



Safe Sanctuaries Policy

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INTRODUCTION

The Mora and Ogilvie United Methodist Churches are concerned about the safety of all children and youth. Our calling and our mandate is to ensure “safe sanctuaries” for each of God’s children.

Throughout the gospels, Jesus provides teachings on providing a peaceable kingdom for all of God’s people, including our most precious gifts, our children and youth (Matthew 5:9, Luke 18:15-17). The peaceable kingdom begins with sanctuary. Scriptures provide examples of how sanctuary is to be a community of nurture and protection:

And when you welcome one of these children because of me, you welcome me. – Matthew 18:5

In the same way, it is not my heavenly Father's will that even one of these little ones should perish. – Matthew 18:14

In addition, we base our understanding of “safe sanctuaries” on the United Methodist Social Principles and tradition of The United Methodist Church:

Children must be protected from economic, physical, emotional, and sexual exploitation and abuse.
Paragraph 162C – United Methodist Social Principles, 2004 Book of Discipline.

With God’s help we will so order our lives after the example of Christ that this child surrounded by steadfast love, may be established in the faith, and confirmed and strengthened in the way that leads to life eternal. –

Baptismal Covenant II page 44, United Methodist Hymnal

Local churches need to develop comprehensive policies and procedures to reduce the risk of abuse of our children and youth. These policies are outlined in this document and are subject to an ongoing evaluation and review process through a Safe Sanctuaries Review Committee that reports to the Staff Pastor Parish Relations Committee. To be fully effective, our entire congregation should become familiar with these policies and the underlying absolute and unwavering commitment to the physical and emotional safety as well as spiritual growth of our children and youth

Specific policies and procedures have been determined by a review of our situation as a congregation and implementation of the best practices to reduce the risk of abuse as recommended by Safe Sanctuaries for Children and Youth by Rev. Joy Melton (Copyright 2004 Discipleship Resources) and other sources such as applicable child protection statutes found in the Minnesota General Statutes.



Statement of Covenant and Policy Purpose

1.1. Statement of Covenant

As a Christian community of faith and a United Methodist congregation, we pledge to conduct the ministry of the gospel in ways that assure the safety and spiritual growth of all our children and youth, as well as all those who work with children and youth. No policy will prevent inappropriate incidents or accidents nor should it be expected to be "perfect," but this work represents our best effort. We will continue to monitor this policy and conduct a review of this policy in the month of August each year. Revisions will be published as they are adopted. We will follow reasonable safety measures in the selection and recruitment of workers; we will implement prudent operational procedures in all programs and events; we will educate all our workers with children and youth regarding the use of appropriate policies and procedures; we will have a clearly defined procedure for reporting a suspected incident of sexual, physical or emotional abuse or neglect of a child or youth that conforms to the requirements of all applicable laws; and we will be prepared to manage and respond to the allegations of abuse to those directly involved, as well as to the congregation and media inquiries, if an incident should occur.

1.2. Policy Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to address the safety of our children and youth at all Mora - Ogilvie United Methodist Church-sponsored events. Mora - Ogilvie United Methodist Church recognizes the need to have a formal, written policy with procedures in place (1) to help prevent the opportunity for the occurrence and/or the appearance of abuse of children and youth and (2) to reduce the likelihood that workers (paid and volunteer) will be subjected to false accusations and/or suspicions. By establishing this policy we hope to ensure that the Mora - Ogilvie United Methodist Church extends safe Christian hospitality, nurture and community to the children and youth in our midst so that they can grow in spiritual maturity in an environment that offers security from sexual, physical or emotional abuse or neglect to the fullest extent possible.

2. Scope

This Safe Sanctuaries Policy applies to all current and potential Mora - Ogilvie United Methodist Church employees and those contracted workers and volunteer workers who will be working in church-sponsored ministries that are being conducted under the auspices of and/or endorsed by the Mora - Ogilvie United Methodist Church and that involve children and youth of this congregation and community. (See Section 3 below for definitions of terms.)

3. Definitions

Abuse is defined as a non-accidental injury or pattern of injuries to a child or youth. Such abuse includes non-accidental:

Physical Abuse - "Physical abuse" means any physical injury, mental injury, or threatened injury, inflicted by a person responsible for the child's care on a child other than by accidental means, or any physical or mental injury that cannot reasonably be explained by the child's history of injuries, or any aversive or deprivation procedures, or regulated interventions, that have not been authorized under section 121A.67 or 245.825. Abuse does not include reasonable and moderate physical discipline of a child administered by a parent or legal guardian which does not result in an injury. Abuse does not include the use of reasonable force by a teacher, principal, or school employee as allowed by section 121A.582. Actions which are not reasonable and moderate include, but are not limited to, any of the following that are done in anger or without regard to the safety of the child:

1. throwing, kicking, burning, biting, or cutting a child;
2. striking a child with a closed fist;
3. shaking a child under age three;
4. striking or other actions which result in any non-accidental injury to a child under 18 months;
5. unreasonable interference with a child's breathing;



6. threatening a child with a weapon, as defined in section 609.02, subdivision 6;
7. striking a child under age one on the face or head;
8. purposely giving a child poison, alcohol, or dangerous, harmful, or controlled substances which were not prescribed for the child by a practitioner, in order to control or punish the child; or other substances that substantially affect the child's behavior, motor coordination, or judgment or that results in sickness or internal injury, or subjects the child to medical procedures that would be unnecessary if the child were not exposed to the substances;
9. unreasonable physical confinement or restraint not permitted under section 609.379, including but not limited to tying, caging, or chaining. *Minnesota Statute §626.556, Subd. 2.*

Verbal Abuse - This includes any verbal act that degrades or threatens any child or youth.

