Safe Sanctuaries is about being prepared and thinking ahead. It is not about limiting ministries. It is about doing ministry safely with children, youth, and the adults who work with them.
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I. INTRODUCTION
The General Conference of The United Methodist Church, in April 1996, adopted a resolution aimed at reducing the risk of child sexual abuse in the church. The adopted resolution includes the following statement:

Jesus said, "Whoever welcomes a child, welcomes me." (Matthew 18:5). Children are our present and our future, our hope, our teachers, our invitation— 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 and sexual exploitation, and abuse.

Tragically, churches have not always been safe places for children. Child sexual abuse, exploitation and ritual abuse (ritual abuse refers to abusive acts committed as part of ceremonies or rites', ritual abusers are often related to cults, or pretend to be) 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. Many annual conferences can cite specific incidents of child sexual abuse and exploitation in their churches. Virtually every congregation has among its members 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. 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. (From The Book of Resolutions of The United Methodist Church 1996. Copyright © 1996 by The United Methodist Publishing House. Used by permission, [pp.384-386])

Thus, in covenant with all United Methodist congregations, we adopt this policy for the prevention of child abuse in our church.

A. Purpose
Our congregation's purpose for establishing this Child Abuse Prevention Policy and accompanying procedures is to demonstrate our absolute and unwavering commitment to the physical safety and spiritual growth of all of our children and youth.

B. Statement of Covenant
Therefore, as a Christian community of faith and a United Methodist congregation, Aldersgate United Methodist Church (hereafter referred to as AUMC) pledges to conduct the ministry of the gospel in ways that assure the safety and spiritual growth of all of our children and youth as well as all of the Paid/Volunteer Staff with children and youth. We will follow reasonable safety measures in the selection and recruitment of Paid/Volunteer Staff; we will implement prudent operational procedures in all programs and events; we will educate all of our Paid/Volunteer Staff over children and youth regarding the use of all appropriate policies and methods (including first aid and methods of discipline); we will have a clearly defined procedure for reporting a suspected incident of abuse that conforms to the requirements of state law; and we will be prepared to respond to media inquiries if an incident occurs.

C. Conclusion
In all of our ministries with children and youth, this congregation is committed to demonstrating the love of Jesus Christ so that each child will be "...surrounded by steadfast love,... Established in the faith, and confirmed and strengthened in the way that leads to life eternal" ("Baptismal Covenant II," United Methodist Hymnal, p. 44)
II. DEFINITIONS

A. Child Abuse - any act committed by a person in a position of trust (parent, Caregiver, Sunday School teacher, Pastor, or other) which harms or threatens to harm a minor child’s welfare, physical, spiritual or mental health.

We recognize child abuse may fall into these categories:

1. Physical Abuse - Inflicting bodily harm to minors constitutes physical abuse.
   a. Instances of physical abuse include any physical act of undue force such as assault with a knife, strap or other implement; burns, fractures and bruises resulting from being beaten, pushed down, shaken, pinched, slapped or thrown. Physical abuse does not always leave visible marks.

2. Sexual Abuse - Any time a minor is used for the sexual stimulation of an adult or older minor, abuse has occurred. The minor is powerless either to consent to or resist such sexual acts. This includes fondling, sexual intercourse, participation in sexual acts, incest, exploitation for the purpose of pornography or prostitution and/or exposure to adult sexual activity.

3. Emotional Abuse - Emotional abuse deeply affects a minor’s self-esteem by submitting him/her to verbal assault or emotional cruelty. It does not always involve injuries we can see. The minor receives the message that he/she is not good and never will be. Emotional abuse can include closed confinement (being shut in a small area), making racial remarks, excessive punishment, use of profanity, knowingly permitting drug or alcohol abuse, ignoring or encouraging peer abuse.

4. Neglect - Not hearing or addressing a minor’s basic needs for health, welfare or safety resulting in harm to the minor. It can include any of the following acts of negligence or maltreatment:
   a. Failure to provide adequate food, shelter, clothing
   b. Abandonment
   c. Refusal to seek treatment for illness
   d. Inadequate supervision
   e. Health hazards in the home, school, or church
   f. Ignoring a minor’s need for affirmation and nurturing

5. Ritual – abuse in which physical, sexual, or psychological violence is inflicted on a child or youth, intentionally and in a stylized way, by someone (or multiple people) with responsibility for the victim’s welfare. It can include cruel treatment of animals or repetitious threats of sexual or physical violence to child/youth or people related to the victim.

