

## D. VOLUNTEER & STAFF POLICIES

### 1. ALCOHOL USE BY STAFF & VOLUNTEERS

Effective February 12, 2002, all paid and unpaid staff and volunteers at an event for youth, sponsored by First United Church of Christ, shall abstain from alcoholic beverages during that event and directly prior to that event taking place.

### 2. CHAPERON POLICY STATEMENT

It is the policy of First Church that when a group church function is being held with minor children, that an adequate number of adult chaperons will be available. The number of chaperons will vary depending on group size and type of function; however, it is the policy of First Church that adult chaperons will work in pairs so that at no time will the chaperone or minor child could be put in a one on one situation.

It shall be the responsibility of the person or committee sponsoring the function to insure compliance with this policy.

### 3. SEXUAL EXPLOITATION, MINISTERIAL CONDUCT, YOUTH PROTECTION POLICY

#### a. Prohibition of Sexual Exploitation and Harassment (See definitions.)

First United Church of Christ is committed to creating and maintaining a worship and work 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. Specifically, all persons associated with First United Church of Christ should be aware that the church is strongly opposed to sexual exploitation and 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 which is contrary to this policy and; if necessary, to discipline those persons who violate this policy.

#### b. Ministerial Conduct (See definitions.)

All persons engaged in the ministry of First United Church of Christ (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 harassment or sexual exploitation of parishioners) or other individual(s) by anyone engaged in the ministry of First United Church of Christ is unethical and unprofessional behavior and will not be tolerated within this congregation.

Because ministers (including elected or appointed leaders, employees, volunteers, and authorized ministers) often deal with individuals who are emotionally and psychologically fragile or otherwise personally vulnerable, it is imperative that those engaged in the ministry of this church maintain their own psychological, emotional, and spiritual health and that they have adequate preparation and education for helping those individuals they seek to serve in ministry. It is the policy of First United Church of Christ to encourage its leaders, authorized ministers, employees, and volunteers 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 a disclosure document in a form substantially similar to that of the one accompanying this policy.

- Verbal contact, such as sexually suggestive or obscene comments, threats, slurs, epithets, jokes about gender-specific traits or sexual orientation, 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. For example, 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.

e. Procedures for Handling Complaints of Sexual Exploitation or Harassment by Employees and Volunteer Leaders

- 1) A response team with no fewer than two members, one male and one female, will be established by the consistory of First United Church of Christ each year at its first meeting, in preparation for the possibility of hearing complaints under its adopted statement of policy. The response team will familiarize itself with the terms of this policy as well as the established procedures of First United Church of Christ for dealing with complaint(s) of alleged sexual exploitation or harassment against any employee(s) or volunteer(s) in leadership position(s) in First United Church of Christ.
- 2) Several options may be taken in addressing incidents of alleged sexual exploitation or harassment:
  - a) The complainant can attempt to resolve the matter directly with the individual(s) accused of sexual exploitation or harassment.
  - b) The complainant can report the incident(s) to a pastor of the church, in an effort to resolve the matter.
  - c) If an informal resolution of the complaint(s) does not seem wise, appropriate, possible, or does not succeed, the complainant(s) may request that the response team institute formal proceedings which shall include the following steps:
    - (1) The response team shall gather statements or other information from the individuals involved in the alleged exploitation(s) or harassment(s), and from others who may have pertinent information, and present such information to the supervisor, and supervisory body, (i.e. Elders, Christian Education Board, etc.) of the accused individual(s).
    - (2) The supervisory board shall make determinations and take actions appropriate to resolve the matter. These may include:

#### f. Child Abuse Prevention Policy

We believe the church should be a place where children are safe and are able to learn and grow. In order to maintain the church as a safe environment we commit ourselves to Preventing physical or sexual abuse of children through the following policies:

- 1) All staff - paid and volunteer - who works with children should undergo appropriate screening as outlined below. No adult who has previously been convicted of child abuse should work with children or youth.
- 2) Adult survivors of childhood sexual or physical abuse need the love and acceptance of the church family. Individuals who have such a history should discuss their desire to work with children or youth with the pastor prior to engaging in volunteer service. Such a history does not necessarily disqualify the individual from such work.
- 3) All adult volunteers working with youth or children are required to have attended and participated in the life of First United Church of Christ for a minimum of six (6) months.
- 4) Volunteers should observe the "two-supervisor" rule. This requires that adults or adolescents are never alone with children or youth without a responsible partner. No adult or adolescent should spend unsupervised time alone with any child or youth without the awareness and consent of that individual's parent or guardian.
- 5) All volunteers should immediately report any behaviors which seem abusive or inappropriate to the pastor, Christian Education committee chair or Senior Elder. Any allegations of abuse or misconduct should be brought to either the pastor or Senior Elder (or one of the Elders), preferably in writing, who will document the allegations and immediately contact the Northwest Ohio Association requesting them to deploy their response team and local authorities as required by state law.

We realize that it is impossible to insure that misconduct will not occur. However, we feel these policies will minimize the risk and, in the event of an incident of misconduct, a timely and appropriate response will help minimize the damage to the individual, their family and the church family.

#### g. Child Abuse Prevention Policy Procedures

##### 1) Screening

- a) All staff- paid or volunteer - will complete the "Information Form for Children and Youth Work" (see attached). This form will be reviewed by the Pastor and the Sunday School Superintendent. Part of this review may be to contact the references given and, after identifying oneself and the purpose of the call, ask each reference the following questions:
  - (1) What gifts does this person bring to working with children or youth in the church?
  - (2) Is there any reason this person should not be allowed to work with children or youth?
  - (3) Is there anything else pertinent you would like to share?

#### 4) Responsibilities and Procedures for Worship Time Nursery

During the nursery time there are toys available for the children to play with. We ask that you take the time to read to the children the day's scriptures (as found in the bulletin). You may ask the children to do a craft or project related to the Bible reading, but do not force children to participate if they choose not to.

If a child will not stay in the nursery or becomes unruly or disruptive, one supervisor should escort the child back to his or her parents in the sanctuary. If this leaves only one child with the remaining supervisor they, too, should accompany them to the entry way landing.

If there is an emergency, notify the parents/guardians immediately.

All children should be picked up by the parents or guardians at the nursery. Please stay with the children until they have all been picked up.

Please clean up the room before you leave. Thank you for attending to our children and seeing that the church is a safe environment for them.

#### 4. TRANSPORTATION POLICY STATEMENT

It is the policy of First Church that when traveling to a church or related functions that drivers be a minimum of 21 years of age, shall have a valid Ohio Driver's License, and liability insurance. As per the First Church Chaperon Policy, no adult chaperone/driver is to be alone in a car with a minor child. The only exception to this rule is when the minor child is a family member.

It shall be the responsibility of the person or committee in charge to determine the above and furnish Xerox copies of above required information to the church office before the trip is made.