Sexual abuse is any sexual behavior imposed on a juvenile. This involves a range of activities, including fondling or other inappropriate physical contact. It also includes, without limitation, exhibitionism, child pornography, and suggestive behaviors or comments, as well as any of the following:

1. incest
2. rape
3. prostitution
4. romantic involvement with any participant
5. any sexual intercourse, or sexual conduct with, or fondling of an individual
6. sexualized behavior that communicates sexual interest and/or content
7. behavior prohibited by law

"Sexual abuse" means the subjection of a child by a person responsible for the child's care, by a person who has a significant relationship to the child, as defined in section 609.341, or by a person in a position of authority. *Minnesota Statute. § 626.556, Subd. 2.*

Emotional Abuse - Emotional abuse is expressing attitudes or behaviors toward a child or youth that create substantial emotional or psychological damage.

Neglect - Child neglect can be defined as any serious disregard for a juvenile's supervision, care, or discipline

Neglect as defined in paragraph (f), clause (2), that substantially endangers the child's physical or mental health, including a growth delay, which may be referred to as failure to thrive, that has been diagnosed by a physician and is due to parental neglect. *Minnesota Statute. § 626.556, Subd. 2.*

Adult refers to a person 18 years of age or older.

Church-sponsored Activities. Any activity within a ministry conducted under the auspices of and/or endorsed by the Mora - Ogilvie United children, youth or vulnerable adults 18 years old and younger and/or vulnerable adults and/or vulnerable adults.

Contracted Worker. The term contracted worker describes individuals who provide services to the Mora - Ogilvie United Methodist Church but are not regular, established Mora - Ogilvie United Methodist Church employees. Categories of Contracted Workers include:

- Individuals who are providing services to the Mora and/or Ogilvie United Methodist Churches through contractual agreements, whether or not through an agency/firm.
- Professional or consulting services provided by a firm, organization or independent contractor who will be working on or off site to deliver a specific project or provide consultancy advice.

Child or youth means any person under the age of 18.



Children’s and youth activities means any activity or program in which children are under supervision of persons (staff or volunteer workers) in charge of these activities.

Conference means the Minnesota Conference of the United Methodist Church.

Lead Volunteer is one who has unsupervised interaction with children, youth or vulnerable adults. Examples include youth or children’s group leaders, overnight retreat chaperones, nursery staff, and youth mission leaders.

Near or nearby shall mean within such proximity that the adult leader is in either visible or audible contact with youth for the purpose of conducting adequate supervision of youth.

Outside Groups Any group whose activity primarily involving children, youth or vulnerable adults younger than 18 years or vulnerable adults of age that does not fall under the direct responsibility of a Mora - Ogilvie United Methodist Church staff member. Each outside group, including those currently using the Mora and Ogilvie United Methodist Church facilities, will be known to the church by completion of the Outside Groups Covenant, which will be secured in the Mora - Ogilvie United Methodist Church office files. Examples of outside groups include Scouts, 4-H and other local youth organizations

Regular Volunteers are those who have supervised interaction with children, youth or vulnerable adults. Examples could include nursery workers, Sunday school teachers, youth group helpers, Vacation Bible School volunteer workers and other volunteers.

Respondent is the individual who is responding to the alleged abuse.

Staff person means any person employed by the Mora and/or Ogilvie United Methodist Churches.

Safe Sanctuaries Review Committee shall be comprised of the Chair of the Staff Pastor Parish Relations Committee or designated SPPRC representative, the Chair of Trustees or designated Trustee or each parish, a representative of the Christian Education Committee of each parish, the Pastor, and a member at large of each parish.

Safe Sanctuaries Crisis Response Committee shall be established for each parish, and will be called to action following an incident. Each shall be comprised of the Pastor, the chairpersons of the Staff Pastor Parish Relations Committee and Trustees or their designates, and outside consultants as necessary. On a case-by-case basis, the Chairs of the Sunday School, Christian Education Chair, Youth Group Leader or Vacation Bible School Coordinator may be members of this committee to assist in managing an incident as appropriate.

Voluntary and Mandatory Abuse Reporters Minnesota Statutes require that certain people who suspect or become aware of maltreatment of children, youth or vulnerable adults report it immediately. Generally, this report of maltreatment is made Kanabec County Family Services or the Sheriff’s Office.

Voluntary Reporters: Any person may voluntarily file a report of known or suspected harm (maltreatment). This includes child, youth or vulnerable adult themselves, family members, friends, and others.

Mandated Reporters: The law requires certain people to report suspected maltreatment of children, youth and/or vulnerable adults. These people are called mandated reporters. They include professionals: social workers, nurses, nursing assistants, clergy, persons responsible for youth as a part of employment such as Youth Workers and administrators. They must report the alleged incident of maltreatment immediately, no longer than 24 hours after the occurrence to Kanabec County.



Volunteer leader is the volunteer worker who is “in charge” of the activity or event, working with children, youth or vulnerable adults when a staff person is not present.

Volunteer Worker means a person who assists in a leadership or support role in children’s and youth ministries and receives no financial compensation for his or her leadership or support.

Vulnerable Adult means “Vulnerable” means there is a risk of experiencing harm. Minnesota’s legislature has declared that it is the state’s public policy to protect adults who, because of physical or mental disability or dependence on health care services, are particularly vulnerable to harm. Minnesota Statute defines a “vulnerable adult” as a person 18 years of age or older who is a resident or inpatient of a facility, one who receives services from a licensed home care provider, or one who receives services from a personal care attendant provider under the Medical Assistance Program. In addition, the law applies to persons 18 years of age or older who, regardless of residence or whether any type of service is received, possesses a physical, mental, or emotional impairment which limits that person’s ability to provide adequately for his or her own care without help and has an impaired ability to protect himself or herself from harm.

4. Screening

4.1. Levels of Interaction of volunteer workers

There are two levels in which volunteer workers may interact with children, youth and/or vulnerable adults

- **Regular Volunteer** Regular volunteer workers have supervised interaction with children, youth or vulnerable adults. Examples could include nursery workers, Sunday school teachers, youth program helpers, Vacation Bible School volunteer workers and other children programs
- **Lead Volunteer** Lead volunteer workers have unsupervised interaction with children, youth or vulnerable adults. Examples include youth or children’s group leaders, overnight retreat chaperones, nursery staff, and youth mission leaders. This level will require several background checks including: criminal background, sex offender, Social Security Number verification and driving record.

