

**FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
OF DAVENPORT**

**CHILD, YOUTH,
AND VULNERABLE ADULT
PROTECTION POLICY**

I. INTRODUCTION

First Presbyterian Church of Davenport, referred to as FPC subsequently in this Policy, is committed to maintaining a safe environment in which children, youth, and vulnerable adults. Accordingly, we will not tolerate any form of abuse to children, youth, or vulnerable adults in any of our interactions with them. FPC has established this Child, Youth, and Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy (Policy) to ensure, to the extent that it is reasonably possible, that children, youth, and vulnerable adults will be free to participate in programs, services, and activities without intimidation, coercion, or abuse of any type.

The Book of Order of the Presbyterian Church (USA) includes multiple provisions regarding the requirement for each council to have a child/youth/vulnerable adult protection policy, to engage in child sexual abuse prevention training, and guidelines for mandatory reporting in order to protect children, youth, and vulnerable adults from abuse. To achieve this purpose, the FPC imposes specific responsibilities on those who have direct contact with children, youth, and vulnerable adults to report suspected or actual abuse and mandates that certain individuals receive regular training regarding abuse prevention. Employees and volunteers who fail to report actual or suspected child abuse may be subject to individual, criminal liability. Because Mandatory Reporting laws are designed to encourage reporting of suspected or actual abuse, they also contain important protections for those who make such reports in good faith.

As a volunteer or employee who has direct contact with children, youth, and/or vulnerable adults participating in FPC programs, services, and activities, it is important for you to understand what your responsibilities are as it concerns reporting of actual or suspected abuse and the need to attend abuse identification and prevention training.

This Policy incorporates these requirements and explains your responsibilities in this regard. As such, you should carefully review the Policy and keep it as a reference. This Policy is intended to apply broadly; when in doubt, you should err on the side of reporting suspected abuse. Should you have any questions about this policy or your responsibilities, please do not hesitate to contact the Pastor/Head-of-Staff.

FPC designates the Christian Education and Fellowship with Youth Committee (the CEFY Committee) and the Personnel Committee to be responsible for oversight and implementation of this Policy.

II. REFERENCES

Approved Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Child/Youth/Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy and Procedures--From the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly, retrieved from: <https://www.pc-biz.org/#/search/3000164>.

III. DEFINITIONS

For purposes of this Policy, the following terms have the listed definitions:

Abuse--A non-accidental injury or pattern of injuries to a child or youth. Abuse may include any of the following:

Neglect--Occurs when an adult responsible for the well-being of a child fails to provide for the child. Neglect may include not giving food, clothing, shelter; failure to keep children clean; lack of supervision and withholding medical care.

Physical abuse--A non-accidental injury that happens to a child. Such an injury could include a beating, burn, bruise, bite, welt, strangulation, broken bones or death.

Sexual abuse--The employment, use, persuasion, inducement, enticement or coercion of a child to engage in or assist another individual to engage in sexually explicit conduct. The behavior may or may not involve touching. Sexual abuse may include: *engaging in sexually explicit conversation; verbal sexual suggestions, innuendoes or jokes; leering or ogling; intrusive touching; the use of pornography; looking at the intimate parts of a child for the purpose of sexual gratification or arousal; sexual assault or attempted sexual assault.* Sexual abuse may consist of numerous acts over a long period of time or a single incident. Children can be victimized from infancy through adolescence. Typically, a perpetrator keeps a child from disclosing abuse through intimidation, threats and rewards.

Emotional abuse-- One or more acts by an adult or other authority figure that endanger the mental health or emotional development of a child including rejection, ignoring, terrorizing, corrupting, constant criticism, mean remarks, insults and giving little or no love, guidance and support.

Spiritual abuse--Using religious references to shame or by guilt to motivate a child into a particular action or behavior.

Failure to act--Any failure to act that causes bodily or mental injury to a child or that causes or permits any of the above described types of abuse to occur may also constitute abuse.

This list is not intended to be exhaustive. Any act or failure to act that causes bodily injury or serious mental injury to a child may constitute child abuse under law.

Certified adult--A FPC employee or volunteer, at least 18 years of age, who has successfully passed the required background checks and completed the required training (or retraining) to qualify under this Policy to work with children and youth.

Child / Youth--Under Iowa law, a child is a person under 18 years of age. This term includes both a "child" and a "youth" as these terms are used in this Policy in

reference to FPC programs, services, and activities. When such terms are used elsewhere in this Policy in reference to FPC programs, services, and activities, "child" means a person in grade 5 or below and "youth" means a person in grades 6 through 12.

Church-sponsored activity--Includes any and all gatherings that arise from FPC-generated worship, educational, fellowship, administrative, pastoral, mission, or recreational events. These events include on-campus and off-campus gatherings.

