

# **LOVE GOD MORE LOVE MORE PEOPLE**

**UNITED METHODIST CHURCH OF EVERGREEN**

## **SAFE ENVIRONMENT POLICY**

**The United Methodist Church of Evergreen**

**The Great Escape at The United Methodist Church of Evergreen**

## **PURPOSE**

A person serving in a ministry leadership role, whether as clergy, staff, lay leadership, or volunteer, is in a position of power and authority which is a sacred trust to maintain an environment that is safe for people to live and grow in God's love. Ministerial leaders sometimes violate the trust given them. As a congregation, The United Methodist Church of Evergreen has the responsibility to train and equip ministerial leaders to avoid actions and words that hurt others, but also to protect the congregation against words or actions that cause harm, and to respond with compassion, confidentiality, and respect when a violation of boundaries and trust occurs within our church. This policy serves to provide guidelines for the prevention of misconduct by our ministerial leaders, and for reporting and responding to incidents of misconduct should they occur.

## **THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATION**

We believe and affirm every person is created in the image of God. We further believe and affirm that abuses of power including sexual harassment, sexual misconduct, abuse, and bullying, within the ministerial relationship and in the church is incompatible with biblical teachings and ethical standards. Such misconduct violates the sacred worth of persons who are created in the image of God and brings real harm to individuals, congregations, and the Church as a whole.

Forgiveness is a sacred teaching of the church, but this teaching in no way prevents the church from setting appropriate boundaries with a person guilty of sexual harassment, sexual misconduct, abuse, or bullying. Representing the church as a ministerial leader is a privilege requiring the highest ethical conduct. Forgiveness by God or by a person harmed by such misconduct does not automatically restore the privilege of serving in a ministerial role within the congregation. It is not appropriate for the pastor, staff, or lay leadership of the church to pressure persons harmed by misconduct to forgive the offender as a way to restore the offender the privilege of serving in a ministerial role in the church. Central to the task of church leadership is to protect the vulnerable and to impose appropriate boundaries to safeguard the congregation and the ministry of the church.

# DEFINITIONS

## Ministerial Leaders

- **Clergy** - for the purposes of this policy, clergy refers to the pastor currently appointed to UMCE by the Bishop of Mountain Sky Conference and overseen by the District Superintendent of the Colorado Front Range District.
- **Staff** - staff includes any full or part time person employed by UMCE, including but not limited to office staff, administrative staff, music staff, Great Escape staff, children and youth ministry staff, custodial staff, media tech staff, etc.
- **Volunteer** - a volunteer is person serving in an unpaid ministerial position at UMCE including but not limited to serving on committees or teams, volunteering with children or youth ministry, volunteering with The Great Escape, volunteering in the office, leading a small group or Bible study, etc.
- **Staff-Parish Relations Team (SPRC)** - this is the committee tasked with helping the pastor and congregation deal with personnel matters, including issues of misconduct by or toward the pastor or members of staff.

## Sexual Misconduct

Sexual misconduct within ministerial relationships is a betrayal of sacred trust. It is a continuum of unwanted sexual or gender-directed behaviors by either a lay or clergy person within a ministerial relationship (paid or unpaid). - *United Methodist Book of Resolutions, 2016, paragraph 2045.*

Sexual Misconduct includes but is not limited to:

- child or adult sexual abuse
- sexual abuse of youth or those without capacity to consent
- rape or sexual assault
- gross sexual imposition like prolonged gazing, fondling, grabbing, or stalking
- sexual harassment
- unwelcome touching and advances
- inappropriate and unwelcome contacts of a sexual nature either in person or via phone, digital media, or cyberspace
- sexualized verbal comments, gestures, or visuals
- solicitation of sexual activity or other sex-related behavior by promise of rewards
- coercion of sexual activity by threat of punishment
- or misuse of pastoral or ministerial position using sexualized conduct to take advantage of the vulnerability of another

## **Sexual Harassment**

Sexual harassment is a form of sexual misconduct and is defined in *The United Methodist Book of Discipline* (2016, paragraph 161) as “any unwanted sexual comment, advance, or demand, either verbal or physical, that is reasonably perceived by the recipient as demeaning, intimidating, or coercive. Sexual harassment must be understood as an exploitation of a power relationship rather than as an exclusively sexual issue. Sexual harassment includes, but is not limited to, the creation of a hostile or abusive working environment resulting from discrimination on the basis of gender.