4.2. Length of Volunteer Worker Involvement at the Mora and Ogilvie United Methodist Churches

Any potential volunteer worker working with children, youth or vulnerable adults must have been a regular attendee of Mora - Ogilvie United Methodist Church services or activities at Mora - Ogilvie United Methodist Church for a minimum of six months before becoming a regular volunteer. An exception is that parents of children and youth may volunteer to serve as a regular volunteer immediately upon becoming church members and completing an application for service. Lead volunteers must have been a member of Mora - Ogilvie United Methodist Church for a minimum of six months.

4.3. Screening Process

Regular and lead volunteers will be asked to complete an application process, which will generally be done online. Lead volunteers will be asked to supply personal information for use during the application process, including Social Security Number, Driver’s License number, current and past addresses. Information such as Social Security numbers will be encrypted and will be accessible only to the agency performing the background check. All reports received as a result of background checks will be held in confidence by the Mora - Ogilvie United Methodist Church Business Administrator and SPPRC chair or designate.

4.4. Annual Updates of Service Applications

All applications for service will be updated annually in August and workers will receive any updates of policies and procedures associated with Safe Sanctuaries as defined by Mora - Ogilvie United Methodist Church and the Conference. Background checks for lead volunteers will be performed every three years.



4.5. Age of Workers

All volunteers must be at least 18 years of age, provided that person is at least 5 years older than the oldest youth in the group and that the other volunteer worker with that group is at least 23 years old. Individuals under age eighteen can assist a Level A, B, or C adult, but they should not substitute for an adult under the “Two Adult Rule” (see 6.3).

4.6. Identification

All volunteer workers and staff will wear identification (nametags indicating first and last names) at all times during children’s or youth functions.

5. Training

5.1. Abuse Awareness Training

All new staff and volunteers working with children and youth will be required to participate in a comprehensive training event every August which will include what abuse is and how to recognize it, which abusers are and what we are doing to keep our children and workers safe, including screening, training, and reporting of suspected abuse. In addition, staff and volunteer workers will be trained how to detect if a child is suspected to be subjected to abuse at home and what action should be taken. At the conclusion of the training, participants will sign a Participation Covenant Statement (Appendix 10.8).

5.2. Other Training

All current staff and volunteer workers will participate in annual training as needed to update their knowledge of policies and procedures. CPR and first aid training are encouraged for regular volunteers and strongly encouraged for lead volunteers and staff. Notices of any substantial changes in the law or policy will be communicated mid-year.

6. Risk Management

The Mora and Ogilvie United Methodist Churches shall implement the following policies to foster a safe environment for children and youth:

6.1. Crime of Abuse Rule

Persons who are deemed a threat to children and youth based on a criminal record check, application response or reference feedback will not be permitted to volunteer, be employed or be accepted as a volunteer or paid worker in any church-sponsored program for children, youth or vulnerable adults

6.2. Six Month Rule

All volunteers must be either a regular attendee or member of the Mora or Ogilvie United Methodist Churches for at least six months before they are allowed in any position involving contact with children, youth or vulnerable adults. (See exception in 4.2 for parents of a child or youth who joins the Mora or Ogilvie United Methodist Churches.)

6.3. Two Adult Rule

Our goal in the classroom is to provide an environment of acceptance and love in which learning can take place. We will strive to have two adults present in each classroom. If this is not possible, a staff person or other Lead volunteer worker will be on site to monitor classes. Whenever there is only one adult leader in a classroom, the door will remain slightly opened.

6.4. Relatives Working Together

If the two adult supervisors working together are spouses or members of the same immediate family, a third adult will monitor the classroom.



6.5. Overnight Activities and Trips

Two supervisors/chaperones (staff or lead volunteers) should be present at any overnight activity or trip. Such activities should be cleared in advance with the proper church staff. If the group is of mixed gender, the leaders must include at least one male and one female. The ratio of children/youth to adults should be one adult per five to seven children/youth. At events that require overnight accommodations, leaders shall sleep nearby in a separate room or other lodging, or if it is necessary to share a room, leaders shall sleep in beds which are separate from children, youth or vulnerable adults. No leader shall be alone with any child or youth in an enclosed space or vehicle under any circumstances.

6.6. Parental Permission

Children and youth should always have parental permission for involvement in church-sponsored activities and programs. All adult workers should obtain written consent from the child's parent or guardian if the activity will be off-site (off Mora and Ogilvie United Methodist Church property) using the standard permission form found as Appendix 10.6 hereto. Parents must be informed and permission granted in writing prior to their child or youth participating in any event or any discussion deemed by the youth worker to be of a controversial nature.

6.7. Church-sponsored Childcare

Procedures Infants and toddlers should wear identification once dropped off for childcare for the child's parent or guardian. Children should only be released to a properly identified and preauthorized adult. The nursery should be staffed by at least one staff member or lead volunteer at all times.

6.8. Open Classrooms

Classrooms or child-care rooms may be visited without prior notice by church staff, directors of the individual programs, and parents.

6.9. Discipline Procedures for Children and Youth

All workers should deal with children and youth in a positive and respectful manner when behavior problems occur. A copy of disciplinary procedures for children and for youth as well as a copy of the Mora - Ogilvie United Methodist Church Methodist Children's Center Discipline and Behavior Management Policy is included in Appendices 10.3, 10.4 and 10.5.

6.10. Monitoring and Visibility

Hallways, classrooms and other areas of the building will be monitored while activities for children and youth are ongoing. All classroom and office doors will have windows or other provision for visibility and accountability. At any counseling sessions with children, youth or vulnerable adults, the doors used on the room should remain open for the entire session, ideally when others are nearby, even though not in listening distance.

6.11. First Aid Kits

First aid kits will be available (in the church, fellowship hall, traveling vehicles, etc.) and a plan implemented to keep them adequately stocked by Trustees and the Business Administrator. One kit per vehicle is required.