Employee--A person who works for a salary or wages at FPC.

Independent contractor--A person not employed by FPC who provides services to FPC pursuant to an express or implied contract.

Lead volunteer--A certified adult who has been designated by the responsible staff person to coordinate/supervise other volunteers involved in a program, activity, or event.

Mandated reporter--A person required to make a report of suspected child abuse where such person has reasonable cause to suspect that a child is a victim of child abuse and/or in danger of abuse in the future.

Mandated reporters include:

- Pastors
- Certain professionals licensed by the state of Iowa
- FPC employees who have direct contact with children in the course of their employment
- Volunteers who, as part of a FPC-sponsored activity, event or program, accept responsibility for a child
- Independent contractors of FPC

Reporting checklist--The document attached to this Policy as Attachment A that sets forth how and to whom reports of suspected child abuse shall be made in accordance with this Policy.

Volunteer--A person not employed by FPC who donates time providing services in connection with a church-sponsored activity, event, or program.

Vulnerable adult--A vulnerable adult is any person 18 years of age or older without the developmental or cognitive capacity to consent.

Youth volunteer--A person at least 13 years old but under the age of 18 not employed by FPC who donates time providing services in connection with a church-sponsored activity, event, or program.

IV. POLICY OVERVIEW

Purpose

This Policy is intended to:

- Be faithful to our baptismal vows as we seek to welcome and nurture children and youth.
- Provide a safe and sacred space for children and youth at FPC.
- Protect children and youth from sexual, physical, spiritual and emotional abuse while participating in FPC activities.
- Educate the staff, volunteers, and the congregation about the subject of sexual abuse and exploitation of children and youth, the need for policies and procedures to prevent such abuse and exploitation, and the legal responsibilities imposed on volunteers and staff who have direct contact with children participating in FPC programs, services, and activities.
- Guide FPC as an institution in the conduct of its employees and volunteers.
- Prevent allegations and incidents of abuse to children or youth.
- Provide a mechanism to deal with reported concerns and subsequent actions.
- Protect the ministry of FPC as carried out through its volunteers, pastors, and staff from the possibility of false accusations and litigation.

This Policy addresses four principal components of child and youth protection:

Screening for employment and volunteer service to identify those who are unsuitable for such employment or service due to a history of behavior potentially detrimental to children and youth.

Training of employees and volunteers regarding appropriate supervision and chaperoning of children and youth.

Reporting of allegations and/or concerns regarding child and youth protection issues.

Responding to allegations and/or concerns regarding child and youth protection issues.

Scope and Applicability

All persons, including FPC employees and volunteers, interested in participating in children and youth ministries and other programs, services, and activities of FPC must be formally invited by the CEFY committee to work directly with children and youth and must adhere to this Policy. In addition, the abuse reporting procedures set forth in this Policy apply to all mandated reporters, including all employees and volunteers who interact with children or who work with FPC youth or children in FPC programs,

services, and activities presently existing as well as others that may be developed in the future, including, but not limited to, the following:

- Sunday school
- Children's and Youth fellowship programs
- Children's and Youth choirs
- Camps and/or conferences
- Mission trips
- Confirmation class
- Vacation Bible School
- Child care
- Scouts and Cub Scouts
- Preschool

General Requirements

All persons working with children/youth at FPC shall abide by the following rules:

- They shall not verbally, emotionally, physically, spiritually, or sexually abuse children or youth.
- They shall not discipline children or youth by use of physical punishment or by failing to provide the necessities of care.
- They shall provide proper supervision and exercise sound judgment in providing a safe environment at all times.
- They shall avoid situations where they would be alone with a child or youth and cannot be observed or monitored by others.

Restroom supervision:

- They shall, as provided in Section VII of this Policy, always appropriately supervise when children are using bathrooms to ensure their safety.
- They shall use caution and common sense when touching children or youth; accordingly, such persons must:
 - o Respect a child or youth's boundaries and never make a child or youth feel uncomfortable or act in ways that impede the child or youth's right to say no.
 - o Maintain appropriate hand placement.
 - o Avoid physical contact that is inappropriate, including body-to-body embrace, a touch of private areas (those areas covered by a bathing suit) or any type of kiss.

