

Resolution Regarding Salem United Church of Christ's Safe Conduct Policy

*“But let all who take refuge in you rejoice; let them sing joyful praises forever.
Protect them, so all who love your name may be filled with joy.”*

Psalm 5:11

- **Whereas** the Illinois South Conference passed a resolution regarding safe churches at its meeting in 2004, urging all churches to develop a safe church policy.
- **Whereas** as Christians we are called to love, care for, protect, and provide places of justice and hospitality for all persons, especially children; and
- **Whereas** churches are to be holy places of sanctuary where all can gather for worship, study, and service with assurance that they are safe and secure in the community of faith; and
- **Whereas** churches, large and small, rural and urban, have not always been safe places for all, free from abuse and exploitation; and
- **Whereas** when such abuse occurs, its consequences are devastating to all involved, including the church; and
- **Whereas** God's call to make our churches safe places and to protect children and adults from abuse has a sense of urgency and intentionality about it;
- **Therefore be it resolved** that the Salem United Church of Christ adopts this resolution, to declare Salem United Church of Christ a “Safe Church.” It is understood that we, Salem UCC, will provide guidelines, documentation, and training workshops as needed to carry out this safe conduct policy.

Adopted January 21, 2007

Salem United Church of Christ's "Safe Conduct" Policy

Policy Prohibiting Abuse, Exploitation, and Harassment

Introduction:

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

A. Child and Youth Protection Policy:

- Salem United Church of Christ is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment in which young people can learn about and experience God's love. In order to ensure this, we have established the following guidelines:
 - We expect that those who volunteer to work with minors will have been members of the Salem United Church of Christ for at least six months, or if not members, regularly and frequently associated with Salem United Church of Christ for at least a year.
 - It is the policy of this church to provide adequate supervision and safeguards for all youth activities. In any situations where participants are not readily visible to other church members, there will not be fewer than two adults over the age of 18 be present with children. Youth over the age of fourteen may assist; however, this assistance does not change the "2 adults" requirement.
 - All volunteers who work with children and youth will complete and submit a disclosure form.
 - All volunteers and employees who work with children and youth will receive orientation to the overall policy.
 - Written consent of one parent or guardian will be required for all activities off the church property, and any overnight activities.

B. Ministerial Conduct:

- Pastors, employees, elected and appointed lay leaders, and volunteers are responsible for understanding the ways in which their words or actions may affect others.
- Sexual Exploitation or Sexual Harassment, of parishioners or others, by anyone engaged in ministry of Salem United Church of Christ is unethical and unprofessional behavior and will not be tolerated within this congregation.

B. Ministerial Conduct (continued):

- All volunteers and authorized ministers of the church may sometimes deal with individuals who are emotionally or personally vulnerable in some way. It is also important that everyone in the church be adequately prepared and educated for the ministry in which they serve others, and to understand the ways in which their actions may impact those who may be vulnerable to their use or misuse of power.
- It is the policy of Salem United Church of Christ to expect its volunteers and authorized ministers, to nurture safety within ministerial relationships by being attentive to self-care, education, and the importance of referring those in need to supportive and helpful resources. It is also expected that those engaged in providing ministry will complete and submit an application and disclosure document.

C. Requirements for Ministry:

- Before an offer of call is made to any authorized minister (whether ordained, commissioned, licensed, or other lay person), a comprehensive background check, including a criminal records check, will be completed. Suggested scope of check to include the counties of residence and counties of work over the past seven years.
- Authorized ministers of the church will attend all boundary workshops suggested or required by the Illinois South Conference of the Salem United Church of Christ or will attend at least one workshop each three years, whichever is more frequent.
- All volunteers and ministers of the church will complete a disclosure form before beginning their duties.
- The (named position: pastor, church school leader, etc.) of the church will conduct a review of the registered sex offender registry for each new minister and authorized minister, employee, or volunteer, by searching for their name on the Department of Justice website at www.nsopr.gov. The registered sex offender registry will be reviewed on a quarterly basis for all ministers and authorized ministers.

Appendix:

- **Authorized ministers:** a person who holds ordained ministerial standing or has been commissioned or licensed by an association of the United Church of Christ or region of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).
- **Ministerial relationship:** the relationship between one who carries out the ministry of the church and the one being served by that ministry.
- **Sexual exploitation:** sexual activity or contact (not limited to sexual intercourse) in which a minister engaged in 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.

Appendix (continued):

- **Sexual harassment:** repeated or coercive sexual advances toward another person contrary to his or her wishes. It includes behavior directed at another person with the intent of intimidating, humiliating, or embarrassing the other person, or subjecting the person to public discrimination. Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitute sexual harassment when:
 - Verbal contact, such as sexually suggestive or obscene comments, threats, slurs, epithets, jokes about gender-specific traits, Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition or circumstance of instruction, employment, or participation in any church activity; Submission to, or rejection of, such conduct by an individual is used as a basis for evaluation in making personal or church-related decisions affecting an individual; or
 - Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's performance or participation in church activities or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work or church environment.