6.12. Age and Activity-appropriate Equipment Supervision

The Director of the Mora - Ogilvie United Methodist Church Nursery and the Director Methodist Children's Center shall periodically and annually during the month of August examine the safety and appropriateness of the equipment used in nursery, classrooms, youth room, playground. Any deficiencies or safety issues discovered at any time shall be promptly reported to the trustees in writing. Unacceptable equipment will be removed or will be made off-limits until properly repaired or replaced.

6.13. Outside Groups

The Trustees will serve as the liaison with outside groups using the facilities of the Mora and Ogilvie United Methodist Churches and the Business Administrator will provide groups with a copy of this policy. A



representative of each outside group will be required to sign the Outside Groups Covenant and abide by its requirements as applicable. If the signing representative changes, this must be reported to Trustees within 10 days and a new representative must sign the form.

6.14. Off-site Transportation and Car Restraint Safety

All church activities that use one of the church vans or for which a vehicle is rented must comply with the current Van Use Policy (rev. 9/4/97) and all applicable state statutes. In addition to this policy, all vehicle operators driving children or youth must be 23 years old or older and not have been convicted of a DUI or drug-related charges within the last seven years. The driver of a non-church owned/rented vehicle assumes all responsibilities to ensure the safety of all passengers. All passengers must use car restraint systems as required by state law.

6.15. Use of Alcohol and Other Substances that Impair Cognitive Faculties

At no time shall Mora and Ogilvie United Methodist Church staff or volunteers be allowed to supervise or work with children, youth or vulnerable adults while under the influence of alcohol or other substances that would impair cognitive faculties. If a staff member or volunteer is using medicine that causes such impairment, the volunteer should not be assigned any duties during such time as the drug is in use.

6.16. Annual Review of Policy

The Safe Sanctuaries policy of the Mora - Ogilvie United Methodist Church will be reviewed at least annually in August by the Safe Sanctuaries Review Committee, and the congregation will be informed of any substantive changes made.

7. Responsibilities

7.1. Screening

Mora - Ogilvie United Methodist Church staff is responsible for selecting potential volunteer workers. The Business Administrator will process applications for volunteers, contracting with an outside agency for purposes of background checks.

7.2. Training

The Director of Children's Ministries and Director of Youth Ministries, as is appropriate for the age level, are responsible for implementing the provisions of this policy with regard to training. Staff-Parish Relations Committee Chair or designated representative from SPRC is responsible for ensuring that the screening procedures described in this document are implemented. The Chairperson or designate or Business Administrator reviews results of all national background checks conducted for both paid and unpaid workers within the scope of this policy.

7.3. The Board of Trustees

The Chair or designated representative from Trustees is responsible for reviewing this policy and its attendant procedures with the insurance company and for assuring that, in the event of litigation pertaining to an incident of sexual child/youth abuse, insurance coverage is sufficient to protect the people and assets of Mora - Ogilvie United Methodist Church. The Trustees will assure that outside groups using the facilities of the Mora - Ogilvie United Methodist Church, currently and in the future, complete the Outside Groups Covenant and are given a copy of this policy, and where necessary, that adequate waivers have been duly processed. All relevant paperwork will be secured in Mora - Ogilvie United Methodist Church office files.

7.4. The Safe Sanctuaries Review Committee is comprised of the Chair of Trustees (or designate) and the Chairperson of SPRC (or designate), a member of Mora - Ogilvie United Methodist Church clergy, the Business Administrator and Director of Children's Ministries and Director of Youth Ministries. This committee is responsible for approving procedures within the scope of this policy, initially and at least annually in August thereafter. In addition, this committee should develop an



implementation plan in conjunction with staff in charge of communications to communicate key principles of the Safe Sanctuary policy to the congregation at large. If changes to the plan are necessary before the annual review, such changes will be communicated by appropriate methods to all parties concerned.

7.5. The Safe Sanctuaries Crisis Response Team is comprised of the Senior Pastor, chairpersons of Mora - Ogilvie United Methodist Church's Board of Trustees and the Staff Parish Relations Committee and outside consultants as needed. On a case-by-case basis, the Directors of Children and Youth will be a member of the team in managing an incident. This group is responsible for assuring that step by step procedures for a Crisis Response Plan is written and approved by the Mora - Ogilvie United Methodist Church Administrative Board to manage any alleged sexual, physical or emotional abuse or neglect incident of a child or youth involved in activities within the scope of this policy and for implementing this plan should such an event occur. In the unfortunate event of an abuse or neglect incident, this Team will disseminate appropriate information to the proper authorities, staff, congregation, and media (only if inquires are made). A single spokesperson shall be designated within this Team to respond to media inquiries. Responses to media should follow the guidelines found as Appendix 10.7 attached hereto.

7.6. All members of the Mora and Ogilvie United Methodist Churches, but especially individuals who are directly or indirectly associated with the children and youth ministries of the Mora and Ogilvie United Methodist Church, have an affirmative duty to immediately report a suspected incident of physical, verbal or emotional abuse or neglect to a member of the Safe Sanctuaries Crisis Response Team using the Incident Report Form found as Appendix 10.9.

8. Reporting of Incidents and Accidents

8.1. Initial Call

When an accident occurs, or when the leader (staff or volunteer) of a church-sponsored activity reasonably suspects that abuse is taking or has taken place, he or she shall call 911 as deemed necessary. If abuse is suspected, the leader shall report the incident to the appropriate local law enforcement agency or the Kanabec County Department of Human Services. In addition, the leader shall complete an Incident Report Form (Appendix 10.10) and if the leader is a volunteer, contact the appropriate staff person and the Safe Sanctuaries Crisis Response Team immediately. Volunteer workers and staff shall cooperate fully with any investigation conducted by officials.

8.2. Report to Parents/Guardians

Leaders (staff or volunteers) should address any needs the child or youth may have, medical or otherwise and notify a member of the Safe Sanctuaries Crisis Response Team in a timely manner. Once the Team has been notified, they shall immediately report to the parent(s) and/or legal guardians(s).