To clarify further, *The United Methodist Book of Resolutions* (2016, paragraph 2045) states that sexual harassment “is unwanted sexual or gender-directed behavior within a pastoral, employment, ministerial (including volunteers), mentor or colleague relationship that is so severe or pervasive that it alters the conditions of employment or volunteer work or unreasonably interferes with the employee or volunteer’s performance. It can create a hostile, offensive environment that can include unwanted sexual jokes, repeated advances, touching, displays, or comments that insult, degrade, or sexually exploit women, men, elders, children, or youth.”

## **Sexual Abuse**

Sexual abuse is a form of sexual misconduct and occurs when a person within a ministerial role of leadership (lay or clergy, pastor, educator, counselor, youth leader, or other position of leadership) engages in sexual contact or sexualized behavior with a congregant, client, employee, student, staff member, coworker, or volunteer. It can include coerced or forced sexual contact (including those unable to give informed consent), sexual interaction or contact with children or youth, and sexual exhibitionism or display of sexual visuals.

*(United Methodist Book of Resolutions, 2016, paragraph 2044)*

## **Bullying**

Bullying is unwanted, aggressive behavior that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. The behavior is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time. Bullying includes actions such as making threats, spreading rumors, attacking someone physically or verbally, and excluding someone from a group on purpose. ([stopbullying.gov](http://stopbullying.gov))

- **Verbal Bullying** is saying or writing mean things. Verbal bullying includes teasing, name-calling, inappropriate sexual comments, taunting, or threatening to cause harm.
- **Social Bullying** involves hurting someone’s reputation or relationships. Social bullying includes leaving someone out on purpose, telling others not to be friends with someone, spreading rumors about someone, or embarrassing someone in public.

- **Physical Bullying** involves hurting a person's body or possessions. Physical bullying includes hitting, kicking, pinching, spitting, tripping, pushing, taking or breaking someone's things, making mean or rude gestures.

## CLERGY-LAY RELATIONSHIPS WITHIN THE LOCAL CHURCH

Clergy relationships with laity and staff within a clergy's congregation are one of the most sacred trusts we hold. Clergy have a sacred responsibility not only to avoid actions and words that could potentially hurt others, but also to protect the vulnerable against actions or words that could cause harm.

The power and position of the pastor can never be fully removed from the relationship, and inappropriate relationships, no matter the intent, can lead to ethical, relational, and systematic issues within the congregation. It is the clergy's responsibility to be aware of the reality, or perception, of inappropriate relationships.

Professional and ethical boundaries are crossed when physically or emotionally intimate relationships begin with staff or parishioners after a pastor is appointed to a congregation. Violating the expected ethics of no physically or emotionally intimate relationships with staff or parishioners is documentable and could lead to an administrative complaint.

Relationships that pre-date an appointment, such as when a non-parishioner significant other decides to begin attending church, are not ethically inappropriate, but can be systematically difficult. SPRC and the District Superintendent should be notified when a significant other becomes a regular participant in the life of the congregation. (*Policy developed by The Mountain Sky Annual Conference*).

The Judicial Council of The United Methodist Church asserts that dating, romantic, or sexual relationships between clergy and their parishioners "are never appropriate because of imbalance of power." (Decision 1228). For the sake of maintaining healthy boundaries, in the case that the appointed clergyperson at UMCE and a member, volunteer, or active participant in UMCE both wish to begin a dating relationship, the clergyperson must inform SPRC and contact their District Superintendent. The District Superintendent and the clergyperson will determine a reasonable course of action for ethically moving forward with such a relationship.

## PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING AN INCIDENT

Incidents are anything that cause a staff member or volunteer concern for the safety or wellbeing of themselves, a coworker, volunteer, vulnerable member, child or youth or an interaction that could be questioned after the fact. Specifically, such incidents could include: abuse, disciplinary action, behavioral issues, revealing of information, etc.

A staff member/volunteer should promptly notify the Pastor, Great Escape Director, on-site staff member or lay leader if any of the following has occurred:

- They were involved in an incident which someone might question later.
- They suspect a child/youth/vulnerable person has been a victim of abuse.
- A child/youth reports abuse to the volunteer or staff member.
- They experienced abuse, misconduct, or a violation of their boundaries by someone else against themselves.

The reporting staff member or volunteer should discuss the situation ONLY with their supervisor or the staff or leadership team member present on site.

A volunteer should NOT amplify the problem by discussing it with anyone other than the Pastor, Great Escape Director, supervisor, on-site staff or leadership team member. It is their role to:

- assist in documenting the incident.
- determine the legitimacy of the claims.
- notify the proper authorities if necessary.

## **INCIDENT REPORT FORM**

Incident Report Forms are kept in the church office and in the Great Escape office. All reporting parties must fill out individual reports. When filling out the report, please take time to clearly state who, what, when, and where. Try, as clearly as memory will allow, to include verbatim conversation.

## **INCIDENTS INVOLVING MISCONDUCT BY STAFF**

- If an incident of misconduct involves a staff member, it should be brought to the attention of the Pastor or Great Escape Director as soon as possible and an incident form submitted to the Pastor or Great Escape Director by the person bringing concerns.
- The Pastor will notify the chair of SPRC and they will follow up on the incident by:
  - discussing with the person bringing the complaint of misconduct in a private venue with the Pastor and/or Great Escape Director and at least one member of SPRC present as soon as possible.
  - speaking privately with any other witnesses to the misconduct and asking them to submit an incident report (this conversation will involve the Pastor and/or Great Escape Director and at least one member of SPRC).
  - discussing the situation with the staff member accused of the misconduct in a private venue with the Pastor and/or Great Escape Director and at least one

member of SPRC present as soon as possible to review UMCE's policies and determine boundaries that need to be put in place.

- The person bringing the complaint as well as the staff member accused of misconduct will receive a written letter from the Pastor and/or Great Escape Director and SPRC chair outlining the policies of UMCE and the boundaries being imposed as a result of the misconduct. A copy of the letter will also be kept in the staff member's employment file.
- The SPRC chair and Pastor will inform the larger SPRC team of the incident and the determination will be made if further reporting of the incident to the congregation is merited. SPRC will do their utmost to maintain the dignity and confidentiality of all persons involved in the incident.
- The Pastor and SPRC Chair will inform the District Superintendent of the incident and the boundaries imposed as a result of the misconduct.

## **INCIDENTS INVOLVING MISCONDUCT BY VOLUNTEERS**

- If an incident of misconduct involves a volunteer, it should be brought to the attention of the staff of the ministry area and the Pastor as soon as possible and an incident form submitted to the Pastor by the person bringing concerns.
- The situation is to be discussed with the volunteer in question in a private venue with at least one staff member present and the Pastor as soon as possible with a review of relevant policies and procedures and a determination will be made of boundaries that need to be imposed as a result of the misconduct.
- The person bringing the complaint as well as the volunteer accused of misconduct will receive a written letter from the Pastor and staff member of the ministry area outlining the policies of UMCE and the boundaries being imposed as a result of the misconduct. A copy of the letter will also be kept on file in the church office.
- The Pastor will inform the church's Lay Leader of the incident and the determination will be made if further reporting of the incident to the congregation is merited. They will do their utmost to maintain the dignity and confidentiality of all persons involved in the incident.
- The pastor will inform the District Superintendent of the incident and boundaries imposed as a result of the misconduct.

## **INCIDENTS INVOLVING MISCONDUCT BY THE PASTOR**

- If an incident of misconduct involves the Pastor, it should be brought to the attention of the Chair of SPRC as soon as possible and an incident form submitted to the Chair of SPRC by the person bringing concerns.

- The Chair of SPRC will notify the District Superintendent and the Lay Leader of the complaint as soon as possible.
- The Chair of SPRC will notify the larger SPRC team.
- The District Superintendent along with others in supervisory roles over appointed clergy will take over the process of dealing with the complaint.
- The SPRC Chair and Lay Leader, in consultation with the District Superintendent will determine if further reporting of the incident to the congregation is merited. SPRC will do their utmost to maintain the dignity and confidentiality of all persons involved in the incident.

