



ALDRSGATE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH SAFE SANCTUARIES POLICY

FORT WAYNE, INDIANA
Adopted 2011
Revised October 2014

Safe Sanctuaries is about doing ministry safely with children, youth, and adults.

October 2014

The Safe Sanctuaries Committee has completed a thorough review of the Safe Sanctuaries Policy. This review is a necessary step for maintaining a living document, so that this policy may remain current and appropriate to the circumstances at Aldersgate United Methodist Church. This is the first comprehensive review of the policy since its adoption in 2011, and the revisions include the following recommendations:

- The document has been made more inclusive of all audiences for whom the policy is designed.
 - References to Children and Youth have been revised to read Children, Youth and Adults throughout the policy.
 - References to Elderly have been revised to read Adults throughout the policy.
- The document has been updated to reflect changes within the internal infrastructure of Aldersgate United Methodist Church.
 - Paid staff titles and job descriptions have been updated or added where appropriate.
- The document has been updated to remove any reference to the Aldersgate Academy.
 - The Aldersgate Academy has adopted its own policy, called the Academy Safe Sanctuary policy.

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I. INTRODUCTION

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

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

Tragically, churches have not always been safe places for children. Child sexual abuse, exploitation and ritual abuse (ritual abuse refers to abusive acts committed as part of ceremonies or rites', ritual abusers are often related to cults, or pretend to be) occur in churches, both large and small, urban and rural. The problem cuts across all economic, cultural and racial lines. It is real, and it appears to be increasing. Many annual conferences can cite specific incidents of child sexual abuse and exploitation in their churches. Virtually every congregation has among its members adult survivors of early sexual trauma. Such incidents are devastating to all who are involved: the child, the family, the local church and its leaders. Increasingly, churches are torn apart by the legal, emotional, and monetary consequences of litigation following allegations of abuse. God calls us to make our churches safe places, protecting children and other vulnerable persons *from* 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 1996*. Copyright © 1996 by The United Methodist Publishing House. Used by permission, [pp.384-386])

Thus, in covenant with all United Methodist congregations, Aldersgate United Methodist Church adopts and expands this policy for the prevention of abuse in our church.

A. Purpose

Our congregation's purpose for establishing this Safe Sanctuary Policy and accompanying procedures is to demonstrate our absolute and unwavering commitment to the physical safety and spiritual growth of all of our children, youth and adults.

B. Statement of Covenant Therefore, as a Christian community of faith and a United Methodist congregation, Aldersgate United Methodist Church (hereafter referred to as AUMC) pledges to conduct the ministry of the gospel in ways that assure the safety and spiritual growth of all of our children, youth and adults as well as all of the Paid/Volunteer Staff. We will follow reasonable safety measures in the selection and recruitment of Paid/Volunteer Staff; we will implement prudent operational procedures in all programs and events; we will educate all of our Paid/Volunteer Staff in ministry to children, youth and adults regarding the use of all appropriate policies and methods (including first aid and methods of discipline); we will have a clearly defined procedure for reporting a suspected incident of abuse that conforms to the requirements of state law; and we will be prepared to respond to media inquiries if an incident occurs.

All Paid/Volunteer staff, Safe Sanctuaries Committee members and Staff Parish Relations Committee members shall have a current copy of the Safe Sanctuaries Policy and be aware of their individual responsibility in the reporting structure of the policy.

C. Conclusion

In all of our ministries with children, youth and adults, this congregation is committed to demonstrating the love of Jesus Christ so that each will be "...surrounded by steadfast love,.. established in the faith, and confirmed and strengthened in the way that leads to life eternal" ("Baptismal Covenant II," *United Methodist Hymnal*, p. 44)

II. DEFINITIONS

A. Child/Youth Abuse - any act committed by a person in a position of trust (parent, Caregiver, Sunday School teacher, Pastor, or other) which harms or threatens to harm a minor child's welfare, physical, spiritual or mental health.

We recognize child abuse may fall into these categories:

1. Physical Abuse - Inflicting bodily harm to minors constitutes physical abuse. Instances of physical abuse can include:
 - a. any physical act of undue force such as assault with a knife, strap or other implement
 - b. burns
 - c. fractures and bruises resulting from being beaten, pushed down, shaken, pinched, slapped or thrownPhysical abuse does not always leave visible marks.
2. Sexual Abuse - Any time a minor is used for the sexual stimulation of an adult or older minor, abuse has occurred. The minor is powerless either to consent to or resist such sexual acts. This can include:
 - a. fondling
 - b. sexual intercourse
 - c. participation in sexual acts
 - d. incest
 - e. exploitation for the purpose of pornography or prostitution
 - f. exposure to adult sexual activity
3. Emotional Abuse - Emotional abuse deeply affects a minor's self-esteem by submitting him/her to verbal assault or emotional cruelty. It does not always involve injuries we can see. The minor receives the message that he/she is not good and never will be. Emotional abuse can include:
 - a. closed confinement (being shut in a small area)
 - b. making racial remarks
 - c. excessive punishment
 - d. use of profanity
 - e. knowingly permitting drug or alcohol abuse
 - f. ignoring or encouraging peer abuse
4. Neglect - Not hearing or addressing a minor's basic needs for health, welfare or safety resulting in harm to the minor. It can include any of the following acts of negligence or maltreatment:
 - a. Failure to provide adequate food, shelter, clothing
 - b. Abandonment
 - c. Refusal to seek treatment for illness
 - d. Inadequate supervision
 - e. Health hazards in the home, school, or church
 - f. Ignoring a minor's need for affirmation and nurturing

5. Ritual – Abuse in which physical, sexual, or psychological violence is inflicted on a child or youth, intentionally and in a stylized way, by someone (or multiple people) with responsibility for the victim’s welfare. It can include:
 - a. cruel treatment of animals
 - b. repetitious threats of sexual or physical violence to child/youth or people related to the victim

Adults who have been convicted of abuse or neglect of children/youth or those who have a history of inappropriate conduct with children will not be employed and shall not volunteer service in any church-sponsored activity or program for minors.

B. Adult Abuse-

Abuse of adults takes many different forms, some involving intimidation or threats against adults, some involving neglect, and others involving financial chicanery. The most common are defined below:

1. Physical - Physical abuse is non-accidental use of force against an adult person that results in physical pain, injury, or impairment. Such abuse can include:
 - a. physical assaults such as hitting or shoving
 - b. the inappropriate use of drugs, restraints, or confinement
2. Emotional - In emotional or psychological abuse, people speak to or treat adults in ways that cause emotional pain or distress.
Verbal forms of emotional adult abuse can include:
 - a. intimidation through yelling or threats
 - b. humiliation and ridicule
 - c. habitual blaming or scapegoatingNonverbal psychological adult abuse can take the form of:
 - a. ignoring the adult
 - b. isolating an adult from friends or activities
 - c. terrorizing or menacing the adult
3. Sexual - Sexual adult abuse is contact with an adult without the adult’s consent. Such contact can involve:
 - a. physical sex acts
 - b. showing an adult pornographic material
 - c. forcing the person to watch sex acts
 - d. forcing the adult to undress
4. Neglect - Adult neglect, failure to fulfill a caretaking obligation, constitutes more than half of all reported cases of adult abuse. It can be active (intentional) or passive (unintentional, based on factors such as ignorance or denial that an adult charge needs as much care as he or she does).
5. Financial Exploitation - This involves unauthorized use of an adult’s funds or property, either by a caregiver or an outside scam artist.
An unscrupulous caregiver might:

- a. misuse an adult's personal checks, credit cards, or accounts
- b. steal cash, income checks, or household goods
- c. forge the adult's signature
- d. engage in identity theft

Typical rackets that target adults include:

- a. announcements of a "prize" that the adult has won but must pay money to claim
- b. phony charities
- c. investment fraud
- d. distress calls from imposter claiming to be family or friends

6. Healthcare and Fraud - Carried out by unethical doctors, nurses, hospital personnel, and other professional care providers.

Examples of healthcare fraud and abuse regarding adults include:

- a. Not providing healthcare, but charging for it
- b. Overcharging or double-billing for medical care or services
- c. Getting kickbacks for referrals to other providers or for prescribing certain drugs
- d. Overmedicating or undermedicating
- e. Recommending fraudulent remedies for illnesses or other medical conditions
- f. Medicaid fraud

III. STANDARDS: for Paid/Volunteer Staff in AUMC programs for children & youth

A. Minimum Age

The following standards for Authority Figures are designed to separate Authority Figures from the group they are serving by age or enough years to reinforce recognition of the Authority Figure's role. AUMC adopts the following standards for Authority Figures and Assistants.

1. AUTHORITY FIGURES—the primary leaders of children's and youth activities.
 - To work with children (infant-5th grade), the Authority Figure must be a minimum of 18 years of age.
 - To work with youth (6th-12th grade), the Authority Figure must be a minimum of 21 years of age.
 - a) In the judgment of an AUMC staff member, must be competent to lead the activity
 - b) Must be able to supervise adult and/or youth assistants.
2. ADULT ASSISTANTS—persons who lend aid to the Authority Figure and act at the direction of the Authority Figure. Whether working with youth or children, Adult Assistants must be:
 - a) A minimum of 18 years of age.
 - b) In the judgment of an AUMC staff member, competent to assist in the activity.
 - c) Able to supervise youth assistants with Authority Figure authorization.
3. YOUTH ASSISTANTS—youth volunteers who lend aid to the Authority Figure or Adult Assistant and act at the direction of the Authority Figure, including volunteers. Whether working with youth or children, Youth Assistants must be:
 - a) A minimum of 12 years of age through 17 years of age.
 - b) At least five years older than the children in the program.
 - c) In the judgment of an AUMC staff member, competent to assist in the activity.

B. Two Person Rule and Open Door Policy

1. The "two-person rule" states that two adults shall supervise all children and youth during church sponsored programming. The "open door policy" states that a door with no window in it shall be open at all times (while a door with a window in it may remain closed).

Paid/Volunteer Staff who work with children and youth shall observe either the "two-person rule" or the "open door policy" at ALL times.

- a) The "two-person rule" requires that Paid/Volunteer Staff shall make every reasonable effort to avoid situations where Paid/Volunteer Staff is alone with children or youth without a partner.
- b) The "two-person rule" will be MANDATORY for all Paid/Volunteer Staff with our NURSERY and PRESCHOOL AGE CHILDREN.

2. All adult/child ratios must be followed (See Section III Part C). Where it is impossible to staff two adults in every room, an additional adult must serve as a floater with visual and physical access to all areas upon approval of the Safe Sanctuaries Committee.

3. While mentoring and counseling are encouraged and supported, Paid/Volunteer Staff should take every precaution to avoid being alone with a child or youth in inaccessible areas. This can include, but is not limited to:

- a) An automobile while taking a child home, unless prearranged and approved by parent or guardian
- b) A classroom with windowless/locked doors
- c) A cabin at camp
- d) A restroom

C. Paid/Volunteer Staff to Child Ratios

1. It is acceptable to combine two or more groups as long as a ratio of younger age group is met.

Infants:	2 Adults – additional help needed for more than 8 children
Toddlers:	2 Adults – additional help needed for more than 10 children
Twos:	2 Adults – additional help needed for more than 12 children
Threes:	2 Adults – additional help needed for more than 18 children
Fours/Fives:	2 Adults – additional help needed for more than 20 children
Kindergarten – grade 5:	2 Adults – additional help needed for more than 16 children
Grades 6 – 8:	2 Adults – additional help needed for more than 20 youth
Grades 9 – 12:	2 Adults – additional help needed for more than 24 youth

2. Children/Youth With Special Needs

- a. In the judgment of AUMC staff, and in consultation with the parent, the above ratios may be adjusted depending on the nature and degree of a participant's special needs.

D. Appropriate Interpersonal Boundaries and Staff Interactions with children/youth

Paid/Volunteer Staff must always be above reproach in their words and conduct. They are to behave in a godly manner demonstrating Christian conduct, respect, honesty and trustworthiness.

Specifically, Paid/Volunteer Staff should follow these guidelines.

1. Paid/Volunteer Staff should never initiate physical contact, such as a hug, and should always be the one to end the contact.

2. Paid/Volunteer Staff must not in any way initiate any of the following activities with children, youth and adults: extended hugging, kissing, sitting on a lap, inappropriate touching or being alone with a child.
3. In the event that a child approaches a Paid/Volunteer Staff with the intent to hug or kiss, or unexpectedly does so, the Paid/Volunteer Staff should accept the affection, but should as quickly as possible, in a non-rejecting manner, encourage a more appropriate form of physical contact.
4. Appropriate physical contact for ages 0 – 3 years include picking up the child, comforting the child, holding the hand of child, changing diapers.
5. Appropriate physical contact with children ages 4+ could include a handshake, pat on the back, quick hug of encouragement with hands located in shoulder area, and a 'high five'.
6. Paid/Volunteer Staff treat children with respect. Keep in mind "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you."
7. Paid/Volunteer Staff uses positive discipline to teach children right from wrong, which behaviors are acceptable and which are not and how to respect the rights of others. Discipline is never punishment. Discipline is teaching, done positively and with respect and is appropriate to the situation and age of the child.
 - a. In extreme circumstances, for example fighting, physical restraint may be necessary and must be reported immediately to an AUMC staff member.
8. The Paid/Volunteer Staff do not use corporal punishment or humiliating or frightening discipline techniques. Food or beverage is never withheld as a form of discipline.
9. Paid/Volunteer Staff are aware that children may display a variety of emotions. Paid/Volunteer Staff help children identify these emotions and teaches them appropriate ways to express them and helps build a trusting relationship with each child that provides both emotional and physical security.
10. Paid/Volunteer Staff model and encourage social behavior such as helping, sharing and cooperating.
11. Paid/Volunteer Staff offer guidance and encourage communication during problem solving and conflict resolution.
12. Paid/Volunteer Staff are encouraged to request advice from AUMC staff if repeat behaviors arise.

E. Restrooms

1. If restroom breaks are needed during children's class or an activity, the Assistant should escort children in groups of two and remain outside the washroom area until the children are finished before escorting them back to the classroom or activity.
2. Paid/Volunteer Staff will notify Authority Figure if they are taking children to the restroom.

F. Health and Safety

1. Any operating licenses and/or certificates of inspection relating to health and safety from the state, as well as any that the local county or city requires, are available through the church office.

G. Emergencies

1. Paid/Volunteer Staff are not to give or apply any medications to children/youth except for bandages for minor cuts/abrasions, or ice packs for bumps. If a child/youth needs medication, the parent must administer it. No medications will be left in the nursery department or any classroom with the following exception: children/youth who carry inhalers for asthma or medication for serious allergies.

2. Diabetic children under the age of twelve will be treated following guidelines provided by the parent/guardian. In the event that an older child/youth who is a diabetic requires sugar, orange/apple juice will be kept on hand in the classroom or director's office and can be given to a diabetic child/youth while parents/guardians are called. An older child is defined as over the age of 12.
3. Paid/Volunteer Staff shall have an annual review of Emergency Action/Evacuation Plan which is to be followed in the event of a medical, fire, severe weather or safety concern emergency.
4. Emergency Action/Evacuation Plan will be placed in red binders in the church office, The Street, and at the Welcome Kiosk. Paid/Volunteer staff should know where these are located.
5. Maps for evacuation are to be posted in each room.
6. Main First Aid box and Defibrillator are located in the Marketplace. Smaller first aid boxes are located throughout the church.

H. Rooming/Sleepovers

1. A minimum of 2 female Paid/Volunteer Staff and 2 male Paid/Volunteer Staff is suggested.
 - a. Additional Paid/Volunteer Staff may be needed based on number of attendees/ratios.
2. If rooming in a hotel situation, with parental consent, youth of the same sex may room together without an adult.
 - a. Paid/Volunteer Staff will be assigned to separate rooms centered between the youth rooms.
3. If rooming in a church, cabin, tent or similar situations, where adults room with youth or children, children or youth will be separated by gender and supervised by two Paid/Volunteer Staff that are not related. These adults must be the same sex as the children or youth.
4. Groups where children are all of the same gender and the leadership is the same gender should provide the same number Paid/Volunteer Staff as ratios outline.
5. Groups where children are all of the same gender, but the leadership is comprised of the opposite gender, should provide a minimum of two adult leaders of the same gender as the children.

I. Group Travel

1. All outings must have a signed and dated parental waiver from each parent/guardian. The waiver must state the nature of the outing, the time of departure and return, the destination (including the name of the host, address and phone number) the mode of transportation and the cost to the child, emergency contact information and medical information.
2. Youth requiring over the counter medications or prescription medications, during group travel, must have a medical permission form filled out, signed by a parent/guardian, and on file with the New Generations' Ministry office. A copy of this form and medication will be given to the adult in charge of the travel. Adult in charge of the travel event will be responsible for administering medications.
3. First Aid boxes must be checked before departure for adequate supplies and expiration dates.
4. When an outing involves transportation, the Authority Figure will:
 - a. Ensure that every vehicle has two licensed and insured adult drivers
 - b. Confirm that copies of the driver's license and insurance are on file with the New Generations' Ministry office.
 - c. Ensure that the vehicles are properly functioning and have up to date insurance.
 - d. Ensure that equipment is not loaded in a fashion that blocks the vision of the driver.
 - e. Give all drivers copies of permission slips and emergency information.
 - f. Leave a list of the drivers' names, vehicle license numbers, names of occupants in each vehicle, emergency information and copies of permission forms with the Director of New Generations' Ministry and the church office.

5. Every person in the vehicle must wear a seatbelt at all times when the vehicle is moving.
 - a. Once a person has been assigned to a particular vehicle, he/she is not to switch vehicles.

J. Six Month Rule

1. All potential volunteers with children or youth must have been members of the congregation or active constituents for at least six months before beginning a volunteer assignment. Persons not meeting this minimum requirement may serve only as an assistant with another Authority Figure. The Safe Sanctuaries Committee will consider exceptions to this rule.

K. Cyber Safety

The General Conference of the United Methodist Church, in 1988, passed a resolution condemning the exploitation of women and children in pornography, including print and video media. Adult leaders will:

1. Get written parental permission for posting photos of youth;
2. Get advance parental permission to communicate with children and youth by any form of technology, which may include email, cell phone, instant messaging, text messaging and social media.
3. Provide training classes for children, youth and adults to teach them how to use privacy settings for their social networking profiles;
4. Encourage youth to let a Paid/Volunteer Staff know if anyone they met online tries to meet them in person;
5. Develop policies regarding use of cell phones and other technologies in ministry settings such as camping, retreats, and trips;
6. Collaborate with teachers, law enforcement officials, and parents to provide educational opportunities for parents and children/youth to learn how to be safe online.

L. Scouting

AUMC supports scouting programs and is pleased to offer meeting locations for various troops.

1. Boy Scout Troops abide by the Youth Protection Plan, a policy of the Boy Scouts of America.
2. Girls Scout Troops abide by the Girl Scouts of Northern Indiana – Michiana Volunteer, Financial and Group Policies and Procedures.

These policies have been reviewed by the Safe Sanctuaries Committee and have the same goals as our policy.

M. Policy Instruction

1. All Paid/Volunteer Staff are required to attend Safe Sanctuary policy instruction before working with children, youth and adults. Safe Sanctuary Committee shall schedule yearly training.
 - a. Once trained, all Paid/Volunteer Staff will participate in an annual policy review.
 - b. Once trained, All Paid/Volunteer Staff will participate in a full training every 3 years.
 - c. In the case that this is not possible, the paid/volunteer staff may only serve as an assistant with another trained adult and under the stipulation that they attend the next training session.
2. Safe Sanctuaries Policy protecting children, youth and adults is accepted by the AUMC Church Council, implemented, and publicized to both the congregation and parents.

N. Written Record of Non-Compliance

1. Paid/Volunteer Staff are expected to report any occurrence of non-compliance of the Safe Sanctuary policy to a committee member within 48 hours of the occurrence. (Safe Sanctuary committee members listed on page 14).

2. Each report will be reviewed by the Safe Sanctuary Committee, and action will be taken as needed.
3. A written record of any non-compliance of this policy will be kept on file by the Church Manager.

IV. SCREENING PROCEDURES

An essential component of preventing abuse by Paid/Volunteer Staff is careful screening. Although we recognize the integrity of an overwhelming number of the persons with discerned calling to ministries with children, youth and adults, we realize that abuse may occur in the church. Therefore, we believe that all Paid/Volunteer Staff must be properly screened. It will be the responsibility of the Church Manager, Ministry Leader, and the Pastors to ensure compliance. The following steps are used for screening Paid/Volunteer Staff.

A. Obtain a completed employment application form and conduct a reference check

1. A completed employment application form will be required for paid staff and will be kept on file.
2. A minimum of two references must be contacted on all paid applicants. It is further recommended that the reference of a church official (pastor, Staff-Parish Relations Chairperson, youth director, etc.) from the church of the applicant's membership be obtained.

B. Conduct an interview with applicants

An interview will be conducted with all paid/volunteer applicants. The interviewer should not ask for information about marital status or handicapping conditions as stated in Federal/State discrimination guidelines. The interviewer should also be sensitive to age and sex discrimination guidelines; however adequate information may be requested to ensure compliance with this policy's minimum standards. The interviewer should be aware of red flags. These are indicators of issues that must be explored further in order for AUMC to be assured that all information is collected concerning a prospective Paid/Volunteer Staff. Red flags might include but are not limited to:

1. Many addresses over a short period of time
 - a. This could indicate that a person is trying to be anonymous, but it could also indicate that they were a college student who moved a lot to keep rent low.
2. Wants to work with only one age group
 - a. If someone would like to work with only one specific age group, it could indicate that the person has targeted that age group for abuse, or it could mean that is the age group for which they are trained and that experience has shown that they are not as gifted with other ages. Also be aware of anyone who seems overly committed to one age group. For example, someone who simultaneously leads a scout troop, coaches Little League, serves as a Big Brother and now wants to teach Sunday School may be neglecting their own age appropriate peer relationships in order to cultivate potential victims.
3. Does not want/need/like close supervision
 - a. The interview may indicate that the person does not like to be closely supervised which might raise questions about motivation for applying for this work.
 - b. The interviewer needs to be able to explore issues as they arise during the interview and to depart from the set of prepared questions to do so.

C. Complete Checklist for Paid/Volunteer Staff

Safe Sanctuaries Compliance Statement (Appendix A) shall be completed and placed in applicant's file. These should be updated yearly upon review of background checks and annual review of the Safe Sanctuary policy.

D. Complete Background Checks

Background checks must be conducted on all Paid/Volunteer Staff prior to beginning their work with children and/or youth. Background checks will not be conducted on minors. Thereafter, background checks will be completed every 3 years on all Paid/Volunteer Staff. Background checks shall include, but are not limited to:

National Criminal Database Check **and** National Sex Registry Database Check

1. Paid staff background checks
 - a. These will be initiated by the Church Manager and be accessible to the Pastors and Staff Parish Relations Committee.
2. Volunteer staff background checks
 - a. These will be initiated and seen by only the Ministry Leader but will be accessible to the Church Manager, Pastors, Safe Sanctuary Committee and Staff Parish Relations Committee.
3. Any unfavorable report from the background check **or** any concern about questionable behavior reported to staff or any volunteer will be provided to each of the following staff or members within 48 hours: ministry leader, Church Manager, staff liaison to Safe Sanctuaries committee, Safe Sanctuaries committee chair and Pastors. After these key positions are made aware of the report it will then be shared with members of the Safe Sanctuaries committee within 10 days. Appropriate action will be determined based upon each situation.

E. Federal and State Law

The requirements of any and all Federal laws or State laws affecting or relating to employment or child abuse must be complied with, and in any case where there is a conflict between such laws and the procedure outlined in this document, said laws shall prevail and the procedure outlined in the document shall be modified to the extent necessary to eliminate such conflict. This policy is subject to all Federal and/or State laws relating to employment and child abuse.

V. REPORTING ACCIDENTS/INJURIES

1. Occasionally during the course of regular program activities, injury occurs. These may be minor or major in nature.
2. After appropriate support and assistance is given to the injured child, youth, adults or leader, a written Major Injuries Reporting Record (Appendix B) should be filled out by the program coordinator or appropriate person on the pastoral staff. A description of the incident, contributing factors and the treatment given should be noted. Witnesses to the incident should be listed with addresses and phone numbers for follow-up purposes.
3. The Incident Investigation Reports will be reviewed by the Safe Sanctuary Committee, semi-annually. A member of the Committee should be appointed to investigate the incident and bring recommendations back to the Committee to help prevent a recurrence of the accident. These Reports are to be kept in the church office for future reference.
4. The Major Injuries Reporting Record is attached to this policy (Appendix B) and copies are available in the church office and from program coordinator/directors.

VI. INVESTIGATING AND REPORTING SUSPECTED ABUSE OR NEGLECT

A. Child or Youth Abuse/Neglect

Reports of suspected abuse or neglect **or** any concern about questionable behavior reported to Paid/Volunteer staff, will lead to the following action steps within 48 hours:

1. Believe the child/youth's story. Don't deny the problem or blame the child/youth. Stay calm. Intense emotions will frighten the child/youth. A quiet, unhurried conversation conveys calmness. Tell the child that you will work with other adults to help keep him/her safe.
2. A Report of Suspected Abuse form (Appendix C) should be initiated and copies distributed to the following:
 - Ministry Leader
 - Church Manager
 - Staff Liaison to Safe Sanctuaries Committee
 - Safe Sanctuaries Committee Chair
 - Pastors

After these key positions are made aware of the report it will then be shared with members of the Safe Sanctuaries committee within 10 days. Appropriate action will be determined based upon each situation.

3. After appropriate investigation, the Paid/Volunteer Staff shall be responsible for making a report to The Indiana Department of Child Services (1-800-800-5556) and/or law enforcement.
4. If the alleged perpetrator is not a custodial parent, after contacting the Indiana Department of Child Services, contact shall be made with the custodial parent about the situation. Safe Sanctuaries Committee recommends that it be the responsibility of two AUMC representatives who have the most knowledge of the family to make this contact.
5. If an Indiana Department of Child Services caseworker or law enforcement official comes to the church to interview a child, a Pastor or designee and/or member of Staff Parish Relations Committee or Safe Sanctuary Committee will be present.
6. A Safe Sanctuaries Committee member shall document the investigation and resolution and file it with the Church Manager.
7. If the abuse reported has taken place within the church or during a church sponsored activity, the Lead Pastor and/or Staff Parish Relations Committee and/or Safe Sanctuaries Committee shall also report the suspected abuse to the District Superintendent.
8. In the event the suspected abuse involves a Paid/Volunteer Staff member, reports must be made to the Staff Parish Relations Committee. Members of the committee may be reached by contacting the church office (260-432-1524).

B. Adult Abuse/Neglect

Reports of suspected abuse or neglect **or** any concern about questionable behavior reported to Paid/Volunteer staff, will lead to the following action steps within 48 hours:

1. A Report of Suspected Abuse form (Appendix C) should be initiated and passed along to the following:
 - Ministry Leader
 - Church Manager
 - Staff Liaison to Safe Sanctuaries Committee
 - Safe Sanctuaries Committee Chair
 - Pastors

After these key positions are made aware of the report it will then be shared with members of the Safe Sanctuaries committee within 10 days. Appropriate action will be determined based upon each situation.

2. After appropriate investigation, the Paid/Volunteer Staff shall be responsible for making a report to The National Adult Protective Services (1-800-992-6978 or 260-449-7989) and/or law enforcement. The National Adult Protective Services handles cases of abuse and/or neglect involving senior adults and/or adults with disabilities.
3. If the adult is incapable of making decisions on their own behalf, after contacting the National Adult Protective Services and/or law enforcement, every effort shall be made to contact the appropriate caregiver or family member about the situation, provided that person is not the alleged perpetrator of the abuse. Safe Sanctuaries Committee recommends that it be the responsibility of two AUMC representatives who have the most knowledge of the family to make this contact.
4. If a National Adult Protective Services caseworker or law enforcement official comes to the church to interview an adult, a Pastor or designee and/or member of Staff Parish Relations Committee or Safe Sanctuary Committee will be present.
5. A Safe Sanctuaries Committee member shall document the investigation and resolution and file it with the Church Manager.
6. If the abuse reported has taken place within the church or during a church sponsored activity, the Lead Pastor and/or Staff Parish Relations Committee and/or Safe Sanctuaries Committee shall also report the suspected abuse to the District Superintendent.
7. In the event the suspected abuse involves a Paid/Volunteer Staff member, reports must be made to the Staff Parish Relations Committee. Members of the committee may be reached by contacting the church office (260-432-1524).

C. Interim Measures - Interim measures may be taken during the investigation to safeguard the potential victim or victims. At the conclusion of the investigation, appropriate actions shall be taken. Depending upon the findings, this may include termination of employment and/or volunteer activities.

VII. RESPONSE PROCEDURES

If a report is made to the authorities regarding suspected abuse or neglect the following guidelines will be followed:

1. The official spokesperson for Aldersgate United Methodist Church shall be the Pastor, or in the absence of the Pastor, a designee appointed by the Pastor.
 - a. All inquires or requests for information from the media, attorneys or any other parties shall be referred to the official spokesperson.
 - b. No person other than the official spokesperson is to release any information regarding any alleged incident of abuse without the express approval of the official spokesperson.
 - c. All communication by the official spokesperson will protect the privacy and confidentiality of all involved.
 - d. The official spokesperson shall immediately report any alleged incident of abuse to the AUMC insurance carrier.
 - e. All efforts in responding to the alleged incident of abuse shall be documented and maintained in a secure and confidential file.
2. The care and safety of the victim is our first priority. We will take any allegation of abuse seriously and will reach out in Christian love and support to the victim and the victim's family, extending whatever pastoral care resources are needed.

3. We will not prejudge any person accused, and we will not confront the accused. We will reach out in Christian love and support to the accused, extending whatever pastoral care resources are needed.

VIII. SAFE SANCTUARIES COMMITTEE

The Safe Sanctuaries Committee will consist of four to six members made up of groups of two that will each serve three-year terms. At least one committee member will be elected from within the Staff Parrish Relations Committee. At-Large Members may be appointed by the Nominations Committee. All Safe Sanctuaries Committee Members will be listed by class annually in the Report on the Committee on Nominations and Personnel.

The responsibilities of the Safe Sanctuaries Committee include:

1. Educating Authority Figures, Assistants, Staff Parish Relations Committee, and all Paid/Volunteer Staff about the policy
2. Answering questions about the policy
3. Ensuring compliance with the policy
4. Ensuring e that All Paid/Volunteer staff, Safe Sanctuaries Committee members and Staff Parish Relations Committee members have a current copy of the Safe Sanctuaries policy
5. Granting exceptions to the policy, in appropriate circumstances
6. Assisting with investigations
7. Reviewing and renewing policy annually or as needed
8. Evaluating Committee function
9. Maintain confidentiality
10. Other duties as needed

Current Committee who helped to assemble and edit this policy:

2011-2014: Mac Routen, Kathy Routen

2012-2015: Ellie Nickeson

2013-2016: Amy Smith

2014-2017: Ruth Carter

2014-2017: Heather Bleeke

Staff Parish Member: Joe Smith 2012-2015

Parish Visiter: Ellen Rhodes

AUMC Staff Liaison: Joan Schell

Aldersgate United Methodist Church

Appendix A – Safe Sanctuaries Compliance Statement

The congregation of Aldersgate United Methodist Church is committed to providing a safe and secure environment for all children, youth, and Paid/Volunteer Staff who participate in ministries and activities sponsored by the Church. The following policy statement reflects our congregation’s commitment to preserving this Church as a holy place of safety and protection for all who would enter and as a place in which all people can experience the love of God through relationships with others.

- A. No adult who has been convicted of child abuse (either sexual abuse, physical abuse, or emotional abuse) should volunteer to work with children or youth in any Church-sponsored activity.
- B. All adult volunteers involved with children or youth of our Church must have been members of the congregation or an active constituent for at least six months before beginning a volunteer assignment.
- C. Paid/Volunteer Staff with children or youth shall observe the “Two Person Rule” at all times so that no adult is ever alone with children or youth.
- D. Paid/Volunteer Staff with children or youth shall attend regular training and educational events provided by the Church to keep volunteers informed of Church policies and state laws regarding abuse.
- E. Paid/Volunteer Staff shall immediately report any behavior that seems abusive or inappropriate using the protocol outlined in the Safe Sanctuaries Policy.

Please answer each of the following questions:

1. As a Paid/Volunteer Staff in this congregation, do you agree to observe and abide by all Church Policies and Procedures including Safe Sanctuaries regarding working in ministries with children, youth and adults?
 Yes No
2. As a Paid/Volunteer Staff in this congregation, do you agree to observe the “Two Person Rule” at all times?
 Yes No
3. As a volunteer in this congregation, do you agree to abide by the six-month rule before beginning a volunteer assignment?
 Yes No N/A (Paid Staff)
4. As a Paid/Volunteer Staff in this congregation, do you agree to participate in training and education events provided by the Church related to your volunteer assignment?
 Yes No
5. As a Paid/Volunteer Staff in this congregation, do you agree to promptly report abusive or inappropriate behavior to the area supervisor or other appropriate person?
 Yes No
6. As a Paid/Volunteer Staff in this congregation, do you agree to inform a minister of this congregation if you are ever convicted of child abuse in the future?
 Yes No

I have read this **Participation Covenant**, and I agree to observe and abide by the policies set forth above.

For Staff Use Only	Date	By
Safe Sanctuary Training completed	_____	_____
“Because We Care” review completed	_____	_____
Background Check completed	_____	_____

Signature of Applicant

Print Full Name

Date

Aldersgate United Methodist Church

Appendix B - Major Injuries Reporting Record

(Person can not immediately resume program activities)

Name of Injured Person _____ Age _____ male female

Name of Parents (if injured is a minor) _____

Address: _____ Phone # _____

Date of Accident: _____ Time of Accident: _____ am/pm

Event accident occurred at: _____

Location of accident: _____

How did the accident happen: _____

Nature of injury: _____

Witness(s) to injury: Name: _____ Phone #: _____

Name: _____ Phone #: _____

Was injured person given first aid? Yes No By whom: _____

Type of First aid given: _____

Was family notified? Yes No Notified by whom: _____

Name of person notified _____ Relationship to injured person _____

Reaction of parent(s), if injured is a minor: _____

Was doctor contacted? Yes No

Was injured person taken to hospital? Yes No By Whom: _____ Name of Hospital: _____

Resolution: _____

Reporter Name (print) and Signature: _____ Date: _____

Staff/Director Name (print) and Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent Name (print) and Signature, if person is a minor: _____ Date: _____

Follow Up Report by Director of Event: _____

Staff/Director Name (print) and Signature: _____ Date: _____

Safe Sanctuary Committee Follow Up Report:

Safe Sanctuary Representative Name (print) and Signature: _____ Date: _____

Aldersgate United Methodist Church

2417 Getz Road, Fort Wayne, IN 46804
260-432-1524 • aldersgatecommunity.com

Appendix C - Report of Suspected Abuse

Indiana Department of Child Services 1-800-800-5556

National Adult Protective Services 1-800-992-6978 or 260-449-7989

(Please print all information)

Name of worker (paid or volunteer) observing or receiving disclosure of abuse:

Victim's name:

Victim's age/date of birth:

Date/place of initial conversation with/report from victim:

Victim's statement (give your detailed summary here):

Name of person accused of abuse:

Relationship of accused to victim (Paid staff, volunteer, family member, other):

Copies Provided to:

Ministry Leader (Name) _____ Date/Time: _____

Church Manager (Name) _____ Date/Time: _____

Staff Liaison to Safe Sanctuaries Committee (Name) _____ Date/Time: _____

Pastors (Name) _____ Date/Time: _____

Call to local protective service agency made by: _____

Spoke with: _____ Date/Time: _____

Summary:

Other contacts:

Name: _____ Date/Time: _____

Summary:

Additional Information / Overall Summary:

Signature

Date