8.3. Removal of Suspected Abuser

The person suspected of abuse shall, for the safety and well-being of the children, youth or vulnerable adults, be removed with dignity from further contact with the children and youth unless and until the reported incident has been determined to be unsubstantiated. The decision as to whether the reported incident has been substantiated is in the sound discretion of the Safe Sanctuaries Crisis Response Team unless the incident has been substantiated by authorities outside the Mora and Ogilvie United Methodist Churches. The matter shall remain confidential to the extent possible.

8.4. Documentation

The event leader or any person who in good faith reasonably suspects that an incident of abuse has occurred shall document the incident using the Incident Report Form found as Appendix 10.10 hereto, following the procedures set out on the form. The completed Incident Report Form shall be submitted to the Safe Sanctuaries Crisis Response Team as soon as practicable and notifications made as indicated on the Incident Report Form. The identity of the reporting person shall remain confidential to the extent



possible. Confirmed reports of proven incidents of abuse shall be retained in a confidential file for future screening purposes.

8.5. Notification of District/Conference Authorities

The Safe Sanctuaries Crisis Response Team shall notify the Conference/District authorities of any allegations involving abuse of children, youth or vulnerable adults.

8.6. Supportive Care to Victim and Respondent

It shall be the goal to provide supportive care to both the victim and the respondent and to restore such persons to wholeness. Supportive care can include the procedures of the criminal justice system, provisions of the current United Methodist Book of Discipline, appropriate counseling referrals and continued pastoral visitation.

9. Administration

9.1. Authorization

This policy is authorized by the Mora and Ogilvie United Methodist Church Administrative Boards, including the Staff Pastor Parish Relations Committee and Trustees as indicated by signatures below. This authorization will remain in effect even though incumbents will change.

9.2. Effective Date of Policy will be November 30, 2008.

Signed,

Chairperson, Mora United Methodist Church Board of Trustees Date

Chairperson, Ogilvie United Methodist Church Board of Trustees Date

Chairperson, Mora United Methodist Church Administrative Board Date

Chairperson, Ogilvie United Methodist Church Administrative Board Date

Chairperson, Mora - Ogilvie United Methodist Church Staff-Pastor Parish Relations Committee Date



Appendix 10.1

Book of Resolutions of the United Methodist Church, 2004, pp. 201-203.

RESOLUTION 65. Reducing the Risk of Child Sexual Abuse in the Church (adopted in 1996 and readopted in 2004)

Jesus said, "Whoever welcomes [a] child . . . welcomes me" (Matthew 18:5). Children are our present and our future, our hope, our teachers, our inspiration. 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, emotional and sexual exploitation and abuse. Tragically, churches have not always been safe places for children. Child sexual abuse, exploitation, and ritual abuse 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. Most annual conferences can cite specific incidents of child sexual abuse and exploitation within churches. Virtually every congregation has among its youths 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.

- 1) "Ritual abuse" refers to abusive acts committed as part of ceremonies or rites; ritual abusers are often related to cults, or pretend to be.
- 2) 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. In response to this church wide challenge, the following steps should be taken to reduce the risk of child sexual abuse:
 - a) **Local churches should:**
 - i) Develop and implement an ongoing education plan for the congregation and its leaders on the reality of child abuse, risk factors leading to child abuse, and strategies for prevention;
 - ii) Adopt screening procedures (use of application forms, interviews, reference checks, background clearance, and so forth) for workers (paid and unpaid) directly or indirectly involved in the care of children and youth;
 - iii) Develop and implement safety procedures for church activities such as having two or more non-related adults present in classroom or activity; leaving doors open and installing half-doors or windows in doors or halls; providing hall monitors; instituting sign-in and sign-out procedures for children ages ten or younger; and so forth;
 - iv) Advise children and young persons of an agency or a person outside as well as within the local church whom they can contact for advice and help if they have suffered abuse;
 - v) Carry liability insurance that includes sexual abuse coverage;
 - vi) Assist the development of awareness and self-protection skills for children and youth through special curriculum and activities; and



vii) Be familiar with annual conference and other church policies regarding clergy sexual misconduct.

b) Annual conferences should:

- i) Develop safety and risk-reducing policies and procedures for conference-sponsored events, such as camps, retreats, youth gatherings, childcare at conference events, mission trips, and so forth; and
- ii) Develop guidelines and training processes for use by church leaders who carry responsibility for prevention of child abuse in local churches. Both sets of policies shall be developed by a task force appointed by the cabinet in cooperation with appropriate conference agencies. These policies shall be approved by the annual conference and assigned to a conference agency for implementation. It is suggested that the policies be circulated in conference publications and shared with lay professionals and clergy at district or conference seminars.

c) The General Board of Discipleship and the General Board of Global Ministries should:

- i) . Cooperatively develop and/or identify and promote the following resources;
- ii) Sample policies, procedures, forms, and so forth for reducing the risk of sexual abuse and exploitation of children and youth in local churches, both in relation to their own sponsored programs and to any outreach ministries or other programs for children, youth or vulnerable adults that use church space;
- iii) Child abuse prevention curriculum for use in local churches;
- iv) Training opportunities and other educational resources on child sexual abuse and exploitation and on ritual abuse; and
- v) Resources on healing for those who have experienced childhood sexual trauma.

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Appendix 10.2

Disciplinary Procedures for Children

If a child is behaving in an inappropriate way, the following procedure which is recommended by the Mora - Ogilvie United Methodist Church's Education Ministry applies for children up through the sixth grade:

- 1) A child who cannot obey rules or participate in an acceptable manner will be given a verbal warning by the teacher, who will also contact the parents of the child.
- 2) If a child continues to misbehave, or misbehaves a second time, he or she will be removed from the class by the age-lead coordinator or Sunday School Superintendent. Parents will also receive a letter from the age-lead coordinator or Sunday School Superintendent outlining the nature of the misbehavior and the consequences of further misbehavior. (#3 below).
- 3) If a third episode of misconduct occurs, he or she will be removed from class and the following week one of the child's parents will be asked to stay with the child in his or her Sunday school class until the child can behave.