Adults who have been convicted of abuse or neglect of children/youth or those who have a history of inappropriate conduct with children will not be employed and shall not volunteer service in any church-sponsored activity or program for minors.

*Indiana Child Protective Services: 1-800-800-5556*
B. Elder Abuse-
Abuse of elders takes many different forms, some involving intimidation or threats against the elderly, some involving neglect, and others involving financial chicanery. The most common are defined below.

1. Physical - Physical elder abuse is non-accidental use of force against an elderly person that results in physical pain, injury, or impairment. Such abuse includes not only physical assaults such as hitting or shoving but the inappropriate use of drugs, restraints, or confinement.

2. Emotional - In emotional or psychological senior abuse, people speak to or treat elderly persons in ways that cause emotional pain or distress. Verbal forms of emotional elder abuse include intimidation through yelling or threats, humiliation and ridicule, habitual blaming or scapegoating. Nonverbal psychological elder abuse can take the form of ignoring the elderly person, isolating an elder from friends or activities, terrorizing or menacing the elderly person.

3. Sexual - Sexual elder abuse is contact with an elderly person without the elder’s consent. Such contact can involve physical sex acts, but activities such as showing an elderly person pornographic material, forcing the person to watch sex acts, or forcing the elder to undress are also considered sexual elder abuse.

4. Neglect - Elder neglect, failure to fulfill a caretaking obligation, constitutes more than half of all reported cases of elder abuse. It can be active (intentional) or passive (unintentional, based on factors such as ignorance or denial that an elderly charge needs as much care as he or she does).

5. Financial Exploitation - This involves unauthorized use of an elderly person’s funds or property, either by a caregiver or an outside scam artist. An unscrupulous caregiver might misuse an elder’s personal checks, credit cards, or accounts; steal cash, income checks, or household goods; forge the elder’s signature; engage in identity theft. Typical rackets that target elders include announcements of a “prize” that the elderly person has won but must pay money to claim; Phony charities; Investment fraud

6. Healthcare and Fraud - Carried out by unethical doctors, nurses, hospital personnel, and other professional care providers, examples of healthcare fraud and abuse regarding elders include: Not providing healthcare, but charging for it; Overcharging or double-billing for medical care or services; Getting kickbacks for referrals to other providers or for prescribing certain drugs; Overmedicating or undermedicating; Recommending fraudulent remedies for illnesses or other medical conditions; Medicaid fraud

National Adult Protective Services of Indiana: 1-800-992-6978
III. STANDARDS: for Paid/Volunteer Staff in AUMC programs for children & youth

A. Minimum Age

The following standards for Authority Figures are designed to separate Authority Figures from the group they are serving by age or enough years to reinforce recognition of the Authority Figure’s role. AUMC adopts the following standards for Authority Figures and Assistants.

1. AUTHORITY FIGURES-- the primary leaders of children’s and youth activities.
   a) To work with children (infant-5th grade), the Authority Figure must be a minimum of 18 years of age.
   b) To work with youth (6th-12th grade), the Authority Figure must be a minimum of 21 years of age.
   c) In the judgment of an AUMC staff member, be competent to assist in the activity.
   d) Must be able to supervise youth assistants.

2. ADULT ASSISTANTS--persons who lend aid to the Authority Figure and act at the direction of the Authority Figure. Whether working with youth or children Adult Assistants must be:
   a) A minimum of 18 years of age; and
   b) In the judgment of an AUMC staff member, competent to assist in the activity.
   c) Must be able to supervise youth assistants with Authority Figure authorization.

3. YOUTH ASSISTANTS—youth volunteers who lend aid to the Authority Figure or Adult Assistant and act at the direction of the Authority Figure, including volunteers. Whether working with youth or children Youth Assistants must be:
   a) A minimum of 12 years of age; and
   b) Be at least five years older than the children in the program
   c) In the judgment of an AUMC staff member, competent to assist in the activity.
   d) Are exempt from background checks

B. Two Person Rule and Open Door Policy

1. Two adults shall supervise all children and youth during all church sponsored programming. Paid/Volunteer Staff who work with children and youth shall observe the “two-person rule” or the “open door policy” at ALL times.
   a) The “two-person rule” requires that Paid/Volunteer Staff shall make every reasonable effort to avoid situations where Paid/Volunteer Staff is alone with children or youth without a partner.
   b) The “TWO-PERSON RULE” will be MANDATORY for all Paid/Volunteer Staff with our NURSERY and PRESCHOOL AGE CHILDREN.
   c) The “open door policy” requires the door be open at all times

2. All adult/child ratios must be followed. (See III. C.) Where it is impossible to staff two adults in every room, an additional adult must serve as a floater with visual and physical access to all areas upon approval of the Safe Sanctuaries Committee.