## **POLICY AGAINST RETALIATION**

No retaliation will be tolerated on account of a good faith report of misconduct. Prohibited retaliation will be considered a separate and independent violation of this policy, and appropriate action may be taken against the retaliator. Anyone who believes they have been retaliated against is encouraged to report such retaliation as detailed above.

## **SAFE ENVIRONMENT COVENANT**

*In order to provide a safe environment for all, The United Methodist Church of Evergreen commits to:*

- Offering in-person Safe Environment Training for staff and volunteers at least once a year.
- Ensuring that all new staff receive Safe Environment Training within one month of employment and once a year during the term of their employment with UMCE.
- Ensuring that all volunteers receive Safe Environment Training before they begin volunteering and once a year while they remain an active volunteer.
- Ensuring that all new staff over the age of 16 complete background checks as a condition of their employment.
- Ensuring that all volunteers over the age of 16 fill out application forms and complete background checks prior to working with children or youth.
- Ensuring that all staff and volunteers over the age of 16 working with children or youth have current background checks on file with the church office. A “current background check” is one completed within the four years prior to the current school year.
- Ensuring that anyone who drives youth or children to or from an event (other than their own) has a current background check on file with the church office.
- Ensuring that the Safe Environment Policy is reviewed annually and that any updates are made available to staff and volunteers.

- Ensuring that no retaliation is directed to any staff member or volunteer reporting an incident or concern in good faith.

*In order to provide a safe environment for all, UMCE and Great Escape Staff Members commit to:*

- Restricting the use of alcohol and other drugs. The use of alcohol and other drugs (except for prescription or over-the-counter drugs) are prohibited on UMCE property and at all UMCE functions. Smoking is prohibited on UMCE property and at all UMCE functions.
- Taking no unnecessary risks that endanger self or others.
- Responding to the rights and feelings of coworkers, volunteers, and congregants in an open and loving manner.
- Avoiding loud, crude, or vulgar behavior.
- Avoiding one on one engagement with children or youth in areas that are isolated or far removed from other groups.
- Avoiding any undisclosed dating relationships with members, volunteers, or active participants in UMCE.
- Respecting the rights and needs of all children, youth, and adults who are part of UMCE.

*In order to provide a safe environment for all, UMCE and Great Escape Volunteers commit to:*

- Restricting the use of alcohol and other drugs. The use of alcohol and other drugs (except for prescription or over-the-counter drugs) are prohibited on UMCE property at all UMCE functions. Smoking is prohibited on UMCE property and at all UMCE functions.
- Taking no unnecessary risks that endanger self or others.
- Responding to the rights and feelings of all UMCE and Great Escape staff, fellow volunteers, and congregants - including children and youth - in an open and loving manner.
- Avoiding loud, crude, or vulgar behavior.
- Serving the needs of the people you are serving first, and those of the volunteer second.
- Avoiding one on one engagement with children or youth in areas that are isolated or far removed from other groups.
- Avoiding any dating relationships with UMCE youth.
- Respecting the rights and needs of all children, youth, and adults who are part of UMCE.

# POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR YOUTH AND CHILDREN

## UMCE YOUTH GROUP COVENANT

*Because we value the **safe space** UMCE Youth Group provides, we commit to:*

- Not using alcohol, tobacco, or other drugs (except for prescription or over-the-counter drugs) at UMCE youth events.
- Taking no unnecessary risks that endanger self or others.
- Not using loud, crude, or vulgar behavior.
- Not having any object that is a potential weapon in possession at UMCE.
- Not driving another youth (who is not related to you) during a UMCE youth event.

*Because we value the **inclusive space** UMCE Youth Group provides, we commit to:*

- Welcoming and including all youth in the youth group regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, faith expression, ability, or race.
- Responding to the rights and feelings of everyone at the youth group in an open and loving manner.

*Because we value the **affirming space** UMCE Youth Group provides we commit to:*

- No bullying.
- Treating all youth and adults with the respect and care we would like to receive.

