



CHRIST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Piscataway

BUILDING USE REQUEST FORM

due 4 weeks prior to date requested, pending approval

The Leadership Council of Christ UMC recognize that the physical property of Christ UMC may be used for outreach and mission in the community. As part of our outreach commitment, Christ UMC makes available designated spaces for use by community nonprofits, boy and girl scout troops, religious celebrations, family milestone events, and events of interest to the broader community.

Date of Application: _____

Date of Event (requested): _____

Name of Organization: _____ herein known as GUEST.

Name of Private Party _____ herein known as GUEST.

Address: _____

Email: _____ Phone: _____

Nonprofit organization _____ YES _____ NO

Entrance/registration fee be charged? _____ YES _____ NO Amount \$ _____.

Type of Event: _____

Setup Time: Start: _____ Event Time: Start: _____ End: _____

Space/s Requested:

Sanctuary _____

Parking Lot _____

Fellowship Hall _____

Kitchen _____

Chapel _____

Family Gathering Room _____

Classroom/s _____ How many _____

Planned Attendance # of Adults _____ under age 18 _____ = Expected total: _____

Services Requested:

Church Musician: _____

A/V Services/Equipment: _____

Piano/Instrument Use: _____

Microphones: _____

Other special equipment requested/special needs: _____



Building Use and Shared Utilities Fee Schedule

Certificate of Insurance and fees must be received ten days prior to event.

	<u>active members</u>	<u>non members</u>	<u>payable to</u>
Deposit	----	\$200	Christ UMC
Sanctuary Use Up to 4 hours Capacity 285 Includes choir loft in front	\$250	\$600	Christ UMC
Chapel Up to 4 hours	\$250	\$300	Christ UMC
Fellowship Hall Max capacity 300 250 seated at tables 4 hours plus 1 hour set up			
Additional time-space	\$250	\$500	Christ UMC
	\$75/hr	\$150/hr	Christ UMC
Sound Setup/microphones	\$75	\$75	Christ UMC
Use of Instruments	\$185	\$185	Christ UMC
Use of AV equipment (sanctuary)	\$75	\$75	CASH
AV Services	\$75	\$75	CASH
Church musician	\$250	\$300	CASH or check payable to Dr. Lynn Stallworth
Soloist	\$75	\$75	CASH
Wedding Coordinator	\$150	\$150	CASH
Church Rep Up to 4 hours, under 100 people)	\$150	\$150	CASH
Admin Fee	\$150	\$150	Christ UMC

Notes: Church rep additional \$50 per hour over 4 hours

Two church reps are needed for larger groups over 100

A \$50 cancellation fee will be charged if cancellation occurs within 7 days of the scheduled date.

Insurance Requirement: The partner/user **must provide a liability Certificate of Insurance** for a minimum of \$1,000,000 liability and \$1,000,000 property damage naming Christ United Methodist Church as an additional insured. The insurance certificate needs to be received no later than ten days prior to the event.

Important: See following pages for **Guidelines and Safe Sanctuary policies** to be followed.

Guidelines for the Use of Fellowship Hall

INSURANCE INFORMATION and AGREEMENT Christ UMC Safe Sanctuaries and Child Supervision Form

Thank you for your interest in using our Fellowship Hall. The information below is intended to insure your event goes smoothly. To avoid any misunderstandings please read carefully, and let us know what questions you have.

Our facilities are open to nonprofits only. are NOT for “for profit” use.

A responsible adult must be responsible for the conduct of the meeting, for the payment of the contribution, and for adherence to all terms of this agreement.

Responsible party will also be held liable for any damage in excess of the security deposit.

The church is especially interested in the welfare of guests - please pay special attention to those items that relate to safety and to our Safe Sanctuary policy that is at the end of this document.

The individual signing the Facility Use application is deemed to be in charge of the group and is responsible for adherence to these guidelines. Responsible party must be at least 25 years old and in attendance for the event from start (setup) through end (cleanup).

If children, youth or minors are present, TWO adults MUST BE PRESENT in every room where children, youth or minors gather in compliance with our Safe Sanctuary policy.

The person signing this application **must provide a liability Certificate of Insurance** for a minimum of \$1,000,000 liability and \$1,000,000 property damage naming Christ United Methodist Church as an additional insured. The insurance certificate needs to be received no later than ten days weeks prior to the event.

All organizations or groups using the facilities agree to assume responsibility for all damage to the facilities and its contents.

All fee payments must be made more than one week in advance of the event. The fee schedule can be found on page 3. The church reserves the right to require a second Church Rep at an additional charge.

A refundable security deposit of \$200, payable to CUMC is required and will be refunded upon completion of the event without incident. See below on items that will result in your deposit being held.

The organization/individual using the facilities agree to hold harmless the church, the pastors, and church members for expenses arising out of any injury or damage occurring during the facility use by the organization and guests.

The maximum capacity for Fellowship Hall is 300 persons and must be strictly adhered to. Fellowship Hall must be left broom clean, trash placed in the bags and cans provided. Tables and chairs must be returned to the placement they were found.

All guests and activities should be confined to the Fellowship Hall. The adjacent hallway and outdoor areas are not areas for children nor grownups to congregate.
All food and beverage served will be consumed in Fellowship Hall only. Food and drink are not allowed in entryways, hallways or any other part of the building.
Alcohol is prohibited on the property of Christ UMC.
Smoking is prohibited on the property of Christ UMC.

Publicity for events located at Christ UMC that are not church-related must clearly indicate the name of the sponsoring group.

USE OF KITCHEN - CLEAN UP AND SUPPLIES

The kitchen must be left in clean condition. Please talk to your caterer if applicable.
Kitchen cleaning is your responsibility.
Use of Styrofoam is prohibited. Speak to your caterer. (See #15).
Exhaust fans MUST be turned ON during any use of stoves or ovens.
No children in the kitchen please.
Food may be warmed in the adjacent kitchen, using the gas stove, gas oven or the microwave. Food preparation/cooking is not permitted in the church without prior permission.
The church cannot be responsible for care or storage of property.
Water and icemaker are available.
Upon request, limited refrigeration is available. Please make requests in advance.
Coffee urns are not for use.
Locked areas are for church use only.
Please bring all supplies you will need. The church's kitchen supplies (such as paper goods, plastic ware, tablecloths, utensils or kitchenware.) are not for the use of outside groups.

DECORATIONS

The church asks that decorations be tied in place rather than taped. If tape must be used, please tape only to glass surfaces - not to metal, brick, or woodwork. All decorations must be removed at the end of the event.

Lack of cooperation with the Christ UMC appointed Church Representative
Failure to supervise children, age 18 and under.
False fire alarms or 911 calls are not permitted.
Use of smoke/fog machine is not permitted.
Damage to, or theft of, church property
Inadequate cleaning of the facility after the rental
Incomplete cleaning of kitchen if used.
Tables and chairs in the hall not returned to their original number and placement.
Failure to adhere to pre-arranged timing of set-up event and event, per the signed written Agreement. Re: not vacating promptly – an additional fee of \$140 will be charged for time extending over the allotted 30 minute cleanup time.

I have read and agree to these guidelines. I understand that failure to adhere to these guidelines may result in deposit not being refunded.

Name: _____ Signature: _____ Date: _____



Safe Sanctuaries Policy

Certified by GNJ May 2025

Rationale: As a United Methodist community of faith, we are committed to John Wesley's three simple rules- to do no harm, to do good and to stay in love with God. We recognize that our responsibility to the people in our community, especially the most vulnerable among us, is a sacred gift, and we endeavor to treat the safety and upkeep of children, youth and vulnerable peoples as such.

The below policy has been developed by our community of faith in conjunction with the standards set by the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference. All entities in this community of faith will be educated about this policy, and will be held to its standards.

Definitions related to Safe Sanctuaries Policies & Procedures: A common set of definitions provides a useful frame of reference for policy development.

Child: In the United States, this term is commonly used to identify anyone age eleven or younger.

Youth: Anyone not a "child" and under eighteen (age of legal majority).

Adult: Anyone who has reached the age of legal majority and is no longer in high school.

Vulnerable person: A person whose ability to protect themselves from violence, abuse, or neglect is significantly impaired through social, physical, or mental disability or illness.

Paid staff person: Someone paid by the church, overseen by the staff/pastor parish relations committee, and screened according to the church's Safe Sanctuary policy and any additional required personnel screening.

Unscreened adult: Someone who has not been screened.

Screened adult: A volunteer who has gone through the screening process involving a criminal background check, reference check, interview, and risk reduction training. These people may or may not be members, but they must be regular attendees and active in the church for at least six months.

Roamer: A Safe Sanctuaries trained/screened adult leader who meets the minimum age requirements as defined in this policy and moves throughout the facility to provide additional oversight and supervision during activities.

Ministry supervisor: A screened individual, staff, or volunteer, responsible for a particular ministry with oversight of the leaders in that ministry.

Physical abuse: Violent, non-accidental contact that results in injury. This includes, but is not limited to, striking, biting, or shaking. Injuries include bruises, fractures, cuts, and burns.

Sexual abuse: Any form of sexual activity with a child/youth/any other vulnerable person, whether at the church, at home, or in any other setting. The abuser may be an adult or another minor.

Emotional abuse: A pattern of intentional conduct that crushes a child's/youth's/other vulnerable person's spirit and attacks his/her self-worth through rejection, threats, terrorizing, isolating, or belittling.

Neglect: When a person with responsibility for a child, youth, or other vulnerable person fails to care for that individual's physical and/or emotional needs.

Facts about Abuse:

- It Can Happen Anywhere: The child victim is never responsible for causing the abuse and is never to be blamed. The child victim is never capable of consenting to abusive behavior. Child sexual abuse is ALWAYS wrong and is solely the responsibility of the abuser.
- Knowing the Statistics: Studies have estimated that 1 out of 3 girls are sexually abused before the age of 18. Estimates state that 1 out of 7 boys are sexually abused, but the number may be higher because of a reluctance to report occurrences.
- The Church at Risk: The risk for churches is especially high because we are seen as "trusting organizations" and we've been "notoriously INACTIVE when it comes to screening volunteers and/or employees who work with kids." Churches routinely provide opportunities for close contact with children.
- Indicators of Child Abuse: Children showing anxiety about coming to church or being left in a class or program, or reluctance to participate when he/she had previously been enthusiastic may be an indicator of abusive behaviors. Abused children may have fears of specific individuals experiencing nightmares or showing hostility.
- Abusers: Who Are They: Less than 20% are strangers - 93% of victims know their abuser. People who abuse children look and act just like everyone else. Those who sexually abuse children are drawn to settings where they can gain easy access to children, such as sports leagues, faith centers, clubs, and schools.
- How Does Abuse Happen? Children are vulnerable, and the abuser is powerful; without a comprehensive strategy against abuse, we are taking a needless risk that harm may be done to our children or our workers with children. Strategies must be supported by the entire congregation and, applied to each worker involved in children's ministries. We need to think carefully about the safety of any- adult/one--child situation. Look for group situations where possible. Set an example by personally avoiding one-adult/one-child situations with children other than your own. There should never be a situation in ministry where one adult is left alone with one child.
- Consequences of Child Sexual Abuse: Of foremost importance is the child/ youth or vulnerable adult who has been harmed; he or she must be cared for. The harm that is done to the child/youth/vulnerable adult is entirely life-altering, and every step should be taken to care for the victim- including but not limited to providing support and resources for the continued care and wellbeing of the child/youth/vulnerable adult.

- Many victims are created, including the person harmed, that person's family, the congregation, and often the family of the abuser. The congregation's wounds may continue well beyond litigation - that doesn't provide healing among the members. Litigation can go on for two or more years. Financial consequences are somewhere around \$750,000 if innocent/at least \$1-2 million if proven guilty. No congregation can afford, financially, ethically, or morally, to fail to implement strategies for the reduction and prevention of child sexual abuse.

- GNJ Insurance: All churches are covered because the Conference has a policy, and there is an expectation that every church and its programs, is implementing some type of policies and procedures. As is true with most situations, the extent of coverage varies, depending on what the local church has done to proactively prevent abuse from happening.

- Minimizing Opportunity for Abuse: If you eliminate one-adult/one-child situations, you'll dramatically lower the risk of sexual abuse for your children/youth/vulnerable adults. Expect programs to perform careful screening and background checks on all persons working with children/youth/vulnerable adults. Youth-serving organizations outside of the local church should have policies in place for dealing with suspicious situations and reports of abuse. Furthermore, these organizations should regularly train their staff to prevent, recognize and react responsibly to child sexual abuse.

Selection and Screening of Church Staff and Adult Volunteers:

We should not allow possible risks to undermine or stop our ministry.

Rather, we must:

- Acknowledge the risks and develop a practical plan to address these issues
- Take steps to prevent harm to our children, youth, and other vulnerable persons; and
- Continue to answer the Gospel's imperative to be in ministry with children, youth, and other vulnerable persons, thus making a difference in their lives
- Safe Sanctuaries policies and the implementation of practices that reflect those policies seek to fulfill this call for our church

A. The pastor in charge or his/her designee and the staff parish relations committee are charged with the responsibility of developing, implementing, and evaluating the process for recruiting, screening, selecting, training, and supervising non-appointive church staff (§ 258.12 Book of Discipline, 2016). The pastor will utilize Ministry Safe for background checks and screenings as well as training for staff and volunteers.

B. All adults who volunteer with/come into contact with the church's children, youth, and other vulnerable people, and each church-paid staff person, including clergy, will be screened at least every 3 years. All will be trained using Ministry Safe.

C. Screening Procedures:

1. Each person being considered to volunteer with/come into contact with children, youth, and/or other vulnerable people, whether as a volunteer or paid staff person, shall fill out a volunteer application. Anyone interested in volunteering with youth, children, or vulnerable persons must be regularly attending worship in person for at least six months.

2. Before placing the applicant in a position of responsibility with children, youth, or other vulnerable people, a designated paid staff member or person charged with specific responsibility will interview the applicant and review the written volunteer application.
3. Child Abuse Survivor Applicants -Adult survivors of childhood physical or sexual abuse need the love and acceptance of this church family. A person's experience with abuse and the recovery process may be pertinent to the individual's suitability as a youth, children, or other vulnerable people's ministry worker. Applicants who are survivors of abuse should discuss this in confidence with the person who conducts the confidential interview. If an applicant is uncomfortable doing so, he/she may have the interview conducted by a pastor. When evaluating candidates, the following factors will be considered if an applicant is a survivor of child abuse:
 - A. whether the applicant has previously committed an act of child abuse or molestation (anyone who has maltreated children may not serve in ministry with children, youth, or other vulnerable people);
 - B. the extent of professional counseling the applicant has received;
 - C. the opinion of references, especially professional counselors who have served the applicant;
 - D. the opinion of leaders in other churches or youth organizations in which the applicant has been involved; how closely the church is able to supervise and monitor the position for which the applicant is applying
4. The person conducting this interview will contact the references provided on the screening form and any additional people as the circumstances dictate. A written record of such contacts will be retained with the screening form.
5. The reference forms, volunteer application, and any notes from the interview will be retained in a designated confidential place even after termination or completion of services. Background checks are not to be deleted from Ministry Safe.
6. Each person applying to work with children, youth, and/or other vulnerable people shall authorize the church to conduct a criminal background check through Ministry Safe.
 - D. After the interview and background check have been accomplished, the decision will be made to approve or not approve the applicant as a paid staff member/screened adult volunteer who will work with youth, children, and/or other vulnerable people.
 - E. Previously screened/trained workers must report any new incidents that would appear on a new background check to the pastor or DS immediately.
 - F. Where it has been determined that an applicant should not be approved, those people involved with the decision should handle it in a sensitive manner. The pastor in charge or her/his designee should inform the applicant in person. The specific reasons for the decision should be given, whenever possible.
 - G. It is important that all records (except for the background checks and training reports which are to be kept online in Ministry Safe) be kept in a locked cabinet in the pastor in charge's office. There should be a system in place that offers those who need these records appropriate access and a safe place to be stored to assure confidentiality. These documents should be kept for 20 years.

Note about Selection and Screening of Church Staff and Adult Volunteers: If a known offender wants to participate in ministries within the church, please contact your District Superintendent for resources.

Training: The pastor in charge or designee and staff parish relations committee shall ensure that regularly scheduled annual training focused on foundational and current issues of child protection is available to and received by those working with children, youth, and other vulnerable people.

Attendance at this training shall be required prior to involvement in affected areas of ministry by all paid staff members, screened and unscreened adults, and youth helpers who work consistently with children, youth, and/or other vulnerable people. (At a minimum, the basic training with Ministry Safe is the Sexual Abuse Awareness Training.)

The entire congregation should be educated on the church's Safe Sanctuary Policy.

General Supervision

1. All activities involving children, youth, and other vulnerable people will be supervised by two screened adults. A designated roamer shall monitor the room when it is impossible to have two leaders present.
2. When reasonably feasible, each room set aside for children/youth should have a door with a window. (Windows in doors tend to remove the opportunities for secrecy and isolation, conditions every child abuser seeks.) Half doors should be considered for toddlers to second-grade children to keep them from wandering outside the classroom. Windows should remain free from obstruction; avoid covering them. If there are no windows in the door, the door should remain open.
3. The "two-person rule" is defined as having at least two unrelated people in any classroom or setting, who are screened adult volunteers or staff persons. When this is not possible, a designated roamer should visit the room regularly. If using a roamer, keep the doors open.
4. Leaders with children and youth must be adults. Volunteer assistants may be youth, 13 years or older, and should be at least five years older than the oldest child.

Classroom Activities:

1. Crib/Toddler to Second Grade: Two unrelated screened adults will be present for all classroom activities involving infants, toddlers, and children in grades K-2. In addition, a designated roamer should check each classroom on a regular basis. Two adult leaders in the classroom are the expectation; more can be added.
2. Grades 3–5 Two Screened adults will be present for all classroom activities. In addition, a designated roamer should check each classroom on a regular basis. Children should be escorted to and from bathroom facilities or when otherwise leaving the room by either one of the adults or by a designated roamer who checks on all classrooms. Where two adults are not available, the classroom doors are to remain open, and a designated roamer should visit the classroom regularly.
3. Grades 6–12 Classroom activities will be led by at least two screened adults. A designated floater shall monitor the room when it is not possible to have two leaders present.

Open Door Policy Parents, volunteers, or staff of the church will be permitted, as reasonableness dictates, to visit and observe all programs and classrooms at any time.

Sign-in/Sign-out Procedure: Adults responsible for children who are infants through toddlers should sign their children in and indicate the names of authorized person(s) to whom the child may be signed out. Adults responsible for children aged 2 through second grade should sign their child in and out of Sunday school and other children's activities. Non-authorized adults should not be allowed to pick up children. Older siblings, parents, and other adults may be authorized to pick up children when they are identified on a child's care and information records. This record of authorized adults with pick-up privileges should be updated annually.

Supervision of Non-Classroom Activities: At least two screened adults will be present for all non-classroom activities involving children, youth, and/or other vulnerable people. Any meetings held in an individual's home will be supervised by at least two screened adults, with two adults present who are not members of the same family. Meetings held in an individual's home must be pre-approved by the child's/youth's/vulnerable person's parent or guardian.

Counseling of Youth, Children, and Other Vulnerable People: In instances where circumstances dictate that counseling would be most effective on a one-on-one basis, an appropriate paid church staff person may meet individually for a one-on-one conversation with the knowledge of at least one other paid staff member and with permission of a parent or guardian.

During any one-on-one conversation with children, youth, or other vulnerable people, the door of the room used should remain open for the entire session, unless there is glass in the door or wall that gives a clear view into the room. If another adult is not in the building when the counseling occurs, the session should be moved to a public place, such as a restaurant or outside where other people are present.

Notes about General Supervision:

NOTE 1: At the initial meeting, the adult should first determine if he/she is qualified to address the child's/youth's/other vulnerable person's needs effectively. Counseling should be limited to no more than three sessions. Referral to another more qualified counselor should always be considered.

NOTE 2: This section is not meant to govern a licensed professional counselor in a paid counseling relationship with a child, youth, or other vulnerable people.

Time Following Group Events:

Following group events, it is inevitable that occasionally a child's/youth's/or other vulnerable person's transportation arrives after all other participants have departed. Two screened leaders should be scheduled to be present until all participants have been picked up. In some circumstances, a child/youth/other vulnerable people may unavoidably be supervised by one screened adult. When this occurs, the screened adult is responsible for exercising his/her best judgment for the participant's well-being as well as his/her own. Example—Have the parents on the phone with you until they arrive.

Building Compliance Requirements: Safe Sanctuaries policy applies to all church-operated programs for children, youth, or vulnerable adults.

These programs must be clearly differentiated from those that are non-church operated.

The following are basic assumptions made as they relate to both church and non-church-operated children, youth, and vulnerable adult programs:

1. All buildings in which such programs are housed shall have any necessary "certificates of occupancy."
2. All groups conducting such programs shall have the necessary certificates of insurance for both liability and workers' compensation. They shall be displayed as required by law.
3. All such programs shall conform to Federal and State wage and tax laws for employees.
4. Any group using the church building should have its own protection policy for children, youth, and young adults or agree to abide by the church's policy.

Transportation General Rules:

Transporting children, youth, and other vulnerable people is an important concern. Their safety can be at risk in a variety of ways. Therefore, certain discretion must be used depending upon the event attended, the locale of the event, and the age group participating. This policy includes both requirements and guidelines. When feasible, there should be adherence to the recommendations and the guidelines. It is expected that the requirements will always be followed.

Requirements for Transportation:

1. Drivers must be screened adults with a Motor Vehicle background-specific check in addition to their background check and Ministry Safe Training.
2. When a child/youth/other vulnerable person is transported in any vehicle, the driver must be either the child's/youth's/other vulnerable person's parent/guardian, a screened adult or a paid staff person who is at least 25 years old.
3. When a child/youth/other vulnerable person is transported in a church-owned vehicle, the driver must be at least 25 years of age; an exception is made when the driver is a paid staff member who is at least 18 years of age and for whom a motor vehicle record search has been made and the record has been found to be satisfactory by the pastor in charge or his/her designee. (This is subject to other church policies, state law, and insurance regulations.)
4. Drivers must have a valid driver's license for the vehicle being operated. For example, if driving a church bus, a commercial driver's license is required. A copy of the driver's license should be on file in the church office.
5. Drivers must require that passengers wear seat belts; the number of passengers must not exceed the number of seat belts.
6. Drivers should be advised of a designated route and should not deviate from it except in cases of emergency or road detours.
7. Drivers should not use cell phones unless required for communication with other drivers. Any use should be hands-free and in accordance with state law. Drivers should not text/message while driving.
8. When a trip is planned and the destination is expected to be 100 miles or more from the point of departure, drivers are to be listed on an "approved driver list" maintained in the church office.

9. People who regularly drive church-owned vehicles are to be listed on an “approved driver list” maintained in the church office.

10. To be listed on the “approved driver list,” a motor vehicle record search must have been conducted, and the pastor in charge or his/her designee must determine if the record is satisfactory.

11. Drivers will read and sign an acknowledgment form indicating that the Child, Youth, and Other Vulnerable People Protection Policy has been read and will be followed (See Appendix Section).

Guidelines for Transportation:

1. Drivers should be accompanied by at least one other adult and more than one youth.
2. Drivers should receive training for any church-owned vehicle being operated.
3. Youth who drive their own vehicles should be reminded regularly of the importance of vehicle safety.

Overnights, Trips, Retreats:

Trip and retreat settings can call for different child/youth/other vulnerable people protection requirements, depending on the circumstances. What follows are the requirements and guidelines of this policy. The requirements should always be implemented. Depending on the circumstances of the setting, who is in attendance, etc., some or all of the guidelines should be implemented as needed. Those in charge of the trip or retreat should be mindful of both requirements and guidelines, in addition to applying their own wisdom to the needs of a given occasion.

Requirements for Overnights, Trips, Retreats

1. There will be at least two screened adults present for all trips, retreats, and other events where the children, youth, and /or other vulnerable people gather overnight at, or away from, the church campus.
2. There will be at least one screened adult for each gender present at coed overnight events. At single-gender overnight events, at least one of the two screened adults present shall be of the same gender as the children/youth/other vulnerable people who are present.
3. The person in charge of youth/children/other vulnerable people for each overnight trip and/or retreat shall carry parental permission forms, including permission for emergency medical care.

Guidelines in a Hotel Type Setting: rooms should be assigned as follows:

1. Separate rooms for adults and child/youth/other vulnerable people (where applicable) should be assigned with at least two participants per room except where specific situations dictate a different arrangement.
2. Assignments should be made so that an adult room is between two children’s/youth’s/other vulnerable person’s rooms.
3. Adults should make random monitoring hall trips and room checks at night. This should be done by two adults of the same gender as those being checked.
4. A hotel should be selected where the rooms are open to the interior of the building (i.e., do not open to the outside).

Online Safety - Use of Electronics or Media Communications Guidelines:

1. The volunteer or staff person shall never initiate a connection (friending, following, etc.) on social media.
2. If a child, youth, or other vulnerable person initiates a connection, that individual's parent or guardian as well as the volunteer or staff member's supervisor shall be notified.
3. If an adult leader receives a private text from a child, youth, or other vulnerable people that seems questionable, the leader should immediately end the conversation in the virtual space and offer opportunities to have the conversation in person and in compliance with the earlier guidelines for one-on-one conversations. The ministry supervisor and/or parent/guardian should be made aware of the incident immediately.
- 3a. Note: If an in-person meeting is not possible, those involved will determine the most reasonable alternative in compliance with the earlier guidelines for one-on-one conversations.
4. Adult leaders should post photos on social network sites only with prior written permission granted by a parent/guardian. When posted, PHOTOS MUST NOT BE TAGGED with names or location indicators. All photos must be appropriate and in keeping with the spirit of the ministry event.
5. All in-person protection policies apply to online platform meetings like Zoom, Skype, Messenger, Facetime, Discord, Instagram and so on. (For example, two unrelated adults should be present in the virtual room just as they would be in a physical room.) We recommend using caution and understanding platforms before using them, and we do not recommend apps like Snapchat or anything that deletes messages.
6. All use the official church account, not a personal account.
7. Communication about online meetings should be shared with parents/guardians as well as with children, youth, and other vulnerable people.
8. Adult leaders and participants should use their real names as usernames.
9. Attendance of online meetings should be documented.
10. All electronic communications shall be documented and retained.

Responding to Allegations of Child Abuse:

All citizens of NJ are considered mandatory reporters. If child abuse is suspected, all persons are both legally and morally required to report child abuse or neglect by calling the Department of Children and Families at 1-877-652-2873 .

Procedure for Responding to Allegations of Child Abuse:

A. Immediately, yet with dignity and respect for the sacred worth of the accused, remove the accused from further involvement with children, youth, and/or other vulnerable people. Once the proper authorities have been contacted and the alleged victim's safety is secured, the pastor in charge should inform the accused that abuse has been reported.

B. If abuse is observed by, disclosed to, or suspected by a volunteer and/or paid staff member of the church, the observer shall report the incident immediately to the ministry supervisor and the pastor in charge, the district superintendent as well as to the Department of Children and Families. Reporting in NJ 1-877-652-2873. If the district superintendent is not available, the incident should be reported to the bishop's office immediately.

C. Notify the parents/guardian(s) of the victim and take whatever steps are necessary to assure the safety and wellbeing of the child, youth, or other vulnerable people until the parent(s) or guardian(s) arrive. NOTE: If one or both of the parents is the alleged abuser, follow the advice of local authorities concerning notification of others.

D. Take all allegations seriously and reach out to the victim and the victim's family. Show care and support to help prevent further hurt. Remember that the care and safety of the victim is the first priority. Respond in a positive and supportive manner to the victim and the victim's family.

E. The church should provide a supportive atmosphere to all those who are affected, offering both objectivity and empathy as it seeks to create a climate in which healing can take place.

F. After having reported the suspected abuse to the proper authorities, the pastor in charge is to report the incident immediately to the district superintendent if he/she has not already done so. If the district superintendent is unavailable, the incident should be reported to the bishop's office.

G. Keep a written report of the steps taken by the church in response to the reported abuse. The report should be brief and contain only factual information relevant to the situation. It should be kept in a secure place. The report should be written in ink or typed to prevent it from being changed.

H. Any contact with the media should be handled by the pastor in charge.

Notes on Procedure of Responding to Allegations of Child Abuse:

Implementation of Safe Sanctuaries Policies: The Pastor, SPRC and Leadership Council will ensure that the church has a Ministry Safe Administrator and a yearly refresher for the entire congregation on the importance of Safe Sanctuaries and any updates to the Safe Sanctuary Policy. Churches will utilize Ministry Safe for their background checks and their training. The Ministry Safe Administrator oversees sending background checks and training to volunteers and staff.

Congregational Covenant and Adoption:

Christ United Methodist Church's purpose for establishing this Child, Youth, and Vulnerable People Protection Policy and accompanying procedures is to demonstrate our total and unwavering commitment to the physical wellbeing, emotional safety, and spiritual growth of all our children, youth, and vulnerable people.

We adopt this policy in accordance with the statement we as a congregation make at each baptism that we will "nurture children and youth in the Christian faith and life and include them in our care." With this policy, we renew our baptismal pledge to "live according to the example of Christ" and surround children, youth, and other vulnerable people with a "community of love and forgiveness, that they may grow in their trust of God, and be thus confirmed and strengthened in the way that leads to life eternal" (Baptismal Covenant II, United Methodist Book of Worship, p.96).

This policy coordinates and supersedes the previous policies used by Christ UMC. As a Christian community of faith and a United Methodist congregation, we are committed to conduct the ministry of the gospel in ways that assure the safety and spiritual growth all our children, youth, and vulnerable people, as well as all the workers with the children, youth, and vulnerable people.

By this policy and its accompanying procedures, we implement prudent operational procedures in all programs and events:

a. Training: We will conduct training on this policy and its procedures to assure that adults involved in children's, youth's, and vulnerable people's activities are aware of these standards and will abide by them.

b. Screening: All adults of the age of eighteen or above who have direct involvement with activities covered by this policy and its procedures will be screened in accordance with Greater New Jersey Annual Conference policy. All people who are subject to this policy will be rescreened every three (3) years. Any person who was screened but, for whatever reason, has been absent from the Christ UMC, Piscataway community for more than one (1) year and thereafter returns, will be rescreened.

c. Supervision: All activities covered by this policy and its procedures will be supervised by the appropriate number of screened adults.

Conclusion: In all our ministries with children, youth, and vulnerable people, Christ United Methodist Church is committed to demonstrating the love of Jesus Christ so that each of God's children here will be "surrounded by steadfast love, established in the faith, and confirmed and strengthened in the way that leads to life eternal." ("Baptismal Covenant 11," United Methodist Hymnal, p.44.)

This Child, Youth, and Other Vulnerable People Protection Policy is adopted by action of Christ United Methodist Church, Piscataway this 10th day of June, 2024. This policy is to be reviewed/updated every year by the Administrative Council, and will be submitted to the Safe Sanctuaries Coordinator every other year.

I have read and agree to these guidelines.

Name: _____ Signature: _____ Date: _____