3. While mentoring and counseling are encouraged and supported, Paid/Volunteer Staff should take every precaution to avoid being alone with a child or youth in inaccessible areas. This can include, but is not limited to:
   a) An automobile while taking a child home, unless prearranged and approved by parent or guardian
   b) A classroom with windowless/locked doors
   c) A cabin at camp
   d) A restroom
C. Paid/Volunteer Staff to Child Ratios

1. May combine two or more groups as long as ratio of younger age group is met. If local or state licensing agency ratio is lower, we shall meet the lower ratio.
   - Infants: 2 Adults – additional help needed for more than 8 children
   - Toddlers: 2 Adults – additional help needed for more than 10 children
   - Twos: 2 Adults – additional help needed for more than 12 children
   - Threes: 2 Adults – additional help needed for more than 18 children
   - Fours/Fives: 2 Adults – additional help needed for more than 20 children
   - Kindergarten – grade 5: 2 Adults – additional help needed for more than 16 children
   - Grades 6 – 8: 2 Adults – additional help needed for more than 20 youth
   - Grades 9 – 12: 2 Adults – additional help needed for more than 24 youth

2. Children/Youth With Special Needs
   a. In the judgment of AUMC staff, and in consultation with the parent, the above ratios may be adjusted depending on the nature and degree of a participant’s special needs.

D. Appropriate Interpersonal Boundaries and Staff Interactions with children/youth

Paid/Volunteer Staff must always be above reproach in their words and conduct. They are to behave in a godly manner demonstrating Christian conduct, respect, honesty and trustworthiness and these are the ways they should act.

1. Paid/Volunteer Staff should never initiate physical contact, such as a hug, and should always be the one to end the contact.

2. Paid/Volunteer Staff must not in any way initiate any of the following activities with children and youth: extended hugging, kissing, sitting on a lap, inappropriate touching or being alone with a child.

3. In the event that a child approaches an Paid/Volunteer Staff with the intent to hug or kiss, or unexpectedly does so, the Paid/Volunteer Staff should accept the affection, but should as quickly as possible, in a non-rejecting manner, encourage a more appropriate form of physical contact.

4. Appropriate physical contact for ages 0 – 3 years include picking up the child, comforting the child, holding the hand of child, changing diapers.

5. Appropriate physical contact with children ages 4+ could include a handshake, pat on the back, quick hug of encouragement with hands located in shoulder area, and a ‘high five’.

6. Paid/Volunteer Staff treat children with respect. Keep in mind “Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.”

7. Paid/Volunteer Staff uses positive discipline to teach children right from wrong, which behaviors are acceptable and which are not and how to respect the rights of others. Discipline is never punishment. Discipline is teaching, done positively and with respect and is appropriate to the situation and age of the child.
   a. In extreme circumstances, for example fighting, physical restraint may be necessary and must be reported immediately to an AUMC staff member.

8. The Paid/Volunteer Staff do not use corporal punishment or humiliating or frightening discipline techniques. Food or beverage is never withheld as a form of discipline.

9. Paid/Volunteer Staff are aware that children may display a variety of emotions. Paid/Volunteer Staff help children indentify these emotions and teaches them appropriate ways to express them and helps build a trusting relationship with each child that provides both emotional and physical security.
10. Paid/Volunteer Staff model and encourage social behavior such as helping, sharing and cooperating.
11. Paid/Volunteer Staff offer guidance and encourage communication during problem solving and conflict resolution.
12. Paid/Volunteer Staff are encouraged to request advice from AUMC staff if repeat behaviors arise.

E. Restrooms
1. If restroom breaks are needed during children’s class or an activity, the Assistant should escort children in pairs of two and remain outside the washroom area until the children are finished before escorting them back to the classroom or activity.
2. Paid/Volunteer Staff will notify Authority Figure if they are taking children to the restroom.