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

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

Selection of Volunteers and Staff Working with Children and Youth

- We expect that those who volunteer to work with minors will have been members of the Salem United Church of Christ for at least six months, or if not members, regularly and frequently associated with Salem United Church of Christ for at least a year.
- An application and disclosure form is to be completed by all employees, clergy, and volunteers.
- All youth workers are to be screened and evaluated to work with youth.
- References are to be provided upon request.
- Police checks will be done when appropriate.
- Screening may vary with intensity of contact with children.
- All persons convicted of child abuse or molestation will never be allowed to work with children and youth.
- All persons transporting youth are to complete a form indicating driving record, driver's license, and insurance information.
- All persons working with children and youth are to receive training regarding appropriate behaviors and boundaries.

Guidelines for Adult Volunteers Working with Children and Youth

- Two adults are required to be present with children and youth at all times, both at Salem United Church of Christ and off-site
- Adults should not be alone with minor children without parental permission.
- Adequate supervision for all programs involving children and youth must be maintained from the time the children arrive until they are picked up by parents or guardians. Children are to be released only to designated parent or guardian.
- All adult supervisors must be approved in advance by designated Salem United Church of Christ leadership before supervising overnight or out-of-town activity.
- Adults are to report to the Senior Pastor all encounters with children that might be misunderstood. Document event with a memo and place in designated church file.
- Do not single out one child or young person from a group for gift giving. Make gift giving a group activity and/or make gifts “from the church” or “from your class.”
- Have an “open-door policy” that gives parents, clergy, and church staff the right to visit and observe a class or program at any time unannounced.
- Establish touch boundaries. Offer children choices, a hug or a hand shake. Don’t assume all children want to be touched. Never touch any part of the body that would be covered by a modest swimsuit or touch the clothing which covers those parts.
- Overnight events must have a minimum of two (2) adults on the premises at all times. Ground rules for the event are to be established ahead of time. Have separate sleeping areas for boys and girls and privacy for changing clothing.
- Only age appropriate movies are to be shown at any Salem UCC sponsored activity. PG-13 rated movies must have parental approval. R-rated movies must have council and parental approval.
- Never show the youth any material which displays nudity or could by any standard be called pornographic. Confiscate anything brought by the youth that might be considered pornographic and document such activity.
- It is the policy of Salem UCC to never allow alcoholic beverages or illegal drugs on the premises. If a youth is suspected to be under the influence of an illegal substance, the parents should be called and arrangements should be made for the youth to get home safely.

~ Salem United Church of Christ ~

Employee Application & Disclosure Form

(An Equal Opportunity Employer)



Personal Information:

Date _____

Name _____
(Last) (First) (Middle)

Social Security Number _____

Are you 18 yrs or older? _____

Phone Number _____

Address _____

Education:

Education (Circle The Grade You Last Completed)

High School: 9th 10th 11th 12th

Name of High School: _____

College: 1st Year 2nd Year 3rd Year 4th Year

Name of College: _____

Graduate School: _____ Yes _____ No

Name of Graduate School: _____

General:

Employment Experience _____

What special skills do you have? _____

What activities are you involved with? (Civic, Athletic, Etc.)

Why do you want to work for Salem United Church of Christ?

Authorization:

I hereby give permission to Salem United Church of Christ to obtain a police background check, and I hereby declare that all of this information on this application is true to the best of my knowledge.

Signature _____ Date _____

Salem United Church of Christ is committed to protecting children and other vulnerable individuals from sexual and physical abuse. Have you ever been convicted of a crime involving sexual or physical abuse of any kind? (Exclude convictions that have been sealed, expunged, pardoned, or legally eradicated, a misdemeanor conviction for which probation was completed and the case was dismissed, or an offense about which inquiry is not permissible in this state.)

_____YES _____NO

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

I have terminated my employment, professional credentials, or service in a volunteer position or had my employment, professional credentials, or authorization to hold a volunteer position terminated for reasons relating to allegations of actual or attempted sexual, physical, and/or child abuse.

_____YES _____NO

If yes, give a short explanation. (Please indicate the date of termination, name, address, and telephone number of employer or volunteer supervisor; and nature of the incident(s).

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

_____YES _____NO

If yes, please provide a brief explanation.

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

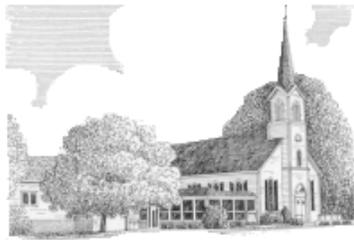
Beginning such relationships with an open exchange of relevant information builds the foundation for a continuing and healthy covenant between employees or volunteers and the church they seek to serve. To that end, I authorize Salem U.C.C. and/or its agents to make inquiries regarding all statements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

Salem U.C.C.'s hiring and authorized volunteer recruitment process involves the distribution of information regarding applications with those persons in a position to recruit, secure, and supervise the position I am seeking to fill. To that end, I authorize Salem U.C.C. and its agents to circulate, distribute, and otherwise share information gathered in connection with this application to such persons for these stated purposes. I understand that Salem U.C.C. will share with me information it has gathered about me, if I so request.