APPENDIX 10.3

CHILDREN DISCIPLINE AND BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT POLICY

Praise and positive reinforcement are effective means of producing good behavior in children. When children receive positive, non-violent and understanding interactions from adults and others, they develop good self-concepts, problem-solving abilities and self-discipline. Based on the belief of how children learn and develop values, MCC will practice the following discipline and behavior management policy:

WE DO:

- Praise, reward, and encourage the children;
- Reason with and set limits for the children;
- Model appropriate behavior for the children;
- Modify the classroom environment to attempt to prevent problems before they occur;
- Listen to the children;
- Provide alternatives for inappropriate behavior to the children;
- Provide the children with natural and logical consequences of their behaviors;
- Treat the children as people and respect their needs, desires and feelings;
- Ignore minor misbehaviors;
- Explain things to children on their levels;
- Use short, supervised periods of “Time-Out” (explanation below);
- Stay consistent in our behavior management program

WE DO NOT:

- Spank, shake, bite, pinch, push, pull, slap, or otherwise physically punish the children;
- Make fun of, tease, yell at, threaten, make sarcastic remarks about, use profanity or otherwise verbally abuse the children;
- Shame or punish the children when bathroom accidents occur;
- Deny food or rest as punishment;
- Relate discipline to eating, resting or sleeping;
- Leave the children alone, unattended, or without supervision;
- Place the children in locked rooms, closet or boxes as punishment;
- Allow discipline of children by children;
- Criticize, make fun of, or otherwise belittle children’s parents, families or ethnic groups

TIME OUT is the removal of a child for a short period of time (3-5 minutes) from a situation in which the child is misbehaving and has not responded to other discipline techniques. The time-out space, usually a chair, is located away from classroom activity but within the teacher’s sight. During time out, the child has a chance to think about the misbehavior which led to his/her removal from the group. After a brief interval of no more than 5 minutes, the teacher discusses the incident and appropriate behavior with the child. When the child returns to the group, the incident is over and the child is treated with the same affection and respect shown the other children.

TO BE SIGNED BY PARENT OR GUARDIAN

I, the undersigned parent or Guardian of _____, do hereby state that I have read and understand the Discipline and Behavior Management Policy.

Signature

Date



APPENDIX 10.4

Youth Covenant

Youth Education exists to encourage all youth to become deeper disciples of Jesus Christ. In order to do this, we must abide by the following policies.

Youth should act in a polite and respectful manner at all times, unless instructed to do otherwise.

- 1 Peter 2:17
 - “Show proper **respect** to everyone: Love the brotherhood of believers, fear God, honor the King.”

Respecting others involves my actions and my words.

All youth are welcome at all activities (some age restrictions may apply for certain events). Youth are encouraged to invite non-church youths to participate in the activities (some youthship restrictions may apply for certain events).

- Leviticus 19:18
 - “**Love** your neighbor as yourself.”

Loving others involves making others feel welcome and a part of our group.

All youth are expected to engage in the activities of the program for which they are participating, and should at no time distract others from engaging.

- Ecclesiastes 3:1
 - “There is a **time** for everything, and a season for every activity under heaven.”

Being on time and participating is important to the success of all activities.

Any youth present during a regularly scheduled or special activity must be within the designated areas of the activity.

- Hebrews 13:17
 - “**Obey** your leaders and submit to their authority.”

Obeying all rules and those in authority shows my respect for God.

Electronic Devices should not be used during structured activities. If it is necessary for a youth to call his or her parent or another person for any immediate reason such as a ride home or other similar concern during such a time, they should politely excuse his or herself to an area immediately outside of the center of activity, and re-enter said area when complete.

- Proverbs 4:1
 - “**Listen, pay attention** and gain understanding.”

There is an appropriate time to use cell phones, pagers, music players, or handheld games. However, using these devices during a meeting or group time is a distraction and will result in the item being removed from my possession.

All youth should be respectful to anyone speaking or leading an activity.

- Ephesians 5:4
 - “Nor should there be **obscenity**, foolish talk, or coarse joking, which are out of place, but rather thanksgiving.”

Our conversations and our music should be suitable for Jesus to hear at all times and should not hinder my leaders or peers from being heard by others.



If any of these policies should be found to be in conflict with the teachings of Jesus Christ, it is the responsibility of the youth to address their concern to the adults in charge as soon as possible. These policies were written and approved to create a respectful, loving, safe and inclusive ministry; however, imperfection in wisdom and discernment is acknowledged.

- Ephesians 4:3
 - “Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of **peace**.”

I have read and support the Youth Covenant of Conduct of the Mora and Ogilvie United Methodist Churches. I will require my child to abide by it. I understand that if he or she does not the leadership of the activity or group has the right to discipline or send my child home at my expense.

Parent Signature

Date

I have read the Youth Covenant of Conduct of the Mora and Ogilvie United Methodist Churches and I will abide by its content. I understand that if I violate this covenant, the leadership of the activity or group has the right to discipline me or notify my parents and send me home.

Youth Signature

Date



Medical Insurance Company _____ Policy No. _____

Physician or Clinic _____ Address _____ Phone _____

Authorization

If an injury or illness develops during an activity or event, medical care will be provided and I will be notified as soon as possible. I understand that it is my responsibility to provide updates (including changes in health conditions and medical coverage) prior to events in which the above-named youth participates. I understand and accept the above statements and further authorize each of the following:

- A. The health history and medical information I have provided is correct and the above-named member has my permission to engage in all program activities as noted. I understand that it is my responsibility to provide updates (including changes in health conditions, medical coverage, or activity restrictions) throughout the program year and prior to any events/activities in which the above-named member intends to participate.
- B. If an injury or other medical condition occurs or arises, I grant permission for medical treatment to be obtained for the member and authorize the physician and/or the other medical staff to employ such diagnostic procedures and medical treatment as deemed necessary.
- C. I authorize the release of any medical records necessary for treatment, referral, billing, or insurance purposes.
- D. I understand that I am financially responsible for charges and hereby guarantee full payment to the attending physicians and/or health care unit.