F. Health and Safety
1. Any operating licenses and/or certificates of inspection relating to health and safety from the state, as well as any that the local county or city requires, are available through the church office.
2. Safe Sanctuaries Policy protecting children is accepted by the AUMC Administrative Board, implemented, and publicized to both the congregation and parents. Safe Sanctuary committee shall schedule yearly training.
   a. All church and preschool staff, paid and unpaid, will attend Safe Sanctuary training and sign the church policy concerning child protection.
   b. Training shall be held yearly for all paid staff and every three years for volunteer staff (policy and guidelines will be reviewed with current volunteers at annual planning meetings).

G. Emergencies
1. Paid/Volunteer Staff are not to give or apply any medications to children except for bandages for minor cuts/abrasions, or ice packs for bumps. If a child needs medication, the parent must administer it. No medications will be left in the nursery department or any classroom with the following exception: children who carry inhalers for asthma or medication for serious allergies.
2. Diabetic children under the age of twelve will be treated following guidelines provided by the parent/guardian. In the event that an older child who is a diabetic requires sugar, orange/apple juice will be kept on hand in the classroom or director’s office and can be given to a diabetic child while parents/guardians are called. An older child is defined as over the age of 12.
3. There will be an annual review of emergency procedures to be followed in the event of a fire or weather emergency. Paid/Volunteer Staff will be trained in these procedures. Evacuation procedures are to be posted in each room.
4. First Aid boxes and Defibrillators are accessible throughout the church and all Paid/Volunteer Staff should review their locations monthly.

H. Rooming/Sleepovers
1. A minimum of 2 female Paid/Volunteer Staff and 2 male Paid/Volunteer Staff is suggested.
   a. Additional Paid/Volunteer Staff may be needed based on number of attendees/ratios.
2. If rooming in a hotel situation, with parental consent, youth of the same sex may room together without an adult.
   a. Paid/Volunteer Staff will be assigned to separate rooms centered between the youth rooms.
3. If rooming in a church, cabin, tent or similar situations, where adult’s room with youth or children, children or youth will be separated by gender and supervised by two Paid/Volunteer Staff that are not related. These adults must be the same sex as the children or youth.
4. Groups where children are all of the same gender and the leadership is the same gender should provide the same number Paid/Volunteer Staff as ratios outline.
5. Groups where children are all of the same gender, but the leadership is comprised of the opposite gender, should provide a minimum of two adult leaders of the same gender as the children.

I. Group Travel
1. All outings must have a signed and dated parental waiver from each parent/guardian. The waiver must state the nature of the outing, the time of departure and return, the destination (including the name of the host, address and phone number) the mode of transportation and the cost to the child, emergency contact information and medical information.
2. When an outing involves transportation, the Authority Figure should leave a list of the drivers’ names, license numbers, names of occupants in each vehicle, emergency information and copies of permission forms with the Church Administrator.
3. Authority Figure will insure that the vehicles are properly functioning, the vehicles have up to date insurance, and the adult drivers who will be driving are properly insured.
4. Every vehicle must have two insured adult drivers.
5. Equipment will not be loaded in a fashion that blocks the vision of the driver.
6. Every person in the vehicle must wear a seatbelt at all times when the vehicle is moving.
7. Once a child/youth has been assigned to a particular vehicle, he/she is not to switch vehicles.
8. Authority Figure will all have copies of permission slips and emergency contact information.

J. Six Month Rule
1. All volunteer staff with children or youth of our church must have been members of the congregation or active constituents for at least six months before beginning a volunteer assignment. Persons not meeting this minimum requirement may serve only as an assistant with another Authority Figure. The Safe Sanctuaries Committee will consider exceptions to this rule.
2. Preschool parent volunteers with less than 6 months exposure to programs must be with an Authority figure at all times.

K. Cyber Safety
The General Conference of the United Methodist Church, in 1988, passed a resolution condemning the exploitation of women and children in pornography, including print and video media. Adult leaders will:
1. Get written parental permission for posting photos of youth;
2. Get advance parental permission to communicate with youth by email, cell phone, instant messaging, or text messaging;
3. Provide training classes for youth to teach them how to use privacy settings for their social networking profiles;
4. Encourage youth to let an Paid/Volunteer Staff know if anyone they met online tries to meet them in person;
5. Develop policies regarding use of cell phones and other technologies in ministry settings such as camping, retreats, and trips;
6. Collaborate with teachers, law enforcement officials, and parents to provide educational opportunities for parents and children/youth to learn how to be safe online.
L. Boy Scouts
Boy Scout Troop 3349 and Cub Scout Pack 349 are youth programs supported by Aldersgate. These troops abide by the Youth Protection Plan, a policy of the Boy Scouts of America that has been reviewed by the Safe Sanctuaries Committee and has the same goals as this policy. www.scouting.org

