his day to “spread the gospel;” he travelled on foot, by animal, and by ship; he employed scribes to pen his words and readers to speak them to people he had never met; he even learned to write himself in “what great letters;” to build up the Body of Christ.

Recommendations – Safe Church (Minor to Adult Relationships)

Recommendations – Safe Church (Adult to Adult Relationships)

General Recommendations for Digital Communication and Contact

Minor to Adult Relationships: Social Networking Sites – Relationship and Group status

1. Adults should not submit “friend” requests to minors or youth. Youth may request friendships with adults, and adults should discern the level of contact they want to maintain with youth prior to responding to these requests.
2. When and where available, authorized youth workers may choose to create separate private and professional profiles on networking sites to create a line of privacy.
3. If an authorized youth worker chooses to accept friend requests from minors or youth that are associated with their community of faith, we recommend that other youth workers (within the same community of faith) have full access to the professional youth worker’s profile and correspondence.
4. Authorized youth workers who choose to accept friend requests from minors or youth should use all privacy settings applicable to shield youth from any inappropriate content that may exist within the authorized youth worker’s profile.
5. All youth and adults should be informed that any communication that is set via digital means (email, social networking site notes or posts, etc.) is not confidential and may be reported or shared with others.
6. We strongly recommend “closed” groups, but not “hidden” groups be used for youth groups. These groups should have both youth and adult administrators.
7. Youth groups should decide within their covenant whether or not their social

networking site groups are open to parents of current members.

8. Covenants should be created to govern what is appropriate and inappropriate content to be placed and displayed in the online group for the youth group.
9. Any inappropriate material that is not covered by “Mandatory Reporting” laws should be deleted from the site. Any material that is covered by “Mandatory Reporting” laws should be reported to the clergy (within your community of faith), documented for church records, and then delete from the site.
10. Any content that details inappropriate behavior (outside of the bounds of the established covenant) during a church sponsored event or activity should be addressed by authorized youth workers and parents.
11. Parents should be informed that content that appears on youth pages or groups that are not sponsored by the church are NOT within the purview of authorized youth workers.

Recommendations – Boundaries (Adult to Adult Relationships): Social Networking Sites – Relationships and Group status

1. Adult members of congregations or communities of faith who seek religious or spiritual advice from clergy via digital means (email, social networking site posts, etc.) should be informed that their communication is NOT confidential. Use of digital means to communicate nullifies confidentiality.
2. When and where available, clergy are encouraged to consider creating a personal and professional account to maintain appropriate boundaries with members of their congregations or other members of communities of faith.
3. Clergy should consider the impact of declining a “friend” request from their church members. These encounters may create tension in “real world” relationships.
4. Clergy who work directly with youth are encouraged to establish church sponsored digital communications groups to maintain contact with youth members.
5. Clergy are encouraged to use privacy settings to shield both adult and youth members from viewing content that may be inappropriate.

General Recommendations for Communication and Contact

Recommendations for Transitions:

1. Clergy who are leaving a specific ministry setting (congregation, youth ministry, conference) should refrain from offering pastoral care through digital communication after the END date of their contract/call/covenant with their community of faith.
2. Former youth members and adult leaders of youth groups, due to departure,

removal or loss of eligibility (aged out of a program) should be removed from digital communication youth groups (Facebook groups, list serves, etc.)

Recommendations for Digital Covenants

1. Digital Covenants should acknowledge that materials posted on Church Sponsored sites (and/or group pages) are not CONFIDENTIAL. At CCCUCC we utilize only the individual's first name and last initial in relaying prayer concerns on the Website and constant contact posts.
2. Digital Covenants should acknowledge that content deemed inappropriate will be removed from the site or group page and/or the person posting the content will be requested to remove the post from the site. Pictures and/or postings need to be cleared with the individual before posting them on any social media.
3. Digital Covenants for communities of faith should address the following issues:
 - appropriate language,
 - eligibility of membership (do you have to be a member of a local congregation or youth group, are parents of current members eligible, are their age requirements/restrictions for participation, etc.),
 - content that can be posted/published on the site or page (Rule of thumb: post your information and not others'),
 - who, how and when may photos be tagged (members identified by name; for example, individuals may tag themselves in photos but should not tag others),
 - stipulate appropriate and inappropriate (bullying, pictures that depict abuse, violence, sexual acts, etc.) behavior of members and the consequence for inappropriate behavior,
 - transitions: due to departure, loss of eligibility or removal of youth members and/or adult leaders, and
 - mandatory reporting laws will be followed (individuals who work with youth are responsible to report to clergy any activity or language which indicates that a minor is being severely harmed (sexual assault, physical abuse or emotional torment) by a youth or adult, considering doing severe harm to themselves (thoughts or plans of suicide) or severely harming others (abuse, homicide or rape). Any information that is posted on a church sponsored site that includes this type of information should be reported to clergy, documented in church records and deleted from the site).

Recommendations for Video Chats, Blogs or Video Blogs

1. Adults should refrain from initiating video chats with youth.

2. Participants in a video chat or blog should consider what will be shown in the video such as their surroundings, their clothing/state of dress, etc.
3. All transcripts of on-line text chats, video chats, blogs or video blogs should be saved when possible.
4. All clergy and authorized youth workers should consider the content and nature of any post that will be read by or visible to youth. Your voice is often considered the voice of the church, and your content may be viewed as church policy.

Recommendations for Publishing/Posting Content Online

1. All Communities of faith should take care to secure signed Media Release forms from adults and guardians of minor children who will or may participate in activities that may be photographed or videoed for distribution.
2. Any congregation that distributes video of its congregational services or activities on the web or via other broadcast media MUST post signs that indicate the service will be broadcast.
3. Congregations are NOT considered PUBLIC space and therefore must inform participants when they are begin videoed.
4. Photos that are published on church sponsored sites should not include name or contact information for minor children or youth.”

Fire Safety on the Church Campus⁷

Basic Fire Prevention Principles recommended for CCCUCC:

- Make sure all exits are clear of chairs and clutter.
- Ensure individuals can leave via every exit door during services.
- Ensure all exit signs and emergency lights are properly working.
- Regularly check all appliances on a regular basis to ensure they are properly functioning.
- Regularly check all extinguishers to ensure they are up to date and working.
- Ensure smoke detectors, or alarm systems are working.
- Have exit plans posted for all rooms and in every office/meeting room.
- Conduct a fire drill once a year, after the worship service.
- Educate community members to ensure that every member knows the emergency plans.
- Fire Wardens, Evacuation Wardens and Floor Wardens need contact numbers to contact each other during emergency.

⁷ Emergency Guidelines for Churches: Emergency Planning and Preparedness Alabama – West Florida Conference United Methodist Church <http://awfumc.org>

Where are CCCUCC Fire Extinguishers?

- One is in the office by the front door.
- One is behind the Altar.
- One is in the hallway between the sanctuary and Andrus Hall.
- One is in Andrus Hall near the Nursery Room.
- One is in Andrus Hall near the custodian's closet.
- One is in the kitchen.
- One is in the kitchen over the range.
- One is in the hallway outside the kitchen door.
- One is in the power room.
- **One is in the Sanctuary (proposed 8-14-2019)**

All CCCUCC fire extinguishers are Class ABC – Dry Chemical that can be used on paper, flammable liquids and electrical equipment (All Purpose) DO NOT USE ON METALS.

When Would You Use A Fire Extinguisher?

- Use to fight small fire (nothing larger than a trash can size)

To Use a Fire Extinguisher: (PASS)

- Pull the Safety Pin
- Aim the nozzle at the base of the fire
- Squeeze the handle
- Sweep at the base of the fire

You Need to Know:

- Where your two nearest fire exits are.
- Where your two nearest fire extinguishers are.

Emergency Plan for Church Evacuation:

Sanctuary: In the event of a fire or other emergency during a worship service in the sanctuary the fire warden (sexton) will be called on to investigate the odor or smoke if there is one and determine if there is a need for the sanctuary to be evacuated. As needed, anyone can determine that a fire is larger than a fire extinguisher can handle. (Size of a trash can) and call FIRE! and begin the process of evacuating the sanctuary.

The South Side of the sanctuary will evacuate using the back door and out the parking lot door toward the dumpster site. This is the B gathering site.

The North Side of the sanctuary will evacuate using the Narthex doors and out the Orange Lake doors toward the front of the church. This is the A gathering site.

The Choir loft will use the choir room door and evacuate using the choir room door to the B gathering site.