Parent/Legal Guardian's Signature _____ Date _____

Youth Signature _____ Date _____

(If the member is 18 or over, **BOTH** the parent/legal guardian and member must sign.)

Furthermore, I agree that all activities and use of all facilities relating to participation in church youth group activities shall be undertaken at the sole risk of the member/family and that the Mora and Ogilvie United Methodist Churches, its officers, representatives, agents, employees, leaders, and members shall not be liable for any claims, demands, injuries, damage, actions or causes of action, whatsoever, to me, my family, or my property arising out of or connected with participation in Church Youth Group programs/events or the premises where the programs/events occur and I do hereby expressly forever release, discharge, and hold harmless the Mora and Ogilvie United Methodist Churches, its officers, representatives, agents, employees, leaders, and members of the Youth Group program from all such claims, demands, injuries, damage to person or property, actions or causes of action, including but not limited to all acts of active or passive negligence on the part of the Mora and Ogilvie United Methodist Church, any church Youth Group program, their servants, agents, or employees. **I do not, however, release these individuals and entities from liability for intentional, willful or wanton acts and this release shall not be construed to include such acts.** I have read and understand and agree to the terms and conditions of this release. I understand that I have given up rights by signing this release and sign it freely and without inducement.

Parent/Legal Guardian's Signature _____ Date _____

Youth Signature _____ Date _____



APPENDIX 10.6

Guidelines for Handling Media Inquiries

Mora/Ogilvie United Methodist Church What to say and how to say it is of critical importance when dealing with the media. Although a reporter may seem aggressive about demanding information, simply staying with the media plan will be an effective way to deal with such a reporter. Reporters are looking for whatever information they can get on a story in the shortest amount of time possible. Newsroom deadlines will force the reporter to keep things short in most cases. They are likely to hit quickly with a few blunt questions, and then disappear back into their writing. Some general guidelines for handling media inquiries include: The Senior Pastor should be the spokesperson for the church in charge of talking with the media. There should be only one media contact for the church. Don't start the interview until you are physically comfortable. Do not sit in a chair that swivels or rocks if it can be avoided. Speak to and look at the reporter, not the camera. It is easier to talk to a person. Do not hesitate to challenge the reporter in a friendly manner if he/she has made an irresponsible insinuation. "We are not sure at this time what exactly happened." Listen carefully to the reporter's questions. If you are asked a leading question, don't bite. Just state one of your talking points. Don't be coaxed into making speculative statements that might backfire on you. Be patient, even if the reporter is being aggressive and antagonistic. It is your answer that will appear in print or broadcast, not the reporter's question. So don't stray away from your message regardless of the reporter's question. Saying "no comment" is not an effective way of dealing with a question about which you cannot comment. Simply state that the matter is "under investigation and it would not be proper to respond to that question at this time." If you can explain in a credible fashion why you can't comment, reporters will generally be satisfied. If you don't have the answer or can't answer, admit it and move on to another topic. Remember, the matter is still under investigation. Don't accept "what if" questions. Avoid speculating or guessing; "it's not fair to any of the people involved." Don't accept "laundry list" questions. That is, if the reporter asks two or more questions as one, just smile and note that he/she has asked several questions in one. Which would the reporter prefer be answered? Then stay on your message. Know when to stop. Don't ramble. Keep your message short and stay with your talking points. When the interview is over, it is over. Do not continue an "off the record" conversation with the reporter. Don't assume that the camera or recording is off. The old saying is that nothing is off the record. Remember, the interview lasts as long as a reporter is there. "Talking Points" Prepare a few talking points as soon as the situation comes to your attention. Consult with church counsel as soon as possible to vet the comments. Talking points must be short statements that the press will use and the public will understand. Long explanations often result in statements being lifted out of context. Choose three or four key message points that are simple, declarative sentences that outline exactly what you would like the reporter to put in the article. While reporters will pick and choose from your statements, you are more likely to get your key points in if you stay focus on them. Keep the sentences short, between 8 to 15 words, and weave them into interviews. Repeat the key words and sound-bite statements when appropriate. Talking points might include the following:

- Begin with a statement that sincerely expresses empathy for all who are involved in the alleged incident. [Remember: it is still being investigated.]
- Statement regarding the Mora and Ogilvie United Methodist Safe Sanctuary Policy. "Our Safe Sanctuary Policy is designed to assure the safety and spiritual growth of all of our children and our youth." Or, "its purpose is to assure the safety and spiritual growth of all of our children and our youth." This is your "bumper sticker" statement. Weave it into your responses.
- "The matter [or the incident alleged] is still under investigation so all of the facts are not yet known. The church's Safe Sanctuary Policy contains safeguards for all persons involved in any reported incident." Or, "This allegation is disturbing, and we're very concerned about it. We're not sure exactly what has happened. It is under investigation."
- "The church follows reasonable safety measures in the selection, recruitment and training of persons who work with children and youth. [Know the procedures set out in Section 4, "Screening", Section 5, "Training"] Avoid going into detail unless it seems appropriate. Keep it short and simple.



- The church has established a number of “Risk Management” procedures to provide a safe environment for our children and our youth. [Know these procedures set out in Section 6, “Risk Management.”] Avoid going into detail unless it seems appropriate, Keep it short and simple.
- “We are cooperating with the authorities.”
- Conclude as you began, with a statement of sincere empathy for those involved in the alleged incident. Key words to emphasize are “empathy”, “church”, “safety of our children and youth” and “Safe Sanctuary Policy.” Stay on this message regardless of the reporter’s question. If you are not sure of an answer to a reporter’s question, just restate one of these talking points. Don't be afraid to repeat these points. If you stay on these talking points, you are more likely to control the interview. The average TV sound bite is less than 10 seconds, so package your talking points into short, concise messages. Ask yourself, "How can I say this clearly within 10 seconds?"