M. Policy Instruction
1. All Paid/Volunteer Staff are required to attend Safe Sanctuary policy instruction before working with children and youth.
   a. In the case that this is not possible, the paid/volunteer staff may only serve as an assistant with another trained adult and under the stipulation that they attend the next training session.
2. All paid/volunteer staff are required annually to review this policy, to attend a policy instruction session and to sign a new participation statement kept on file at the church.
   a. All Paid staff are required to attend training once a year
   b. All Volunteer staff are required to attend training once every three years and will receive a review of the policy at annual meetings for the program they volunteer in.

N. Written Record of Non-Compliance
A written record of any non-compliance of this policy will be kept on file by the Church Administrator. Paid/Volunteer Staff are expected to report these non-compliances within 48 hours of their occurrence.

IV. SCREENING PROCEDURES
An essential component of preventing abuse by Paid/Volunteer Staff is careful screening. Although we recognize the integrity of an overwhelming number of the persons with discerned calling to ministries with children, youth and vulnerable persons, we realize that abuse may occur in the church. Therefore, we believe that all Paid/Volunteer Staff must be properly screened. It will be the responsibility of the Church Administrator, Management Staff, and the Lead Pastor to ensure compliance. The following steps are used for screening volunteer and paid applicants:

A. Complete an application form
A completed AUMC application form will be required for paid staff and will be kept on file.

B. Conduct an interview with applicants
An interview will be conducted with all paid applicants. The interviewer should not ask for information about marital status or handicapping conditions as stated in Federal/State discrimination guidelines. The interviewer should also be sensitive to age and sex discrimination guidelines; however adequate information may be requested to ensure compliance with this policy’s minimum standards. The interviewer should be aware of red flags. These are indicators of issues that must be explored further in order for AUMC to be assured that all information is collected concerning a prospective Paid/Volunteer Staff. Red flags might include but are not limited to:
1. Many addresses over a short period of time
   a. This could indicate that a person is trying to be anonymous, but it could also indicate that they were a college student who moved a lot to keep rent low.
2. Wants to work with only one age group
   a. If someone would like to work with only one specific age group, it could indicate that the person has targeted that age group for abuse, or it could mean that is the age
group for which they are trained and that experience has shown that they are not as
gifted with other ages. Also be aware of anyone who seems overly committed to one
age group. For example, someone who simultaneously leads a scout troop, coaches
Little League, serves as a Big Brother and now wants to teach Sunday School may be
neglecting their own age appropriate peer relationships in order to cultivate potential
victims.

3. Does not want/need/like close supervision
   a. The interview may indicate that the person does not like to be closely supervised which
      might raise questions about motivation for applying for this work.
   b. The interviewer needs to be able to explore issues as they arise during the interview
      and to depart from the set of prepared questions to do so.

C. Complete Reference Checks
A minimum of two references must be contacted on all paid applicants. It is further recommended
that the reference of a church official (pastor, Staff-Parish Relations Chairperson, youth director, etc.)
from the church of the applicant’s membership be obtained.

D. Complete Checklist for Paid/Volunteer Staff
Checklist for Paid/Volunteer Staff shall be completed and placed in applicant’s file. These should be
updated yearly upon review of background checks and annual review of the Safe Sanctuary policy.
Checklist can be found on page 16 of this policy book.

E. Complete Background Checks
Background checks must be conducted on all paid Paid/Volunteer Staff that have contact with
children and minor age youth and shall include, but are not limited to:
   - National Criminal Database Check
   - National Sex Registry Database Check

1. Church staff (paid and volunteer) background checks will be initiated by the Church
   Administrator and be accessible to the Pastors and Staff Parish Relations Committee.
2. Children’s Ministry staff and Preschool staff (paid and volunteer) background checks will be
   initiated and seen by only the Children’s Ministry Director and Preschool Director but will be
   accessible to the Church Administrator, Pastors, and Staff Parish Relations Committee.
3. Youth staff (paid and volunteer) background checks will be initiated and seen by only the
   Youth Director but will be accessible to the Church Administrator, Pastors, and Staff Parish
   Relations Committee.
4. Concerns will be reported to the Lead Pastor only, who in turn will decide how the situation
   shall be handled.

F. Federal and State Law
The requirements of any and all Federal laws or State laws affecting or relating to employment or
child abuse must be complied with, and in any case where there is a conflict between such laws and
the procedure outlined in this document, said laws shall prevail and the procedure outlined in the
document shall be modified to the extent necessary to eliminate such conflict. This policy is subject
to all Federal and/or State laws relating to employment and child abuse.
V. REPORTING ACCIDENTS/INJURIES
1. Occasionally during the course of regular program activities injury occurs. These may be minor or major in nature.
2. After appropriate support and assistance is given to the injured child, youth, adults or leader, a written Accident Report (page 20 of this policy) should be filled out by the program coordinator or appropriate person on the pastoral staff. A description of the incident, contributing factors and the treatment given should be noted. Witnesses to the incident should be listed with addresses and phone numbers for follow-up purposes.
3. The Incident Investigation Reports will be reviewed by the Safe Sanctuary Committee, semi-annually. A member of the Committee should be appointed to investigate the incident and bring recommendations back to the Committee to help prevent a recurrence of the accident. These Reports are to be kept in the church office for future reference.
4. An accident report form is attached to this policy and copies are available in the church office and from program coordinator/directors.

VI. REPORTING SUSPECTED ABUSE OR NEGLECT
A. Reporting Child or Youth Abuse/Neglect
In the event of suspected abuse or neglect the Paid/Volunteer Staff shall immediately notify their supervisor and the Pastor. The Paid/Volunteer Staff shall also make a report to Indiana Child Protection Agency (1-800-800-5556). In the event the victim feels uncomfortable reporting to the Lead Pastor or if the suspected abuse involves a Pastor, reports may also be made to the Staff Parish Relations Committee (SPRC). The SPRC may be reached by contacting the church office (260-432-1524). If the abuse reported has taken place within the church or the perpetrator is a church member or employee, the Lead Pastor and/or SPRC shall also report the suspected abuse to the District Superintendent.

1. RESPONSIBILITIES:
   a. Believe the child/youth's story. Don't deny the problem or blame the child/youth. Stay calm. Intense emotions will frighten the child/youth. A quiet, unhurried conversation conveys calmness. Tell the child he/she is safe and will not be harmed.
   b. A child abuse report form (pg 22 of this policy manual) should be initiated and passed along to the Pastor, Staff Parish Relations Committee or Safe Sanctuary Committee Member.
   c. After appropriate investigation, the Paid/Volunteer Staff shall be responsible for making a report to child protective services (1-800-800-5556) or law enforcement.
   d. If the alleged perpetrator is not a custodial parent, after consultation with child protective services, the Pastor may contact the custodial parent about the situation.
   e. If a child protective services caseworker or law enforcement official comes to the church to interview a child, a Pastor or designee and/or member of SPRC or Safe Sanctuary Committee will be present.

2. In cases of questionable abuse or neglect Paid/Volunteer Staff should immediately discuss the situation with a Pastor and a member of the Safe Sanctuary Committee to review the signs of abuse and begin steps to report abuse/neglect, if necessary. The Pastor and Safe Sanctuary Committee member shall document the discussion and resolution and file it with the Church Administrator.
B. Reporting Elder Abuse/Neglect - Whenever elder abuse or neglect is suspected, reports must immediately be made to the National Adult Protective Services (1-800-992-6978) and the Lead Pastor. In the event the victim feels uncomfortable reporting to the Lead Pastor or if the suspected abuse involves the Lead Pastor, reports may also be made to the Staff Parish Relations Chairperson (SPRC). The SPRC may be reached by contacting the church office at 2417 Getz Road. If the abuse reported has taken place within the church or the perpetrator is a church member or employee, the Lead Pastor, SPRC, and/or the Executive Committee shall also report the suspected abuse to the District Superintendent.

VII. INVESTIGATION
1. Whenever child abuse is suspected, the following information should be obtained and reported to the Lead Pastor or designee and the Indiana Child Protective Service (1-800-800-5556).
   a. Names, ages, addresses and telephone numbers of both the accused and the abused.
   b. The nature of the alleged abuse, with dates where possible
   c. The factual details of the report
2. The name of the person making the report and the date that the information was received. A Report of Suspected Abuse Form of information can be found on pg 22 of this policy manual.
3. The Lead Pastor and/or SPRC shall conduct or direct an investigation into the suspected abuse in conjunction with the Safe Sanctuaries Committee. Interim measures may be taken during the investigation to safeguard the potential victim or victims. At the conclusion of the investigation, appropriate actions shall be taken. Depending upon the findings, this may include termination of employment.