(Signature) _____ (Date) _____

~ Salem United Church of Christ ~

Volunteer Information & Disclosure Form



Date _____

Employment Experience _____

Name _____

Phone _____

Address _____

Volunteer Experience _____

Children (Names, Ages, & Grades)

In what capacity are you volunteering?

_____ Sunday School Teacher

_____ Vacation Bible School Teacher or Helper

_____ Committee or Council Member

In case of an emergency call _____

_____ Occasional Cooking or Kitchen Help

_____ Music

_____ Office Assistance

Spouse's name and occupation _____

_____ General Help

I will be available to help:

Education (Circle The Grade You Last Completed)

_____ During day hours- morning or afternoon

High School: 9th 10th 11th 12th

_____ During evening hours

College: 1st Year 2nd Year 3rd Year 4th Year

_____ During special events

Graduate School: _____ Yes _____ No

How are you associated with Salem UCC?

Salem United Church of Christ is committed to protecting children and other vulnerable individuals from sexual and physical abuse. Have you ever been convicted of a crime involving sexual or physical abuse of any kind? (Exclude convictions that have been sealed, expunged, pardoned, or legally eradicated, a misdemeanor conviction for which probation was completed and the case was dismissed, or an offense about which inquiry is not permissible in this state.)

_____YES _____NO

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

I have terminated my employment, professional credentials, or service in a volunteer position or had my employment, professional credentials, or authorization to hold a volunteer position terminated for reasons relating to allegations of actual or attempted sexual, physical, and/or child abuse.

_____YES _____NO

If yes, give a short explanation. (Please indicate the date of termination, name, address, and telephone number of employer or volunteer supervisor; and nature of the incident(s).

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

_____YES _____NO

If yes, please provide a brief explanation.

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

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(Signature) _____ (Date) _____

Transporting Children and Youth in a Motor Vehicle

Name: _____

Address: _____

Daytime Phone: _____ Evening Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____

Driver's License #: _____ Driver's License Expiration Date: _____

Insurance company for vehicle(s) used to transport children and youth:

Have you ever had a driver's license revoked or suspended?

_____ Yes _____ No

If yes, please give details: _____

Have you ever been arrested for driving under the influence?

_____ Yes _____ No

If yes, please give details as to where and when each such charge was made, and describe the outcome:

In transporting children and youth, I agree to:

- Obey all traffic regulations including speed limits and safety restraint requirements.
- Transport only the number of persons my vehicle is equipped to carry.
- Drive only when I am not under the influence of alcohol or other intoxicating drugs.

Signature _____ Date _____

Consent and Authorization for Medical Treatment

Name _____ has permission to participate in activities of Salem United Church of Christ youth groups.

Date of Birth _____

Known Health Problems _____

Known Allergies _____

Physician's Name & Phone Number _____

Preferred Hospital _____

Medical Insurance Company _____

Policy Number _____

Parents' Names _____

Parents' Address & Phone Number _____

Emergency Contact & Phone Number _____

In case of an accident or emergency, I give consent and authorization to a representative of Salem United Church of Christ to obtain and authorize any and all medical, dental, or surgical care and treatment for my child by any licensed physician or surgeon. This authorization will remain in effect until revoked by the undersigned.

Parent's Signature _____ Date _____

State of Illinois)
) SS
County of Madison)

Subscribed and affirmed before me this _____ day of _____ 20_____.

(Seal)

Signature of Notary Public

My Commission Expires: _____

Response to Allegations of Child Sexual Abuse

State law requires mandatory reporting by any person whose primary responsibility is care and supervision of children.

Reporting:

- Take any allegation seriously.
- Report allegations promptly to the Senior Pastor and/or the Council President. At that time, the 'Report of Suspected Sexual Misconduct' form should be completed.
- Senior Pastor and Council President will report allegations to appropriate persons and agencies which may include:
 - Criminal authorities (State's Attorney and Department of Children and Family Services)
 - Victim's families (except when alleged perpetrator is a family member)
 - Church's attorney and insurance company

Responding:

- Support the alleged victim and families.
- Use professionals to investigate allegations.
- Designate official spokesperson in dealing with authorities and media.
- Utilize an attorney during any interview or investigation.
- Confidentiality is to be observed, limiting dissemination of information only to those individuals who must be informed.

REPORT OF SUSPECTED SEXUAL MISCONDUCT

Date reported: _____ Time reported: _____

Name and position of person who received report: _____

Manner in which report was received (i.e. telephone, written, etc): _____

INCIDENT INFORMATION

Name of person reporting incident: _____

Position and/or relationship to alleged victim: _____

Street address: _____ City, State, Zip: _____

Home phone: _____ Cell phone: _____ Work phone: _____

Date of Incident: _____ Time of incident: _____

Location of incident: _____

ALLEGED VICTIM INFORMATION

Name of alleged victim: _____

Age at time of incident: _____ Gender: _____

Street address: _____ City, State, Zip: _____

Home phone: _____ Cell phone: _____ Work phone: _____

SUSPECT INFORMATION

Name of person suspected of misconduct: _____

Position and/or relationship to alleged victim: _____

Street address: _____ City, State, Zip: _____

Home phone: _____ Cell phone: _____ Work phone: _____

(Continued on back)

