

**Safe Church Policies and Procedures  
Lewisville Baptist Church  
Lewisville, NC**



**Presented to Lewisville Baptist Church**

## **A. INTRODUCTION**

### **A.1 PURPOSE**

As a community of faith committed to following Jesus Christ, we strive to extend a generous welcome to all who enter our doors and to treat them with the love and dignity that God bestows upon each and every one of us. We want our church to be a safe place for everyone.

Unfortunately, we cannot simply assume that our church is a safe place. We know that we cannot eliminate all risks, but we can strive to reach that goal by taking intentional and direct actions. The Safe Church Ministry Team wants people of all ages to be able to deepen their relationship with God and each other in an environment that is safe and secure. It is in this spirit that the Lewisville Baptist Church Safe Church Policies and Procedures was created. We consider this to be a living document which will be amended over time as new issues arise. We hope that although there are sure to be omissions, this document will provide guidelines to create a safer environment at Lewisville Baptist Church for our members, employees and guests.

#### **What is safety?**

Safety means that a person's spiritual, emotional and physical self is protected from injury. For example:

#### **Spiritual safety**

- People's beliefs are treated respectfully

#### **Emotional safety**

- Kindness and civility are the norm
- People refrain from personal attacks and gossip
- Confidentiality is honored

#### **Physical safety**

- Door Key holders agree to abide by safe church policies
- Facilities are clean and well lit
- Exits are clearly marked and free of debris
- Fire alarms are kept in working order
- Food preparation areas are clean and health department guidelines for food preparation are followed

### **A.2 SCOPE OF POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

The policies and procedures included in this document apply to all activities which take place within the building and properties of Lewisville Baptist Church in Lewisville, NC (LBC), as well as programs, activities, or events scheduled as part of the ministry of this church which take place elsewhere. The policies and procedures apply to all members, friends, volunteers, renters and employees of the church.

### **A.3 LOCATION OF POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

A Safe Church Policies and Procedures Manual is provided to each new employee. All volunteers who will be regularly working with children, youth, or vulnerable adults will review the manual. Manuals are located in identifiable binders in two locations.

1. Church Office
2. Church Library

## **A.4 SAFE CHURCH TEAM DESCRIPTION**

The Safe Church team's function is to oversee the implementation of the Safe Church Policies and Procedures.

### **A.4.1 SAFE CHURCH TEAM COMPOSITION**

This team will be comprised of five members of Lewisville Baptist Church. The following groups will provide a representative:

- Children's Leader
- Youth Leader
- Deacons
- Ministerial Staff
- Sunday School Director

### **A.4.2 SAFE CHURCH TEAM FUNCTION**

The Safe Church Team will:

- Annually review and update Safe Church Policies and Procedures
- Oversee distribution of Safe Church Policies and Procedures to committees
- Confirm staff and volunteers working with children are trained in Safe Church Policies (Section C.4), including keeping an attendance sheet of who has received training and copies of the Volunteer Participation Covenant (Form C-2) and Acknowledgement of Safe Church Policies and Procedures forms (Form F-2).
- Oversee the completion of Criminal Background Check Authorization Forms (Form C-1)
- Receive Criminal Offender Recod Information (CORI) reports referred to them by the CORI processor
- Receive and Manage Incident Report Forms (Form A-1)
- Verify that CORI Reports, Incident Reports and other documents are stored in a safe and secure location
- When necessary, report incidents to the State of North Carolina Department of Social Services in conjunction with the clergy. (Section G.2.4)
- When necessary, serve on a task force to review formal complaints on adult misconduct (Section H)
- maintain strict confidentiality

## **B. BUILDING SAFETY**

It is the responsibility of Lewisville Baptist Church to maintain physical safety of the church building.

### **B.1 GENERAL**

Lewisville Baptist Church will:

- Maintain the building upkeep to preserve physical safety.
- **M a i n t a i n** the fire alarm system, fire extinguishers and first aid kits.
- Create and post floor plans indicating emergency exits, fire extinguishers, first aid kits and emergency phone numbers.
- Provide users of the building a mechanism to report any safety issues to the Facilities Manager.
- Follow health department guidelines for food preparation

### **B.2 BUILDING ACCESS**

Care will be taken to secure entrances to the church by limiting access to the Door Key to appropriate individuals who:

- Have a documented reason to have possession of a door key.
- Abide by all policies and procedures for building use and LBC Safe Church Policies

- Sign a Door Key Receipt Form (Form B-1) which states that the signer will not share the Door Key with anyone and will verify that all outside doors are locked if they are the last person in the building.
- Change the Door Key as necessary.

Documentation of individuals who hold keys to exterior and interior church doors will also be kept. Such individuals will sign a form with the same stipulations as the Door Key Receipt Form.

### **B.3 OUTSIDE GROUPS**

All outside groups who rent or use the church facilities will receive a copy of the Safe Church Policies and Procedures. If groups agree to comply with its provisions as pertain to their use of the building, they will sign the Use of Facilities form (Form B-2).

## **C. SCREENING AND TRAINING**

### **C.1 DEFINITIONS**

**CORI Processor:** a PMBA employee who manages the CORI process.

**Criminal Offender Record Information (CORI):** Criminal conviction information of persons within the North Carolina Court System.

**Staff or paid employee:** Any individual hired and compensated by Lewisville Baptist Church on a part-time, full-time, permanent or temporary basis.

### **C.2 VOLUNTEER SCREENING**

Lewisville Baptist Church in Lewisville, NC ( LBC) welcomes volunteers to become involved in the programs offered as part of our ministries. For those volunteers who work with youth and children on a regular basis, volunteers should generally be at least five years older than the youth or children they work with and have been part of the church community for six months, subject to the discretion of the clergy.

### **C.3 CRIMINAL BACKGROUND VERIFICATION**

#### **C.3.1 POLICIES**

Lewisville Baptist Church uses the PMBA CORI verification process and may also use a national criminal background verification service selected by the Safe Church Team.

Lewisville Baptist Church requires a CORI report on:

- all prospective employees
- adult youth leaders
- all volunteers who supervise youth or children overnight

Anyone convicted of any felony or a felony default by the court, with child or elder abuse, whether physical, emotional, or sexual, will not be considered, under any circumstances, for a position at Lewisville Baptist Church.

#### **C.3.2 PROCEDURES**

Ministerial staff will provide CORI applications (Form C-1) to volunteers and turn them in to the CORI processor. The CORI processor will submit CORI applications and receive CORI reports. The CORI processor will consult the

Safe Church Team when there are concerns. The ministerial staff will solicit approval for volunteers from the CORI processor. All attempts will be made to maintain confidentiality.

The Safe Church Team may consult with the church's pastoral staff and an attorney retained by the Church regarding background check findings and reports.

All reports are maintained in a secure/locked location in the Lewisville Baptist Church office.

CORI reports are to be repeated every two years.

#### **C4. TRAINING**

All staff members, teachers, and youth leaders who work with youth and children will receive training on safe church policies and procedures. They will sign a Participation Covenant (Form C-2) which will be kept on file with the Safe Church Team. Each will be given a copy of the Safe Church Policies and procedures and Procedures and Information for Volunteers (Form C-3) to review and given an opportunity to ask questions. Those individuals who have regular, direct contact with youth will also receive education about child abuse awareness and reporting procedures.

Training procedures:

- Training sessions will be offered at the beginning of each church school term.
- The Safe Church Team will keep an attendance sheet of who has received training.
- Training will include a review of the Lewisville Baptist church (LBC) Safe Church Policies and Procedures.
- Staff will review the Safe Church Policies and Procedures prior to starting their position.

### **D. CHILDREN'S MINISTRY PROTECTION AND SUPERVISION**

#### **D.1 CHILDREN'S MINISTRY POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

Lewisville Baptist Church is committed to creating a safe and healthy environment in which children from nursery to grade 6 can learn about and experience God's love. Therefore we provide supervision for all activities and programs involving children and employ practices that provide for the safety of children and those who care for them.

#### **D.2 CHILDREN'S MINISTRY DEFINITIONS**

**Aide:** a volunteer who functions in a non-supervisory role in one of the Sunday school classrooms or nursery/toddler room in the presence of an approved teacher or caregiver. Aides generally should be at least 14 years of age.

**Nursery/Toddler Caregiver:** a volunteer who supervises activities in the nursery/toddler rooms. The caregiver must be at least 18 years of age.

**Teacher:** a volunteer who leads classroom activities. Teachers must be at least 21 years of age.

**One-time Volunteer:** someone who helps with a trip or event but has not committed to a regular role such as aide or teacher.