## SAFE ENVIRONMENT PAPERWORK NEEDED FROM VOLUNTEERS:

- Completed volunteer application (before beginning to volunteer)
- Completed background check (every 4 years while volunteering)
- Completed volunteer training (annually while volunteering)
- If volunteer plans to drive youth or children to or from UMCE events, a current driver's license needs to be on file with UMCE office

## SAFE ENVIRONMENT PAPERWORK NEEDED FROM CHILDREN/YOUTH:

- Completed health authorization form (annually)
- Completed photo release form (annually)
- Completed travel release form (annually)
- Contact information for parent(s)/guardian(s) on file with Director of Children and Youth Ministries

## **BASIC INTERACTION RULES TO PROTECT CHILDREN, YOUTH, AND VOLUNTEERS**

- A volunteer must be at least 5 years older than the oldest youth they are working with.
- All volunteers must have a current background check (completed within four years of the current school year) on file with the UMCE office.
- All volunteers must complete UMCE Safe Environment Training (online or in person) prior to volunteering with children or youth and at least once a year while volunteering.
- All volunteers must have been a regular attender of worship at UMCE for six months prior to volunteering with children or youth. If volunteering with The Great Escape, volunteers must have a relationship with a student or staff member of The Great Escape.
- A volunteer should never be alone with a youth. Two adults must be present at all times with youth.
- One-on-one conversations should take place in public or visible places.
- Driving a child or youth to or from a church event without another adult or youth present *for the entire time* is not allowed under any circumstances.

## **EMERGENCY PROCEDURE**

In the event of a serious emergency:

1. Make the victim as comfortable as possible. DO NOT ATTEMPT TO MOVE THE VICTIM. Keep them warm. Administer first aid only if you have proper training. Do not leave the victim, unless you are the only one who can call/contact emergency personnel.
2. Delegate someone to call 911. Remember to give the address clearly and distinctly.
3. Have the victim's health form ready to give to emergency personnel when they arrive.
4. Get the names and telephone numbers of any witnesses.
5. Whenever possible, notify the victim's family. Avoid undo panic – explain the situation calmly. Tell the family that you have called 911 and that help is on the way.
6. Cooperate with police and fire department investigators. If you are a witness, you can answer questions about the incident. Provide investigators with your list of witnesses.

7. As soon as possible after the victim has been provided for and preliminary investigation has been made, inform the on-site staff or leadership team member and document the event on an incident report form. The leadership team member will notify the pastor.

## ABUSE

If a young person informs you of abuse (sexual or physical) you are legally obligated to report it to a leadership team member or social services. You are not to counsel, confront, or resolve the issue; only gather facts and pass them on.

Abuse falls into four categories:

- Physical
- Sexual
- Emotional
- Neglect

**Physical Abuse:** Deliberately inflicting bodily harm on youth. Includes violent assaults with a knife, strap, or a different object. It can include burns, fractures, or bruises from being beaten, pushed down, shaken, or thrown.

***How you may see the child reacting:***

- Fears parents, fears going home, is fearful of other adults
- Reports physical abuse
- Shows extremes of behavior: aggressive, emotionally withdrawn, regression
- May exhibit violence toward peers or adults, acting out behavior he/she/they have experienced
- Frequent and unexplained cuts, abrasions, welts, burns, broken bones, bruises

**Sexual Abuse:** Any time a child is used for the sexual stimulation of an adult or older child, abuse has occurred. The child is powerless either to consent to or resist such sexual acts. This includes fondling, sexual intercourse, forced participation in sexual acts, incest, exploitation for the purpose of pornography or sex trafficking (prostitution).

***How you may see the child reacting:***

- Has unusual sexual knowledge or behavior for his/her/their age
- Reports sexual abuse
- Plays out sexual abuse through drawings, written work
- Is depressed; cries often and easily
- Withdraws into fantasy play and daydreams

- Withdraws from peer relationships

**Emotional Abuse:** While difficult to prove or to trace, spoken or unspoken emotional violence toward a child is extremely devastating. The child receives the message that they are not good and never will be. Emotional abuse includes verbal lashings; cruel restrictions or punishments; withholding of parental love, affection, language by the parent.