South Side: (to Gathering Area B – parking lot)

When the emergency (FIRE!) is called the **assistant fire warden** (church moderator) will assist the South Side of the sanctuary to be guided out the parking lot door. A **floor warden** can stand at the back door and guide members down to the hall to the outside back door to exit. The **floor wardens** (deacons, pastor, and committee chairs) that are seated on the South side of the Sanctuary will take charge of that section to assist and guide South Side members to the door. Able bodied members will be asked to assist with walkers and wheel chairs to get everyone to evacuate and sit in cars with air conditioning until the fire warden and/or emergency personnel have called off the emergency evacuation. (The Fire Warden must account for everyone before the drill can be called off.) Floor wardens will close off any section that may be on fire and review the Andrus Hall Bathrooms and Kitchen to insure all members have evacuated before leaving.

- **Exception:** If the fire is toward the parking lot members will be guided out the front door and out to gathering point A.

North Side: (to Gathering Area A – Toward Orange Lake)

When the emergency (FIRE!) is called the ushers will open doors and stand in the Narthex to guide members out the front of the church to gathering point B. Members that are closer to the side door (near the office) can also use that door to exit. Floor wardens (deacons, pastor, and committee chairs) that are seated in the North Side of the Sanctuary will take charge of that section to assist and guide North Side members to the door. Able bodied members will be asked to assist with walkers and wheel chairs to evacuate everyone. Members can sit in cars with air conditioning or on park benches until the fire warden and/or emergency personnel have called off the emergency evacuation. (The Fire Warden must account for everyone before the drill can be called off).

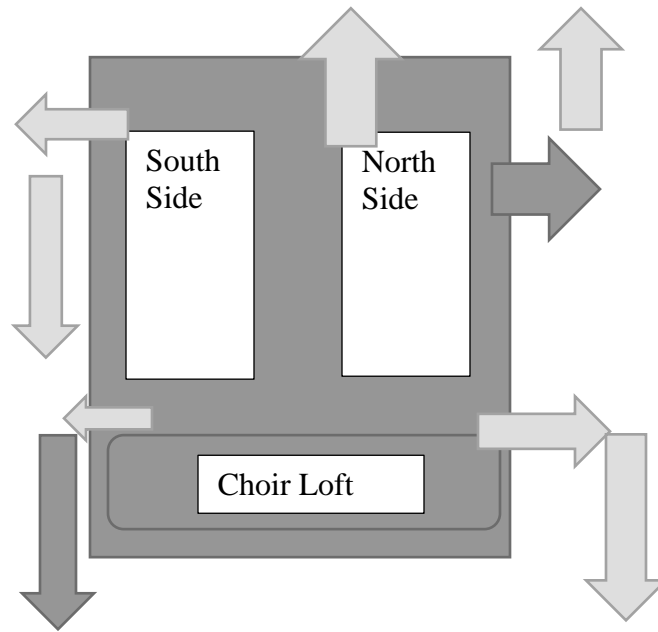
- **Exception:** If the fire is on the front of the church, North side members will leave via the parking lot door on the South Side.

Choir Loft: (to Gathering Area B – parking lot)

When the emergency (FIRE!) is called the choir will file out into the choir room and out the choir entrance to gathering point B by the dumpster. A floor warden from the choir will review the bathrooms off the office and choir room to ensure all members have

evacuated. Everyone must stay near the gathering point until the fire warden and/or emergency personnel have called off the emergency evacuation. (The Fire Warden must account for everyone before the drill can be called off).

Orange Lake (Gathering Place A)



CCCUCC Parking Lot (Gathering Place B)

Andrus Hall: Andrus Hall can evacuate to both gathering point B by the dumpster and A by Orange Lake.

Choir Room: The choir room will evacuate to gathering point B by the dumpster.

Church Offices: The church offices will evacuate to gathering point A by Orange Lake.

Evacuation of persons with disabilities;

The evacuation of persons with disabilities can prove to be a challenging task for worship facilities. Not every emergency that involves moving members with disabilities can be planned for. However, church should anticipate the need to effectively evacuate members with disabilities. Fire Wardens should coordinate with evacuation wardens in order to assure that adequate resources are available for these types of evacuations. The following should be considered:

Identify members with special needs within the congregation

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Consult these individuals, if possible, about their special needs and how to best provide assistance.

Ensure adequate devices are available for the facility should the need arise.

Use the buddy system, if possible. Consider using ushers or other able bodied members.

Consider using at least two people for every wheel chair bound person.

Fire Prevention Team:

1. **Fire Warden: (Church Sexton)** Responsible to ensure fire prevention policy is updated as needed and for training the church to respond in case of emergency.

- Ensure that the building meet fire prevention code: all doors can be opened during worship/meetings, fire extinguishers in working order, fire alarm operational, no blocked exits, etc.
- During the emergency establish what the emergency is and direct floor wardens (deacons) what action should be taken. (Investigate strange odors or smoke).
- Ensure 911 is activated and given proper information.
- Instruct emergency personnel of any members still believed to be in the building and what actual conditions are.

2. **Assistant Fire Warden: Responsible to Fire Warden, or fill in during the absence of the fire Warden. (Church Moderator)**

3. **Evacuation Warden: (Chair of Deacons)** Responsible for the safe and orderly evacuation of people within the sanctuary. Floor wardens (Deacons, Pastor and Chairs of Committees) should also conduct a quick visual search while ensuring everyone is out.

- **Floor Wardens (Deacons, Pastor, Chairs of Church committees)** should close doors to unoccupied areas as people leave in order to reduce the spread of smoke and fire.
- Ensure all members are at the designated meeting place and conduct as accurate a roll call as possible.
- (Both Meeting Places A and B need to report numbers of people to ensure all people are out of the sanctuary.)
- (Members must remain at place A and B until the fire emergency is called

over by the fire warden or emergency personnel. Members may seat other members in their cars with the air conditioner on to insure that all members are as comfortable as can be during the called emergency.)

4. Assistant Evacuation Warden: Responsible to Floor Warden, or fill in during the absence of the Floor Warden. (Church Treasurer)

Procedures:

- Floor Wardens take immediate charge of every member in your assigned area. Take all emergencies seriously until told by the Fire Warden otherwise. Notify the Evacuation Warden of any fire code violations or any improvements that should be made to the plan.
- Designate the means of egress as well as any outside meeting areas before an emergency. (Area A is directly in front of the church sanctuary, Area B is behind the church sanctuary in the parking lot next to the dumpster). (SIGNS NEED TO BE MADE TO INDICATE AREA A AND B AND FIRE EGRESS SIGNS NEED TO BE MADE AND HUNG TO INDICATE EGRESS PATH).
- See that the evacuation from rooms to exit is orderly, without crowding, and at a uniform speed. Be careful to ensure that members do not stumble or trample each other, which would impede safe evacuation.
- Check all areas to ensure complete evacuation – double check rest rooms and kitchen to ensure all members are making their way outside.
- Once everyone is at one of the two designated areas outside, use the walkie-talkie to communicate with the other group to insure an accurate count of members is gathered. Any missing members need to be reported and their last known location.

Fire Emergency:

A fire may or may not include visible flames or strong burning odors. The fire emergency might be a small kitchen fire but the facility should be evacuated until such time as the emergency is deemed over by the Fire Warden or emergency personnel.

A. Person discovering fire:

- Notify the Fire Warden or nearest person who can call 911.
- Extinguish the fire only if you can do so safely and quickly.
- Use an approved fire extinguisher utilizing the PASS method (above).
- Ensure that you remain safe, keeping yourself between the fire and the nearest exit.
- After the fire is extinguished, ensure 911 has been called.

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- Make sure doors are closed and leave the building.
- B. If fire cannot be extinguished:
- Confine the fire by closing all the doors.
 - Notify the Fire Warden.
 - Call 911.
 - Alert other members.
 - Get out of the building.
 - Meet the emergency personnel when they arrive, and notify them of the location of fire or emergency.
- C. Building occupants should:
- Close doors in your immediate areas.
 - Evacuate the building by the nearest exit. Assist others in exiting the building.
 - Proceed to the designated meeting area outside.
 - Do not return inside the building.
- D. For persons evacuating the immediate fire area;
- Feel door from the top to the bottom. If the door is hot, do not use this exit.
 - If the door is cool, crouch low to the floor and open door slowly. If smoke is present, close door and use another exit.
 - Stay low (crawl) if attempting to exit in a smoke-filled area.
 - Find the exit route and proceed out of the building.
 - Proceed to the designated meeting area outside.
 - Do not return to the building.
- E. Responding to Individual Calling "FIRE!"
- Fire Warden will immediately respond to call of "FIRE!"
 - Evacuation Wardens will begin to organize their areas and begin to evacuate the areas according to the evacuation plan.
 - If the Fire Warden discovers a false or accidental call of "FIRE!" notify evacuation wardens to discontinue the evacuation plan.
 - If a fire or emergency is discovered, call 911 and continue an orderly evacuation of the facility.

Medical Emergencies

Action should be taken in all medical emergencies. Upon being notified of an emergency, or observing an emergency, the following action should be taken:

- The church has several members who have current CPR qualifications to provide first response until Emergency Medical Service arrives with the Fire Department.

- Activate the EMS system by dialing 911 and provide the call taker with the following information:
 - State of emergency
 - Give complete address of the church and the location of the patient
 - Give pertinent information about the patient: age, sex, symptoms exhibited, previous medical condition, medications taken, and any assistance given.
- The individual providing the information should stay on the line until the call taker advises to end the call.
- Stay with the patient until EMS arrives. Have another church member meet the emergency personnel in order to direct them to the patient.

Violent Incident

Violent incidents, including acts of terrorism, assaults, and anti-religious aggression can occur at any time and with little warning. Members of your local church should consider the following in order to minimize the loss of life and/injuries.

- **Report any emergency situation to law enforcement authorities immediately by dialing 911.**
- **When talking to the call taker, try to remain calm and give the following information: What is happening, Location of the incident, Who is involved, Number of aggressors involved and their last known location, type of weapons involved and your name and address.**
- The Department of Homeland Security encourages all to:
 - Be aware of your environment and any possible dangers.
 - Take note of the two nearest exits in any facility you visit.
 - If an emergency arises and you can run, do so! **Leave your belongings and keep your hands visible. Assist others to escape, if possible. Follow the instructions of any police officer.**
 - If an emergency arises stay in an office and secure the door. Block the doors with furniture. Hide! Be out of the shooter's view and provide protection if shots are fired in your direction. Silence your cell phone and remain quiet.
 - If you are in a hallway, get into a room and secure the door with furniture or a desk.
 - As a last resort, attempt to take the active shooter down. When the shooter is at close range and you cannot flee, your chance of survival is much greater if you try to incapacitate him/her. (Try to disrupt or incapacitate the shooter by using aggressive force or throw items such as fire extinguishers or chairs. Yell!)

- CCCUCC Every Sunday Standard Precautions
 - All doors on the exterior of the church should be locked 10 minutes after the start of the service, with instructions to proceed to the front door for admission after this time. The head usher and assistant will monitor the front door during the service to admit people to the church. Back Packs and large bags should be discouraged and an area (away from the sanctuary) to put them (if they are brought in) should be designated.
 - The side doors to the inner sanctuary should be locked during the service and only the 2 inner front doors should be left open. (A quick closure and locking method should be developed for the 2 front inner doors).
- **The KEY WORD at our church (signal to call the police) is GEORGE WASHINGTON.**
- **Emergency Action If Situation Should Occur⁸**
 - **CALL 911 for assistance. Pull the fire alarm!!**
 - Should an active shooter situation arise ALL DOORS to the sanctuary should be locked, disabled parishioners, children and parents should move to the choir room. Leave belongings behind! The disabled, children and the able bodied assisting them should move into the church offices, lock the door and block the door with a desk. All others should shelter in place on the floor. If it is safe, or as directed by a police officer, able bodied persons should run out the back choir door with their hands raised, into the back parking lot and away from the scene. Shelter over at the United Methodist Church until another church member comes to tell you it is safe to return. Please do not leave! Everyone needs to be accounted for!! First responders are finding that to return together for a brief debriefing is important to promote peace of mind. Pastor is capable of holding a debriefing for us.
- When law enforcement arrives:
 - Remain calm and follow officer's instructions
 - Put down any items in your hands
 - Immediately raise hands and spread fingers
 - Keep hands visible at all times
 - Avoid making quick movements toward officers such as holding on to them for safety
 - Avoid pointing, screaming and/or yelling
 - Do not stop to ask officers for help or direction when evacuating, just proceed in the direction from which officers are entering the premises.
 - The first officers to arrive will not stop to help injured persons. Expect

rescue teams comprised of officers and medical personnel to follow the initial officers. These teams will treat the wounded and may also call upon any able bodied individuals to assist in removing the wounded from the premises.

- Once you have reached a safe location or an assembly point, you will likely be held in that area by law enforcement until the situation is under control, and all witnesses have been identified and questioned. Do not leave until law enforcement authorities have instructed you to do so.

