

WARNINGS!

This sample policy manual, which is also contained in the accompanying CD, is NOT intended for churches simply to download, cut and paste into an instant church policy manual.

Part One of this publication indicates the importance of developing church policies consistent with a church's own traditions, doctrines and practices. An effective policy manual must be based on a church's careful decisions.

This sample manual, based on legal and policy issues discussed in Part Two of this publication, is intended to offer suggestions and possible approaches to a wide range of policy matters. But churches vary enormously in size, complexity, style and ministries – and YOUR policies should reflect those realities.

We hope you will find these sample policies helpful in assisting your church's careful planning and decisions about policies, but we warn you against simplistic shortcuts. One size does not fit all – especially when it comes to churches.

The accompanying CD contains these policies, as well as forms related to them, to allow you to download those that you find appropriate, adapt them to your needs, and develop your own appropriate policy manual.

To _____ Baptist Church Family and Friends

This _____ *Baptist Church Policy Manual* is the product of our church's traditions and judgments about how we may best fulfill our ministry and organize our lives for fruitful service. It covers the wide range of programs and activities of a dynamic church community.

We recognize that there is always a risk of too many rules and procedures that may stifle creativity and a vigorous adventuresome spirit, as well as the Holy Spirit's promptings. We also know, however, that there is effectiveness and freedom in clarity about the way we organize our church life and fulfill our individual calling as part of the Body of Christ.

Policies are always subject to review. All our committees and ministries are urged to suggest ways in which we can enhance our life together. Policies may need adjusting or even abolishing if we find they are counterproductive or disabling. Therefore, we invite constructive criticism of these policies and suggestions concerning areas not addressed.

Because policies are always reviewed by our church, and the church is free to adjust and adapt them to new circumstances or priorities, the policies set forth in this manual are only a statement of current policy. They are subject to change at any time by the members of this church acting in accord with our congregational government and the procedures of the bylaws. No policy set forth herein is a promise or guarantee, nor is any contract right created by this statement of current practice.

We urge our church family, staff and friends to familiarize themselves with these policies, especially those that affect areas of their own church participation, ministry or interest. These policies are not merely formal abstract legal clauses, but statements of how we can best work, worship and ministry together in this family.

_____, Pastor

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Section A.

Organization and Structure

1.00 Primary Governing Documents

The core governing documents of the church which set forth its basic structure, leadership and core beliefs are the constitution (or charter if a corporation) and the bylaws. These do not normally contain the detailed procedure set forth in this policy and procedure manual, but do provide the larger context of duties and responsibilities. Policies and procedures adopted by this church must not be inconsistent with provisions in these core documents.

2.00 Core Organization Aspects

2.01 Local Church Autonomy

A core principle of Baptist life is the autonomy of the local church. This autonomy is crucial because it means that all decisions about the church, its doctrine, property and leadership are made within the local church. No external body such as a conference, association or denomination has any control over the local church's decisions. This is not only a freedom but a responsibility to exercise care in all our actions to be faithful to our calling.

2.02 Relationships

While independent and autonomous, the church nevertheless recognizes the privileges and strengths which come through association with other churches and bodies of like mission and belief. Through such associations, the local church is strengthened in fellowship and enabled collectively to further the mission of the local church in missions, education, evangelism and social witness. This church thus is affiliated with the _____ Baptist Association and the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina.

2.03 Congregational Government

Consistent with Baptist tradition and theology, the government of this church is congregational in nature. The final authority for the operation and management of the affairs of this corporation, spiritual and temporal, shall be vested in the membership of the corporation, which authority shall be exercised in the manner set forth in the bylaws. Members alone have the authority to adopt and amend bylaws, approve budgets, receive members and govern and conduct the affairs of this corporation. This means that, except where specific provision is made in the bylaws, decisions are made by majority vote of those present and voting at regular and special called meetings of the members. This places a major responsibility on the members to take their responsibilities as members seriously and prayerfully.

3.00 Legal Aspects of Church Organization

3.01 Basic Character

If a nonprofit corporation...

This church is a registered nonprofit corporation under the laws of North Carolina and functions consistent with the requirements of organizations recognized under the Internal Revenue Code as a §501(c)(3) tax-exempt charitable organization. Our nonprofit and exempt character provides certain rights and privileges as well as imposing some limited obligations on our affairs, chiefly financial.

If an unincorporated church....

This church is an unincorporated association under the laws of North Carolina and functions consistent with the requirements of organizations recognized under the Internal Revenue Code as a §501(c)(3) tax-exempt charitable organization. Our exempt character provides certain rights and privileges as well as imposing some limited obligations on our affairs, chiefly financial.

3.02 Political Activities

Consistent with our tax-exempt status, the church is barred from certain electioneering activities and limited to insubstantial lobbying. While the church urges members to exercise their political rights to vote in elections for leadership in our local state and federal government, and in doing so to apply their Christian worldview and moral convictions, neither the church nor its officers speaking on behalf of the church shall endorse any candidate in an election, nor shall the resources, or facilities of the church be used in support of a candidate for office. Literature supporting a candidate shall not be distributed within the church. Literature about issues in a campaign may only be distributed within the church after the review and approval by the pastor. However, nothing in this policy shall discourage the vigorous prophetic witness of the church and its members on issues touching matters of faith, morals and the spiritual health of the nation.

4.00 Membership

Membership is not merely an organizational status, but a spiritual relationship with this body of believers. The policies and procedures regarding membership, and the rights and duties of such are set forth with some particularity in the bylaws. Since members often are not aware of such provisions, they are set forth here as well.

Membership

Section 1. Eligibility.

The membership of this church shall be composed of persons who have confessed Jesus Christ as their Savior and Lord, who have been baptized by immersion, and who have been received by majority vote of members present and voting. The requirement of immersion baptism may, on recommendation of the pastor and consent of the deacons, be suspended in cases of physical impossibility or severe hardship.

Section 2. Admission of Members.

A person may become a member in one of the following ways:

- a. Profession of Faith and Baptism: An applicant may be received on profession of faith as a candidate for baptism, after the administration of which the applicant shall enjoy the full fellowship of the church.
- b. Letter. A member from another church of like faith and order, who has received the ordinance of baptism by immersion, may be received by letter of dismissal and recommendation. If such letter cannot be secured within ninety days, the Clerk shall automatically record such member as “received on statement of experience.”
- c. Statement of Experience. Any person to whom the ordinance of baptism by immersion has been administered may be received as a member upon statement of experience and faith in Christ.
- d. Spiritual Watchcare. Persons who are temporarily residents in the area of the church or who otherwise have not met the full requirements for membership may come under the “spiritual watchcare” of this church. Such persons shall, except as qualified below, have the same rights and privileges as those ordinarily afforded members of this church such as pastoral care, but they shall not vote in church business conference nor hold office in this church or in any of the church organizations filled by vote of the general church membership.

Section 3. Procedure.

Any person desiring membership in this church may present himself as a candidate in response to the invitation at any worship service. The presiding officer shall accept his application and refer it to the membership committee. Either the membership committee or the pastor will meet with the candidate to acquaint him with the bylaws, covenant, statement of faith, and programs and policies of the church. After receiving his affirmative commitment to the responsibilities of membership in this church, the membership committee shall present the applicant to the church, and upon the majority vote of the members present and voting, he shall be accepted in accordance with the constitution. The applicant may choose to confer with the pastor or the Membership Committee before presenting himself to the church as a candidate for membership; if so, he may be received immediately by the majority vote of the church.

Section 4. Duties of Members.

The duties of the members of this church shall be to be just in their dealings, faithful in their engagements, guarded in their conversation, exemplary in their deportment; to be faithful in all the duties essential to the Christian life; to regularly attend the services of the church; to give regularly and systematically to its support and kingdom causes; and to share in its organized work.

Section 5. Rights of Members.

- a. Voting. Except as may be otherwise provide in the bylaws every member is entitled to vote at all elections and on all questions submitted to the membership.
- b. Holding Office. Except as otherwise set forth herein, every member is eligible for consideration by the membership as a candidate for elective offices in the church.
- c. Records. Members shall have access to the principal records of the church including minutes of its governing body and principal financial reports. However,

consistent with Baptist doctrine and practice, these rights shall not include the right to review or inspect individual donor records or personnel files.

Section 6. Inactive Members

The deacons shall not less than every three years review the membership rolls of the church. For those persons who, without good cause, have not participated in the life of the church in the past six months, the deacons shall seek to make personal contact and determine the reasons for their inactivity and encourage them in their relationship with the church. In the event such persons cannot be contacted, or the persons indicate a desire to be placed on an inactive roll, or the deacons believe an inactive status would be appropriate, the deacons may recommend to the church those persons to be placed by an inactive roll. The church by majority vote may then place such persons on the inactive roll. Persons on an inactive roll shall not be entitled to vote on any matter before the church. Persons may be removed from the inactive roll and return to the regular church roll by congregational vote initiated by a request of the member or by recommendation of the deacons.

Section 7. Termination of Membership.

The methods of terminating the membership status of a member shall be as follows:

- a. By Letter. A letter of transfer to unite with another church may be issued, upon request, to another church for any member of this church who is in good standing. All such applications must be passed upon by the church to which transfer is requested.
- b. Removal from Roll. Upon receipt of reliable information that a member has united with another church, this church shall terminate the membership status of the member and the clerk shall remove the member from the roll.
- c. By Exclusion. In the event of persistent breach of a member's covenant vows, the membership, after due notice and opportunity of hearing, and every possible kindly effort to make such action unnecessary, may upon majority vote terminate the membership status of a person in this church for reasons it considers sufficient to warrant such action. Any church discipline shall be exercised in accord with the principles and practices mandated in Matthew 18 with a primary view to the ministry of reconciliation and restoration.
- d. By Personal Request of the Member. Any member shall be removed from the roll and the membership status of that member terminated upon request by that member to the pastor or the deacons.

5.00 Officers and Leadership

5.01 General Officers

We believe that all are called to ministry and gifted by God for each one's calling. Among those gifts are those of leadership, both paid and volunteer. The church bylaws set forth the principal leadership of the church including general officers such as pastoral staff, deacons, treasurer and other financial officers, clerk and those with specific leadership in ministries such as Sunday School, mission groups, and specialized ministries.

5.02 Committees/Task Groups

Much of the work of the church is carried forth by commissions, committees and task groups – short and long term. The bylaws authorize the church to create such committees/task forces and determine their composition and duties. Such groups as are created by the church are then identified with their composition and duties in the committee handbook made available to all the members. This is meant to be a working document that not only guides committees and their members, but so that the whole church may identify areas of ministry and responsibility.

5.03 Other Ministries

The church believes all members are ministers. Thus the work of the church is carried forth not only by formal organizations within the church but by individuals and small groups who witness, serve and minister in effective and wide-ranging ways, without official title of assignment.

5.04 Conflicts of Interest Policy

A. Basic Policy.

Those in positions of church leadership shall recognize the trust that is placed in them as stewards of the resources and ministries of the church. They shall act in the exercise of their duties and leadership with the best interests of the church as the first priority, and prayerfully exercise their best judgment in providing that leadership on behalf of the church. No church staff member, officer or leader shall use his or her position, or knowledge gained through their roles, in any manner that creates a conflict between the interest of the church and its ministry and his or her personal interests. In order to comply with both legal and spiritual principles, and to avoid any appearance of impropriety, church leadership must be sensitive to potential conflicts of interest, and comply with the provisions of the Conflicts of Interest Policy of this church.

B. Procedures in the Event of Potential Conflicts of Interest

The church recognizes that not all potential conflicts of interest are inappropriate, and some actually are in the best interests of the church, as when the church purchases supplies or property from a church member or leader who has a financial interest in the business or property. To assure, however, that such transactions comply with conflicts of interest principles and avoid any appearance of impropriety, the following procedures shall be observed:

1. Disclosure of Interests: Whenever a church leader may have a financial or other personal interest in a proposed transaction, he or she shall disclose such interest prior to the church's consideration of the transaction. Such disclosures should be made in writing to the church body involved in the transaction, and such disclosure documents maintained by the church.
2. Non-Participation in Decisions: The church leader who has such a personal interest shall not vote on whether such a transaction is approved, make motions on the matter, or execute documents formalizing the transaction. Such nonparticipation shall be documented in minutes of the body acting on the proposed transaction.

6.00 Organizations/Ministries of the Church

A portion of the church's program is carried forth in organizations of the church such as the Sunday School, women's and men's mission groups, children and youth organizations, short-term special ministries. Each of these may establish their own policies and procedures which govern their own special efforts. In some instances, the mission and leadership of such groups may be set forth in the bylaws.

7.00 Church in Conference ("Business" Meetings)

7.01 Role of Members

As a congregationally governed church, the major decisions of the church are made by the congregation meeting in regular or special sessions. Members are urged to accept their responsibilities as members to participate in these sessions and bring their gifts of discernment, wisdom and judgment to the process of governing the church.

7.02 Regular and Special Called Meetings

As set forth in the bylaws, regular congregational business meetings are held _____. Special meetings may also be called under procedures set in the bylaws, and notice is provided by announcement at Sunday morning worship services.

7.03 Bylaw Provisions Govern Meetings

The bylaws of the church provide specific rules and procedures regarding meetings, voting, quorums and related matters.

Section B.

General Church Policies

This section of a model church policy manual covers the subjects discussed in this section. As we have frequently noted, these should be reviewed for their appropriateness for each church in terms of its beliefs, ministries and judgments. While these issues often need to be addressed, the policy statements here are by no means the only way to “skin the cat.”

1.00 Property Matters

1.01 Real Property Titles and Ownership

All church real properties shall be held in the name of the church, and their disposition and use subject exclusively to the decisions of the congregation made in accordance with the congregational government of the church as set forth in the governing documents of the church including its charter (constitution) and bylaws.

1.02 Mortgages and Encumbrances

The real properties of the church may be encumbered only with the express consent of the congregation acting in business session.

1.03 Use and Disposition of Church Property

All personal property owned by the church through its purchase, donation or bequeath shall be used and disposed of solely at the discretion of the church, and in a manner consistent with its charter and bylaws and its character as tax-exempt, non-profit organization.

1.04 Property Committee Duties

The responsibility for assuring the church’s interests and purposes are preserved and its policies observed in regard to the real property of the church is vested in the Property Committee which shall assure that the titles to properties are properly recorded, title insurance secured, the property adequately insured and a maintenance and inspection program established as required by these policies. They shall report not less than annually to the congregation on the matters within their responsibility.

1.05 Property Inventory

The Property Committee shall maintain and continually update, an inventory of all church real and personal property, dates of acquisition and cost, any warranties and manuals, any registration or other identifying numbers and where appropriate, assure the attachment of tags or markings identifying the property as church property.

1.06 Inspections

The Property Committee or its designees shall not less than annually, physically inspect all church properties owned or used by the church for any unsafe conditions, and shall report to the church their findings and recommendations for action. In conducting this review they shall consult available property and inspection guidelines which may assist in

their assessment. In the event they report any such unsafe conditions, they shall assure that repairs or other appropriate action is taken promptly, and re-inspect within thirty (30) days to assure the property condition has been rectified. They shall also take immediate steps to warn and otherwise protect persons from injury from any discovered defect. The committee shall maintain records of its inspections, reports and corrective actions taken by themselves or others whether volunteers, employees or independent contractors. Other committees and officers or personnel shall also report to the chairman of the Property Committee or senior staff any conditions they believe may present a hazard or risk of injury.

1.07 Maintenance

The Property Committee shall establish a system of regular maintenance of all church properties and equipment, and maintain records of such maintenance.

1.08 Housekeeping

The Property Committee shall in consultation with staff assure the development and use of detailed regular housekeeping tasks lists and procedures to assure that those responsible for custodial and housekeeping duties have clear guidelines covering responsibilities both for building and grounds regular maintenance.

1.09 General Safety Policies

A. Safety Coordinator

The Property Committee shall appoint a staff member or church member as Safety Coordinator who shall oversee the safety policies and procedures of the church, assure their implementation, and make recommendations for enhanced policies and procedures.

B. Accident Policies

1. The church shall assure the prompt availability of first-aid supplies in all church facilities.
2. The church shall provide first-aid and CPR training for church staff and leaders, especially those who work with children and youth. The church shall have available the names and means of contacting persons with medical assistance skills.
3. The church shall prominently post the contact numbers for police agencies, medical assistance, ambulance service, poison information offices and other appropriate persons or agencies.
4. Accidents shall be promptly reported to all appropriate persons including the church's insurance carrier.
5. The Safety Coordinator and those present shall assure that the Accident-Incident Report Form is promptly completed.
6. The Safety Coordinator and appropriate staff and committees shall investigate all accidents, and take or recommend such steps as they think appropriate to minimize future risks, and review as well the church's response to the accident and any ways to enhance the response.

C. Fire Safety

1. Fire extinguishers shall be available and maintained, as well as other appropriate fire-fighting equipment.
2. Staff (paid and volunteer) shall have adequate training covering fire safety, evacuation, and the use of alarms and equipment
3. Special inspections shall insure that fire hazards are avoided, including care in the storage of flammable liquids, improper use of extension cords or electrical equipment.
4. An evacuation plan shall be in place, including the posting in all facilities of exit directions, and clear signs and functioning exit doors. Evacuation training shall be provided all staff and teachers, including fire drills when appropriate.
5. The Safety Coordinator shall assure the church is in full compliance with fire regulations, and shall seek the counsel of fire department personnel, and insurance company recommendations.

D. Safety Training

The Safety Coordinator shall assure that all staff and church leaders have adequate safety training and appropriate refresher training in many dimensions of safety for personnel and those who utilize the facilities of the church.

1.09 Security/Safety of Participants

A. General Measures

The Property Committee shall develop and recommend to the church specific measures to provide security for church facilities and those involved in the church's ministry. The committee shall regularly review the security measures in place and make recommendations to the church. Entry security policies shall include key-control systems, door and window locks and systems, and appropriate landscaping and lighting to impede unauthorized entry. The committee shall also consider the appropriateness of internal security measures such as visitor registration, video and other monitoring, and fire, smoke and entry alarm systems.

B. Personal Safety and Security Review

The Property Committee shall annually, as well as whenever concerns are expressed or the church requests, review the security of the building and grounds for persons using, entering or leaving the facilities, and assure that appropriate personnel, locks, lighting, security and other systems and procedures are in place to assure to the extent feasible the safety of all those who participate in the life of the church and come on its premises. They shall make a written record of any recommendations, steps taken and responses to specific concerns expressed by persons of church bodies.

1.10 Use of Church Personal Property

A. Church Vehicles

In accord with the church-vehicle policy set forth herein and below, church vehicles may not be loaned or used in any way except for approved church purposes with approved drivers.

B. Other Church Property

Persons requesting short-term and limited use of tables and chairs for non-church, off-premises events shall complete a property request form noting the property to be used, and event for which it is to be used, the dates of such use, and the person responsible for its timely return. The _____ shall review such any request, assure that such use would not conflict with a needed church use, and that such use is appropriate, and grant or deny the request. Where such use may be permitted, factors to be weighed in granting approval of such use will be whether the event includes members of the church, the duration of such use, the event for which the property will be used, and any disruption to normal church activities and maintenance. The use of church-owned powered equipment such as lawnmowers, tractors, snow blowers, computers, audio-visual equipment such as projectors will not be authorized except in very special circumstances.

1.11 Prohibited Activities on and Uses of Church Property

[A church should develop this list consistent with their own practices.]

The following policies govern impermissible uses of church property:

- A. Smoking is not permitted in or on any church property
- B. The use of possession of alcoholic beverages or illegal substances on church property is prohibited.
- C. The use of R- or X-rated videos or other rated materials is prohibited on church property.
- D. The possession of guns or other weapons is prohibited.
- E. The posting of signs or materials on walls in church hallways and foyers is prohibited except with specific approval of the pastor or other designated staff.
- F. The use of church properties for commercial purposes is prohibited.
- G. The use of church properties in support of political candidates in any election is prohibited.
- H. The use of church property by any no-church group or for a non-church activity is prohibited except where approved according to procedures established by the church.
- I. The serving of food or dining is permitted only in designated areas.
- J. Pets are not permitted in the church at any time except as part of an approved educational or other program activity of the church.

1.12 Policy on Non-Church Uses of Facilities

A. General Policy on Non-Church Use

The church seeks to serve the community at large and to assist families in the church in family events requiring facilities such as church fellowship hall. Thus, so long as not in conflict with church activities or policies, certain church facilities may be used by approved community groups and local families.

B. Specific Policies

- 1. Church properties may only be used in a manner and for purposes consistent with the Christian mission of the church, its federal tax-exempt status and property tax exemption.

2. Any use by persons, whether members or non-members for non-church organized or sponsored activities must be approved under the policies of the church as provided herein or in other policy provisions.

3. Persons or groups wishing to use the property for non-church organized or sponsored activities shall submit a written request to the church office indicating the requested time of use, purpose, facilities to be utilized, persons responsible, and other information as may be requested. No use is confirmed or reserved until the application is received and approved, when it is then placed on the church calendar.

4. The church secretary, or in the absence of such staff position, some other person designated by the church shall maintain an official calendar noting scheduled church events as well as approved non-church events.

5. Facility-use policies shall be reviewed annually by the Building and Grounds (Property) Committee who shall make such recommendations as they believe appropriate to the church. The church shall have final authority to adopted and amend policies.

6. Requests for use of the facilities for non-church sponsored events shall be reviewed by the pastor and chair of the Building and Grounds Committee, and if the use is clearly consistent with the policies and the parties requesting use are of known responsibility, they may approve such use, or delegate that authority to staff. In the event requests are less clearly within guidelines or involve individuals or groups unknown to the pastor and/or chair, they shall refer the matter to the full committee.

7. The church reserves the right to require the payment of fees, deposits, fees to cover janitorial services as the nature of use and church policy may require. In certain contexts of use the church may require evidence of insurance.

C. Prohibited Uses

1. No use of the church facilities may be made for commercial purposes, for partisan political efforts, or by organizations that advocate laws or policies directly contrary to the doctrines and beliefs of this church.

2. No smoking or use of alcoholic beverages shall be permitted in any portion of the church's facilities.

3. Church policy generally prohibits the serving or consumption of food in certain facilities including the sanctuary.

D. Facility Specific Policies

Some facilities have special policies and requirements for their use. Among these are the church's recreational facilities and the kitchen-fellowship hall. Policies regarding these must be read and affirmed as part of the application procedure and are available from the church office.

E. Weddings and Funerals

The use of the church property for weddings and funerals is governed by the church wedding policies set forth separately.

1.13 Special Types of Property

1.13A General Cemetery Policy and Management

1. Cemetery Committee

The church shall elect ____ (number) members to serve three-year rotating terms on the Cemetery Policy and Management Committee. The committee shall be charged with upkeep, maintenance, operation and preservation of the church cemetery.

2. Committee Duties

- a. Regularly review cemetery operations and finances and recommend policies and actions to the church regarding the operation, upkeep, financing and development of church cemetery,
- b. Implement policies adopted by the church regarding the cemetery and its funds including provision for the perpetual care of the cemetery, and specifically to assure that funds designated for cemetery maintenance are exclusively dedicated to that purpose.
- c. Report regularly to the church on all matters related to the cemetery including a publication of cemetery operating policies and financial reports.

3. Limitation on Powers

The committee shall have no power without express authorization of the church to convey, mortgage or otherwise dispose of property except the allocation of cemetery plots in accord with the established procedures of the church.

4. Financial Affairs

All funds received and expenditures shall be processed through the church financial officers and recorded on the books of the church

1.13B Church Recreational Facilities

The various committees whose activities involve the play and recreational areas of the church (including Property Committee, children's ministry and youth ministry committees and staff) shall develop specific proposed policies covering a range of topics related to the safety, use, security, appropriate activities, behavioral expectations, routine inspection and maintenance and liability protections associated with the use of these areas by church programs, outside organizations and individuals without express permission or church supervision.

These committees shall report to the church, and the church shall consider for adoption appropriate policies, and when adopted, incorporate them into this policy manual, and where appropriate provide public and posted notice of these policies.

1.13C Church Parking Lots

[See the discussions of Parking Lot Policy options in the General Church Policy section. This policy draft here assumes the church wishes to limit parking lot usage to church purposes, but does NOT wish to create a substantial enforcement mechanism.]

1. Design and Safety

The Property Committee's Safety Coordinator shall assure that parking lot design of traffic flow of pedestrians and vehicles has been carefully reviewed for safety.

Appropriate markings on the parking lot and signs will further the safety considerations. Where appropriate, the committee may recommend stationing church traffic personnel to

assure safety in picking up or discharging passengers, and in entering streets and highways.

2. Use

The use of church parking lots shall be limited to persons on church-related uses. The Property Committee shall arrange for appropriate signs in the parking lot indicating its use is limited to persons on church-related activities. The notice shall also indicate that overnight use is prohibited without special permit. The committee shall create a special parking permit which may be given to persons and placed in vehicles which do have authorization for use of the lot other than immediate church matters. The committee may also create a notice of unauthorized use that may be placed on unauthorized vehicles advising the owner of the improper use and stating the policy.

c. Other Uses

Use of the church parking lots for other than parking is prohibited except by prior written permission. Neither church groups nor others may use the parking lots for other activities such as games, skateboarding, rollerblading and similar activities. Because of the risk of potential injuries, this policy shall be strictly enforced by notice in the parking lot advising improper users, and advising parents of improper use by their children when necessary.

1.14 Church Land Rented to Others

In the event any church real property is leased, rented or use permitted in any form by other persons or groups, the Property Committee, staff and officers shall assure that the use is lawful, that the users maintain insurance coverage for damages or liabilities arising from their use or possession, and that the use is not inconsistent with the values, beliefs and mission of the church.

1.15 Insurance

The Property Committee shall secure professional insurance advice and assure that adequate insurance coverage is obtained including property, general liability, business auto, appropriate to the ministries of the church, and sufficient to provide coverage for liabilities arising from the ministry of members and staff, both volunteer and paid. Not less than \$2,000,000 in liability coverage shall be included.

1.16 Zoning and the Use of Properties and Bona fide Church Purposes

The Property Committee, officers and staff shall address all uses of the real property set forth in church documents and establish programs that are grounded in the church's understanding of its character and mission. These programs shall be centered in biblical principles and/or commands which have historically been recognized as proper functions and ministries of the church. These clarifications shall affirm to this church and public agencies such as zoning authorities the legitimacy of these programs as authorized by our character and any zoning authority to function as a church.

1.17 Property Tax Exemption

The Properties Committee and church officers shall seek to assure that in so far as is possible, all real estate of the church is being presently used for church purposes in such a

way as to legitimately qualify for tax exemption. Applications for such exemption shall be timely filed in the appropriate offices.

2.00 Kitchen and Food Service

(This area is one where church policies vary widely, and each church should develop and set forth policies appropriate to its facilities and activities.)

2.01 Policy Responsibility

The church shall appoint a special committee to propose a set of policies governing the use of the kitchen and food service at the church. Such policies shall address permissible uses and procedures for use, kitchen maintenance and cleaning, use of the kitchen by outside persons or groups, appropriate sanitation policies, and persons with responsibility for assuring compliance. The church shall review any recommendations, and upon adoption of any policies, they shall be added to this policy manual, and where appropriate posted in the church facilities, and provided to any proposed users of the affected facilities. Once policies are adopted, the committee and its leadership shall assure the effective implementation of such policies.

2.02 Kitchen Use

Use of the kitchen facilities and equipment must be approved by the church in accord with policies and procedures set by the church.

[One sample church policy follows.]

Fellowship Hall / Kitchen Usage Policy

The church has provided this facility and furnishings for your enjoyment. Please abide by the following guidelines. Our major concern is cleanliness and safety. Furnishings and equipment are church property and are not to be taken outside the facility without prior approval. Decorations should be limited to tables and shelves. Please do not mar, deface or make holes in walls. Please do not use tape on doors, walls or windows. In all cases, a church member must be a part of the group and be the responsible person for the function.

1. Schedule use of the Fellowship Hall/kitchen with the church office. Provide date, time, group, point of contact and phone number.
2. Using group is responsible for:
 - Checking out keys from the office, if needed.
 - Setup of tables, chairs, and equipment. Please do not use unfamiliar kitchen equipment without prior instructions.
 - Cleanup (cleaning supplies in kitchen or washer/dryer area)
 - Thoroughly clean kitchen area/stoves/counter tops, etc., and clean the coffee bar in the Fellowship Hall.
 - Sweep and mop Fellowship Hall/kitchen areas.
 - Wipe off all tables/chairs with damp cloth. All garbage should be taken outside.
 - No leftover food or drink items to be stored in refrigerator or freezer. Throw items out or take home. Don't leave them to accumulate.
 - Group items need to be marked with your group name and stored in your area of the pantry or refrigerator/freezer.

- All dishes/pots and pans/utensils to be placed in their proper place.
- All dish towels/potholders/cloth items to be cleaned (at church or taken home) and returned to their proper place.
- Return tables, chairs and equipment to the locations as indicated on the diagram posted in the Fellowship Hall. Return extra tables and chairs to classrooms, as appropriate.
- Check thermostat and turn off or adjust, as required.
- Inspection of the area by a responsible group member.
- Lockup of all doors in Fellowship Hall/kitchen. Lock and check all outside building doors. Ensure the entire church is secure.
- Return keys to the office, if required.

2.02 Kitchen and Food Preparation Policies

Any use whether by the church or authorized others must conform to permissible-use policies established by the church concerning sanitation practices, fees and cleanup. Such policies shall be posted or provided in a binder available at the office and/or in the church kitchen.

2.03 Non-church Use of Food Service Facilities

Use of food service facilities of the church by any persons or groups not recognized as a church activity must be approved by the church in accord with procedures established by the church including written application and written approval and scheduling on the official church calendar. Such policies may include fees for non-church use, permitted and non-permitted used, identification of the group seeking use and responsible person, responsibilities for cleanup, food-service equipment that may and may not be used. Any user agrees to comply with all church policies regarding appropriate use of church facilities.

2.04 Church Regular Dinners/Meals

In the event the church provides regular meals in connection with church events, such as Wednesday night dinners, the designated committee shall develop specific policies regarding preparation, serving, charges, cleanup, use of tickets and other matters related to safe and effective provision of these services.

2.05 Food Banks and Other Charitable Food Services

If the church offers charitable food services such as food banks, “meals-on-wheels” type activities, special dinners for needy families, the designated committee shall set forth in writing specific policies and procedures regarding such activities including such areas as duties and responsibilities, financial procedures, health and safety issues, eligible persons, adequate supervision of food preparation, facilities security, and reporting.

3.00 Worship and Ministry

(Church and pastoral policies in this area are highly individualized, and the church should review and develop appropriate policies in the major areas which would normally include weddings, funerals, baptisms, baby dedications, revivals and homecomings. Other activities that may create special policies could be mission trips, work projects and

similar activities. Where the policies chiefly relate to concerns for children and youth, they are addressed in that section of this policy manual. The few policies noted here governing weddings are intended to be illustrative of issues that might be addressed. The author does not intend to suggest these are the “best.”)

3.01 General Worship Policies

[The church might here set forth any general policies about worship services, including any church commitments to styles and leadership. If there is a “Worship Leader” position, whether staff or volunteer, the role should be clearly set forth.]

3.02 Music Policy

[The church might here set forth any general policies about music including responsibilities, role of a Music Committee if such exists, role of staff such as any Minister of Music, pianist and/or organist. Some churches have also established policies regarding types of music they believe is appropriate in the church.]

3.03 Lord’s Supper Policies

[The church might here set forth any general policies about the Lord’s Supper – its preparation, frequency, etc.]

3.04 Baptism Policies

[The church might here set forth any general policies about baptisms.]

3.05 Missions Support

This church affirms the centrality of the call to missions clearly set forth by our Lord in his command to “Go into all the world...” We believe vigorous support of world missions, both financially and in personal involvement, is not only in obedience to our Lord’s command, but invigorates the local church in all its life. Therefore, we adopt the following general policies:

- A. Mission committees and mission organizations of the church will be encouraged to promote and further the church’s participation in mission support and engagement, and recommend programs and activities which enhance our mission consciousness.
- B. We encourage mission awareness at all levels in our church’s life and support the development of children’s and youth mission organizations and activities.
- C. We affirm our church’s commitment to support world missions through associational, state and national bodies, and will promote such mission support through our budget and special offerings.
- D. We will through newsletters and our times of worship and fellowship share the urgency of world missions and the mission work being carried on through the support of the church.
- E. We encourage mission workers to share within our congregation their work; the Missions Committee will work with the staff to assure regular personal sharing on mission needs and news.
- F. We commit ourselves to systematic prayer support for missions, both in formal times of church prayer and worship, and to facilitating informed and specific prayer support for missions by our membership.

G. The church shall consider periodic mission conferences that provide intensive and personal exposure to world missions, missionaries and the scope and urgency of issues of Christian missions and freedom of religion throughout the world.

H. Direct church support for specific missionaries either on a regular or special offering basis is encouraged in principle, but such support must be approved by the church as part of a larger missions strategy. Priority for any such support would be for members of this church whom seek endorsement and support in full-time mission service, who have demonstrated a mission commitment, evidenced an appropriate spiritual maturity, have the personal and professional skills appropriate for the ministry they anticipate, and have the organizational links and endorsements essential for effective ministry. Persons seeking such support should consult with the pastor and other church leaders to discuss their sense of calling and the way in which the church can be appropriately involved

I. Individual members are encouraged to give continuing support to mission personnel or programs with which they have some special interest or personal relationship. As an aspect of world mission and witness to “all nations,” the church shall seek to respond with special ministries and programs to “internationals” living and often studying or working in our communities. The mission organizations and committees of our church shall seek to identify such internationals, develop means of fostering relationships at the family and church levels with such internationals, seek in sensitive and appropriate ways to witness to internationals, and in all cases to assure such persons have an understanding of our Lord’s love for all persons as set forth in John 3:16.

J. The church recognizes the value in direct mission involvement by the church members, and thus seeks to enable a range of mission projects and trips. All such church mission trips must be reviewed by staff and lay leadership and approved by the church. A request for approval of a proposed mission trips shall set forth the following:

1. Means to assure appropriate prior training,
2. Clear expectations and requirements for those who will participate,
3. Demonstrating a clear spiritual and ministry perspective,
4. A sound financial plan and any recommendation for a church-approved special mission-trip fund,
5. Identification of local and other organizations with whom such a project would be coordinated,
6. Identification of specific contacts with church and mission leadership at the place of ministry with whom the project would be conducted,
7. Scope and nature of adult involvement if the project is a youth ministry project,
8. Assurance of appropriate travel arrangements, and
9. Plans for addressing emergencies which may arise, such as health emergencies.

3.06 Weddings Policy

[Church policies here will vary widely, and we note here only one sample. Policies would normally cover such matters as counseling, making reservations, fees, music, flowers, photography, etc.)

Wedding Policy

It is our desire that your wedding be the happiest experience possible and that it be all God designed it to be. God created man and woman and intended the two to be joined in marriage, so that each might give to the other what each lacked alone. Because we desire to live within God's principles for marriage and are committed to building strong marriages, the following are the guidelines governing marriages in this church:

- A. Not Being Unequally Yoked. The church believes that Scripture (2 Corinthians 6:14-16) prevents a pastor from marrying a Christian to a non-Christian.
- B. Divorce. We will consider remarriage where a biblically allowed divorce has occurred (Matthew 5:31-32). A minimum of twelve (12) months must have elapsed since the divorce became final. In cases where one or both parties have been divorced twelve (12) months or longer, the pastor asked to perform the ceremony must decide, in light of Scripture, whether or not to perform the ceremony (Mark 10:2-12; Luke 16:18; Matthew 5:31-32; Matthew 19:1-9).
- C. Premarital Sex. Couples who are living together, or who are involved in a physical relationship, will need to separate and remain abstinent until marriage (1 Corinthians 6:13-20; Ephesians 5:3).
- D. Pre-Marital Pregnancy. In case of pre-marital pregnancy, the marriage may or may not be performed depending on the maturity of the persons involved and other considerations. The final decision to perform the ceremony will be determined by the pastor asked to perform the ceremony.
- E. Officiating. Weddings held on church facilities are officiated by pastors from the church. Guest pastors may participate in the wedding at the discretion of the officiating pastor.
- F. Pre-Marital Counseling. Pre-marital counseling is required by attending either the church's ten-week program or an equivalent program approved by the pastor.
- G. Music. The atmosphere of the ceremony is established by the music. All music should be part of the worship experience. Because a wedding is a service of worship, secular music is typically not appropriate. Final approval of music is the responsibility of the Wedding Committee. The church will provide an organist for the ceremony. If you wish to have a guest musician, this must be discussed with and approved by the Wedding Committee.
- H. Scheduling and Procedures. Persons planning a church wedding should contact the office and pastor to discuss the church wedding policies, and schedule counseling and use of facilities. Church policies regarding use of the facilities including the sanctuary and fellowship hall, reception policies should also be reviewed.

3.07 Funerals

(Insert your policies here)

3.08 Other policies regarding worship services

4.00 Special Church Activities

(Other than children and youth activities which are discussed in the Children/Youth Section)

4.01 Homecomings

(Insert your policies here)

4.02 Mission Projects/Teams

(Insert your policies here)

4.03 Other policies concerning activities

5.00 Vehicles

5.01 Transportation and Vehicle Policy

A. Transportation Committee

The church shall establish a Transportation Committee or task force consisting of persons such as staff, potential drivers, parents and others to develop, recommend, and implement appropriate policies regarding transportation needs including church-owned vehicles and borrowed vehicles in all aspects of the church's ministry.

B. Authorized Drivers and Driver Policies

Policies regarding drivers of church or non-church vehicles for church-sponsored activities.

1. The church shall require the completion of information forms for all persons driving church vehicles or non-church vehicles on church-sponsored programs and activities. The driving records of all staff and volunteer drivers operating church-owned vehicles shall be checked. No person may drive a church-owned vehicle or drive a non-church vehicle on behalf of the church who has had more than one moving violations or accident within the last year, or any reckless driving conviction or DWI/DUI charged or convicted within the past five (5) years, nor have records prior to three (3) years evidencing a pattern of irresponsible driving.
2. No persons under twenty-five (25) may operating a church-owned vehicle, or drive a non-church-owned vehicle where the church is responsible for or arranges the transportation.
3. Drivers shall be instructed on safety procedures for passengers entering or exiting the church vehicle. Such procedures shall be established, communicated and observed.
4. Trips exceeding 300 miles require the addition of a second authorized driver.

C. Other Transportation Policies

1. The Transportation Committee shall establish a regular and documented maintenance program for all church vehicles.
2. All staff and volunteers working with children and youth groups shall be provided a copy of the transportation policy.
3. Parents must be advised of and approve any transportation of their children in borrowed vehicles by non-church staff or volunteer drivers. Such approval may be a blanket approval for transportation within twenty-five (25) miles of the church. There must be a separate and specific authorization for travel beyond twenty-five (25) miles or into any other state.
4. A regular inspection and record system shall be established and implemented for each use of a church-owned vehicle including a log of each trip, purpose, driver, number

of passengers and notation of inspection and indication of any problems with the vehicle or incidents with passengers or others.

5. An incident-report form for any accident or injury associated with the vehicle whether involving an accident or not shall be completed by the driver.
6. Non-owned vehicles used in any church activity involving out-of-town transportation to have passed a current inspection, and evidence must be provided of insurance coverage on the vehicle at a minimum level established by the Transportation Committee.
7. The church shall secure a business automobile insurance policy to cover damages to any church vehicle, injuries and damage to the property of others, and non-owned vehicle coverage that will cover vehicles owned and used by volunteers in church activities.
8. An additional adult besides the driver must be present on any van or bus, whether church-owned or borrowed, transporting more than seven passengers.
9. The Transportation Committee shall establish a code of conduct of youth/children who are passengers on church trips, and parents and drivers shall be advised of the policy. A copy shall be kept in each church-owned vehicle.
10. Church vehicles shall have appropriate emergency equipment on hand including safety warning lights, first-aid kits, flashlights and other equipment prescribed by the Transportation Committee. Procedural guidelines for drivers and adult supervisors in the event of a problem shall be established, including emergency numbers for church personnel or parental contacts.
11. Seat belts must be present and worn at all times by all passengers.
12. Transporting hitchhikers or unauthorized passengers is prohibited.
13. Unattended church vehicles shall be locked at all times.
14. Current vehicle registration cards and insurance information shall be kept in all church vehicles.
15. All these transportation policies shall be communicated to parents and others involved in church transportation operations.

6.00 Copyright

The church is committed to respecting all copyrights and prohibits staff or volunteers from any forms of copyright infringements. Church-owned copy machines; computers, tape duplicators, sound-recording devices or any other forms of duplicating or reproducing equipment should not be used to copy or reproduce any forms of copyrighted materials for ministry or personal use. Senior personnel are expected to understand and encourage compliance with this policy.

The church shall post on all photocopiers the following statement:

U.S. Copyright laws protect the rights of copyright holders and limit or prohibit copies being made of copyrighted materials including books and music. The making of illegal copies on this machine is prohibited by the church. In the event of any uncertainty about whether any copying is proper, please contact _____.

7.00 General Computer Policy

7.01 General Policies

- A. The Nominating Committee shall recommend and the church appoint a Computer-Technology Committee, or assign such duties to an existing committee, charged with recommending action in regard to the development and implementation of appropriate computer technology and policies governing the same in the ministry of the church.
- B. The committee shall work with the staff and professionals in the field to establish short and long-range plans for the use of computer and related technologies both to improve the efficiency of the internal administration of the church and its outreach as well. The committee shall also insure the application of the policies set forth herein.
- C. All computers on which church data are stored shall be owned by the church, which retains all rights to such data, and full access to the church computers and their data as set forth in the personnel policy.
- D. An inventory shall be kept of all computer hardware and software, and all hardware shall be identified with appropriate markers.
- E. The committee shall assure the integrity and security of church data on computers through appropriate systems of regular, secure backups, redundancy and appropriate access codes for different data and files.
- F. Computer file systems and passwords shall be utilized which recognize the confidentiality of certain records and assure only authorized persons have access to sensitive material.
- G. An appropriate system for maintenance of computer systems and enhancements through upgrades of hardware and software shall be established.
- H. Virus protection software shall be installed and systems in place for its upgrade and frequent use.
- I. The committee shall recommend appropriate steps to assure that the computers and their data are protected against electrical anomalies, surges or interruptions in service.
- J. The committee shall periodically review these policies and the computer policies in the Personnel Policy section and Employee Handbook, make recommendations regarding any changes, and report on their effectiveness.
- K. The committee shall make recommendations regarding training of staff and others to enhance the effectiveness of these systems in the ministry of the church.
- L. Computer data files shall be annually reviewed, and data no longer essential in the ordinary operations shall be deleted, and where appropriate, those files stored in external media secured appropriately.
- M. Computers no longer used by the church must have their memories effectively cleared before disposal of any type to assure that data is not inadvertently accessible to purchasers or others who acquire the computer or its parts.

7.02 Computer Use Policy

(Set forth in the Personnel Policy section of this policy manual.)

7.03 Website Policy

A. Management/Purpose Issues

1. Control

The church shall establish a Website Communications Committee which under the final authority of the congregation shall have responsibility for developing, controlling, monitoring and managing the church's website. The committee may, with the consent of the church and as the budget so provides, contract out certain technical services related to website maintenance so long as final control remains with the church and the privacy and security of data is preserved. The committee may also, with the consent of the church, contract with such professionals as may be required in establishing or expanding the capacity or scope of website church communications. The committee shall annually recommend a budget for website communications and report on all aspects of the site's activities.

2. Nature of the Site

The website shall serve as a means of communication to and from members, friends and guests about the church, its ministries and activities. Its purposes are membership enhancement and services, outreach and evangelism, and sharing vitality of Christian life and the church. It shall also provide means for church members and others to communicate with staff through e-mail links.

3. Copyright

The church shall reserve its copyright on its site contents by providing the following: "This site and all material contained in this site are protected by copyright. This includes text, graphics, logos and images. Permission is granted to download materials from the site for personal, noncommercial use. The images of people or places used on this site are either owned by the church or used with permission, and use by others is prohibited."

B. Content of Site Policies

1. Use of Links to Other Sites

The site shall include links to other sites offering denomination information, religious news, Bible study materials, church resources, world mission sites, and other ministries compatible with this church's ministry. No link shall be provided to any site whose materials would be objectionable and inappropriate for children, nor to any site whose express doctrines and beliefs are contrary to the core convictions of this church.

The site shall contain this statement regarding such links: "As a courtesy, this site may offer links to other websites. The church has not reviewed every page of every website that might be linked, and is not responsible for, nor necessarily agrees with all the contents of other sites. Users who find materials on any linked website objectionable should report the same to the Website Ministry Committee which will evaluate the appropriateness of the link."

2. Church policy shall prohibit any of the following on its website:

- a. The website shall not contain any commercial website links or any other commercial advertising.
- b. No copyrights or trademarks such as logos or artwork shall be displayed on the site without the permission of the copyright holder.
- c. The website shall comply with the church's nonprofit status by avoiding support for or against candidates for public office during elections.

3. In regard to confidentiality and security concerns, the website shall conform to the following policies:

a. Security and nondisclosure policies shall be communicated on the site itself.

b. Users shall be advised that confidential information should not be sent to any response option or e-mail link within the site.

Any communication or material you transmit to this site by electronic mail is not necessarily secure and will not be presumed to be confidential.

c. The site shall have security measures in place to protect the loss, misuse and alteration of any information under the church's control. All servers, network hardware, and storage devices will be housed in monitored, secure and limited access locations. Data will be stored in an encrypted fashion, and access to outside persons is not permitted.

d. The church is committed to the privacy of persons who visit the site. The names or addresses, e-mail or otherwise, obtained from persons who volunteer to provide such on the site, such as signing in a visitor's guest book, would not be made available to third parties, sold, or otherwise distributed beyond the church. On-site registration forms may be utilized to allow users to provide contact information such as their name and e-mail address, as well as demographic information. Such information is never sold or disclosed to any third person or other organization and only disclosed as may be required by law.

e. The church is committed to insure that persons will not be able to use information on the site for purposes which pose a risk to others, especially children. For this reason,

1) The site will not use any full names of children nor provide any identifying information (name, address, school) with any image of a child, faces or addresses of children.

2) No maps or directions to members or to staff members' homes shall be provided.

3) No member's name, phone number or e-mail addresses shall be provided without their permission.

4) If there is an interactive component that allows persons to ask questions and receive e-mail responses, requests from children will be dealt with consistent with this policy: "We will only use the online contact information such as e-mail to respond directly to a child's request on a one-time basis only, and the child will not be contacted or re-contacted further for any other purpose without the parent's consent."

8.00 Crisis Management Plan

The church shall appoint a Crisis Management Planning Team to explore the need for emergency/crisis management plans for the church to respond effectively to a range of crises, natural disasters as well as other personal, community or national crises which pose immediate risks and which require an organized response. The Planning Team shall report back to the church on their recommendations for action including the possibility of a permanent Crisis Management Team with specific contingency plans for a range of contexts.

Section C.

Personnel Policies

(The most sweeping personnel policies are those set forth in the Employee Handbook, a model of which is provided separately from this section of the general church policy manual. It could be included directly in the church policy manual, but it is often prepared separately because it is for a specific audience – employees. Since the Employee Handbook does not cover non-employee issues, such as volunteers, and a few other items, those are covered in this section. Frequent reference would be provided here to the Employee Handbook.)

1.00 Personnel Policy Responsibility

The church retains final authority over all personnel matters including the adoption of personnel policies and an employee handbook. The church retains final authority over all hiring, employee compensation, discipline and termination of employees, but may delegate such duties to a Personnel Committee elected by the church.

1.01 Personnel Committee

A. The Personnel Committee shall be responsible for making recommendations to the church on personnel policy, and when such policies are adopted by the church, to assure they are communicated to the church, staff and employees, are understood, and posted where appropriate and observed. The committee shall review such policies regularly, assure that it stays informed about changes in legal duties, and make recommendations to the church, staff and employees that assure a lawful, healthy and effective work environment.

B. The Personnel Committee (or others to whom it designates the responsibility) shall assure annual employee-performance reviews, be available to address employee concerns, and assure prompt response to employee communications about unhealthy, dangerous or improper working conditions. They shall be available to consider any concerns regarding sexual harassment or other inappropriate conduct toward employees.

C. The committee shall assure that proper records are maintained for all employees.

D. The committee may assign supervisory duties and other responsibilities to senior staff such as the pastor or a church administrator so long as it retains final authority and properly oversees the personnel process, and hears any appeals, charges or concerns.

2.00 General Principles and Foundations of Personnel Policy

The church shall adopt and implement a comprehensive Employee Handbook containing personnel policies affecting employees. Such policies shall be consistent with the biblical and spiritual commitments of the church and comply with applicable federal and state law. It shall evidence a recognition of the value of those who serve the church as employees, and biblical recognition of the value of work, and the responsibility of the church to treat all employees with honor and respect.

2.01 The Employee Handbook

The Employee Handbook with its personnel provisions is an expression of the current operating policies and procedures of the church, and is subject to change at any time through the procedures of the church as set forth in its bylaws and other documents. The

church is charged with periodic review of all the policies and procedures set forth herein, and may prospectively change these policies and procedures. Thus, while the church is committed to operating within its policies and procedures, these may be modified from time to time. Thus, this manual is not a contractual promise to hold in force these specific policies and procedures. This handbook is not to be construed as a guarantee of continued employment or specific benefits. The church reserves the right to revise this handbook at any time. Employees are responsible for becoming familiar with new policies or procedures. No oral statements or representations can in any way change or alter the provisions of this handbook. This handbook cannot, however, anticipate every situation or answer every question about employment at the church. The church shall make every reasonable effort when policies and procedures are modified, to advise those affected of the changes.

2.02 Nondiscrimination

As a matter of faithfulness to biblical principles, the church shall not practice or condone discrimination against persons based on their race, color, ethnicity, national origin or age. This commitment derives from biblical teachings, from the example of our Lord, the command of the Great Commission and the witness of the early church in breaking down barriers of race and ethnicity.

2.03 Hiring Consistent with Spiritual Character

We will, consistent with our calling and character, reserve employment and volunteer workers to those who share our Christian faith and commitment and can thus further our mission. This, too, is consistent with our commitment to spiritual integrity and faithfulness to biblical admonitions. It shall be the employment policy of this church that a condition of employment at this church is a personal faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. Workers should maintain an active membership in a local Christian church and their lifestyle should be consistent with biblical teachings. Applicants shall be asked to affirm their Christian commitment and provide information on their current church involvement. The lifestyle expectations apply to conduct both on the job and outside the workplace, and are governed by biblical teachings as understood and applied by this local church. The lifestyle expectations shall be those solely as determined by the church in the exercise of its spiritual discernment.

3.00 Sexual Harassment

3.01 Policy

This church is committed to providing a work environment for employees and volunteers in keeping with Christian principles and free of unlawful harassment and any other inappropriate harassment even if not covered by law. Church policy prohibits sexual harassment and harassment because of race, color, national origin, ancestry, physical or mental disability, medical condition, marital status, age, or any other basis protected by federal, state or local law, ordinance, or regulation. This church's anti-harassment policy applies to all persons involved in the operation of the church and prohibits unlawful harassment by any employee or volunteer worker of the church, including supervisors and co-workers. Prohibited unlawful harassment because of sex, race, ancestry, physical

or mental disability, mental condition, marital status, or age, includes, but is not limited to, the following behavior:

- A. Verbal conduct such as epithets, derogatory jokes or comments, slurs or unwanted sexual advances, invitations or comments;
- B. Visual conduct such as derogatory and/or sexually-oriented posters, photography, cartoons, drawings or gestures;
- C. Physical conduct such as assault, unwanted touching, blocking normal movement or interfering with work;
- D. Threats and demands to submit to sexual requests as a condition of continued employment, or to avoid some other loss, and offers of employment benefits in return for sexual favors; and
- E. Retaliation for having reported or threatening to report harassment.

Any employee or volunteer who believes that she/he or another employee has been subjected to any form of unlawful harassment should register a complaint to her/his supervisor, the senior pastor, chairman of the Deacons or the chairman of the Personnel Committee. The complaint should specify the name(s) of the individuals involved (including any witnesses) and a description of the specific conduct complained of as sexual or other harassment. The church will immediately undertake an effective, thorough, and objective investigation and attempt to resolve the situation. If the church determines that improper conduct, whether unlawful or improper, even if not unlawful, harassment has occurred, effective remedial action will be taken commensurate with the severity of the offense. Appropriate action will also be taken to deter any future harassment. The church will also take appropriate action to remedy any losses that may have occurred as a result of the harassment. The church will not retaliate against any employee for filing a complaint and will not knowingly permit retaliation by any other employee or elected official.

The church encourages all employees to report any incidents of harassment forbidden by this policy immediately so that complaints can be quickly and fairly resolved.

3.02 The Sexual Harassment Complaint Process

The individual has the right to decide how to deal with harassment. If you believe you are being harassed, you should speak up or your lack of action may be interpreted as acceptance. Incidents of harassment should be documented. Keep a written record of the incident(s) including what the harasser did and said, who saw what, your response and to whom you reported anything. You may decide to proceed informally or you may decide to initiate formal action immediately, or later if the informal procedures are unsuccessful.

Informal Process

Not all incidents of harassment require formal complaints to deal when the situation and may be resolved in an informal manner. Sometimes an exaggerated response to a misinterpreted action can cause great pain and turmoil out of proportion to the incident.

Informal resolution options:

1. When you feel you are being harassed, communicate your disapproval and objections immediately to the harasser, either personally or in writing, and request the harasser to stop.

2. If the harassment does not stop or if you are not comfortable with addressing the harasser directly, you may take your concern to the Senior pastor or chair of the Personnel Committee for discussion and advice. All conversations with the Personnel Committee Chair or pastor with respect to allegations of harassment are to be kept confidential.

Formal Process

You may register in writing or otherwise, a complaint of sexual harassment and request the Personnel Committee or a special committee it appoints to investigate the allegations. They will examine the allegations through interviews with you and any witnesses and the alleged harasser. The investigating committee will then determine as best as they can, whether any sexual harassment has occurred and its severity, frequency and the appropriate manner of dealing with the harassment, if in their opinion the allegations are founded. This may include obtaining the apology of the harasser, suggesting counseling and/or education for the harasser, informal or formal reprimands, and disciplinary procedures including possible termination in cases so warranting. If it is determined that, in their opinion, no harassment has taken place, the confidentiality of all parties should be maintained.

Legal Action

If this church is an employer covered by Title VII of the Civil Rights Act, an employee may bring a complaint directly with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission which will investigate the allegations. The Commission investigates and may prosecute complaints of harassment in employment. Any employee who believes that prohibited harassment has occurred or who believes that retaliation for resisting or filing a complaint has occurred may file a complaint with the appropriate federal agency. The nearest offices for the federal agencies are listed in the telephone book.

4.00 Hiring, Training and Supervision of Employees

4.01 Hiring Processes

The Personnel Committee shall implement a comprehensive hiring process for all employees that assures an appropriate hiring process including recruitment, applications, interviews, reference and background checks, and disclosure to applicants of the faith, mission and expectations of the church. The extent of any testing, references and background checks will be adapted to the nature of the position.

4.02 Training

All new staff or staff transferred to new duties shall be provided with orientation and training in connection with their responsibilities. This training should include full familiarity with the policy and procedures manual of the church and its Employee Handbook. The nature of the responsibilities will affect the scope of this training, with special training emphases where the task involves financial systems, working with children, operation of motor vehicles, food service, sanitary systems, etc.

4.03 Supervision

Employees shall be informed of who has supervisory authority and responsibilities and the duties that entails. Such immediate supervisors are responsible for directing the employee's activities, establishing priorities, giving counsel to employees on-job performance, and being involved in periodic performance reviews. Employees shall be advised about to whom complaints may be made regarding supervisor misconduct.

5.00 Performance Review

The Personnel Committee shall assure an annual comprehensive performance review which documents areas of achievement and special competence and excellence, as well as areas of substandard performance, expectations for improvements and benchmarks for assessing such improvement. These shall be documented as provided in the Employee Handbook.

6.00 Discipline and Termination

The Employee Handbook shall contain specific and detailed provisions for disciplinary action in regard to employee misconduct or failure to adequately perform the assigned duties. Supervisors shall be informed of the procedural requirements in such discipline or termination.

7.00 Volunteers

7.01 Central Role

The church recognizes the primary role volunteers play in the many ministries of the church, including responsibilities often held by employees in other organizations. These duties include a wide range of positions, some involving the highest levels of trust and responsibility such as financial involvements, working with children and youth, informal counseling, teaching and ministries within and without the church facility.

7.02 Appropriate Screening, Training and Supervision

The church shall implement specific systems for appropriate screening, training and supervision based on the nature and context of the volunteer's work.

7.03 Special Risk Contexts

The church shall be especially sensitive to volunteers whose activities are of a nature and context involving dangerous conditions or of special risks. Among these are persons who operate vehicles owned by or on behalf of the church, who handle or have access to substantial funds, who work with infants, children or youth, and similar contexts. The church shall develop specific measures to assure the competence and reliability of such volunteers. They want to assure that their backgrounds do not suggest any undue risk. Information forms, releases and background or reference checks shall be utilized when appropriate to the nature of the duties. Appropriate forms for be developed or adopted for this process.

With volunteers as well as employees, the church shall assure appropriate training, supervision and periodic performance review.

Section D.

Financial Policies

Note: As noted elsewhere in this volume, churches use a range of terminology to describe church leadership, officers and sub-groups. Churches should adapt the language of any policy to reflect their preferred usages. For example, the policy sections here refer to “committees” – a common designation. Many churches prefer language such as “task groups,” “teams” or “ministry groups.” Similarly, some churches refer to “church business meetings,” while others use an older language “church-in-conference.” Of course, even “committee” names vary. In this section we refer regularly to a “Finance Committee.” This committee may in some churches be “Budget and Finance Committee,” a “Finance Committee,” a “Stewardship Committee,” or other name. Not only in “language” and terminology, but in substantive content, churches should adopt those policies and procedures which reflect their own structures, ministries and styles they believe appropriate to their own context – and faithful to their sense of biblical calling. What is NOT optional, however, is that policies ought to reflect careful judgment, legal aspects related to authority and accountability as well as non-profit organizational and tax law affecting churches.

1.00 General Principles

1.01 Biblical Principle of Stewardship

_____ Church recognizes the biblical and legal principles of stewardship of all financial resources and the challenge to invest the resources God provides with faithfulness, wisdom and vision.

1.02 Biblical Means of Financial Support of the Church

_____ Church believes the principal means for the financial support of the ministry of the church in its local as well as global witness is the gifts of tithes, offerings and labor of God’s people who are challenged to give generously and joyfully as God has prospered, recognizing that they are stewards of all that God has given them.

1.03 Mission Commitment

_____ Church believes that its financial resources should be prudently invested not only in a local ministry in and through the local church, but in mission outreach across the community, nation and world. Mission support both through cooperative giving to mission programs and locally developed missions shall form a prominent part of the financial allocations of the church.

1.04 Support for the Larger Church

_____ Church, as a Baptist church, shall cooperate and generously support the mission and other ministries of the associations and conventions with which it is affiliated.

1.05 Responsible Systems of Management and Control

_____ Church, as a matter of proper stewardship, shall implement appropriate financial systems to assure compliance with legal obligations, sound financial management, and prudential systems of accountability and control.

2.00 Governing Bodies and Key Personnel

2.01 Congregational Authority

Consistent with our Baptist congregational polity, the congregation as a whole shall have final authority over the financial affairs of the church including the adoption of a budget, adopting financial policies which shall guide its elected and paid leadership, and the application and interpretation of those policies. In furtherance of the diversity of gifts and ministries, the congregation through its policies and procedures may assign many responsibilities to its leaders, committees and staff, but retain final authority.

2.02 Budget and Finance Committee

The Finance Committee shall oversee the financial affairs and policies of the church and carry out the directions of the church in the financial area. It has oversight and responsibility for reviewing the budget, evaluating the on-going financial status of the church, providing guidance to the church's elected financial officers, and proposing and assuring compliance with financial policy.

(If there is no separate Budget Committee, then the following might be included: The committee is responsible for the proposing an annual comprehensive budget that covers the ministries, administrative, and practical needs of the church.)

2.03 Financial Officers

The church shall elect annually such financial officers as may be essential to fulfill the financial management needs of the church including a treasurer and such other officers such as a financial secretary, offering-counting committee, audit committee and investment committee as may be appropriate. The church shall for each officer establish their duties, and assure they function within the financial policies of the church.

2.04 Responsibilities and Duties – Financial Secretary

The financial secretary position is primarily to receive the funds that come into the church treasury, record these funds, deposit these funds, and forward information about the deposit to the church treasurer so that it may be used to support the ministry of the congregation. The responsibilities of the financial secretary are as follows:

1. To work according to the guidelines established by the church.
2. To receive funds from whatever source, record them, and report them to the church treasurer and the church and its leadership as provided in church policies.
3. To collect offerings received during worship services at the conclusion of the programs, making certain that more than one person is involved in collecting and counting the money.
4. To ensure money is deposited in a bank as soon as possible after it is received. All deposits should be made within three (3) days of receipt.

5. To establish a procedure to collect and record money received through methods other than the regular offering, including money received through the mail.
6. To produce individual charitable-gift receipt summaries of all donations received during a calendar year and mail within two weeks of the end of that year.
7. To be accountable to the congregation through the designated committees, elected officers, and paid staff leadership.

2.05 Responsibilities and Duties – Treasurer

The treasurer is responsible to disburse all funds received into the church treasury in a responsible and organized manner in accord with the policies and procedures established by the church. The responsibilities of the treasurer are as follows:

1. To disburse all money contributed to the local church budget, keeping accurate records of how money is spent.
2. To prepare accurate monthly financial reports indicating the financial well-being of the congregation.
3. To work according to the guidelines established by the church.
4. To participate in and report regularly to the appropriate committees and officers and congregational meetings.
5. To assure there are adequate records documenting the assets of the church for insurance and other purposes.
6. To make recommendations for the investment of excess funds.
7. To insure that all church property is appropriately covered by insurance for casualty and liability losses.
8. To insure that all governmental taxes, reporting forms, and regulations are met on a timely basis.
9. To be accountable to the congregation and its committees.

2.07 Counting Committee

The Finance Committee shall appoint sufficient members of an Offering Counting Committee which may include some of their own number to assure that not less than two are available on all occasions at which funds are to be counted. The counting team on any given occasion shall perform double counts on all receipts and utilize counting sheets to report their counts. Each counter shall sign the counting sheet reports.

2.08 Audit Committee

The Audit Committee shall consist of not less than three persons nominated by the Nominating Committee and elected by the church. The committee shall conduct or arrange for an annual audit of a type and nature the church deems appropriate. The scope of any audit shall assess whether the financial policies and procedures are being adhered to. In the event of outside auditors, they shall recommend to the church such person(s) or auditing firm, and assist the audit, and review with the auditors any findings and recommendations. The committee shall convey the report of the auditors to the church leadership, officers and the congregation.

2.09 Authority

No officer, elected or paid leadership of the church shall have any authority to act for the church in any financial matter except where expressly authorized. No officer, paid or elected leader may without express authorization enter into any loan agreement, encumber any property or otherwise bind the church to any contract or financial obligation except as directed by the congregation.

2.10 Bonding

The church may require the bonding of any elected or paid staff who handles the funds of the church.

3.00 Budget

3.01 Budget Process

A. The Budget Committee shall annually request each department, person or committee with budget line items, to evaluate their programs and submit a budget request to the committee.

B. Optional: The _____ Committee shall/may submit its draft proposal to (the Deacons, Church Council, for example) for their review and recommendations before submission to the church.

C. The proposed budget shall be distributed to the membership not less than two weeks before the church conference where it will be presented for adoption. The budget shall be submitted for approval by majority vote at the church's annual meeting or at such other time as set by the church approve an annual comprehensive budget.

3.02 Budget Publication

On adoption, the budget shall be published and made available to all church members. Financial status reports to the membership shall be structured to reflect the budget, and actual receipts and expenditures reported in the budget categories.

3.03 Effect of Budget

The budget shall constitute the limits of authority for the elected and paid leadership to expend funds and establish the basic categories of accounting. The treasurer or other leadership shall have no authority to expend funds except where authorized by the budget or separate congregational authorization.

A. If the Finance Committee determines there is a cash flow problem or other factors requiring financial restraint, it may impose temporary spending limits in one or more categories, and/or recommend to the church specific budget adjustments.

B. Any major expense items – those exceeding (\$1,000)—even though it is in the budget—may not be expended without notice to and approval of the Finance Committee or its designee, to assure that sufficient funds are available immediately to meet that and other needs.

3.04 Budget Changes and Adjustments

A. Proposed budget changes during the fiscal year must come from the Finance Committee or from other committees or members. All such proposals from other

committees of members must be first presented to the Finance Committee thirty (30) days before they are presented to the congregation so that the Finance Committee may make informed recommendations regarding any such proposal. The Finance Committee is responsible for making all proposed changes to the budget to the church conference.

B. With the approval of the Finance Committee, budget reallocations within subcategories of major ministry areas such as Sunday School, youth ministry, and property maintenance, may be made between line items when sufficient justification is found. However, such internal adjustments may not increase the basic church budget or the budget for any major ministry area.

C. In an emergency, with the consent of two-thirds of the Finance Committee (and the _____) the church may expend funds beyond the budget for any line item up to \$1,000 for operational contingencies, and up to \$5,000 for emergency repairs. This provision is intended only to be utilized when the need is sufficiently compelling and there is inadequate time to secure congregational approval. When this authority is utilized, the Finance Committee shall advise the church of its action in the next congregational business meeting.

3.05 Fiscal Year

The fiscal year for all church finances shall be _____ to _____.

3.06 Borrowing Authority

Only the congregation meeting in a regular or specially called meeting with notice may approve the borrowing of any funds from any source, including internal special-designated, reserved or investment funds.

4.00 Handling of Church Receipts and Funds

4.01 Receiving, Counting and Depositing Funds

The Finance Committee shall develop a comprehensive written set of policies and procedures for the reception, counting, recording and depositing of offerings and gifts whether through the general offerings or by mail or other means. The policies and procedures, as aspects of the overall financial management systems, assures appropriate internal controls through checks and balances, separation of functions and systems which can assure the membership of the integrity of the system and those who handle and safeguard the finances.

4.02 Non-Cash Gifts

The church recognizes that non-cash gifts of many kinds are very important in the ministry of the church. The policies set forth here are intended to assure that such gifts are appropriately used by the church and to guide donors in their giving priorities.

A. Gifts of negotiable securities will, unless the Finance Committee finds special circumstances, be welcomed and be sold immediately.

B. The church in conference or through a committee given the authority, must agree to the receipt of real property, and the Finance Committee and other appropriate committees may make recommendations to the church regarding the acceptance and use of such a gift.

C. Gifts of other items for the use of the church must be approved by the appropriate committee or person who would utilize such property in the ministry of the church. This is to assure the property is appropriate for the intended use, and that the donor will also be aware of the intended use of the donated item.

D. All gifts become the property of the church, and their use and/disposal is at the sole discretion of the church, except where the donor has subjected the gift to a specific designation accepted by the church.

E. For all gifts of objects accepted by the church, a donation receipt letter will be sent to the donor in a timely manner for tax purposes.

4.03 Receipting Rules

Contributions of non-cash property

Receipts [typically letters of acknowledgement from the church to the donor] for non-cash gifts must describe the gift given. No dollar value of the gift given shall be included in such a receipt/letter. Thus a gift of a car or real estate should note the gift given with specific detail that might be relevant to its value, but it is the donor's responsibility to justify any tax-deduction value claimed on tax returns.

Gifts of property exceeding a value of \$5,000

For gifts of property the aggregate value of which exceeds \$5,000, the donor must obtain a qualified appraisal and attach it to his/her tax return in which the deduction is claimed. The appraisal summary must be on Form 8283, signed by the charitable organization, such as the church, and attached to the return. If property received by the church requiring Form 8283 is then sold or otherwise disposed of within two years, the church must file form 8282 within 125 days of its disposition, and a copy provided to the donor.

4.04 Approving Financial Accounts

The church may establish the following accounts:

- General Fund
- Building Fund
- Memorial Gifts Fund
- Missions Fund
- Benevolence Fund
- Endowment Fund

The church may also establish such other special and designated accounts as it may deem appropriate.

4.05 Funds Policy

All accounts or funds created by the church or by any church entity must (a) be approved by the church in conference, (b) be subject to annual reporting requirements, (c) be under the oversight of the treasurer and Finance Committee, and (d) provide a means of recording, securing, depositing and reporting approved by the Finance Committee. Some miscellaneous funds created by a group within the church may NOT be official church funds in which case there will no official receipting or reporting within the church. Funds not processed through the church's financial officers are not official church funds, and donations to such funds are not qualified charitable gifts for tax purposes. These funds should in most cases be for limited and short-term use such as a

temporary fund for an outing or a social-events fund of a class. No bank or other financial account may be established under the name of the church unless approved by the church and unless the funds are subject to the usual financial processes established by the Finance Committee.

4.06 Deposit Accounts

The church may establish such bank and other accounts for the deposit of funds as shall be appropriate. Designated (Restricted Use) Funds shall be receipted and disbursed through separate ledger accounts. The church treasurer shall maintain one or more separate accounts for all designated funds. Note: Though not required by law or sound accounting practices, the separate account provides greater assurance such funds are not inappropriately used.

4.07 Allocation to Gifts to Funds and Accounts

Except where the donor has expressly designated otherwise or the receipts have been received for special funds or causes, all receipts shall be credited to the General Fund.

4.08 Designated Funds Policy

- A. The church may establish such designated funds and accounts as may further the ministry of the church, and shall for all such funds assure separate accounting and reporting.
- B. The church through its officers shall establish one or more separate bank accounts for such designated funds, separate from the general fund, but may combine multiple designated funds in one account so long as separate accounting is made.
- C. No designated funds shall be received by the church except where the church has approved or established the fund and its related project or activity. Gifts with some unapproved designation shall be returned, or may at the discretion of the Budget and Finance Committee be held conditionally until the church can assess whether it wishes to establish such an approved designated fund.
- D. Members wishing to give designated funds should consult with the pastor or other leadership to request the church's consideration of their preferred designation and any alternatives.
- E. Designated funds shall be restricted solely for the designated use and may not be diverted to other purposes without the written authorization of the donor.
- F. The treasurer and/or Finance Committee shall provide an annual report to the church on the status of all designated funds including new receipts and expenditures.
- G. Whenever feasible and appropriate, the Finance Committee or its designee shall advise donors when their designated funds have been used

4.09 Benevolence Fund Policy

In furtherance of this church's ministry exemplified in our Lord and his teaching to give to those in need, the church Benevolence Fund shall be a resource for meeting special financial needs that arise in our community and church. The church will accept contributions to the Benevolence Fund that are "to and for the use of" the church, and the specific use of such funds is subject to the control and discretion of (the Deacons or Benevolence Committee or those designated by the church to disburse such funds). Any

church member may make recommendations regarding situations calling for assistance, but donors may not designate nor control the identity of persons receiving financial assistance from the fund. The church may establish a procedure of regular Benevolence Fund offerings as well as special appeals or offerings as needs may require.

4.10 Mission Project Fund Policy

The church may from time to time establish a Mission Project Fund to receive designated gifts in support of a church-approved mission project. Such approval shall assure the project is consistent with the purposes and ministry of the church, has appropriate leadership, and has a realistic budget. The church will accept gifts to such mission projects so long as the gifts are not designated for particular individuals but for the project broadly. The Mission Project Committee with the Finance Committee shall have final authority over the specific allocation of the gifts toward elements of the project costs.

4.11 Memorial Gifts and Fund

A. The Finance Committee and treasurer shall establish a Memorial Gifts Fund for receiving and accounting for designated gifts in memory/honor of members and others associated with the church or its friends.

B. The Finance Committee [or a Memorials Committee if such is established] shall establish appropriate policies on the use of such memorial gifts and authorize expenditures of the funds for purposes it deems appropriate. The committee may identify priority projects or ministries toward which it will allocate such gifts. While specific interests of donors will be considered, the committee retains the authority and responsibility to use the funds in a manner appropriate to the purposes of the church. All gifts are received subject to this principle.

C. A Book of Memorial Fund Gifts [or Book of Memory] shall be maintained by the committee that will register memorial gifts to the church. The following information will be included in the book: the name of the person in whose memory/honor the gift is given, the date and occasion for the gift if applicable, the name(s) of the donor, and a description of the gift. When the funds are used, a note may be made in the book as to the use.

D. Where Memorial Funds are used to purchase a tangible asset, the committee may recommend to the church that a memorial marker be placed on the object noting that it was made possible by the Memorial Fund.

4.12 Memorials Committee

The church shall elect a standing Memorials Committee of not less than three persons. The tasks of a Memorials Committee are as follows:

A. To establish procedures and policies in regard to memorial gifts and related projects to assist families in choosing items that best support priority church ministry projects and help redirect unneeded or undesirable gifts.

B. To prepare an inventory of potential memorial projects and regularly review and update the list and submit it to the church annually for approval.

C. To publicize the existence of the approved list of needs and opportunities to members and friends of the church. Projects can be in memory of a loved one who has died or in honor of a loved one who is still living.

- D. To supervise the receiving, recording and disbursement of all memorial gifts.
- E. To keep an accurate record of all memorial-gift money received and distributed by the Memorials Committee through the church financial secretary (or treasurer).
- F. To supervise the sending of thank-you notes for all memorial contributions.
- G. To approve the disbursement of memorial gift fund money at its discretion through the church treasurer.

4.13 Investment Policy

The chair of the Finance Committee will appoint a chair and two other committee members to form the Investment Committee. The function of this committee is to make recommendations to the Finance Committee to insure the safe and prudent investments of unrestricted funds while continuing to fulfill the operational obligations of the church and its purposes. Authority for selecting investment options remains with the Finance Committee subject to the review and ultimate authority of the congregation.

4.14 Fundraising

The principal means for the support of the ministry of the church is through the tithes and offerings of its members, whose stewardship is a dimension of discipleship. Any special fundraising activities by the church or any of its divisions or programs must be approved by the church based on a written proposal noting the nature of the proposed fundraising activity including the target audience, place and time, the financial goal, the proposed use of the funds, and who will be conducting and supervising the event including accountability for the funds. No fundraising event shall use the name of the church or its ministries without the approval of the _____.

5.00 Handling Disbursements

5.01 General Procedures

The Finance Committee shall establish specific written policies and procedures for the handling of disbursement of funds, assuring ample internal controls. Such systems shall assure that (a) disbursements are properly authorized by the congregationally approved budget or other approval process set forth in the church bylaws or policy manual, (b) that adequate records are maintained to support the appropriateness of each disbursement through such documents as purchase orders and invoices, (c) that multiple persons are involved in the processes of authorizing payments, preparing checks and signing checks, (d) that multiple check signatures are required on all disbursements exceeding \$1000 [Note: the figure here might be affected by the common extent of such payments], (e) that the specific duties of financial leadership, paid or elected, in regard to disbursements are clearly set forth.

The disbursement system shall be integrated into a general accounting and bookkeeping system recommended and overseen by the Finance Committee and authorized by the church.

5.02 Authority to Expend Funds Outside the Budget

[Note: Who is given this authority and the financial extent of that authority vary widely, depending typically on the size of the budget, the typical congregational role in approving

specific expenditures, and the function of different church bodies. What follows is one example.]

The Finance Committee may authorize expenditures outside the budget up to _____, when in their judgment such expenditure is required or especially appropriate to proceed without other approval and sufficient funds are available. The committee shall report such action to the church in a timely manner, not later than the next congregational business meeting or financial report.

5.03 Non-Employee Payments

A church shall file Form 1099 MISC for each person to whom it pays \$600 or more annually in rents or payments for services.

5.04 Employee Reimbursement Policy and Procedure

A. Consistent with ISR regulations for an accountable expense reimbursement policy, and the church's desire to confirm to these requirements for the benefit of the church and staff, the church shall adopt and implement an expense reimbursement policy whereby ministers and other staff may receive advances for, or reimbursement of, expenses to the extent provided for in the current budget if and only if the following conditions are met: (1) the expense has a stated business purpose related to the church's ministry, (2) the minister or staff provides written detailed substantiation of the expenses, normally on a form provided by the church, within not less than sixty (60) days, and (3) any excess reimbursements are returned within 120 days. Further, any advances must not be made more than thirty (30) days before the expected expenses, nor in excess of a reasonable estimate of those expenses. An accounting and substantiation of expenses must be made within sixty (60) days and the return of any excess advance fund within 120 days.

B. The Budget Committee shall recommend for church approval a budget and account for advances and/or reimbursement as staff employment/ ministry church expenses arise. The church may set limits on the extent of such expenses by setting budget maximums in general, or for any sub-expense component such as continuing education, travel expense, etc.

C. The Personnel Committee shall adopt a written specific expense reimbursement policy that shall include guidelines on what expenses are considered appropriate—for example when the church would consider air travel appropriate, limits to tourist-class fares, and any limits on costs of meals reimbursed such as a maximum amount for meals per diem.

D. The church or its designated committee shall establish and implement the specific procedures for submission of requests for reimbursement, required substantiation documentation, and procedures for expense advances and reimbursements, consistent with the requirements of an accountable plan as described by applicable IRS regulations. The procedures shall include the appropriate forms and identification of persons authorized to approve advances, reimbursements or process forms.

E. The treasurer shall monthly process approved reimbursements and approved advances and record such on the books of the church and retain records to establish conformance with the accountable plan standards of the IRS.

5.05 Petty Cash Fund

The Finance Committee may recommend, and the church approve, a Petty Cash Fund which shall be governed by policies set by the Finance Committee regarding its custodianship, amount, receipting and accounting.

5.06 Housing Allowance

(See Policy Section on Pastoral Staff)

6.00 Financial Reporting

6.01 Financial Reports

The treasurer and such other officers as may be necessary shall provide financial reports at each congregational business meeting. A comprehensive written financial report and accounting of the previous year's revenues and expenditures shall be presented to the membership at the first church conference of the new fiscal year and a summary published in the church newsletter. This report will include comparisons of actual revenues and expenses compared to budget figures.

6.02 Access to Financial Records

Members shall have access to the principal financial reports of the church including budgets, periodic financial reports, annual financial reports and reports from auditors. Members shall not, however, have access to individual donor records, except records of their own giving. Such individual donor records shall be confidential and available only to those who must have the information to carry out their assigned duties. Members shall have access to records showing the disposition of designated funds.

6.03 Other Financial Reports

If the church is an employer, it is subject to many state and federal labor, withholding, and other tax laws. The church should carefully review their duties of reporting and complying under these laws, and may well need to consult their financial and legal advisers. There may also be additional requirements if a church employs a number of people who are engaged in trade or commerce, or are doing business in other states. Here is a list of the common reporting and filing requirements that often affect churches—most related to employment and/or financial dealings.

IRS Form 8274	Social Security and Medicare tax for church employers
IRS Form 4361	Relates to Social Security and ministers
IRS Form 941 or 941SS	Forms are for the reporting of city, state or federal tax withholding. If the church is exempt from Social Security, 941SS is to be submitted.
IRS Form W-4	Form pertains to all employees and some minister employees
IRS Form W-2	Statement of earnings
IRS Form W-3	To the Social Security Administration and, in some instances, to the state
IRS Form 1099 MISC.	Issued to self-employed individuals indicating sums paid

IRS Form 1099 INT.	Issued to anyone paid interest of more than \$10 in a calendar year
IRS Form 1096	Transmittal form for all 1099 forms
IRS Form 8283	Submitted to the IRS for donations of non-cash items in excess of \$500 or less than \$5,000. Read it carefully.
IRS Form 8282	To be completed by the church only if non-cash items are sold.
IRS Form 8300	If a church (or any other ministry) receives \$10,000 or more in cash in any business or trade transaction (e.g., rental of property or a parking lot), it would need to be reported on Form 8300. This reporting is NOT required for charitable contributions.
IRS Form I-9	The Immigration and Naturalization Service requires this to be on file for every employee.
IRS Form 990	A church is not obligated to fill out and return this form.
IRS Form 990T	A church that receives \$1,000 or more in gross income from an unrelated trade or business must file this form. (Unrelated Business Income obligations are discussed below.)

6.04 Document Retention Policy

The church through its officers and staff shall retain permanently the following records and documents: Articles of Incorporation, church bylaws, titles to property, insurance policies, membership rolls, stock certificates and transfer lists, minutes of church business meetings (church-in-conference), annual financial reports, audit reports, copyrights and trademark registrations, church newsletters, Sunday bulletins, legal correspondence, tax returns and working papers, retirement and pension records, and such other documents whose permanent retention is required by congregational action. These documents shall be maintained in a fireproof and secure location under the control of the church.

The following records shall be retained for a period of ten years in a secure location: All church financial records and statements (bank statements and records, checks, contribution statements, vendor documentation, purchase orders, housing allowance designations), accident reports, personnel records (applications for employment, terminated employee records, expired contracts, personnel files, payroll records), property documents (appraisals, expired insurance policies, tax or other financial matters), contracts and agreements, wills of deceased donors, federal/ state/local filings, insurance documents (accident reports, claims [after settlement], expired policies, safety reports), expired trust agreements.

7.00 Audits

The Audit Committee shall conduct or arrange for an annual audit of a type and nature the church deems appropriate. The scope of any audit shall assess whether the financial policies and procedures are being adhered to. In the event of outside auditors, they shall recommend to the church such person(s) or auditing firm, assist the audit and review with

the auditors any findings and recommendations. The committee shall convey the report of the auditors to the church leadership, officers and congregation.

8.00 Special Financial Matters

8.01 UBI Policy Statement:

The treasurer and Finance Committee shall be familiar with the basic provisions of Unrelated Business Income regulations, and shall file federal and state tax returns in the event such income exceeds \$1,000. In the event of reportable UBI, The treasurer and and/or Finance Committee shall advise the pastor, deacons and other leadership so that the church may assess its policies and practices in this regard.

8.02 Special “Love” and Other Special Offerings Earmarked for Individuals

The Finance Committee and other elected leadership and staff shall familiarize themselves with the provisions of the Internal Revenue Code in regard both to earmarked gifts generally and especially where gifts are solicited to be given to specific individuals. Where such gifts may be made, but would not qualify as charitable gifts for tax purposes, donors will be so advised and the church will not issue receipts or letters of acknowledgment unless they note such gifts are not qualified charitable gifts.

8.03 Loans to Staff

Loans shall not be made to staff from church funds or secured by any church asset.

Alternate Policy:

No loan shall be made from church funds or secured by any church asset except under the following conditions:

- A. The loan is recommended in writing by the Finance Committee,
- B. The loan provides a specific repayment plan,
- C. If the loan is to provide funds to enable a staff member to purchase and/or remodel a residence or other property, that a mortgage is obtained against the property,
- D. The church accountant, or other accountant or lawyer secured by the church, provides a written statement to the church that the loan does not violate state or federal law including the church’s not-for-profit status, and
- E. The church approves the loan by three-fourth ballot vote.

Section E.
Preschool/Child/Youth
Protection and Ministry Policies

1.00 General Policy and Commitment

2.00 Preschool/Children and/or Youth Ministry Committee (Team)

The church shall establish and elect a preschool/children/ youth committee (team) charged with oversight over all the preschool, children, and youth ministries of the church. (Separate committees can be established for each age group, if the church approves.) They shall be responsible for assuring the quality and integrity of such ministries, implementing the policies of the church designed to assure ministries which are faithful to the church's beliefs and vision, are staffed by persons of highest vision, integrity and commitment to children and teens, and assure that all aspects of such ministries are administered and staffed to assure the safety of, and care for, our children and youth. They shall regularly review the programs and policies in these areas, assure their observance and recommend additional policies, procedures and programs.

2.01 Protection Task Force Subcommittee.

A specific Protection Task Force that is a subcommittee of the larger committee (team) will be established to develop and implement protection policies for the church. These protection policies will be presented by the larger committee (team) to the congregation for approval. (Again, the church may decide to have more than one committee.)

2.02 Relationship with Church Leadership and Parents

The Preschool/Children and/or Youth Ministry Committee (Team) and Protection Task Force shall in all respects work closely with the ministerial staff and volunteer leadership, as well as parents, in furthering this vital area of ministry to our church and community.

3.00 Policies on Leadership Selection, Screening, Hiring, Training and Supervising

Recognizing the highest priority that must be given to assuring that those who work with children and youth be carefully chosen and effectively trained and supervised, the church shall assure a thorough process of screening, training and supervising all who work in these ministries.

3.01 Screening Assurance

Careful and systematic screening of volunteers or paid staff who work with preschool, children and youth will assure all parents/guardians that the church is committed to enduring the safety of those in our care and the quality of our leadership.

3.02 Screening Steps

The specific screening process shall be established by the Protection Task Force Subcommittee.

3.03 General Qualifications for All Leadership

Every volunteer and staff person who works with preschoolers, children, and/or youth shall:

- 1) Confess Jesus Christ as their personal Lord and Savior
- 2) Adhere to the affirmations of faith of the church
- 3) Be a member in good standing for one year
- 4) Be hired or approved in accord with the policies and procedures of the church
- 5) Evidence the skills, attitude and Christian maturity appropriate to the ministry
- 6) Agree to adhere to the church's ministry and preschool, children and youth protection policies
- 7) Have no history of being an abuser or criminal record inconsistent with the ministry task

3.04 Application process for volunteer leadership positions with preschool, children and youth.

A. Volunteer in Ministry Form

All persons being considered for, or seeking, positions working with preschool, children and youth shall complete the "Volunteer in Ministry" form as developed by the Preschool/Children and/or Youth Ministry Committee (Team), providing personal information, references, signed releases authorizing the securing of reference and background checks, and information regarding criminal records.

B. Criminal Records Statement

A declaration of criminal record, orders of civil courts, and other conduct statement, approved by the Preschool/Children and/or Youth Ministry Committee (Team) shall be completed and signed by all candidates.

3.05 Background Checks

Those responsible for screening shall assure thorough background checks are completed and written records maintained of the specific steps taken and information received. These records shall be confidential personnel records and retained. Outside agencies may be employed for these background checks. Candidates will be provided an opportunity to respond to any alleged misconduct which might surface in any background check.

3.06 Reference Checks

References shall be contacted, preferably by phone as well as written communications. Records of communications received and notes from phone or personal conversations shall be maintained. These records shall be confidential personnel records and retained. A checklist of questions shall be developed by the Preschool/Children and/or Youth Ministry Committee (Team) for use in interviews with references. References shall be asked to identify others who may have relevant personal information.

3.07 Interviews

Thorough interviews will be conducted with any candidates by a team of not less than two persons. The Preschool/Children and/or Youth Ministry Committee (Team) shall establish specific objectives, issues and questions to be covered in such interviews. The interview process shall include a thorough discussion of the church's child-safety policies and provide the candidates with copies of church policies and procedures regarding safety

and protection matters. Interviewing teams shall provide a written summary of the interview including their observations and recommendations and areas for any further inquiry. The interview report shall be retained as a confidential file item.

3.08 Final Hiring Approval

The church and Preschool/Children and/or Youth Ministry Committee (Team) shall assure a process for the final and formal approval of all persons, paid or volunteer, who work with in this ministry, and maintain the list of approved persons.

3.09 Occasional Workers

The Preschool/Children and/or Youth Ministry Committee (Team) may establish a more limited process for the approval of occasional workers with preschool, children and youth where such persons are not paid employees and not regular workers in this ministry area. However, they must work directly alongside persons who are fully approved. This more limited process shall include an interview, thorough provisions for informing the workers of the safety policies and procedures, and a signed Declaration of Criminal Record, Orders of Civil Courts, and other conduct statements.

3.10 Outside Groups Working with the Church's Preschoolers, Children and Youth

The Preschool/Children and/or Youth Ministry Committee (Team) or Protection Task Force Subcommittee shall assure that any outside organization or persons working with the church's preschoolers, children and youth have employed appropriate screening procedures and have appropriate safety policies and procedures which will be in force in the work with this church.

3.11 Training

The Preschool/Children and/or Youth Ministry Committee (Team) shall assure the development of an comprehensive training program for all workers, paid and volunteer, in this area of ministry.

3.12 Specific Training Programs

A. Mandatory Training

1. Training sessions shall be held not less than annually. Sessions shall be held for all volunteers who work with preschoolers, children and teens to educate them on the policies and procedures for insuring safety and reducing the risk of abuse. Specific training shall be provided by supervisors, staff or volunteer, in regard to specific policies in the volunteer's area of ministry.
 2. Annual training for all paid church staff members shall review the policies and procedures for insuring safety and reducing the risk of abuse.
 3. New staff and volunteers must participate in the training program upon beginning their ministry assignments.
 4. Records of attendance and program content shall be retained.
- #### B. Training content shall include all the following:
1. Church policies and procedures
 2. General "abuse" matters
 - What is abuse?

- Signs of abuse: physical, emotional, sexual
- What conduct is inappropriate?
- Reporting duties to state and church
- Staff and volunteer screening procedures and purpose of these measures
- Hearing preschool/children/teen “reports”
- Legal (civil and criminal) consequences of misconduct
- Where to get help

3.13 Training Records

The committee shall retain records of training sessions including leadership, program components, and attendees.

3.14 Supervision

The Preschool/Children and/or Youth Ministry Committee (Team) shall assure that effective supervision is provided in all areas within their ministry, and that systems are in place to monitor and measure the competence and performance of all workers. Such supervision would typically include structured sessions of observing leaders and formal times of performance review. More informal and occasional times of encouragement and friendly admonition should be planned.

4.00 General Safety and Health Issues

The Preschool/Children and/or Youth Ministry Committee (Team) and the Protection Task Force Subcommittee shall review all aspects of the church’s ministry, giving special care to issues of safety and health, providing periodic reports, assessments and recommendations for appropriate actions by the church and its personnel.

4.01 Recreational Facilities (playgrounds, play areas etc.)

A. Responsibilities

The Preschool/Children and/or Youth Ministry Committee (Team) shall assure that there are assigned responsibilities for oversight and implementation of procedures and operations involving all recreational facilities, and set forth the duties of those responsible in regard to inspections, supervision, records, and incident reports of injuries and accidents.

B. Prohibited Activities

The Preschool/Children and/or Youth Ministry Committee (Team) and Protection Task Force Subcommittee shall expressly prohibit certain activities such as skateboarding in areas where such would pose a risk to others using the property. Such policies shall be enforced, and publicized to the church and, where feasible, in public notices. Other activities may be restricted to certain areas. Behavioral rules for users of such facilities shall also be established.

C. Safety Standards for Facilities and Equipment

Policies shall be developed, publicized and implemented to assure the general safety and good repair of equipment on such playgrounds, and to see that the equipment and surfaces conform to accepted standards. Adequate adult supervision should be required whenever such facilities are being used for church activities. Rules and policies regarding the maximum number as well as ages of children using certain facilities such as preschool

and children's play area shall be addressed. In considering appropriate safety standards in such recreational areas, the committee responsible shall consult guidelines and standards published by state agencies, insurance companies and others. They shall develop checklists and routine inspection procedures. Reports of periodic inspections and repairs shall be maintained. Maintenance schedules shall also be established and written records made and retained.

D. Supervision

Policies shall be developed and applied that assure that adequate adult supervision is provided in the use of recreational facilities and equipment.

4.02 Appropriate Space for Preschool and Children

Policies shall assure that appropriate space standards for preschoolers and children are followed including space per child and maximum numbers of children in a class. These policies are intended to assure effective teaching and supervision.

4.03 Staffing Levels

To assure both effective teaching, care and safety, the policy of this church is to seek to meet the following standards:

4.04 General Prohibited or Restricted Activities

A. Prohibited

To minimize undue risks in children and youth activities under church sponsorship, the Preschool/Children and/or Youth Ministry Committee (Team) and Protection Task Force Subcommittee shall establish policies which prohibit certain activities as part of church-sponsored programs whether on church facilities or otherwise. Among such prohibited activities would be bungee jumping, parasailing, high-diving boards, scuba diving, fireworks displays, any vehicle racing or speed contests

B. Restricted

The committee may also establish guidelines for other activities which, while not prohibited, are of such a nature as to require special care or expertise. The guidelines for such activities may include special policies regarding church approval, skilled supervision, training, age limits, and parental approval.

4.05 Food Preparation

The Preschool/Children and/or Youth Ministry Committee (Team) shall establish guidelines and policies regarding food safety. The Protecting Our Church and Children resource provides a "Food Safety Checklist" as a general guide. (See the supplement provided with this manual.)

4.06 General Safety and Health Policy

A. Phone Access: There shall be access to a telephone on the premises and a cell phone available off the premises when minors are on a trip or at a playground. Important phone numbers needed in a medical emergency shall be posted prominently.

B. First Aid: A first-aid kit shall be available in any location used by minors. It should be checked monthly to assure that it is fully supplied. Those who work with

children shall be trained in first aid and other emergency skills such as CPR and dealing with choking.

- C. Accident Log: A logbook shall be kept in an official place to record all accidents.
- D. Fire Safety: All adults working with preschool, children and youth shall be trained in fire safety, including exit routes and alternatives. Fire extinguishers should be available and regularly checked. Smoke detectors should be installed and batteries regularly checked. Regular fire drills should be held.
- E. Emergency Preparedness: All adults shall be trained in procedures to follow in case of a tornado, hurricane, earthquake, terrorist threats or other emergency situations.
- F. Infectious Diseases: Children or staff with infectious diseases shall not participate in the group until medical personnel clear them.
- G. Allergies and Sensitivities: A policy and procedure shall be established that assures that adult workers are aware of any special limitations or allergies a child may have, especially to foods such as peanuts and special sensitivities such as to bee stings.

4.07 Premises Control – Access, Departure, Etc.

- A. Premises Control: Preschoolers and children shall not be allowed to leave the premises unsupervised. They shall not be allowed to wander around the church facility or be alone especially when going to the bathroom.
- B. Departure of Children: Arrangements shall be made for children and teens to return to their homes after the activity is over. Children shall not be permitted to go home alone. Children shall not be permitted to leave the premises without their parents' permission.
- C. Drop-Off of Preschoolers and Children: Preschoolers and children are never to be left in a classroom unless two unrelated adults are present. If there are not two adults present, parents may wait with their child or take the child to another room or office where two or more adults are present.
- D. Pick-up of Preschoolers and Children: For all preschool children, unless special provision is made otherwise, a parent must come to the room and pick up their child/children from the classroom. Authorization for independent release may be given by signing a release for children in first and second grades. Third and fourth graders may be released independently after class.
- E. All teachers and workers who release children MUST visually check the parent ID with the child's ID before releasing the child.

4.08 Off-Site Events

- A. Any off-site events with preschoolers and/or children must be approved by the Preschool/Children and/or Youth Ministry Committee (Team), based on a detailed submission of the plans, supervision, travel arrangements and parental involvement/approval process.
- B. One-day, but not overnight, off-site events by the youth group, but within the county or adjacent county must be approved by the youth ministry leadership. They shall provide for sufficient supervision, adult transportation, and otherwise comply with church policies. Off-site youth events involving travel beyond adjacent counties or involving overnight stays must be approved by the Preschool/Children and/or Youth Ministry

Committee (Team) which shall assure adequate supervision, appropriate facilities and chaperones, adult transportation and use of consent forms.

C. Consent Forms: Parents must sign a consent form when children or young people are taken on trips or activities off the premises (not in the church or regular meeting place). Consent forms shall note the nature of the activity, type of transportation provided, contact numbers for the supervisors and sites of activities. Parents shall also be asked to authorize emergency medical treatment, provide information on special medical or dietary needs, provide telephone numbers where a parent or others may be contacted in an emergency, and other information appropriate to the activity.

4.09 Medical and Emergency Policies and Procedures

A. First Aid

First-aid supplies and equipment should be available in each classroom. (See Protecting Our Church and Children for suggestions on specific items.)

B. Incident Reports

An incident/accident report form should be completed each time an accident or health issue occurs. This form shall be completed by the person in charge who is present and turned in to the office immediately. Extremely minor injuries requiring only emotional comfort or a simple Band-Aid need not be written up but shall be communicated to the parent or guardian.

C. Medicines

Staff, paid or volunteer, shall never administer any medicine, including over-the-counter medicines, without the written consent of the parent! In special circumstances where church workers must administer medications, it must be only where there is written authorization with specific instructions on the medications, timing and dosage. Staff shall record in a log any medications given, noting child, medicine, dosage, time and person administering. (Protecting Our Church and Children resource, included in this manual, gives additional recommendations about children medications.)

D. Bodily Fluids

Caution must be exercised when dealing with bodily fluids. Due to the increased risk of the spread of disease, bodily fluids must be promptly and safely disposed of and the area properly cleaned. Leaders must wear protective gloves. Leaders must adequately wash after contact with body fluid of any kind. This should be done routinely, even when no health risk is perceived. Disposable materials soiled by blood must be placed in a plastic bag. Soiled clothing will be returned to the parents in a plastic bag. If a child has come in contact with the body fluids of another child, the parents of that child should be notified.

E. Medical Issues and Emergencies

1. Consent/Information Forms

The parent or legal guardian shall be encouraged annually to fill out a parental consent certification and medical authorization form for each child who will be participating in the ministries of the church. A copy of the forms should accompany any activity that takes place outside the church facilities.

2. Guidelines in Case of Serious Medical Injuries/Emergencies

In case of a serious emergency involving broken bones, convulsions, fainting, loss of consciousness or other serious injury, the following guidelines shall be observed:

- Keep calm and keep children and the injured as calm as possible.

- Do not move the injured child.
- Speak calmly, reassuring the child.
- Send a fellow teacher for help. Never leave the injured child.
- The person in charge shall call 911 after assessing the situation and give the information and directions as needed.
- As soon as the leadership is notified, the co-worker should return to help in removing other children in the area from the scene of the accident.
- The person in charge (staff member) will locate the parents and advise them of the condition of the child and procedure suggested by medical personnel.
- Leaders will refer to the child's parents for details of preference of hospital and doctor.
- In case the child is transported to the hospital, a leader will accompany the child, especially if the parents cannot be located in a timely fashion.
- As soon as possible, the teacher needs to return to his/her group to see that the other children remain calm and reassured.
- An incident/accident form should be written as soon as possible with specifics of medical personnel recommendations and name of hospital to which the child was taken.

F. Wellness Policy

The Preschool/Children and/or Youth Ministry Committee (Team) shall develop and communicate to parents and workers a policy regarding under what circumstances children with symptoms or illnesses should not participate in classes or activities.

A “wellness policy” set forth in Protecting Our Church and Children notes the following: “Signs of communicable illness that would be reason to exclude the child from participation include”:

- A fever (100 degrees or more in the armpit, 101 degrees orally, or 102 degrees rectally)
- Diarrhea
- Severe coughing
- Two or more episodes of vomiting within the past twelve (12) hours
- Red eye with white or yellow eye discharge, until twenty-four (24) hours after treatment
- Yellow or green nasal discharge
- Scabies or lice
- Chicken pox or a rash suggestive of chicken pox
- Other undiagnosed rashes
- Open skin lesions
- Tuberculosis, until a physician states the child is not infectious
- Strep throat, until twenty-four (24) hours after treatment begins
- Pertussis, until five (5) days after antibiotic treatment
- Hepatitis A, until one week after onset of illness or jaundice
- Impetigo, until twenty-four (24) hours after treatment

Any child on antibiotics should have been on the drug for at least twenty-four (24) hours before coming to an activity.

4.10 Special Emergencies – Fire, Weather Emergencies

A. Emergency Checklist

The Protection Task Force Subcommittee shall assure that emergency checklist such as that suggested by Protecting Our Church and Children, are developed and utilized by the Preschool/Children and/or Youth Ministry Committee (Team) and workers to be effectively prepared for dealing with special emergencies.

Checklist from Protecting Our Church and Children

- Are building diagrams with emergency evacuation procedures and routes posted by the doors in each room?
- Do diagrams show the location of fire extinguishers and alarms?
- Are leaders trained in the proper use of fire extinguishers?
- Are fire extinguishers inspected routinely?
- Are all exits clear of furniture or other obstructions?
- Is a telephone easily accessible to leaders, with numbers for the fire department, law enforcement, emergency medical service and poison-control center posted?
- Is there a designated evacuation crib for babies (equipped with evacuation wheels), and does it fit through all exit doorways?
- Is there a designated meeting place in the event of an evacuation and are parents aware of this location?
- Are leaders trained in first aid, adult and infant/child CPR, security, and procedures for fires, tornadoes, or other emergencies?
(For an example, see <http://www.dhhs.state.nc.us/dcd/emerg.pdf>.) Is there a readily available list of these leaders and other trained church members?
- Are periodic evacuation/emergency drills conducted?
- Are first-aid supplies kept in an easily accessible location?
- Are first-aid supplies routinely checked to ensure sufficient quantities and adherence to expiration dates?

B. Leader Guidelines in Case of Fire or Fire/Smoke Alarm

In the event of fire or fire/smoke alarm, take the following immediate action. Do not wait for confirmation of a fire.

- Line up students by the door and take a head count.
- Close windows and doors as you leave and if possible take your class attendance or sign-in sheet with you.
- Know your exit route as posted in the classroom and quietly and calmly lead students out by proper exit.
- Proceed to a grassy area away from the building and off any roads. Once you are clear of the building, take a head count and/or attendance.
- Return to the building only after the “All Clear” has been sounded.
- Do not dismiss any students from outside.
- For the safety of the children, parents may NOT get their child/children before the class has left the building. Parents must show their ID to claim their child and sign out on the sheet.

C. Leader Guidelines in Case of Tornado Immediate Threat

In the event of a warning that there is immediate risk of a tornado, take the following steps immediately:

- Assemble all the children and then lead them to an inside wall on the lowest floor.
- Guide the children to crouch on the floor facing the wall, bent over with hands on the back of their heads.
- Keep away from glass doors and windows.
- Do not return to the classroom until advised by other church staff or leaders that the risk has passed.

5.00 Child Abuse Policies, Procedures and Commitments

5.01 Basic Church Perspective and Policy

1. Introduction

Child abuse affects the lives of thousands of children every year in the United States. Churches too often have been negligent in the screening, education and training of their children and youth workers. The result has been tragic either because of false accusation, or the failure to protect a child in need. We recognize a high responsibility for our ministry programs for children and youth, and for the actions of all those who work with them. Court decisions are holding churches liable when they failed to properly screen their volunteers, educate their workers, or provide adequate supervision. Yet our accountability to law is almost nothing compared to our spiritual accountability to God and our community for the children entrusted to our love, nurture and care.

2. Our Response

It is our commitment to make every effort to make our facilities and programming a safe and nurturing place for all our children, youth and workers. Our commitment to our children and youth, and their parents, is to assure that specific procedures and policies are implemented to screen, train and supervise children's and youth workers. Through increased awareness and supervision, we hope to prevent any incidents from occurring, and hence support effective, caring ministries that continue to further the cause of Christ and lead individuals to a personal relationship with Him.

3. Statement of Purpose

The main purpose of our Preschool/Child/Teen Protection Policies is to protect our children and youth. This purpose is accomplished in part by educating and training child care workers, both members and friends, on issues which may contribute to dangerous and unsafe conditions affecting children and youth. These issues include how best to avoid neglect and abuse. Individual members and friends of the church are encouraged to act responsibly not only in caring for children and youth, but also in caring for each other (Matt. 19:13-14; John 15:9-17).

We continue to develop guidelines and procedures to address concerns and/or allegations concerning safety, wellness and abuse. The governing board of the church will assume responsibility for evaluating the conditions under which the church ministries are carried out and for investigating charges and reporting misconduct. The Preschool/Children and/or Youth Ministry Committee(Team) and its Protection Task Force Subcommittee is

specifically charged with implementing and reviewing all our policies, and developing effective responses to any concerns.

5.02 Specific Child-Abuse Prevention and False-Allegation Protection Policies

The Protection Task Force Subcommittee shall develop specific policies and procedures designed to reduce the risk of child abuse, assure the children and parents of the church of the safe environment for their children, and protect workers from false allegations or suspicions. The policies shall include at least the following principles:

A. Two-Adult Rule:

Two adults shall be present in all programs and activities involving preschoolers and children (and perhaps youth) – preferably not from the same immediate family, and include both men and women. This shall apply to classes, transportation, bathroom visits, counseling and other activities. In the absence of two adults, classes or activities shall be combined, or meet in a common larger room, or be cancelled.

B. Adults-Only Rule:

Non-adults may not satisfy the two-adult rule, nor may minors take a leadership role in any preschool or children’s program or activity. While minors may assist adults in some activities, minors shall never be in charge of a ministry for minors. Any youth assistants should be under the direct and immediate supervision of an adult.

- In no event shall minors be left alone with a preschooler or child or leave the room with them.
- Minors shall not handle or provide immediate care for infants even if adults are present.
- Minors shall never discipline a preschooler or child.
- Minors shall never take a preschooler or child alone to the bathroom.
- Minors shall never bathe or undress a preschooler or child.

C. Open-Door Policy

Parents of minors served, the clergy, and administrative and professional staff of the church have the right to visit and observe the preschool, children’s and youth programs at any time unannounced.

D. “Public” – Visible Activities

All preschool, children and teen activities shall be “public” in the sense of visible, transparent to others. The activities shall not normally be conducted in isolated, remote or unobserved locations. This policy shall normally have the following implications:

- 1) All activities for minors shall be held in a visible locations where other groups or adults are present.
- 2) Activities shall not take place in private rooms, offices or isolated parts of a building. Remote areas, such as closets and unoccupied rooms, shall remain locked.
- 3) Classrooms and teaching areas should never be locked while in use, with the exception of outside entrances to the preschool and or children’s areas. These outside entrances should be locked to outsiders, but of course not locked for persons needing to exit in an emergency. Putting alarms on the exit doors to provide notice if any person, such as a child, does open the door is advisable. Lights should remain on.
- 4) Each door of a classroom shall have a large window. If there is no window, the door should be left open. Sight lines through each window should remain unobstructed at all times.

E. Respect Privacy of Children and Youth

F. Identify Workers

Program staff, leaders and workers with children should be clearly identified with name tags or other indicators they are appropriate persons to be working with the children.

G. Specific Policy Areas

The Protection Task Force Subcommittee shall also assure specific policies are developed in certain specified sensitive contexts including bathroom procedures, infant care, release of children to parents and others.

H. Discipline

The church is committed to a nurturing, safe and respectful environment for children entrusted to its care. The staff and all those who minister to our children are committed to such care, and to abiding by the following child-discipline policy.

1. The church recognizes that appropriate discipline is not only essential in our ministry to children, but is also an aspect of the loving care of children as they mature and learn to respect themselves and others.
2. No physical punishment or verbal abuse, such as ridicule or threats, is to be used at any time.
3. Adult expectations of children/youths' behavior and appropriate discipline must reflect their age and level of comprehension.
4. Children are to be reminded of the kind of behavior that is acceptable for the setting.
5. Appropriate forms of disciplining a child/youth are: Distracting the child/youth with another activity, helping the child/youth focus on another more acceptable behavior, and separating the child/youth from others if another volunteer/staff is available to assist.
6. Parents will be informed and involved whenever a child/youth misbehaves beyond minor correction or a pattern of misbehavior increases. If separating the child within the classroom or removal of the child from the room becomes necessary, the situation must be discussed with the child's parents or guardian as soon as possible.
7. Concerns about a child's behavior or the appropriate response to a child's behavior should be reported to the program leadership.
8. Appropriate forms of discipline are to be reviewed with the volunteers/staff as part of staff/volunteer regular training.

5.03 Youth/Student Protection Policies

A. General Policy

While recognizing there are distinctions that may be made in policies regarding youth programs, the same fundamental concerns for protection and minimizing risks are present. The Protection Task Force Subcommittee shall develop appropriate policies for youth ministry, recognizing that the screening of workers, assuring adequate adult presence and supervision, and policies such as the two-adult rule, are appropriate in this context as well.

B. Staffing.

The following shall be staffing guidelines.

1. Ages 12-14: One qualified adult for every eight minors.
2. Ages 15-18: One qualified adult for every ten minors. (Check on this!)

3. Two-Adult Rule for Leadership: At least two unrelated, qualified, adults must be present on all trips and outings. If both male and female youth are present, both male and female adult leadership is required.

C. Transportation

Special concern for transportation issues also mandates a clear policy assuring adult drivers, appropriate vehicles and operating procedures and policies as set forth by this church in its transportation policies

1. The church's general transportation policy regarding appropriate drivers, vehicles and procedures must be observed. Minors may not be transported in truck beds, even if equipped with a "topper," camper or other enclosure.

2. Parental permission must be given in writing for a minor to drive to an event away from church property. In any case, minors may not drive with passengers other than siblings in the vehicle.

3. When a staff member or volunteer is driving a minor home, they should not be alone with the minor. However, if there are times when a driver has only one youth/student to take home, the driver is to call the parents and give the estimated time of departure and arrival at destination. A staff member or volunteer must never take a student of the opposite sex anywhere alone.

D. Guarding Relationships

Special care must be exercised regarding any physical contact between adults and minors. Adults, whether staff or volunteers, must avoid even the appearance of romantic relationships with teenagers. At no time shall anyone working with youth/students pursue a dating relationship with a student. Staff shall be sensitive to students' "crushes."

E. Care Exercised in Personal Conferences.

In situations requiring personal conferences with youth/students, the meeting is to be conducted in view of other adults and youth/students.

1. Youth/student ministers are generally not qualified to counsel youth/students. Ongoing counseling relationships – more than two meetings – are discouraged. In the event of any such ongoing counseling relationship, parents must give specific written permission, the pastor must approve, and in all cases the policy requires that any such one-on-one counseling must be where other adults are within the line of sight.

2. Opposite-Sex Outside Appointments/Lunches: One-on-one lunch or outside appointments with students of the opposite sex are discouraged. If necessary, meetings with members of the opposite sex should only be made if separate transportation is used. Meetings should only be in public places. Late night meetings with students are discouraged. When possible, meet with at least two students for off-site appointments.

3. Staff/volunteers should not invite a youth/student to his/her home alone. Instead, invite a group, making sure the "two-adult rule" is observed and parents are notified of the activity.

F. Respect for Privacy

Adults must respect the privacy of youth/students in situations such as changing clothes or bathing. Adults are to respect their own privacy in the same way.

G. Separate Accommodations.

When staying in hotel-style rooms or camping, no youth/student is permitted to sleep in the same tent or room as an adult other than his or her own parent or guardian. Adults and

youth/students sharing a large sleeping space (for example, a barracks-style retreat room) is acceptable as long as at least two qualified adults are present.

H. Reporting Child Abuse

Adults, both paid and volunteer, are required to report incidents of suspected abuse to the appropriate civil and church authorities as set forth by church policy and law.

I. Behavioral Standards

1. Sexual harassment or unwanted physical contacts or approaches in any form shall be promptly addressed and remedial steps taken.

2. Physical hazing is prohibited and may not be included as a part of any church activity. Abusive peer activities, e.g. initiation ceremonies, ridiculing, bullying, tickling are not permitted.

3. The use of alcoholic beverages and/or illegal drugs is prohibited while participating in (or traveling to) any youth/student event. No adult shall participate in a youth/student event while under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs. Alcoholic beverages are not to be present at youth/student events or activities. When incidents occur, follow the incident report procedure.

4. Displays of affection. Appropriate displays of affection are often part of conveying support and encouragement to one another. Displays of affection between youth/student leaders and youth/student group members should be limited to such actions as a brief hug, an arm around the shoulder, an open-handed pat on the back, a handclasp or handshake, or a light touch to the forearm. These displays of affection should be restricted to public areas. A youth/student group leader's or member's right to refuse such a display will be respected.

5.04 Child Abuse (See the section on child abuse in the Preschool/Child/Teen Protection Policies in the manual.)

5.05 Child Abuse Response Team

A. Composition

The church, working through the Preschool/Children and/or Youth Ministry Committee (Team) and Protection Task Force Subcommittee, shall establish a Child Abuse Response Team. The team shall include at least one member of the Protection Task Force, and shall include or work closely with key professional paid church staff such as the pastor. The work of the team will require the following skills:

- The ability to provide spiritual support and counsel
- The ability to provide emotional and practical support to family members (the victim's and the perpetrator's families)
- The ability to lead group and congregational discussions
- The ability to liaison with treatment and legal personnel
- The ability to mediate family relationship and practical issues

B. Duties

1. The Child Abuse Response Team shall meet at least annually to review policies, consider their respective roles, and clarify means by which the group may be mobilized when necessary.

2. Responding to Incidents and Allegations: It would then be this body's task to respond in accord with the policies and procedures adopted by the church in the event of

allegations or incidents including the reporting, documentation, investigation, findings and recommendations.

3. The Child Abuse Response Team shall work with the Protection Task Force Subcommittee in assuring education of those who work with preschoolers, children and youth, as well as the congregation and parents on child-abuse signs, prevention and responses.

4. Ministry to Those Impacted: The team shall often be involved in ministry affecting diverse persons impacted including the victim(s) and members of the family; the perpetrator's family; the peers of the victim (e.g., education classes, youth group); and abuse survivors who are part of the congregation at large. (An incident of abuse may raise old issues for survivors of child sexual abuse.)

5.06 Church Child Abuse Policy

A. Basic Policy/Procedure Commitments

1. Commitment to Prompt Response: This church is committed to prompt and effective responses to allegations and complaints.

2. Complaint Procedure: The church shall clearly identify persons to whom child abuse reports or concerns can be made – with alternatives for reporters.

3. Reporting Requirements: The church shall reinforce a clear requirement and expectation that members, staff and volunteers report inappropriate conduct, whether it arises to the level of abuse or not.

4. Follow-Up Action Steps: the church will set forth specific and clear procedure for acting on complaints through protection measures, investigations and disciplinary action where proper.

B. Specific Policy

1. Basic Policy and Commitment

This church is committed to a safe and healthy environment for preschoolers, children and teens. The church has established many policies and procedures to minimize such risks in its own ministries. A further aspect of our policy is to assure that the church and its leadership take immediate and effective action when suspicions, allegations or incidents of improper conduct with minors within our church's ministry occur. This is essential to protect both any alleged victim and an accused. To implement this commitment, the following policies and procedures shall be observed:

2. Communicating Concerns

Church members are encouraged, and staff and volunteers required, to discuss with the pastor, other staff or church leadership including the Preschool/Children and/or Youth Ministry Committee (Team) or Protection Task Force Subcommittee any violations of church protection policies or suspicious behavior such as inappropriate conduct or relationships between a paid or volunteer leader and a minor. Such conduct need not rise to the level of "child abuse" to be of legitimate concern. To the extent legally permissible, the identity of persons communicating these concerns shall be kept in confidence. Such prompt discussion permits the church to promptly and effectively monitor any situation, clarify possible misunderstandings or interpretations, and take such corrective and disciplinary action as may be appropriate. Reports may be direct complaints from parents, children, or other persons within the church, or persons outside

the church. All reports will be promptly investigated. It is our intention to be alert to any abusive situation and to take prudent steps to respond to each report.

3. Reporting Abuse.

Paid or volunteer leaders, including clergy, must report any suspicions or incidents of abuse occurring within the ministry of the church, whether those suspicions or incidents are directly observed or reported to them by other staff, other witnesses or minors themselves. Reports of such should be communicated promptly made to the church through lay leadership, senior church staff or church officers, as well as to official authorities as required under the Child Abuse Reporting Act. Any lay leader or officer receiving such reports shall communicate them promptly to the senior pastor, or the chair of the Deacons or a member of the Preschool/Children and/or Youth Ministry Committee (Team), Protection Task Force Subcommittee or any Child Abuse Response Team member.

4. Persons Responsible to Pursue Allegations.

The Child Abuse Response Team shall assure that the church's policies and procedures in handling allegations and incidents are promptly and fully observed, and that the resources the Child Abuse Response Team has identified are properly mobilized

Allegations of Child Abuse

Upon receiving a report or allegation clearly raising a reasonable possibility of abuse, the Abuse Response Team shall immediately take charge of the process, observing the policies and procedures established by the church, and as may be supplemented by team policies.

Allegations of Serious Misconduct, but Not Abuse

Upon receiving reports or allegations of serious misconduct or serious or repeated breaches of protection policies, the pastor or in his absence the chair of the Preschool/Child and Youth Protection and Ministry Team shall conduct an inquiry or appoint a team of three persons to follow up consistent with church policies, including recommendations for interim and final action. If the matter clearly does not involve an allegation of or possible incident of child abuse, the Child Abuse Response Team shall not be responsible for processing the concern.

Allegations of Inappropriate, Non-Abuse Conduct and/or Breaches of Policy

Upon receiving reports of conduct or policy breaches which clearly do not rise to the level of allegations or suspicions of abuse or other serious misconduct, the pastor or other party supervising the response shall, with at least one other person, conduct an inquiry, report to the Preschool/Child and/or Youth Ministry Committee (Team) in writing their findings and recommendations, and as appropriate meet with all parties concerned to clarify the findings and any actions recommended.

5. Interim Measures.

The Child Abuse Response Team or other group designated in charge of any inquiry may take immediate steps to assure the protection of all persons pending clarification and conclusions, and may temporarily suspend with pay any staff members or volunteers until the inquiry and findings are completed. The temporary suspension shall be effective for not more than thirty (30) days unless the Personnel Committee agrees on a longer period.

6. Processing Allegations and Incidents.

The Child Abuse Response Team or other group designated in charge of any inquiry shall assure that the following steps have been or are promptly taken:

- a. That immediate steps to protect and assure assistance to any preschooler, child or teen are taken.
- b. That the reporting statutes are complied with if applicable, and that the church is cooperating with civil authorities in providing accurate and complete information.
- c. That the parent of any minor who has allegedly been the victim of abuse or object of inappropriate behavior has been notified of the allegations and the actions being taken.
- d. That the matter is promptly investigated by interviews with all relevant persons.
- e. That, as necessary, staff or volunteers have been temporarily placed on leave or reassigned pending resolution of the matter.
- f. That where possible and appropriate, the church will minister directly to any victim and his/her family, without impeding any criminal or other state investigation.
- g. That as much as possible, the inquiry, investigation and conversations will be kept confidential.
- h. That after due inquiry, those responsible shall determine as best as possible the facts, and propose any church action of discipline and ministry as they find appropriate.
- i. That, when appropriate and necessary, the church leadership will be advised of any findings and resolution, and when proper or required, the church membership will also be advised of actions taken or recommended and the needed response of the church.
- j. The church insurer shall be promptly notified of allegations of serious misconduct toward children and youth.
- k. The church shall secure legal counsel.
- l. The Child Abuse Response Team collectively and its members individually, as well as others who may be involved in any investigation or abuse response, shall document in detail their inquiries, reports received, reports of witnesses or parties, and findings. These shall be kept by the chair in a confidential file.
- m. The Child Abuse Response Team shall carefully assess any response to media or other inquiries from those not directly involved. The church shall normally simply issue this statement:

“All matters involving reports or allegations of abuse or any misconduct toward or involving preschoolers, children or teens are taken very seriously, and in accord with specific written policies of this church, are investigated thoroughly and promptly by a special team, and in full compliance with all civil and criminal laws. Appropriate action is promptly taken to ensure the protection of minors and others, including any accused, during the inquiry. The inquiry within the church is properly confidential, protecting both alleged victims and any accused, but guided by biblical principles and commitments to justice and truth. Where wrongs or sins have been committed, the church focuses on the continued protection of minors, accountability, confession, repentance and ministries of healing and restoration to all involved.”

7. Barring Involvement with Minors.

On any finding that a staff member or volunteer has engaged in willful and serious misconduct with a minor, whether or not rising to the level of abuse, that person shall not be approved, authorized or permitted to have further involvement in the preschool, children and teen ministries of the church, and that the person shall be so advised. Such additional restrictions on the person's involvement in certain activities or presence as

may be necessary to implement this policy and protect the preschoolers, children and teens, may also be imposed. These restrictions shall be recommended by the Child Abuse Response Team or other body charged with the investigation to the Personnel Committee and other appropriate committees such as those for children or youth ministry. After review by such committees, they may be approved by the church in conference, or if the bylaws so permit, by some other body delegated such powers.

8. Allegations Against a Pastor.

In the event allegations of abuse or other serious misconduct involving a minor are lodged against the pastor, the Abuse Response Team shall fulfill the duties of assuring the steps set forth in this policy are observed. On any initial and immediate finding that the allegations are serious and credible, even if as yet unconfirmed, the Child Abuse Response Team may recommend to the church the immediate suspension of the pastor from his duties pending further investigation and recommendations. The church may, by majority vote, accept the recommendation of the team. Those responsible for investigating and responding to such allegations may consult advisers such as other pastors, leadership at the Baptist State Convention, legal counsel and other counselors. In the event the Child Abuse Response Team finds serious pastoral misconduct, the Child Abuse Response Team shall report their finding to the church along with any recommendations regarding dismissal, counseling, restrictions on ministry and related matters.

C. Ministry and Investigative Procedures

The Child Abuse Response Team shall seek professional counsel in developing specific procedures and means of carrying forth any of its investigative, support and counseling functions with current and former victims, families, accused persons and perpetrators. The team shall also work with the pastor and other professionals in developing appropriate ministries and policies toward persons formerly charged with abuse who now seek to be a part of the church family.

In regard to ex-offenders, the church's general policies shall be as follows:

1. Ex-offenders, subject to the conditions set forth herein, are encouraged to find in the church a place of worship and spiritual life –joining with the whole community of faith in confession, repentance and restoration.
2. Ex-offenders are invited to seek forgiveness and healing, and we are confident that the grace of God is sufficient to forgive. As forgiven sinners, ex-offenders are encouraged to find fellowship, spiritual nurture and encouragement from the Body of Christ. Ex-offenders who are members of the congregation are to receive the normal pastoral care afforded a child of God.
3. Ex-offenders are expected to recognize the nature of their compulsions and spiritual disease and with God's help commit themselves to steps which will help them deal effectively with their behavior including professional counseling.
4. Ex-offenders must recognize that for their own self-discipline and the church's protection of others, specific steps of supervision and discipline which provide protection for potential victims may be established by the church.
5. The pastor, in consultation with other church leadership including the chair of the Preschool/Children and Youth Ministry Committee (Team), Protection Task Force Subcommittee, and the Child Abuse Response Team Chair shall develop specific guidelines and restrictions applicable to the ex-offender's participation in the church, put

them in writing, and communicate them to the ex-offender who will be asked to sign them acknowledging their receipt and a commitment to abide by them.

6. Ex-offenders must recognize and accept that, given their conduct, it is necessary that they have no further involvement with preschool, child or teen ministries, or have unsupervised contacts or involvement with minors in any context. Ex-offenders will not be authorized to participate as volunteers in these programs. Other restrictions may be imposed in terms of access to facilities and/or activities to further reduce risks.

7. The ex-offender will be advised that while the church recognizes that it may create difficulties if others in the church are aware of his/her background, the church cannot keep the information totally confidential. Key leadership involved in preschool, child and teen ministries will be informed. It is also recognized that given the context, the word will likely spread to the whole church.

8. The pastor shall share with church leaders and those involved directly in preschool, child and teen ministries the fact of the presence of the ex-offender in the church, emphasizing that the person has been welcomed to the church. These leaders shall be advised of the restrictions that have been established and urged to inform the Child Abuse Response Team chair promptly if these restrictions are violated or other inappropriate conduct involving the ex-offender is observed or reported. The Child Abuse Response Team shall also assess to what extent and under what circumstances the larger church should be informed of the facts – given due consideration for all the concerns both for the ex-offender and the church body.

Ex-offenders who disregard the restrictions and conditions may be subject to additional restrictions and supervision, and if violations continue, may be subject to dismissal from the church, and if the conduct warrants, further legal action may be necessary.

Section F. Pastoral Staff Policies

The policies noted below regarding pastoral staff are in part set forth in the bylaws as well as here.

Other policies may be established by the pastoral staff regarding internal matters.

1.00 Pastoral Duties

The pastor shall have in his charge the welfare and oversight of the church. The pastor shall be an ex-officio member of all organizations, departments and committees; may call a special meeting of the deacons or any committee according to procedures that may be set forth in the bylaws; shall conduct religious services on stated and special occasions; administer the ordinances; minister to members of the church and community; and perform other duties that usually pertain to that office. The pastor shall have special charge of the pulpit ministry of the church and shall, in cooperation with the deacons, provide for pulpit supply when absent and arrange for workers to assist in revival meetings and other special services.

2.00 Pastoral Search

2.01 Pastoral Search Committee

(The church should determine whether this process applies to all pastoral staff, or only the senior pastor. If it only applies to the senior staff, then other provisions should be made for other ministerial staff calls such as associate pastors, ministers of youth, music, etc.)

When a vacancy in the pastorate occurs, a special Pastor Selection Committee shall be elected by the church from nominees submitted by the (Deacons, Nominating Committee, or combination e.g. the Deacons and Nominating Committee meeting together) of whatever size it deems appropriate. These nominees shall represent a cross-section of the church and shall be recommended on the basis of their spiritual maturity, commitment to the ministry of this church, and the special commitments and interests they represent within the church. The church shall vote on the nominated committee as a group. The committee shall proceed promptly and diligently to seek to find a pastor who, by calling, training, and proven ability, seems qualified spiritually, mentally and physically to lead the members of this church. In its efforts to meet its responsibilities, the committee shall be responsible to the church directly. The committee shall receive and give full consideration to all suggestions from members of the church. Members of the committee shall be reimbursed by the church treasurer for any necessary travel and subsistence expenses that are incurred in the performance of their duties.

2.02 Election/Call of a Pastor

(As with the paragraph above, the church must determine whether this process is applicable to all pastoral staff members or only the senior pastor – and if not applicable to other pastoral staff, some other process should be set forth for the other pastoral staff members.)

The vote on the nomination of a pastor by the Search Committee shall be held at a service to which notice has been provided for not less than two weeks. Prior to such a meeting the Search Committee shall have provided ample opportunity for the members of the church to have become familiar with the candidate and assess his appropriateness and calling for the church, and the terms of the call proposed by the Nominating Committee. The vote shall be by secret written ballot. To be elected pastor, the minister nominated by the committee must receive at least 90 percent of all the votes cast. If the committee's report fails to receive the required vote, the moderator shall declare the nominee not elected, and shall refer the matter, without debate, to the committee for further investigation and further recommendations under the foregoing procedure.

3.00 Pastoral Staff Employment Relationships

3.01 Pastoral Staff Employment Policies

The church shall establish and set forth appropriate employment policies in regard to the pastoral staff, adopt them as an aspect of the calling of a pastor, and annually review such policies. Such policies shall not constitute a contract and are subject to modification by the church at any time.

3.02 Identification of Pastoral Staff

The Personnel Committee shall make recommendations as a matter of general policy, and in individual calls, as to what staff members shall be classified as members of the "pastoral" staff, giving recognition to the church's biblical and theological views, and the employment law implications of such classifications. The church shall also, in that process, identify and set forth in writing those persons whose classification, ordination status and church practice are authorized to perform the principal rituals and ceremonies of the church, including the performance of weddings.

3.03 Pastor-Congregational Covenant

The pastor and the church may choose to enter into a written specific covenant as an expression of the aspirations of the pastor and congregation regarding the nature and quality of the relationship. Any such covenant, however, shall not create any legal rights or duties on any party.

4.00 Pastoral Staff Ministry Accountability and Review

(One of more of the following may be included)

4.01 Annual Review

The deacons (or perhaps the Personnel Committee) shall not less than annually develop and implement a process of ministry review with each member of the pastoral staff. This review shall seek in collaborative and constructive ways to assess ministry strengths and areas of weakness or concern, and seek to identify means to enhance effectiveness in ministry and in the pastor's growth in all dimensions of life and work. Where appropriate, priorities may be mutually set, and means developed for addressing problems or concerns.

4.02 Minister Relations Committee

(There are alternative names such as Council on Care-Giving)

The church shall establish a committee of not less than five or more than seven persons to serve as a Ministerial Relations Committee. The deacons shall appoint one member. The Personnel Committee shall appoint one member, and the Nominating Committee shall recommend other members who shall serve three-year, staggered terms. In the first year of a new pastor's tenure, at least one member shall be a person who served on the Pastor Search Committee.

The committee shall seek to provide support and counsel for the pastor, sharing visions for ministry and reflecting the expectations and/or concerns of the congregation. They shall be sensitive to the minister's personal and family needs, spiritual nourishment and ministerial effectiveness. The committee shall annually in consultation with the pastor, engage in a review of the church's ministry, and where appropriate, work collegially to develop goals and objectives to enhance ministerial effectiveness. The committee may conduct a survey of a scope and nature they deem appropriate to assess the sense of the congregation regarding the pastor and the pastoral ministry.

5.00 Ministerial Staff Benefits and Related Policies

5.01 Policy on Pastoral Continuing Education

The pastoral staff is encouraged to participate in denominational and other educational opportunities to develop professional skills and ministry effectiveness. Pastoral staff who wish to enroll in more extended educational programs including programs leading to degrees and certificates, or matriculation with educational institutions such as universities, theological schools or institutes, or where such programs will involve times when the pastoral staff are otherwise assumed to be performing their ministry, shall review their interests and proposals with the Personnel Committee (or deacons), setting forth in writing the nature of the program, time commitments, length and relevance for ministry. The committee may make such recommendations to the church as they deem appropriate.

5.02 Policy on Pastoral Sabbatical Eligibility

A member of the pastoral staff, after full-time service for a period of not less than seven (7) years may request a sabbatical leave (perhaps three months) with pay for purposes of spiritual renewal, education or other purpose which will enhance effectiveness in ministry. The staff member must request such leave not less than six months in advance, and set forth in writing the nature of the use of the sabbatical. The Personnel Committee shall review the proposal with the pastor and make such recommendations to the church regarding its approval as they deem appropriate.

5.03 Reimbursement Policy

A. Authorization for Reimbursements.

In addition to the salary provided all employees including the pastor, the church will reimburse them for auto, travel and professional expenses considered ordinary and necessary for them to carry out their duties with a fixed limit as set forth in the annual

budget. If actual expenses are less than this sum, the difference will not be paid as additional salary or other benefit.

B. Compliance with IRS Regulations

Consistent with IRS regulations for an accountable expense reimbursement policy, and the church's desire to conform to these requirements for the benefit of the church and staff, the church shall implement an expense reimbursement policy whereby ministers and other staff may receive advances for or reimbursement of expenses to the extent provided for in the current budget if and only if (1) the expense has a stated business purpose related to the church's ministry, (2) the minister or staff provides written detailed substantiation of the expenses, normally on a form provided by the church, within not less than sixty (60) days, and (3) any excess reimbursements are returned within 120 days. Further any advances must not be made more than thirty (30) days before the expected expenses, nor in excess of a reasonable estimate of those expenses, and an accounting and substantiation of expenses must be made within sixty (60) days, and the return of any excess advance fund within 120 days.

C. Church Reimbursement Systems

The financial officers shall establish a clear system including appropriate forms for employees to submit expenses for reimbursement. Such a system should include requirements for necessary documentation such as receipts where possible. The system may also require that certain expenses would require prior approval and others more routine, such as monthly pastoral car mileage, would not require such.

The church may also provide that in certain circumstances the church would advance expense account funds, subject to necessary post-expenditure accounting and return of any unused funds.

5.04 Pastoral Housing Allowance Policy

The Finance Committee shall annually request of those who qualify for a "Housing Allowance" the submission of estimated housing expenses, satisfy itself that the total does not clearly exceed the fair-market rental value of the furnished home plus utilities, and recommend to the church prior to next tax year, a sum to be designated in that next year as "Housing Allowance." The church or its designated body shall vote on such recommendation and record it in its minutes.

5.05 Policy on Church Loans to Pastoral Staff

The church, consistent with its exempt status and legal obligations regarding the use of its funds, shall not make loans or otherwise act as security for loans, to members or staff.

Any exception to this policy must be approved by two-thirds vote of the church on recommendation from the Personnel and Finance Committees, and only after a written legal opinion that such a loan is not inconsistent with the church's legal obligations. Any loan agreement must be in writing and contain specific provisions for regular repayment.

5.06 Policy on Pastoral Outside Employment

Pastoral staff are expected to give their full-time energies to the ministry of the church. Any other employment or active business involvement involving the time and energies of the pastoral staff must be disclosed to the Personnel Committee (or perhaps the entire church or the deacons). Where, in the opinion of the committee, such activities are likely

to in appearance or fact intrude upon the commitments toward the church, the committee shall refer the matter to the church. The committee may make recommendations to the church regarding the church's approval, limitations on, or disapproval of the outside involvements.

6.00 Pastor Termination

6.01 Biblical Commitment

The church commits itself to address issues of church conflict involving pastoral staff in a manner consistent with biblical doctrines of reconciliation, confession and forgiveness, and the specific admonitions of Matthew 18.

6.02 Conflict Management

The church shall give serious consideration in cases of conflict involving the pastoral leadership to utilizing outside resources which may assist in understanding and resolving such conflicts.

6.03 Bylaw Pastoral Termination Provision

The pastor is called to serve until the relationship is dissolved at the request of either the pastor or the church.

A. Resignation.

The pastor may resign but shall normally provide at least thirty (30) days notice before the termination of his services. A written resignation or an oral resignation delivered at a Sunday morning service or business meeting of the church, if without conditions, shall be final and binding. If any resignation is subject to conditions it shall be effective and binding when accepted by majority ballot vote of the church.

B. Removal.

Such a vote may be initiated by the recommendation of the deacons or by a motion calling for such a vote passed by majority vote at a congregational meeting. In this case the moderator shall immediately set the date for such a meeting to be held within thirty (30) days, or by written petition signed by not less than 20 percent of the membership and given to the deacons or its chair. In the event of such a petition, the deacons shall set a time for the vote on the tenure of the pastor to be held in not less than sixty (60) days. No member-petition-based call for a vote on the pastor's tenure shall be effective if such a petition has been filed and a vote taken within the last twelve (12) months.

1. The officers and the members shall make every effort to follow biblical principles including the process set forth in Matthew 18 in dealing with conflicts regarding pastoral staff. An effort should be extended to permit reconciliation of conflicts in a manner consistent with our Christian faith and doctrine.

2. Removal shall be effective immediately upon the adoption of a motion terminating the pastor, but salary and benefits shall continue for not less than thirty (30) days. Any resolution to dismiss may also contain recommendations concerning other financial aspects of the termination including severance pay.

Alternate Termination Bylaw Provision:

(The church may decide to adopt the “Communication and Exit Strategies” for dealing with church-minister conflicts. These are noted in the section of Pastoral Staff, and a proposed policy is set forth in the Appendix, that could be set forth in the bylaws.)

6.04 Suspensions of Pastoral Staff

The deacons and Personnel Committee (or perhaps some other committee) may by combined three-fourths vote temporarily suspend with pay all or some of the duties of pastoral staff. This could occur in the face of criminal accusations or charges or other serious allegations of moral failure which cause them to believe that suspension is required for the credibility of the church and/or the safety and security of the church, its members or those it serves. Such suspension may include conditions or prohibitions related to their pastoral status. Such suspension imposed by the committees may only extend for a period sufficient for the congregation to take appropriate action consistent with other provisions in the bylaws, and in no event more than thirty (30) days without congregational action extending such. At any proper congregational meeting such suspensions may be terminated, modified, affirmed or extended for indefinite or defined periods of time. Such suspensions shall not be understood as necessarily concluding the truth of charges against the pastoral staff member, but to provide an appropriate process for investigation and for processes consistent with church doctrine and governance.

7.00 Ministry Guidelines

The church may adopt guidelines regarding any specific area of pastoral ministry. The pastoral staff may also develop their own ministry guidelines and advise the church, and if the pastor so wishes ask the church’s endorsement of those policies. Special consideration should be given to the development of such policies in areas of pastoral counseling.

8.00 Sexual Exploitation

This church is committed to a community in which members, friends, staff and volunteers can worship and work together in an atmosphere free of sexual harassment, exploitation or intimidation. All persons should be aware that the church condemns sexual misconduct and sexual exploitation in any form and such is prohibited by church policy. Misconduct of a sexual nature within the life of the church not only is a personal tragedy, but it also undermines the moral mission of the church today to speak to a culture whose sexual mores and preoccupation in media are risking our very culture and the foundations of marriage and family life.

All persons engaged in the ministry of this church whether ordained clergy, ministerial or lay staff members, or volunteers 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 misconduct or exploitation of others by anyone engaged in the ministry of this church is sinful, unethical and unprofessional behavior with tragic consequences for families and the community and will not be tolerated. Because the ministry of the church often deals 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 commitment to biblical sexual standards, and to their psychological, emotional,

and spiritual health and that they have appropriate preparation for helping those individuals they seek to serve in ministry.

In addition, this church has always recognized that those who are chosen for ordained ministry bear a particular responsibility to pattern their lives according to Jesus' example. Not only are our leaders regarded by the faithful as examples of what a Christian life should be but any moral offense by clergy or laypersons entrusted with pastoral and educational ministries is especially hurtful because it betrays that trust committed to them by the church to nurture and care for every member.

Any staff member who engages in sexual misconduct as set forth in Scripture is subject to discipline including dismissal. Any persons, staff or volunteers, who engage in sexual misconduct with persons to whom they are ministering in positions of leadership and trust such as counseling, group leadership, teaching, team leadership, mission group leaders, youth counselors and similar capacities will be subject to removal from those positions. Similarly, persons whose relationships in such contexts become inappropriate and risk abusing positions of leadership will be counseled regarding their conduct and may be removed from their positions.