***How you may see the child reacting:***

- Reports verbal/punitive and restrictive behaviors
- Exhibits extreme depression
- Threatens/attempts suicide
- Extremely compliant/eager to please but unable to accept/believe in an ability to please adults

***Physical characteristics related to emotional abuse:***

- Displays passive/aggressive patterns of behavior
- Lags in development (physical as well as emotional)

**Neglect:** Children have basic physical, environmental, and nutritional needs which must be supplied. Chronic withholding of food, clothing, medication, and proper living quarters, as well as abandonment, are all indicators of neglect. Parents' failure to care adequately for a child's physical, emotional, or educational needs represents a far more common form of maltreatment than physical, sexual, or emotional abuse.

***How you may see the child reacting:***

- Reports lack of care by parent or care giver
- Begs or steals food
- Extreme listlessness; fatigue
- Lack of care evidenced by clothing, bodily hygiene, etc.

***Physical characteristics related to neglect:***

- Look of abandonment
- Is always hungry
- Dresses inappropriately (ie summer clothes in 20 degree weather)
- Displays poor hygiene
- Failure to thrive

## REPORTING ABUSE

If a child or youth discloses any form of abuse to a staff member or volunteer during a UMCE event:

1. First and foremost, try to stay calm. If you act shocked and horrified by his/her/their story, they may feel you are angry at them rather than at the perpetrator.
2. If the child or youth demonstrates that they will harm themselves or others, you must take immediate action.
3. Follow the **BASER model:**  
**Believe** – “I believe what you told me.”  
**Affirm** – “I am glad you told me.”  
**Support** – “It’s not your fault.”  
**Empower** – “There are some things we can do to help you feel better.”  
**Refer** – “Let’s talk to someone who can help.”
4. DO NOT make promises you cannot or should not keep. (“You will never have to go back there.” “I will not tell anyone.”)
5. Use open-ended questions such as “Tell me what happened...” rather than “Did such and such happen.”
6. The volunteer will contact the on-site staff or leadership team member immediately to report the observation or disclosure. Under no circumstances should the volunteer disclose the incident to other volunteers, youth, or media.
7. Once reported, the volunteer will write a verbatim report about what has been observed or occurred.
8. In consultation with the on-site staff or leadership team member, the volunteer will determine if the incident should be reported to the proper authorities. The on-site staff or leadership team has the option of speaking with the youth involved.
9. All discourse must be documented verbatim on incident forms.

**If abuse/neglect is suspected or disclosed:**

1. The volunteer will contact the on-site staff or leadership team member immediately to report observation or disclosure. Under no circumstances should the volunteer disclose the incident to other volunteers, youth, or media.
2. Once reported, the volunteer will write a verbatim report about what has been observed or occurred.
3. In consultation with the staff or leadership team, the volunteer will determine if the incident should be reported to the proper authorities. The staff or leadership team has the option of speaking with the youth involved; again, all contents of the meeting must be documented verbatim.

**If abuse involves a volunteer:**

1. The on-site staff or leadership team member should be notified immediately.
2. The pastor should be notified immediately.
3. A parent or guardian will be notified immediately by the pastor (or a leadership team member designated by the pastor).
4. The youth and suspected volunteer should be talked to separately.
5. If allegations are determined to be legitimate by the staff or leadership team, the volunteer will be immediately removed from their position.
6. Every effort will be made to maintain the confidentiality of all involved parties.

## **PROCEDURES WHEN MISCONDUCT OCCURS**

### **MISCONDUCT INVOLVING STAFF**

1. Pastor informs SPRC Chair of a report of misconduct.
2. SPRC Chair and Pastor and/or Great Escape Director meet with the person reporting the misconduct privately in order to:
  - a. Provide pastoral care and support to the person reporting the misconduct
  - b. Review the incident and tell the person to submit a written incident report (if they have not already done so)
  - c. Ask if others witnessed the incident in order to follow up with them
  - d. Discuss boundaries that the person reporting the misconduct feels are necessary moving forward
  - e. Take notes of the meeting and keep the notes in the church files.
3. SPRC Chair and Pastor and/or Great Escape Director meet with other witnesses to the incident in order to:
  - a. Provide pastoral care and support to witnesses
  - b. Hear their story of the incident and tell the person to submit a written incident report (if they have not already done so)
  - c. Take notes of the meeting and keep the notes in the church files.
4. SPRC Chair and Pastor and/or Great Escape Director will determine boundaries that need to be imposed as a result of the misconduct and, if applicable, prepare a behavior covenant for the person accused of misconduct. The behavior covenant should address the following boundaries:
  - a. If and under what conditions they can continue their employment with UMCE.
  - b. If and under what conditions they may have contact with the person accusing them of misconduct.