VIII. RESPONSE PROCEDURES
If a report is made to the authorities reporting suspected abuse or neglect the following guidelines will be followed:
1. The official spokesperson for Aldersgate United Methodist Church shall be the Pastor, or in the absence of the Pastor, a designee appointed by the Pastor.
   a. All inquiries or requests for information from the media, attorneys or any other parties shall be referred to the official spokesperson.
   b. No person other than the official spokesperson is to release any information regarding any alleged incident of child abuse without the express approval of the official spokesperson.
2. The official spokesperson shall immediately report any alleged incident of child abuse to the appropriate local Child Protection Services agency of the county, the AUMC insurance carrier, the Conference or District Superintendent.
3. The care and safety of the victim is our first priority. We will not confront the accused without the approval of the Child Protection Service or law enforcement authorities.
4. We will not prejudge any person accused, but we will take any allegation of child abuse seriously and will reach out in Christian love and support to the victim and the victim’s family, extending whatever pastoral care resources are needed.
5. We will fully cooperate with any authorities investigating an allegation of child abuse.
6. We will treat the accused with dignity and respect.
7. All communication by the official spokesperson to the media, congregation, and public will protect the privacy and confidentiality of all involved.
8. All efforts in responding to the alleged incident of child abuse shall be documented by the Pastor or, in the absence of the Pastor, by the designee, and maintained in a secure and confidential file.
IX. SAFE SANCTUARIES COMMITTEE
The Safe Sanctuaries Committee will consist of four to six members made up of groups of two that will each serve three-year terms. At least one member of each class will be elected from within the Staff Parrish Relations Committee. Any At-Large Members will be appointed by the Lay Leadership Committee. All Safe Sanctuaries Committee Members will be listed by class annually in the Report of Committee on Lay Leadership.
Its responsibilities include:
1. Educating Authority Figures, Assistants, Staff Parish Relations Committee, and all Paid/Volunteer Staff about the policy
2. Answering questions about the policy
3. Ensuring compliance with the policy
4. Granting exceptions to the policy, in appropriate circumstances
5. Assisting, as needed, with investigations
6. Reviewing and renewing policy annually or as needed
7. Evaluating Committee function
8. Other duties as needed

Current Committee who helped to edit and assemble this policy –
2011-2014: David Carter, Mac Routen, Kathy Routen
2012-2015: Kathryn Lopez, Ellie Nickeson, Eileen Oberlin
Staff Parish Member: Heather Bleeke
Ex-officio: Michele Phillips, Joan Schell
Aldersgate United Methodist Church

Child Protection Guidelines

Yearly Checklist for Paid/Volunteer Staff

☐ Has been an active member of our church for at least six (6) months.

☐ Accepts importance of having a non-related adult present when dealing with children or youth one-on-one (alternative: use open areas, leave door open, install windows in doors).

☐ Has been given copy of instructions for handling child abuse cases.

☐ Has a complete and up-to-date background check and disclosure form on file.

☐ Has received annual review of Safe Sanctuary policy.

☐ Paid staff has a complete AUMC job application for ministry or preschool position.

☐ Paid staff has references checked and has had a personal interview conducted (keep written documentation).

__________________________________________________________________________________________
Employee or Volunteer Signature

__________________________________________________________________________________________
Checked by

__________________________________________________________________________________________
Date

Note: This form to be posted in each paid and volunteer staff’s file. No worker is to be assigned until completion of the checklist.
Aldersgate United Methodist Church
Participation Covenant Statement

The congregation of Aldersgate United Methodist Church is committed to providing a safe and secure environment for all children, youth, and Paid/Volunteer Staff who participate in ministries and activities sponsored by the Church. The following policy statement 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.