APPENDIX 10.7

Participation Covenant Statement - Mora or Ogilvie United Methodist Churches

The Congregation of The Mora or Ogilvie United Methodist Churches, is committed to providing a safe and secure environment for all children, youth, and volunteers who participate in ministries and activities sponsored by the church. The following policy statements reflect 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.

- 1) No adult who has been convicted of child abuse (either sexual abuse, physical abuse, or emotional abuse) should volunteer to work with children, youth or vulnerable adults in any church-sponsored activity.
- 2) Adult survivors of child abuse need the love and support of our congregations. Any adult survivors who desires to volunteer in some capacity to work with children, youth or vulnerable adults is encouraged to discuss his/her willingness with one of our church’s ministers or directors of children’s or youth ministries before accepting an assignment.
- 3) All adult volunteer workers involved with children, youth or vulnerable adults of our church must have been members of the congregations for at least six months before beginning a volunteer worker assignment.
- 4) Adult volunteer workers with children and youth shall observe the “Two-Adult Rule,” striving to have two adults present in each classroom. If this is not possible, a staff person or other Lead volunteer worker will be on site to monitor activities.
- 5) Adult volunteer workers or a representative of an outside group having similar child protection policies with children and youth shall attend regular training and educational events provided by the church to keep informed of church policies and state laws regarding child abuse.
- 6) Adult volunteer workers shall immediately report to their supervisor any behavior that seems abusive or in appropriate. Please answer each of the following questions:
 - a) As a volunteer worker in this congregation, do you agree to observe and abide by all church policies regarding working in ministries with children and youth? yes no
 - b) As a volunteer worker in this congregation, do you agree to participate in training and education events provided by the church related to your volunteer worker assignment? yes no
 - c) As a volunteer worker in this congregation, do you agree to abide by the six-month rule before beginning a volunteer worker assignment? yes no
 - d) As a volunteer worker in this congregation, do you agree to promptly report abusive or inappropriate behavior to your supervisor? yes no
 - e) As a volunteer worker in this congregation, do you agree to discuss with a minister or director of children’s or youth ministries of this congregation your experience, if any, as a survivor of child abuse? yes no
 - f) As a volunteer worker in this congregation, do you agree to inform a minister of this congregation if you have ever been convicted of child abuse? yes no

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

Signature of Applicant _____ Date _____

Print Full Name _____



APPENDIX 10.8

Outside Groups Covenant with Mora and Ogilvie United Methodist Churches

The Congregation of the Mora and Ogilvie United Methodist Churches are committed to providing a safe and secure environment for all children, youth, and volunteer workers who participate in ministries and activities at the church. The Safe Sanctuaries policy 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.

Date a copy of the Safe Sanctuaries policy was received _____

I have read and understand the Safe Sanctuaries Policy of the Mora and Ogilvie United Methodist Churches.

I agree to abide by all parts of this policy and am aware that failure to do so may result in the loss of privileges for my group or organization to use the facilities.

Name of outside group or organization _____

Signature of contact person for group _____

Today's date _____

Print full name _____

Address _____

Daytime phone number _____ Evening phone _____ Cell phone _____

For church use only
Room(s) assigned:



APPENDIX 10.9

**CONFIDENTIAL
Incident Report Form
Mora or Ogilvie United Methodist Churches**

SUBJECT CHILD OR YOUTH

PARENT OF SUBJECT CHILD OR YOUTH

Name _____
Last First MI

Name _____
Last First MI

Address: _____

Address: _____
(if different)

Age _____ Date of Birth _____

Telephones: W _____; H _____; C _____

PERSON MAKING REPORT OF INCIDENT

Name _____ Relationship, if any _____

Address (if different) _____

Telephones: W _____ H _____ C _____ Leader of Church activity/event? yes no

Signature of person reporting incident _____ Date _____

SPECIFIC ALLEGATION(S)

When speaking with the alleged victim, be careful to use open-ended questions. Let the alleged victim tell of the incident using his or her own words. Use this space to provide information to describe or explain the circumstances surrounding the incident you are reporting. You may attach additional sheets if necessary. Include in this report the following information, together with all other information you reasonably believe to be relevant:

Name of the activity or event: _____

Date of incident _____ Time: _____ Place _____

Any statement made by the alleged victim:

Describe any injury to the alleged victim:

Any emergency response required? If so, please describe _____



Names of any witnesses to the alleged abuse:

Statements made by witnesses

Any statement made by the person(s) being reported as having committed the alleged incident

Any immediate action taken by person submitting this report as a result of the incident:

REPORTING THIS INCIDENT

Person on Mora - Ogilvie United Methodist Church Safe Sanctuary Crisis Management Team to whom this Report was made: _____

Date and time submitted to Mora - Ogilvie United Methodist Church Safe Sanctuary Crisis Management Team _____

Date and time of call to law enforcement agency, name of officer spoken to and content of that conversation

For Mora - Ogilvie United Methodist Church Safe Sanctuary Crisis Response Team:

Date and time of call to the Kanabec County Department of Social Services _____

Name of worker spoken to, content of that conversation and case number assigned

Date and time reported to Mora - Ogilvie United Methodist Church liability insurance carrier

FOR Mora - Ogilvie United Methodist Church SAFE SANCTUARY CRISIS RESPONSE TEAM ONLY



APPENDIX 10.10

Accident Report Form for the Mora and Ogilvie United Methodist Churches

Use this form to make a report of an accident that occurred to a child or youth while attending a Mora or Ogilvie United Methodist Church sponsored activity.

Today's Date _____

Date/Time of Accident: _____

Location of Accident _____

Name of child or youth injured _____

Name of children or youth's parent or guardian _____

Address _____

Daytime phone number _____ Evening phone _____ Cell phone _____

Date and time contacted about accident _____

Name of person(s) who witnessed the accident:

Name _____ Phone _____

:
Name _____ Phone _____

Name _____ Phone _____

Describe accident:

Condition of child or youth, including the nature and extent of the injury:

Signature of person making report:

Date: