



Safe Sanctuary Program

of

GRACE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH and SCHOOL, Menomonee Falls WI

Established on 8-13-07



“People were bringing even infants to [Jesus] ... and when the disciples saw it, they sternly ordered them not to do it. But Jesus called for them and said, ‘Let the little children come to me, and do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs. Truly I tell you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a child will never enter it.’” (Luke 13: 15-17 NRSVC)

Dear Youth/Child Worker Applicant,

One of the great joys of being a part of a faith community is learning from children and youth about what it means to be a child of God, no matter what the age. They give adults the precious gifts of innocence, enthusiasm, curiosity and are visible signs that God is not yet through with Creation.

They give so much to us. So as adults we are asked to give to them. Attached to this letter is the Safe Sanctuary Policy for *GRACE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH and SCHOOL*. It represents our Congregation's firm commitment to give *children* the chance to spiritually learn and grow in the safest and most secure environment we can provide.

The call to work with *children* carries with it great responsibilities. We are all too aware of incidents of sexual abuse or inappropriate behavior within congregations and other organizations, where the safety of *children* has been threatened, and the sacred trust between adults and young people broken.

Therefore, with God as our guide, the Congregation commits to a more organized and thorough process of volunteer/staff recruitment. Let "the bottom line" be crystal clear...we want to ensure that *children* can come to Christ at *GRACE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH and SCHOOL* and be safe, honored, loved and respected. As well, we want parents/guardians to have full confidence in the adults that care for their *children*, as well as protection for our staff and volunteers from false allegations. The Safe Sanctuary Committee will determine the scope of persons involved in this place as approved by the congregational board.

We are aware that such a policy requires your extra commitment and the sharing of personal information by you. Please be assured that all the information provided will be kept in strict confidentiality and in a secure location, and will be seen only by the Safe Sanctuary Committee. As you commit to taking this added step in ministering to our young people, know that the Congregation is committed to keeping this process humane and sensitive.

"Let the children come to me and do not stop them." This is Christ's command and challenge to us to make our Congregation home safe, secure and nurturing. In this spirit, thank you in advance for being a partner in ministry and with our *children*.

In Christian Love,

Safe Sanctuary Committee, Dated: 9-17-07

Pastor Granke, Pastor Goodwin, Neil Hinze, Marlene Anderson, Kim Knuppenburg & Doug LeClair

SAFE SANCTUARY POLICY

Purpose: GRACE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH and SCHOOL is to be a holy place of sanctuary where all can gather for worship, study and service with the assurance that all are safe and secure in our community of faith. We covenant with one another to provide a safe and secure environment for all children, youth and volunteers who participate in ministries and activities sponsored by this congregation. To help reach these goals, we have adopted the following policies, procedures and educational programs to reduce the possibility of child sexual or physical abuse, or any type of sexual misconduct from occurring in our congregation. All members of the congregation will be made aware of and will be held responsible for knowing and upholding these guidelines even if not working directly with *children* (*children/child referring to all persons under age 18).

Recruiting Congregational Workers: Our congregation welcomes volunteers who have been part of our fellowship for at least six months or have been approved by a professional staff person before being involved in work with *children*. New employees, having satisfied the screening process, employed to work with *children* may assume their position immediately. The Safe Sanctuary Review Board reserves the right to complete a criminal records background check on any person requesting to take a position that has contact with *children*.

Screening procedure if you work directly with *children* on an ON-GOING basis:
Must fulfill the Safe Sanctuary Program by reading the materials and completing the **Screening Application Form**. This includes teachers, youth group leaders, volunteers and staff members.

Screening procedure if you work directly with *children* on a LIMITED basis:
Must fulfill the Safe Sanctuary Program by completing the **Limited Notice Volunteer Form**.

Screening procedure if you are a YOUTH working directly with *children*:
Must fulfill the Safe Sanctuary Program by completing the **Covenant Statement Form** between Youth Participant, Parent/Legal Guardian and the Adult Advisor.

The following table describes the intent of the Safe Sanctuary Program:

TITLE	PURPOSE
Safe Sanctuary Committee (appointed by an officer of the church)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To screen applicants for volunteer and staff positions that have direct contact with <i>children</i>. • To implement procedures designed to educate volunteers, staff and congregation members regarding these policies/procedures. • To insure that the Safe Sanctuary Committee educate volunteers and staff on these procedures through regular training programs. • To ensure the annual review of this policy and all appended material.
Board of Trustees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To design and maintain procedures related to building use which uphold the intent of this policy.

TITLE	PURPOSE
School Principal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To ensure that records of all actions required by this policy and any material pertinent to it including reports, workers' surveys, and application and acknowledgment forms are kept for a legally appropriate time in a secure and confidential place, the location and security measures to be determined by the Safe Sanctuary Committee.
Response Team - President of the Congregation - Senior Pastor - School Principal (if it is a school related issue)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To hear all allegation or concern in the event that a volunteer, congregation member or staff member is uncomfortable reporting an allegation of sexual misconduct to the Safe Sanctuary Review Board or staff person. • To support staff members charged with confirming the of volunteers and carrying out the Response Plan.
All congregation members, teachers, volunteers, paid staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Should an allegation arise, ensure that confidentiality is maintained at all times if an allegation or potential allegation were to occur. Conversations, computer screens, files, etc. will be kept and maintained so that others can't overhear or see information pertaining to a case. • To support and uphold the intent of the Safe Sanctuary Policy

SAFE SANCTUARY GUIDELINES

Supervision Rule:

- The *children* in both the educational and youth ministry of our congregation shall be under the care and supervision of persons whom have been approved by the Safe Sanctuary Committee or by a staff person as a "limited notice volunteer".
- If, for any reason, a teacher or aide is left alone in a classroom with an individual *child*, the teacher in the nearest or neighboring classroom should be so informed and the door shall be left open.
- No teacher, advisor, coach, aide or anyone else working with our *children* should place themselves in a compromising situation by being alone with a child or with children out-of-sight of other teachers, advisors, aides or parents.

Bathroom Supervision: No teacher, advisor or aide shall be alone with a child in the bathroom unless the situation dictates necessity.

Five Year Separation Rule: When utilizing high school or young adults in educational settings, youth programs and off-site activities, there shall be 5 years of separation between these young persons and those they supervise, unless with supervision of an adult.

Under 18 Rule: Every attempt will be made first to use youth who have reached the age of 18 as workers with *children*.

Classroom Windows Rule: All classrooms that are used for youth or children activities will have windows or half-doors. Blinds, curtains, or other coverings will remain open at all times.

Nursery Rule: There will be one adults in the nursery at all times. If two persons can't be found, the nursery will be closed on that day.

Parental Consent: *Children* shall have signed, written consent of a parent/legal guardian before attending, chaperoning or supervising activities or programs away from our facilities.

Overnight Rule

- Any and all adult chaperones supervising overnight stays at our facilities or on congregational sponsored trips shall have been cleared to do so by the Safe Sanctuary Committee or staff.
- At least two male adults will dorm with boys and two female adults will dorm with girls, unless the staff approves otherwise.
- Furthermore, a signed written consent form is required, which lists the names of the advisors to be present.

Youth Group Activities

- Physical contact such as wrestling, horseplay or other high contact games are not appropriate recreational activity.
- No adult leader, staff or volunteer, should initiate or encourage physical or intimate contact with *children*.
- The Youth Group is a group ministry. All participants are expected to remain with the group throughout the times listed in congregation publications, unless the group leader approves.

Leaving and Locking: To the best of our ability, every attempt will be made to have two adults present when a *child* is left at the facility waiting to be picked up by a parent/guardian at the end of an activity.

Key Assignment

- When a key to the areas frequented by *children* is assigned to staff or volunteer, an appropriate request form shall be filled out.
- It is understood that said key will not be loaned out to anyone else, nor will a duplicate key be made.
- The assigned person shall take full responsibility for the security of the key(s) and will return it when he/she no longer has the responsibility which required the use of said key.

Drugs, Tobacco and Alcohol: The use of any drugs, tobacco or alcoholic products in congregation facilities or at congregation sponsored youth events is not permitted.

Transportation: Written parental permission is required when transporting *children* for field trips, activities or events to/from the congregation facility.

SAFE SANCTUARY RESPONSE PLAN

- All allegations will be taken seriously.
- Response to allegations must be handled with due respect for everyone's privacy and confidentiality.
- Care and safety of alleged complainants (and family) are the first priority. Extend whatever pastoral resources needed. Notify parent of alleged complainant if appropriate.
- When questionable or inappropriate behavior related to possible sexual misconduct involving *children* is observed, it should be reported to the staff person or the Response Team. The incident will be documented by the staff person or Response Team who will discuss it and make an initial response.
- When a case is reported, the staff person or Response Team receiving the report is asked to interview the supervising adult and to share all pertinent information with him/her. A low level, discrete investigation of the charges is to be taken as soon as possible. This will include speaking to both the alleged perpetrator and victim.
- Document all activity involved in handling the incident on the **Incident Report Form**. All documentation will be held confidential.

If deemed necessary:

- If, after an initial investigation by the staff person or Response Team, the charges are deemed valid, steps will be taken to immediately comply with all state laws. All incidents involving *children* shall be reported to all of the following:
 - Wisconsin Department of Health and Family Services
 - Congregation's insurance agent or carrier
 - Congregation's attorney
 - District Official
 - Local law enforcement
- Should it become necessary, full cooperation will be given to civil authorities under guidance of the congregation's attorney. The attorney must be present while any investigative questions from the police or applicable agencies are being answered by anyone. If a report is made to Wisconsin Department of Health and Family services, the Response Team must carefully document all steps taken regarding when and who the contacted person of above people/organizations were notified.
- Treat the accused with dignity and respect and offer support. If the accused is a congregation worker or paid employee, he/she should be relieved temporarily of his/her duties until the investigation is completed.

If deemed necessary by the staff person, the Response Team will:

- Appoint one official congregation spokesperson to deal with any and all media inquiries.
- The designated spokesperson will be prepared to issue a public statement to inform the congregation and respond to press inquiries. This statement should communicate that the congregation regards these allegations seriously and offers responsible action, concern, and support for all involved. No details of the accusation will be released. Do not deny that the incident occurred; do not assign blame; do not minimize the situation (e.g., "It wasn't that serious."). No statement will be issued until it has been approved by the congregation's attorney.
- The designated spokesperson will share appropriate information, with the wider congregation, in all cases respecting the privacy of the individuals involved.

Screening Application Form

This application is to be completed by all applicants for any position (volunteer or compensated) involving the supervision of *children* on an ON-GOING BASIS. It is being used to assist this congregation in providing a safe and secure environment for those *children* who participate in our church's programs and use our facilities. The information provided will be kept strictly confidential!

PERSONAL INFO and HISTORY

Date:	Home Ph: ()	Cell Ph: ()
Name:		
Present Address:		
City/State/Zip:		
Driver's License:	State Issued:	
List any driving restrictions:	Vehicle Insurance Carrier:	
Social Security #:	E-mail Address:	
Emergency Contact Name and Ph #:		
Please indicate all addresses of residency within the past 5 years, if applicable:		
Please indicate the type of <i>children</i>'s work you prefer:		
Please indicate the date you would be able to begin:		
List all aliases:		

RELIGIOUS HISTORY AND PRIOR YOUTH WORK

List name/address of other religious institutions you have attended during the past 5 years:
List all previous <u>religious</u> work involving <i>children</i> (list each institution's name, type of work performed, dates and a contact person with his/her phone number):
List all previous <u>non-religious</u> work involving <i>children</i> (list each institution's name, type of work performed, dates and a contact person with his/her phone number):
Have you ever been convicted of or pleaded guilty to a crime? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No If yes, please explain:

PERSONAL REFERENCES (not former employees or relatives):

Name:	Name:
Address:	Address:
City/State/Zip:	City/State/Zip:
Phone: ()	Phone: ()

Applicant's Statement

The information contained in this application is correct to the best of my knowledge. I authorize *GRACE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH and SCHOOL* to contact any references or religious institutions listed in the application to obtain information (including opinions) that they may have regarding my character and fitness for working with *children*.

Should my application be accepted, I agree to be bound by the Bylaws and Policies of *GRACE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH and SCHOOL* and to the following covenant which governs working with *children* at our congregation:

- To honor each child's integrity and worth as a child of God.
- To provide a nurturing and safe environment for *children* to grow socially and spiritually.
- To continue to grow and nurture my own personal faith.
- To work in partnership with the professional staff, volunteers, and Christ as a part of the larger Christian community.

GRACE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH and SCHOOL reserves the right to run and have access to a criminal records check. Signing and agreeing to this does not mean such a check will be run automatically. It may be run if deemed necessary by the Safe Sanctuary Review Board.

I state that I HAVE CAREFULLY READ, UNDERSTAND AND AGREE TO FULLY COMPLY WITH THE SAFE SANCTUARY POLICY AND I SIGN THIS RELEASE AS MY OWN FREE ACT.

I further understand that if any of the information provided on this form is false, I will be removed from work with *children* at *GRACE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH and SCHOOL*.

Signature

Print Name

Date

Incident Report Form

Name of Person Reporting Incident:	
Phone Number: ()	Relationship to Congregation:
Date of Incident:	Time of Incident:
Date of Notification:	Time of Notification:
Location of the incident:	
In what manner was the incident reported:	

NAME OF PERSON(S) INVOLVED IN INCIDENT:

<input type="checkbox"/> Minor <input type="checkbox"/> Adult Name: _____ Phone #: () _____ Address: _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Minor <input type="checkbox"/> Adult Name: _____ Phone #: () _____ Address: _____

WITNESSES TO INCIDENT:

Name: _____ Phone #: () _____
Address: _____
Name: _____ Phone #: () _____
Address: _____

CHECKLIST FOR STAFF PERSON IN RESPONSE TO ACCUSATION

Date:	Initials:	Report the incident to the Response Team
Date:	Initials:	Do not pre-judge the situation
Date:	Initials:	Document your investigative efforts
Date:	Initials:	Do not confront the accused until the safety of the child is secured
Date:	Initials:	Treat the accused and the complainant with dignity and support

After the report was made the following actions were taken (please check all that apply):

- An informal interview with the alleged perpetrator and victim was held.
- Since the alleged victim was under 18 years of age, his/her parents were notified and were present at the interview of the alleged victim.
- It was determined that the allegation was unwarranted and all parties concurred.
- It was determined that there was sufficient evidence and concern to report the incident to the:
 - Appropriate authorities, and
 - Safe Sanctuary Committee
 - District Official
- The alleged perpetrator was notified of this action.
- The incident was reported to the appropriate authorities: _____

The following space records the participation of the appropriate parties of the church during the ensuing investigation and outcome (make date notation for each entry):

Limited Notice VOLUNTEER FORM

Name of Event or Program

Start Date

End Date

Participant Code of Behavior

A successful event or program with our church is dependent upon the cooperation of all those participating in it. Please read the list of expectations which have been designed to ensure a good experience for all of us.

During this program or event, I will:

- Not purchase or possess and/or use alcohol or other controlled substances.
- Respect the property of all other participants and advisors. This includes not touching things that are not mine.
- Attend all scheduled programs unless specific permission is given for me to be elsewhere.
- Join in group work, play, study, activities without undue complaint.
- Respect myself, God, the other members of our group and the people we meet on our way. Conduct included in such acts of respect would exclude:
 - Self or other personally directed put downs
 - Abusive or vulgar language
 - Inappropriate touching
 - Activity which separates an individual (or couple) from the GROUP
 - Placing adult advisors in uncomfortable and potentially vulnerable situations

I agree to be bound by the Participant Code of Behavior of *GRACE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH and SCHOOL* and to the following covenant which governs working with *children* at our congregation:

- To honor each child's integrity and worth as a child of God.
- To provide a nurturing and safe environment for *children* to grow socially and spiritually.
- To continue to grow and nurture my own personal faith.
- To work in partnership with the professional staff, volunteers, and Christ as a part of the larger Christian community.

Signature of Adult

Print Name

Date

NOTE: If the volunteer is a minor, they must also complete the **Covenant Statement Form**

Signature of Minor

Print Name

Date

COVENANT STATEMENT FORM

“One Strike and You’re Out” Rule:

This covenant statement assumes that the sponsoring organization has clearly stated what the behavioral expectations are of the participants and adult advisors participating in on-going or special events of the church. The expectations have been:

- Stated in writing and sent to the participating youth and their parents/legal guardian.
- Reviewed by the participating youth and his/her parents/legal guardian at the beginning of the year or before the trip.
- Completed and returned to the adult advisor prior to the date of the program, trip or event.

In this way, any violation of the expectations shall result in an **immediate conclusion** of the young person’s participation in the stated program, trip or event. Second chances would require exceptional circumstances.

Covenant Statement

FOR YOUTH PARTICIPANT:

I have read the Participation Code of Behavior of *GRACE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH and SCHOOL* as to what is expected of me when I participate in the forthcoming program, trip or event. I understand failure on my part to live up to these expectations will end my participation in the program, trip or event. Blatant disregard of these expectations may result in suspension of future experiences.

Signature of Youth Participant

Print Name

Date

FOR PARENT/LEGAL GUARDIAN:

I have read the Participation Code of Behavior of *GRACE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH and SCHOOL* and reviewed it with my child. I understand what is expected and accept the “One Strike and You’re Out” Rule. I will assume all costs involved in our child’s return home.

I give permission for my child/youth to be photographed/video taped and have said image, printed or downloaded, on our church’s Web Site with the understanding that in no way such images will include identifying names, phone numbers, e-mail or physical addresses.

Signature of Parent/Legal Guardian

Print Name

Date

FOR ADULT ADVISOR:

I have verbally confirmed that the child/youth and his/her parents/legal guardian has reviewed the Participant Code of Behavior of *GRACE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH and SCHOOL* and that they are willing to accept the expectations stated.

Signature of Adult Advisor

Print Name

Date