Generally, all volunteers must be a member of Lewisville Baptist Church (LBC) or part of the church community for six months, subject to the discretion of the ministerial staff.

## **D.3 CHILDREN'S MINISTRY PROCEDURES**

### **D.3.1 TWO LEADER POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

Each class should have at least two teachers.

If a second leader is not available, the teacher may:

- elect to hold class or continue the activity but keep the door open
- contact the Director of Children's Ministries for assistance

If circumstances dictate that a child must be alone with a teacher, the teacher should contact a parent or guardian and wait with the child in a public space on church grounds.

### **D.3.2 REGISTRATION FORMS**

Parents or guardians of all children participating in the Children's Ministry program will be asked to complete a registration form for each child (Forms D-1, D-2). The registration form includes contact information and information regarding allergies or any other relevant medical concerns. This information will be included in the classroom attendance folder. Welcome forms for visitors are available in the classroom folders (Form D-3).

### **D.3.3 ATTENDANCE AND DISMISSAL PROCEDURES**

1. Children are dismissed from the Sunday School to the Sanctuary at approximately 10:30AM. Parents are not required to leave the Sunday School to escort their children to the Sanctuary.
2. Attendance will be taken in each class.

### **D.3.4 DISCIPLINE**

The purpose of discipline is to maintain order in a manner consistent with the teaching of Christian responsibility, respect and cooperation.

- Teachers are encouraged to clearly and respectfully communicate expectations of appropriate behavior to their class at the beginning of each school year and on a periodic basis throughout the Sunday school year. In addition, a covenant of conduct including class expectations may be posted in each classroom.
- If a child's behavior is disruptive, the teacher is instructed to address the issue with the child directly. Should the behavior be repeated, the teacher will contact the Children's Leader, who will follow up with parents/guardians as necessary.
- No child will be disciplined by the use of any form of physical punishment or verbal abuse.

### **D.3.5 HEALTH AND SAFETY**

- A first aid kit is available in the nursery and/or various locations throughout the church.
- Fire safety information, emergency evacuation routes and meeting place will be clearly posted in every classroom, along with emergency numbers for the church, police and fire departments.
- Emergency procedures, including evacuation plans, will be reviewed at each teacher orientation.
- Incident Reports Forms (Form A-1) are found in each classroom folder and should be filled out when necessary. Forms are filed with the Safe Church Team and given to the parents as warranted.
- If there is a medical emergency, the parents should be found immediately, the Associate Minister contacted, and 911 called as warranted.

- The importance of hand washing before handling food and after any clean up is emphasized.
- Generally, snacks are not provided in the 2<sup>nd</sup> through 5<sup>th</sup> grade classrooms. On occasion, a snack may be offered if it supports the curriculum or the class is celebrating a special event.
- Nursery, Pre-K and 1<sup>st</sup> grade classes may have a snack supplied by Lewisville Baptist Church (LBC). Possible snacks include goldfish crackers or cheerios, juice and water. Teachers will refer to child's allergy sheet when providing snacks.

#### D.3.6 CONCERN FOR A CHILD'S SAFETY OUTSIDE OF CHURCH

If in the context of a class or other event, a child discloses information that raises concern about his or her safety, the incident should be discussed promptly with the ministerial staff to clarify and determine an appropriate level of response.

## E. YOUTH MINISTRY PROTECTION AND SUPERVISION

### E.1 YOUTH MINISTRY POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Lewisville Baptist Church of Lewisville, NC is committed to creating a safe and healthy environment in which young people can learn about and experience God's love. Therefore we will provide supervision for all ministries and activities involving youth and employ practices that provide for the safety of all youth participants as well as teachers, leaders or helpers who serve in these ministries.

### E.2 YOUTH MINISTRY DEFINITIONS

**Lewisville Baptist Church Youth Group (LBYG):** a fellowship, worship, and service program for grades 7 through 12.

**Adult:** A person 18 years of age or older.

**Chaperone/ Driver:** A volunteer who helps supervise / transport youth for a special activity. To be a chaperone, an individual should be at least 23 years of age.

**Helper, Assistant:** A volunteer worker for regular youth activities who functions in a non-supervisory role. Helpers function under the supervision of the leader or teacher and generally should be 3 years older than the oldest youth participating in the program.

**One-time Volunteer:** an adult who helps with an event (trip, retreat) but has not committed to regularly helping with youth activities

**Teacher, Leader:** A paid or volunteer adult worker who has direct responsibility for the care of youth under their supervision.

**Off-Site Event:** A youth event requiring transportation that is scheduled off Lewisville Baptist Church property and may or may not include an overnight (e.g. bowling, mission trip, retreat)

**Youth:** All students participating in the 7<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade programs.

Adult volunteers should generally be at least five years older than the youth, and have been part of the church community for six months, subject to the discretion of the Minister.

### E.3 YOUTH MINISTRY PROCEDURES

#### E.3.1 TWO ADULT POLICY

The Two Adult Policy is intended to protect youth and prevent adults from encountering a situation where they could be wrongfully accused. Therefore, no adult should be alone in the church, or be at a church-approved activity, with a youth that is not related to him or her. It is recommended that there be a ratio of one adult for every six youths at all youth programs or activities. If these ratios are unable to be met, the youth activity may be canceled at the discretion of the minister or lay leader.

At least two chaperones should wait with youth being picked up after an offsite event. In the event that an adult is alone with a youth waiting to be picked up, they should wait in a public space.

It is permissible to have one adult per car carrying youth to an off-site event, but at no time should an adult be alone with a child other than his/her own. Two children and one adult in a vehicle is appropriate.

### E.3.2 FIVE YEAR OLDER POLICY

It is recommended that all leaders, teachers, and chaperones / drivers for youth activities or off site events be at least five years older than the oldest participant in the class, group or activity.

### E.3.3 PERMISSION, MEDICAL, AND COVENANT FORMS

All Youth participating in youth programs must have a Lewisville Baptist Church Youth Information Form (Form E-1) and Medication Consent Form (Form E-3) on file. These forms will be kept on file for the year with the church. Completed forms will be brought on all youth off site events by the adult leader. A Lewisville Baptist Church Trip Permission Form (Form E-2) will be filled out and handed in for any offsite overnight trips.

All youth participating in programs will develop and sign a covenant with their leaders at the beginning of the year. Guidelines for generating a covenant and a sample covenant are provided (Forms E-5 and E-6).

### E.3.4 OFF-SITE EVENT GUIDELINES

1. Parents or guardians and participating youth shall be given information ahead of time about programs, activities, leaders, chaperones, dates, times, cost, method of transportation, purpose of the scheduled trip or activity and other details whenever possible.
2. All occupants of a vehicle must use an individual seat belt (no multiple belting) at all times during the operation of the vehicle.
3. No cell phone use while driving except for a true emergency, and then the driver is encouraged to pull off the roadway to a safe spot.
4. Appropriate supervision: The two adult policies and procedures applies for all church events including those held off-site. On an overnight trip there will be at least one male and one female chaperone.

### E.3.5 DISCIPLINE

All participants are expected to act in a respectful manner toward all others participating in a youth group function. Participants are expected to follow the Covenant developed with the Minister. The purpose of discipline is to maintain order in a manner consistent with the teaching of Christian responsibility, respect and cooperation. No youth will be disciplined by use of any form of physical punishment.

Mutual respect in communication between youth and leaders, teachers and chaperones is expected. Appropriate behavioral expectations will be clearly communicated.

Disruptive, disrespectful or dangerous behavior will be addressed by the leader, teacher or chaperone in charge. If this behavior occurs on a trip or at a meeting, the leader reserves the right to contact the parent/guardian and send the youth home at the parents/guardians expense.

Adult volunteers must report all infractions of youth rules to the minister or adult leader of the group.

### E.3.6. HEALTH AND SAFETY

1. A first aid kit is available in the Nursery and other locations throughout the church.
2. Fire safety information, emergency evacuation routes and meeting place will be clearly posted in every classroom, along with emergency numbers for the church, police and fire departments.
3. Emergency procedures, including evacuation plans, will be reviewed at each teacher orientation.
4. Incident Reports Forms (Form A-1) are found in the Church office and should be filled out when necessary. Forms are filed with the Safe Church Team and given to the parents as warranted.
5. If there is a medical emergency, the parents and the minister should be contacted and 911 called as warranted.
6. The importance of hand washing before handling food and after any clean up is emphasized.

### E.3.7 CONCERN FOR A YOUTH'S SAFETY OUTSIDE OF CHURCH

If in the context of a class or other event, a youth discloses information that raises concern about his or her safety, the incident should be discussed promptly with the ministerial staff to clarify and determine an appropriate level of response.

## F. INTERNET SAFETY

The internet and social media are evolving tools which offer great promise for developing and deepening ministries but also pose significant safety challenges.

### F.1 DEFINITIONS

**Church Sponsored Sites** — any group, page or list-serve that is created by a designated member of Lewisville Baptist Church for the purpose of establishing, maintaining or growing ministries to and with youth and/or adults.

**Inappropriate Content** — refers both to content that is improper or offensive, but also content that might be suited to the medium but not to the relationship.

### F.2 MINOR TO ADULT RELATIONSHIPS

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, adults may choose to create separate private and professional profiles on networking sites to create a line of privacy.
3. If an adult chooses to accept friend requests from minors or youth that are associated with LBYG, we recommend that other adults (within LBYG) have full access to the correspondent's profile and correspondence.
4. Adults who choose to accept friend requests from youth should use all privacy settings applicable to shield youth from any inappropriate content that may exist within the adult's profile.
5. All youth and adults should be informed that any communication that is sent via digital means (email, social networking site notes or posts, texts, etc.) is not confidential and may be reported or shared with others.
6. Adults should archive or save all email correspondence with youth.

7. We strongly recommend “closed” but not “hidden” groups be used for LBYG. These groups should have both youth and adult administrators.
8. Clergy who work directly with youth are encouraged to use church sponsored digital communications groups to maintain contact with youth members.
9. Members of LBYG should decide within their covenant whether or not their social networking site groups are open to parents of current members.
10. Covenants should be created to govern what is appropriate and inappropriate content to be placed and displayed in the online group for LBYG.
11. 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 Lewisville Baptist Church clergy, documented for church records, and then deleted from the site.
12. 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 adults.
13. Adult leaders are not responsible for internet youth pages that are not sponsored by Lewisville Baptist Church.

### **F.3 ADULT TO ADULT RELATIONSHIPS**

1. Adult members 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 a professional account to maintain appropriate boundaries with Lewisville Baptist Church members or other members of communities of faith.
3. Clergy should consider the impact of declining a “friend” request from church members. These encounters may create tension in “real world” relationships.
4. Clergy are encouraged to use privacy settings to shield both adult and youth members from viewing content that may be inappropriate.

### **F.4 COMMUNICATION AND CONTACT**

#### **F.4.1 TRANSITIONS**

1. Clergy who are leaving Lewisville Baptist Church (LBC) should refrain from offering pastoral care through digital communication after the end date of their contract with Lewisville Baptist Church.
2. Former youth members and adult leaders of LBYG, 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.) (See Guidelines for making Digital Covenants, Form F-1).

#### **F.4.2 DIGITAL COVENANTS**

For reasons of education and accountability digital covenants should be made between members of LBYG and adult leaders. See Form F-1 for digital covenant guidelines.

### F.4.3 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 youth leaders should consider the content and nature of any post that will be read by or visible to youth because it might be perceived as the voice of the church, and may be misconstrued as church policies and procedures.

### F.4.4 PUBLISHING/POSTING CONTENT ONLINE

1. Secure signed Media Release forms from parents/guardians of minors who may participate in activities that may be photographed or videoed for distribution (See Forms D-1, E-1).
2. When video is distributed of services or activities on the web or via other broadcast media, signs should be posted that indicate the service will be broadcast.
3. Photos that are published on church sponsored sites should not include name or contact information for individuals unless otherwise requested.

## G. CHILD ABUSE RESPONSE AND REPORTING

Through our Safe Church Policies and educational programs, we seek to prevent abuse occurring at Lewisville Baptist Church. Allegations or reasonable suspicions of abuse will be responded to seriously and reported to appropriate church and state authorities. All the actions and documentation described below must be held in the strictest confidence and as such as few people as possible are informed. It is the responsibility of all concerned to maintain confidentiality.

### G.1 DEFINITIONS

**Child:** A person under the age of eighteen.

**CORI Processor:** Submits and receives CORI forms. The CORI processor will consult the Safe Church Team (See Section A.4) when there are concerns. The ministerial staff will solicit results from the CORI processor. All attempts will be made to maintain confidentiality.