- c. What behavioral changes need to happen and on what timeline in order to continue their position with UMCE.
- d. Take notes of the meeting and keep the notes in the church files.

5. SPRC Chair and Pastor and/or Great Escape Director will meet with the person accused of misconduct in order to:

- a. Provide pastoral care to the person accused of misconduct
- b. Identify that they are part of a community and that we are responsible to one another and for our behavior in relationship with each other.
- c. Review the incident with them and listen to their response.
- d. If applicable, review the behavioral covenant with them and have them sign it, along with the Pastor and/or Great Escape Director and SPRC Chair. Give them a copy of the behavioral covenant and retain a copy for church records.

6. Follow up the meeting with a mailed letter to the person who committed the misconduct recounting the meeting and a copy of the signed behavioral covenant. Keep a copy of the letter on file at the church.

7. Follow up the meeting with a mailed letter to the person who filed the complaint explaining that the meeting took place and outlining the behavioral covenant that was agreed to. Keep a copy of the letter on file at the church.

## **MISCONDUCT INVOLVING VOLUNTEERS**

- 1. Pastor informs SPRC Chair and Lay Leader of a report of misconduct.
- 2. Pastor and/or Great Escape Director and at least one staff member from the volunteer's ministry area meet with the person reporting the misconduct privately in order to:
  - a. Provide pastoral care and support to the person reporting the misconduct
  - b. Review the incident and tell the person to submit a written incident report (if they have not already done so)
  - c. Ask if others witnessed the incident in order to follow up with them
  - d. Discuss boundaries that the person reporting the misconduct feels are necessary moving forward
  - e. Take notes of the meeting and keep the notes in the church files.
- 3. Pastor and/or Great Escape Director and at least one staff member from the volunteer's ministry area meet with other witnesses to the incident in order to:
  - a. Provide pastoral care and support to witnesses
  - b. Hear their story of the incident and tell the person to submit a written incident report (if they have not already done so)
  - c. Take notes of the meeting and keep the notes in the church files.

4. Pastor and/or Great Escape Director, staff member of the ministry area, and Lay Leader and/or SPRC Chair will determine boundaries that need to be imposed as a result of the misconduct and, if applicable, prepare a behavior covenant for the person accused of misconduct. The behavior covenant should address the following boundaries:
  - a. If and under what conditions they may continue to serve in leadership or volunteer positions at UMCE.
  - b. If and under what conditions they may have contact with the person accusing them of misconduct.
  - c. What behavioral changes need to happen and on what timeline in order to continue their position with UMCE.
  - d. Take notes of the meeting and keep the notes in the church files.
5. Pastor and/or Great Escape Director, staff member from the ministry area, and Lay Leader and/or SPRC Chair will meet with the person accused of misconduct in order to:
  - a. Provide pastoral care to the person accused of misconduct
  - b. Identify that they are part of a community and that we are responsible to one another and for our behavior in relationship with each other.
  - c. Review the incident with them and listen to their response.
  - d. If applicable, review the behavioral covenant with them and have them sign it, along with the Pastor and/or Great Escape Director and Lay Leader and/or SPRC Chair. Give them a copy of the behavioral covenant and retain a copy for church records.
6. Follow up the meeting with a mailed letter to the person who committed the misconduct recounting the meeting and a copy of the signed behavioral covenant. Keep a copy of the letter on file at the church.
7. Follow up the meeting with a mailed letter to the person who filed the complaint explaining that the meeting took place and outlining the behavioral covenant that was agreed to. Keep a copy of the letter on file at the church.

## **MISCONDUCT INVOLVING PASTOR**

1. SPRC Chair will notify the District Superintendent and Lay Leader of the complaint as soon as possible.
2. SPRC Chair will notify the larger SPRC team.
3. The District Superintendent along with others in supervisory roles over appointed clergy will take over the process of dealing with the complaint.