Guns on the Church Campus⁹

“Additionally, with regard to guns on the premises, most experts do not recommend encouraging civilians to carry guns into the pews. Concealed carry laws vary widely by state, and individuals may actually find him/herself in legal jeopardy if the use of a gun is not specifically authorized under the state’s concealed carry law. Also, congregants with guns in the pews may create confusion once law enforcement officials arrive further exacerbating an already tense situation. If a church decides to provide armed security, it should be provided by an off-duty, uniformed law enforcement officer. A law enforcement officer in uniform may deter an event from happening, and a law enforcement official is best trained to react to a hostile situation. The Federal Emergency Management Agency provides resources designed to equip church leaders to consider, among many options, the most appropriate response(s) to employ during an active shooter/assailant scenario.”

Bomb Threats

Occasionally churches receive a telephone call or a report of a bomb at their worship facility. All reported bomb threats should be taken seriously and reported immediately to the police department by calling 911.

- Verbal threats received by a church indicating an imminent threat:
 - Remain calm, listen and take notes
 - Have your facility evacuated in a calm manner. Churches may utilize their fire plan in order to evacuate the building.
- Threats received by telephone:
 - Remain calm, listen and take notes
 - Have your facility evacuated in a calm manner. Churches may utilize their fire plan in order to evacuate the building.
 - Remember what you hear.

⁹ A Message from Insurance Board President Timothy Harris, CPCU President and CEO (Insurance Board)

- Keep the caller talking while someone calls 911.
- Check the caller ID on your phone and record phone number.
- Try to get as much information as possible. If the caller stays on the phone and you are not in immediate danger, ask these questions:
 - Where is the bomb?
 - What does it look like?
 - Why did you choose this building, motive?
 - When is it set to go off?
 - Why would you want to hurt innocent people?
 - Can you tell me the reason you are doing this?
- Record a description of the caller's voice:
 - Male or female
 - Juvenile or adult
 - Local, foreign, southern, etc.
 - Speech impediment, slurred speech, etc.
 - Excited, quiet, calm, etc.
 - Possible education level
- Listen for background noises such as railroad, metro, streets, etc.
- Do not discuss call with anyone except the police department.

Hazardous Materials Incident

Hazardous materials are any materials that may be spilled or released, including chemicals, radioactive materials, or biological materials and are harmful to the environment. Fortunately there are relatively few hazardous materials in most church facilities that will harm the environment or endanger occupants.

Simple Spills

Simple spills should be cleaned up by personnel causing the spill, if no hazard is present. Simple spills include: materials that do not spread rapidly, do not endanger occupants or the environment and trained occupants can clean up.

Major Spills

Major spills include materials that spread rapidly, that endanger occupants or the environment, and that emergency personnel must respond to.

Call 911.

Evacuate and assemble at a safe distance, to a designated meeting place (similar to

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fire emergency).

Account for all members.

Provide information to emergency responders.

Remain outside the building until told to return by emergency personnel.

In Case of a Tornado

Should weather apps on smart phones report a tornado in the church vicinity members should move toward the hallways and away from glass windows. Interior bathrooms and hallways offer the most protection in case of severe weather. Members should remain in a protected area until weather services provide an “all clear: for the locale surrounding the church.

First Aid Supplies

A first aid kit is kept in Andrus Hall and in the Office Workroom. The Sexton is in charge of keeping the supplies in the first aid kit.

For our Love A Lunch Ministry volunteers are in charge of keeping up with Band-Aids, gauze, eye wash, antibiotic cream, hydrogen peroxide, aspirin, Tylenol, a blood pressure cuff, and other needed supplies. Church members can be called upon to donate the needed supplies as they are much less expensive to purchase individually as opposed to the first aid kits.

How CCCUCC Cooperates with Local and State Legal Authorities

Members and staff of the CCCUCC cooperate fully with local and state legal authorities to enforce a safe church environment. Staff, Officers, Committee Chairs, and Committee members are trained in the above policies in order to assist with the protection of members and visitors to worship and other church sanctioned activities. Church Members participate in safety drills in order to assist everyone who enters the church to be protected and cared for.

Boundary of Finances

CCCUCC has checks and balances built into the everyday procedures used in collecting, counting, depositing, and keeping track of donations given to the church. A budget is included in the CCCUCC Annual Report and is presented to the church and

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voted on during the proceedings of the Annual Meeting held during the month of January every year. **All financial contributions and information are kept confidential.** For further detail please see the Church Treasurer or the chair of the Church Finance Committee for Finance Policy and Procedure.