**Forsyth County Child Protective Services (FCCPS)** Carolina Department which manages child abuse and neglect reports.

**Incident Report:** a written report (Form A -1) of any unusual occurrence at Lewisville Baptist Church.

**Mandated Reporter:** a person who, by virtue of his/her profession or position, is required by law to report all reasonable suspicions of child abuse. Church mandated reporters include: clergy, persons performing duties on behalf of the church (e.g. Deacons), church employees who supervise, educate, coach, train or counsel children on a regular basis (Children, Youth and Music positions).

**Moderator:** The lay Leader of Lewisville Baptist Church and the presiding officer for all Business meetings of the Congregation.

## **G.2 RESPONSE AND REPORTING OF CHILD ABUSE**

### **G.2.1 STANDARD FOR REPORTING**

Lewisville Baptist Church observes the North Carolina standard for reporting abuse. Anyone with "a reasonable cause to believe" that a child under age 18 is suffering or has suffered from abuse - or neglect will follow this Response and Reporting Policies and procedures.

*"Reasonable Cause" - after examining all the facts in a particular situation, most people with similar training and experience would also suspect abuse. This is the 'reasonable person' standard commonly used in the law - Questions and Answers About Reporting Child Abuse ©: Dayl Hufford. (Appendix)*

### **G.2.2 PREVENTING IMMINENT HARM**

To protect children, any circumstance of abuse that poses imminent risk of serious harm will be reported to the Forsyth County Sheriffs' Department at 911 or 336- . Because of the vulnerability of children, their right to our protection supersedes a counselee's right to confidentiality.

### **G.2.3 REPORTING PROCESS**

If in the context of a class or other event, a child discloses information or an adult otherwise has a reasonable cause to believe that a child is not safe, the incident should be discussed promptly with the ministerial staff to clarify and determine an appropriate level of response.

Incident Reports (Form A-1) are required for all unusual occurrences at Lewisville Baptist Church. They must be submitted to the Safe Church Team or the appropriate staff member even if it is determined that an oral or written report will not be filed with FCCPS. These forms will be stored in a secure and confidential location.

The Forsyth County Child Protective Services (FCCPS) is the local agency with responsibility for protecting children from child abuse and neglect. No one is prohibited from making a report directly to FCCPS, and may do so as either an identified or anonymous reporter. Reporters can file anonymously by calling 336-703-3800. For more information see [www.co.forsyth.nc.us>childprotect](http://www.co.forsyth.nc.us>childprotect)

### **G.2.4 PASTORAL STAFF AND SAFE CHURCH TEAM'S ROLES**

Any person raising a concern of abuse should contact the Safe Church Team and/or confidentially discuss their concern with a Lewisville Baptist Church pastor, or the Director of Children's Ministries.

The role of the Safe Church Team is to receive the allegation, provide leadership and to guide the reporter through the Department of Children and Families (FCCPS) contact process. Investigation and evaluation of concerns of abuse is the role and obligation of FCCPS and not the reporter, minister, or the Safe Church Team.

## G.2.5 ALLEGATION AGAINST PASTORAL STAFF

If there is an allegation against the pastoral staff, the Deacon Chairman will contact the Pilot Mountain Baptist Association (PMBA). The church will seek the council of the PMBA regarding action to be taken.

## H. ADULT MISCONDUCT – HARRASSMENT AND EXPLOITATION

Lewisville Baptist Church (LBC) wishes to create and maintain a community in which members, friends, staff, and volunteers can worship and work together in an atmosphere free of all forms of discrimination, harassment, exploitation, or intimidation.

### H.1 DEFINITIONS

**Harassment:** repeated misconduct, whether verbal or physical, that creates an environment that is uncomfortable, unwelcoming, discriminating, or intimidating, or leads to an atmosphere in which a person's ability to participate in worship and activities at the church is compromised.

**Sexual exploitation:** activity or conduct of a sexualized nature in which an employed minister engaged in the work of the Church takes advantage of the vulnerability of a participant by causing or allowing the participant 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's sexuality or sexual orientation with the intent of intimidating, humiliating, or embarrassing the other person, or subjecting the person to public discrimination. Prohibited sexual harassment includes unsolicited and unwelcome contact that has sexual overtones. Sexual harassment also includes continuing to express sexual interest after being informed directly that the interest is unwelcome – and using sexualized behavior to control, influence, or affect the career, salary, work, learning, or worship environment of another.

**Vulnerable adult:** Any person aged 18 or over who is or may be in need of assistance by reason of physical, mental disability, age, emotional illness, and who is unable to take care of or to protect him or herself against significant harm or serious exploitation which may be occasioned by the actions or inactions of other people.

### H.2 POLICY ON ADULT CONDUCT

The Church is strongly opposed to sexual exploitation and harassment of any kind, and such behavior is prohibited. It is the intention of the church to respond to allegations of behavior that are contrary to this policy and, if necessary, to discipline those persons who violate it and/or report it to the appropriate authorities. Every individual always has the right to report allegations to local authorities.

All persons engaged in the ministry of Lewisville Baptist Church (including elected or appointed leaders, employees, volunteers, and authorized ministers) are responsible for knowing the possible impact of their words and actions in ministering to the emotional, mental, and spiritual needs of persons who come to them for help or over whom they have any kind of authority. Sexual exploitation of parishioner(s) or other individual(s) by anyone engaged in the ministry of Lewisville Baptist Church is unethical and unprofessional behavior and will not be tolerated.

Should someone observe that a vulnerable adult is being abused, harassed or exploited, a concerned member may initiate proceedings on their behalf.

### H.3 PROCESS FOR RESPONDING TO A COMPLAINT OR CONCERN

The utmost respect shall be given to the confidentiality and privacy of all parties. Any person who brings a concern or complaint forward, or who assists in investigation of such a report, will not be adversely affected in terms and conditions of employment or Church membership, or otherwise discriminated against or discharged. Information will be shared only on a need-to-know basis.

### H.3.1 RESPONSE

1. **Informal** - The person with a concern may attempt to resolve the matter directly with the person accused. Alternatively, the person with a concern may attempt to resolve the matter with the assistance of his/her supervisor, a Safe Church Team member, or a member of the Lewisville Baptist Church clergy.
2. **Formal** - If an informal resolution of the complaint does not seem wise, appropriate, or possible, or does not succeed, the person with a concern should complete an incident report form (Form A-1) and submit it to a Safe Church Team member and/or Senior Minister. This will lead to a formal proceeding. If the allegation involves the Senior Minister, the person with a concern should contact the Deacon Chairman or the Safe Church Team.

### H.3.2 FORMAL PROCEEDING

When the Safe Church Team is requested to initiate a formal proceeding, the following procedure will happen:

1. A task force will be convened.
  - If the allegation involves the Senior Minister, the task force will be comprised of the Safe Church Team, Associate Pastor and the Deacon Chairman. Lewisville Baptist Church will cooperate fully in any conference procedures related to the person's ministerial authorization.
  - If the allegation involves another authorized LBC minister, the task force will be comprised of the Senior Minister, the Safe Church Team, and the Deacon Chairman. Lewisville Baptist Church will cooperate fully in any conference procedures related to the person's ministerial authorization.
  - If the allegation involves another Lewisville Baptist Church staff member, the task force will be comprised of the Senior Minister, the Safe Church Team, and the Associate Pastor.
  - If the allegation involves a lay person the task force will be comprised of the Senior Minister, the Safe Church Team.
2. The person accused will be notified that an incident report form has been filed.
3. Statements will be gathered from individuals involved.
4. The task force will carefully document all activities and meetings and include dates, times, locations, names of the parties present, any decisions, and any further action to be taken. This documentation is to be kept in a secure location determined by the Safe Church Team.
5. The task force will consider all information and determine an appropriate course of action.
6. If the task force determines that no harassment or sexual exploitation has occurred, all affected parties will be notified.
7. If the task force determines that harassment or sexual exploitation has occurred, the task force will inform the individuals and take actions that may include:
  - Formal reprimand with defined expectations for changed behavior;
  - Recommending or requiring a program of growth that may include education and/or counseling;
  - Probation, with the terms of the probation clearly identified;
  - Dismissal from volunteer leadership position or employment and, in extreme cases, membership in, the Church.

### H.4 APPEAL

If the person(s) involved is not satisfied with the disposition of the matter, he or she has the right to appeal to the Deacon Chairman who will appoint a committee to review the complaint.