1. No adult who has been convicted of child abuse (either sexual abuse, physical abuse, or emotional abuse) should volunteer to work with children or youth in any Church-sponsored activity.
2. Adult survivors of child abuse need the love and support of our congregation. Any adult survivor who desires to volunteer in some capacity to work with children or youth is encouraged to discuss his/her willingness with one of our Church’s ministers before accepting an assignment.
3. All adult volunteers involved with children or youth of our Church must have been members of the congregation or an active constituent for at least six months before beginning a volunteer assignment.
4. Adult volunteers and staff with children and youth shall observe the “Two Person Rule” at all times so that no adult is ever alone with children or youth.
5. Adult volunteers with children and youth shall attend regular training and educational events provided by the Church to keep volunteers informed of Church policies and state laws regarding child abuse.
6. Adult volunteers shall immediately report to the area supervisor or the Director of Children’s Ministry or the Senior Pastor or the Church Administrator any behavior that seems abusive or inappropriate.

Please answer each of the following questions:

1. As a volunteer in this congregation, do you agree to observe and abide by all Church Policies and Procedures including Safe Sanctuaries regarding working in ministries with children and youth?
   - Yes
   - No

2. As a volunteer in this congregation, do you agree to observe the “Two Person Rule” at all times?
   - Yes
   - No

3. As a volunteer in this congregation, do you agree to abide by the six-month rule before beginning a volunteer assignment?
   - Yes
   - No

4. As a volunteer in this congregation, do you agree to participate in training and educational events provided by the Church related to your volunteer assignment?
   - Yes
   - No

5. As a volunteer in this congregation, do you agree to promptly report abusive or inappropriate behavior to the area supervisor or other appropriate person?
   - Yes
   - No

6. As a volunteer in this congregation, do you agree to inform a minister of this congregation if you are ever convicted of child abuse in the future?
   - 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
Name of Injured Person ___________________________________________ Age _______ male  female
Name of Parents (if injured is a minor)___________________________________________________________
Address: ________________________________________________________Phone # _______________

Date of Accident: ___________________________Time of Accident: ___________am/pm
Event accident occurred at: ___________________________________________________________________
Location of accident: _______________________________________________________________________
How did the accident happen: _________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________________

Nature of injury: ___________________________________________________________________________
Witness(s) to injury: Name: ___________________________ Phone #:____________________
Name: ___________________________ Phone #: ___________________

Was injured person given first aid? Yes  No  By whom:__________________________
Type of First aid given: ______________________________________________________________________
Was family notified? Yes  No  Notified by whom: ____________________________
Name of person notified_____________________ Relationship to injured person __________________
Reaction of parent(s), if injured is a minor: _____________________________________________________
Was doctor contacted? Yes  No
Was injured person taken to hospital? Yes  No  By Whom:_______  Name of Hospital: ____________

Resolution:________________________________________________________________________________
Reporter Name (print) and Signature: ___________________________________________Date:___________
Staff/Director Name (print) and Signature: _______________________________________Date:___________
Parent Name (print) and Signature, if person is a minor: ___________________________ Date:_________

Follow Up Report by Director of Event:

_________________________________________________________

Staff/Director Name (print) and Signature: _______________________________________Date: ___________

Safe Sanctuary Committee Follow Up Report:

_______________________________________________________________________________________

Safe Sanctuary Representative Name (print) and Signature: ___________________________ Date: __________
Report of Suspected Child Abuse  1-800-800-5556

(Please print all information)

Name of worker (paid or volunteer) observing or receiving disclosure of child abuse:
________________________________________________________________________________________

Victim’s name:
_______________________________________________________________________________________

Victim’s age/date of birth:
_______________________________________________________________________________________

Date/place of initial conversation with/report from victim:
_______________________________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________________________

Victim’s statement (give your detailed summary here):
_______________________________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________________________

Name of person accused of abuse:
_______________________________________________________________________________________

Relationship of accused to victim (Paid staff, volunteer, family member, other):
_______________________________________________________________________________________

Reported to pastor: ___________________________________________  Date/Time: ____________________

Summary:
_______________________________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________________________
Call to local children and family service agency:

Spoke with: ___________________________ Date/Time: ________________________

Summary:

___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________

Other contacts:

Name: ___________________________ Date/Time: ________________________

Summary:

___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________________

Signature Date
IMPLEMENTATION of SAFE SANCTUARY POLICY AT ALDERSGATE UMC:

We recommend that these guidelines and procedures be implemented within ninety (90) days of their adoption, with the completion of the initial screening process and background checks within sixty (60) days of adoption.

The Safe Sanctuary Committee will have the responsibility to implement and enforce these guidelines and procedures, including the training of Paid/Volunteer Staff, maintaining confidential records, and implementing the screening process.