

## Resurrection Lutheran Church Child and Youth Protection Policy

### GENERAL PURPOSE STATEMENT

Resurrection Lutheran Church (RLC) makes every effort to provide a safe and secure environment for the children and youth who participate in all church programs and activities. The goal of the Child and Youth Protection Policy is to protect the children and youth of RLC from incidents of misconduct or inappropriate behavior, while also protecting church staff and volunteers from false or retributive accusations.

### BIBLICAL FOUNDATION

Jesus graciously welcomes everyone especially the children (Mark 10:13-16; Matthew 19:13-15; Luke 18:15-17): “**Let the little children come to me and do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs.**” We fashion our ministries at Resurrection Lutheran Church (“RLC”) after the practices of Jesus and welcome all children to come and experience the good news that Jesus brings. Our ministries are to be a place of welcome for them.

Jesus saves some of his harshest words for those who would bring harm to children (Matthew 18:6; Mark 9:42; Luke 17:2): “**If any of you put a stumbling block before one of these little ones who believe in me, 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.**” We fashion our safety and ministry policies at RLC after the deep concern of Jesus for the well-being of the most vulnerable. Our ministries are to be a place of safety for them.

### **The following guidelines have been developed to protect the children and youth of Resurrection Lutheran Church.**

- We will disallow from leadership those who refuse to submit to a criminal background check at the church’s expense.
- We will disallow from leadership and participation those who are discovered to be registered sex offenders on any law enforcement sexual offenders registry.
- Leaders must be known by appropriate church staff for at least 6 months and approved by them to participate.
- Non-leader adults (RLC or others) must remain with the leaders at all times and not be alone with participating youth.
- All accusations of misconduct or abuse will be vigorously investigated and turned over for prosecution to law authorities if investigations turn up credible evidence.

Our goal is to help young people grow deeper in the grace and love of God by providing for them a safe and secure place to exist and experience God’s amazing and renewing goodness. We commit to doing all in our power and seeking God’s help to allow this spiritual growth to take place, while keeping the children and youth of RLC safe.

The RLC Council  
The RLC Staff  
The RLC Youth and Family Committee

**DEFINITIONS:** *(For the purpose of this policy the following definitions shall apply)*

**Child Sexual Abuse**

Child sexual abuse includes, but is not limited to, any contact or interaction between a child under the age of eighteen and an adult when the child is being used for sexual stimulation of the adult person or a third person. The behavior may or may not involve touching. Sexual behavior between a child and an adult is always considered forced whether or not it is consented to by the child. Child sexual abuse is a felony (according to federal and state law).

**Sexual misconduct**

Sexual misconduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:

1. Child sexual abuse as defined above.
2. Rape or sexual contact by force, threat or intimidation.
3. Sexual conduct (such as offensive, obscene, or suggestive language or behavior, unwelcome touching or fondling) which is injurious to the physical or emotional health of another person.

For purposes of this policy, the terms “minor/s”, “child”, “children” and “youth” include all persons under the age of eighteen (18) years of age.

**SELECTION of VOLUNTEERS**

- All employees, volunteers and persons who desire to work with children/youth participating in church programs and activities will be screened prior to engaging in those programs.
- The Pastor(s), or Youth and Family Ministry Team will be responsible for completing screenings of all employees and volunteers as applicable. This screening includes the following:

**a. Written Application**

All persons seeking to work with children must complete and sign a written application on a form supplied by the church. The application will request basic information from the applicant and will inquire into previous experience with children, previous church affiliation, references and employment information, as well as disclosure of any previous criminal arrests and/or convictions. The application form will be maintained in a confidential file by RLC.

**b. Six Month Rule**

No employee or volunteer will be considered for any position involving contact with minors until s/he has been involved at RLC for a minimum of six (6) months. After which the application process to work with minors can take place. This time of interaction between church leadership and members and the applicant allows for better evaluation and suitability of the applicant for working with children.

**c. Personal Interview**

The appropriate ministry team will completely review the application, and conduct a face-to-face interview with the applicant to discuss his/her suitability for the position. The Youth and Family Ministry Team can accept new volunteers based on the team’s recommendation. This can be done in lieu of a formal interview. Recommendations from the ministry team are required to be recorded by the team. Minutes of the meetings and all actions taken shall be submitted to the Congregation Council.

**d. Reference Checks**

Before an applicant is permitted to work with children, at least two of the applicants’ references will be checked. Preferred references should be of an institutional nature as opposed to personal or family references. In the event references are not available, approval must be given from the appropriate ministry team. Such approval must be documented and reported to the church council. Documentation of the reference checks will be maintained in a confidential file by RLC and will only be completed if applicant has fulfilled the “6 month rule”.

## **CLASSROOM SAFTY - “Two Adult Rule”**

It is the goal of RLC to have a minimum of two adult staff/volunteers in attendance at all times when children/youth are being supervised during church programs and activities. Some classes may have only one adult teacher in attendance during the class session; in these instances, doors to the classrooms have been adapted with windows, allowing the “Director of Children’s Ministries” to check and monitor each classroom 2 to 3 times during the education hour. Church policy strongly discourages supervision of minors to be alone with one adult on church premises or in any church sponsored activity unless in a counseling situation.

## **CHAPERONES**

- At least two adults (over 25) (at least one adult corresponding to genders of the participating youth).
- Chaperones shall have background checks and sex offender registry checks which will be kept on file in the church office and renewed every year.
- Chaperones shall have been associated with RLC for at least 6 months and approved by church staff.
- For off site youth events the student to chaperone ratio shall be 7:1 (i.e., 7 participants necessitate one chaperone and 8 would necessitate 2 chaperones).
- Chaperones will not be alone with a youth of either gender. Conversations or counseling shall be conducted in the sight of others for the protection of all involved.

## **OVERNIGHT EVENTS**

- Sleeping areas for youth will be separated by gender.
- Chaperones will have sleeping areas separate from youth (*different rooms if in hotels or dormitories*).
- Chaperones and/or volunteers married to each other may share a sleeping space with each other; all others will sleep separated by gender.
- Expectations will be established prior to the event and shall be communicated to all participants, parents, chaperones, volunteers, etc. by the chaperones and all parties shall agree to abide by the expectations.
- Areas that are off-limits to certain genders (*sleeping areas, changing areas, bathrooms, etc.*) will be clearly identified by the chaperones and shall be followed by all.

## **DRIVERS**

- Drivers of the church van are to be adults (*over 25*) with a criminal background check and on the RLC insurance list – they are to have a MVR (*motor vehicle records check*) which they can request by mail from the Oregon DMV. This form can be found at the DMV website at Oregon.gov. This record shall be forwarded to church when received. Their driver’s license and current insurance card will be copied and kept on file in office. Background checks and documentation shall be renewed annually.
- Drivers of the church van are to appoint one of the accompanying chaperones as “navigator” who will be a non-sleeping adult to help with navigation, required cell phone use and assist the driver as required.
- Drivers of personal vehicles are to be adults (*over 25*) with a criminal background check and will provide a driver’s license and current insurance card to be photocopied.
- Youth are not to be riding with drivers other than detailed above during youth ministry events.
- Drivers are to engage in safe driving practices factoring in weather and other situational conditions.

- Drivers are to avoid being distracted, stop for rest when needed and drive in a way that reflects well on the church keeping all safe.
- Youth Drivers - Personal vehicles may only be driven to the church unless one of the following circumstances occurs:

In the event that the group is meeting at a given location, personal vehicles may be driven to that location if it is necessary for that youth to leave early. He/she may drive their car and follow the group. However, if this should occur, other youth will not be allowed to ride as passengers unless there is written permission from both parents.

### **ALCOHOL, DRUGS & TOBACCO**

- No participants, volunteers or chaperones shall participate in any RLC sponsored activity if, in the opinion of the leadership, they are under the influence of any intoxicating substance or consumed intoxicating substances within 8 hours of the event.
- All participants shall refrain from using tobacco and illicit drugs.
- With the exception of communion wine alcohol consumption is prohibited.
- Any medications that are used, while a youth is in our care, must be administered by an adult chaperone (over 25). Youth needing to take medication must complete "Permission to Administer Medication" form. All prescription medications must come in the original prescription packaging– with the youth's name, prescribing doctor and dosage clearly labeled. Over the counter medications must be in their packaging and parents must sign that they approve of the child taking this medication. Parents will discuss medication needs with chaperones prior to leaving.

### **WAIVERS, LIABILITY FORMS & BACKGROUND CHECKS**

- Participants shall complete Liability & Permission to transport every time youth are transported from church premises.
- Participants shall complete medical release for events of physical activities or when major travel occurs.
- All off-site activities require a waiver/liability form which will be turned into the chaperones before the event and destroyed after the event is safely completed.
- All Resurrection chaperones will have undergone a criminal background check and a sex offender registry check within the past calendar year. Youth will not be left alone with adults or chaperones from other churches and/or sponsoring agencies without supervision from our chaperones.
- Background checks will be completed on an annual basis for all volunteers working for minors. This recertification will be recorded and kept on file in the office.

### **EMERGENCY CONTACT PROCEDURES**

- Chaperones will provide cell phone numbers to parents as youth are dropped off for events.
- In the event of a situation, the chaperones will contact the church office (503-255-8772) and the church office will serve as the conduit for information and updates.
- After office hours the leaders or a designee will contact parents with updates.

### **CONFIDENTIALITY, REPORTING & DISCLOSURE**

- All of our chaperones in connection with RLC activities shall function as mandated reporters of: signs of physical, sexual or other abuse which will be reported to the lead pastor and/or to appropriate agencies for follow-up. Keeping children & youth safe and healthy is our priority.

- If an issue arises or there is any suspicion of misconduct this should be reported the RLC staff person running the event. If the issue or suspicion involves the staff person this should be reported to the Lead Pastor who will in turn contact the executive committee or, and if appropriate, the Bishop's office.
- All concerns and accusations will be handled with discretion and identities of those making an accusation will be protected from public disclosure. The procedure detailed below should be followed in reporting a concern or an accusation:

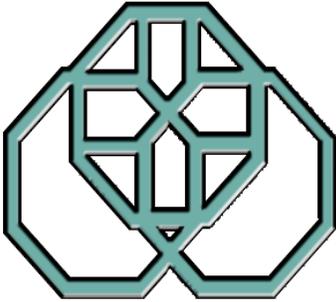
### **REPORTING GUIDELINES**

- If there is a suspicion of abuse or misconduct involving a youth participant which does not involve RLC staff (*called, paid or volunteer*) a report of such suspicion shall be immediately made to the RLC staff person who is in charge of the event. That person shall immediately contact the Lead Pastor of RLC who will then make the necessary notifications (*or will delegate*) to authorities including law enforcement, the Executive Committee of RLC and, if necessary, the Bishop's office.
- If there is suspicion of abuse or misconduct involving a youth participant which does involve RLC staff (*called, paid or volunteer*) a report of such suspicion shall immediately be made to the Lead Pastor of RLC who will make the necessary notifications (*or will delegate*) to authorities including law enforcement, the Executive Committee of RLC and if necessary, the Bishop's office.
- If there are allegations or suspicions of misconduct or abuse of any kind which involve the Lead Pastor, a report shall immediately be made to the President of RLC. If the President cannot be reached, the reporting person may contact any member of the Executive Committee of RLC or they may contact the Bishop's office.

### **CARE and PROCESS**

The RLC person who is contacted by the complainant shall:

- Assure the complainant that RLC does not tolerate sexual misconduct or abuse of any kind and takes seriously all complaints of such misconduct.
- Explain RLC's process for responding to complaints of sexual misconduct or abuse and offer to provide a copy of this statement of policy.
- Answer the complainant's questions about the policies and procedures of RLC.
- Express care and concern for the complainant.
- When the complainant is anonymous, encourage the complainant to identify herself or himself and the person involved in the misconduct.
- The complainant may be accompanied by a friend, family member, support person or advocate of her or his choice.
- Access to the complainant by the accused shall be restricted to the length reasonable and possible.
- Paid RLC staff who have allegations made against them shall be placed on administrative leave of absence and shall be precluded from participating in the life of the community of RLC until the conclusion of any investigation.
- RLC staff shall immediately report suspicions regarding youth to law enforcement for investigation and shall not conduct any further investigation into the allegations. Those allegations involving rostered persons shall also be reported to the Bishop's office.
- It is the policy of RLC to fully cooperate with law enforcement and the Bishop's office in any and all investigations of sexual misconduct and abuse.



## **Resurrection Lutheran Church Contact Information**

### **REPORTING / CONTACT INFORMATION / PHONE NUMBERS**

|   |   |
|---|---|
| Lead Pastor Mike O’Berg                 | 559-359-7224 (cell)<br>503-255-8772 (office)<br>503-328-9036 (home) |
| Minister of Youth & Family<br>Troy Lutz | 503-830-4876 (cell)<br>503-255-8772 (office)<br>503-655-2949 (home) |
| President Ben Fredericks                | 503-256-4503  |
| Vice President Joyce Gibson             | 503-799-1689  |
| Treasurer Dan Hauge                     | 360-909-0326  |
| Secretary Cheryl Beam                   | 503-762-4356  |
| Bishop David Brauer-Rieke               | 503-413-4191 (Oregon Synod)   |
| Assistant to Bishop Susan Kintner       | 503-413-4191 (Oregon Synod)   |

This document was created with Win2PDF available at <http://www.win2pdf.com>.  
The unregistered version of Win2PDF is for evaluation or non-commercial use only.  
This page will not be added after purchasing Win2PDF.