- They shall discourage children from touching others in an inappropriate manner.
- They shall be alert to the physical and emotional state of children entering an activity or program, and any signs of injury or possible child abuse must be reported promptly in the manner specified in this Policy to the authorities and to the Pastor/Head-of-Staff or, if the Pastor/Head-of-Staff is unavailable or is the alleged abuser, to the Clerk of Session.
- They shall only release children (birth - 5th grade) to a parent, a guardian, or another individual authorized in writing by a parent or guardian.
- They shall not use, possess, or be under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs or be impaired by legally prescribed drugs in the presence of children or youth during church working hours or during church-sponsored activities and trips.
- They shall not use tobacco products around children and youth.
- They shall not possess firearms or other weapons around children and youth. Exceptions to this may include activities sponsored by our church or Scouts requiring certain items for programming.
- They shall not engage in profanity, inappropriate language or jokes, or any kind of harassment in the presence of children or youth.
- They shall not share inappropriate details of their personal lives or ask children or youth to share inappropriate details through any form of communication: written, verbal, or electronic.
- They shall not give gifts to an individual child or youth for the purpose of "buying" silence or loyalty. Gift giving must be done on a group basis and/or for specific occasions (ex. birthday parties).
- They shall immediately report to the Pastor/Head-of-Staff any circumstance that adversely affects their ability to work with children and youth in full compliance with this Policy.

In addition, those to whom this Policy applies shall comply with all other Policy and/or legal requirements described below including, without limitation, attending training sessions offered by FPC on child and youth protection and/or required by law, and signing agreements to comply in all respects with this Policy.

An individual may be terminated from employment and/or volunteer service for failure to observe and abide by this Policy. These actions may be taken regardless of the outcome of any investigation if the Pastor/Head-of-Staff, the Personnel Committee, or the CEFY Committee determines that the Policy has not been followed.

Electronic and Social Media Communications

FPC has a website that helps it disseminate its message to members and the general public. Day-to-day communications often involve use of personal communication tools such as emails, text messages, social media (e.g., Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, etc.), among others. These communications include public, private, personal, and professional messages. The following requirements apply to all such communications among FPC pastors, staff, volunteers, youth and children when those communications relate to FPC programs, services, and activities:

No person shall post or permit to be posted any confidential information about FPC, its programs, services, and activities, members or those who participate in its programs, services, or activities.

All communications related to FPC activities/events must maintain a professional and appropriate style and adhere to these FPC Communications Procedures.

No person shall engage in electronic communications that violate any FPC policy or any local, state, or federal law.

In all communications related to FPC programs, services, and activities or made during FPC activities/events, employees and volunteers should avoid the use of statements that reasonably could be viewed as:

- Derogatory
- Sexual, lewd, pornographic, or obscene
- Offensive due to the use of profanity
- Threatening, harassing, or bullying
- Discriminatory
- Facilitating illegal activities
- Having the purpose to assist personal, commercial, or for-profit ends
- Expressing overtly partisan political views
- Unauthorized or illegal distribution, reproduction, or use of copyrighted materials
- Fraternalization or otherwise crossing the line between professional and personal boundaries
- Suggestive in nature.
- Use/posting by FPC of photographic images of children and youth and of their FPC-sponsored activities will conform with the following guidelines:
- FPC will honor the request of any parent or legal guardian who asks that their child not appear in any church publications or website.

- FPC will obtain written permission from parents and/or guardians before a photo of a child/youth is used electronically or in print. See Attachment H for the Photo Release Form.
- FPC will never identify a child or youth by their full name or address with any photo.
- FPC will not “tag” children and youth in images used on social media.
- No adult volunteer or FPC employee may initiate a connection with a child or youth on a social media site except a child or youth of which they are a parent or guardian.
- Text messages between FPC employees/volunteers and children/youth will be appropriate and strictly related to FPC programs, services, and activities. Such text messages must maintain an appropriate and professional style and otherwise be in compliance with the requirements of this Policy.
- No individual shall identify or represent themselves as speaking on behalf of FPC without prior approval from the Pastor/Head-of-Staff and/or Session.

Policy Oversight and Implementation

The Personnel Committee’s and the CEFY Committee’s roles in the oversight and implementation of this Policy include (a) ensuring appropriate screening, training, certification and recertification of all FPC employees, volunteers, and others covered by this Policy and (b) ensuring that all who are covered by this Policy receive a copy of the Policy and acknowledge in writing their receipt and understanding of, and agreement to comply with, the Policy.

V. SCREENING

Employees

All employees shall consent to and pass background checks, including criminal, child abuse, and reference checks, and consent to potential drug screenings at the discretion of the Personnel Committee.

Volunteers

All persons (adults and youth) who wish to volunteer to work with children/youth in FPC programs, services, and activities must be formally invited by the CEFY Committee to volunteer, and consent to and successfully pass child abuse and criminal background checks. All volunteers must be a member of FPC and affiliated with FPC for a period of at least six months to be eligible to volunteer with children/youth. Regarding the chartered Scout Packs at FPC, BSA policies will be followed for the selection of volunteers.

Background checks

The Personnel Committee will arrange child abuse and criminal background checks for volunteers. Volunteers who successfully pass child abuse and criminal background checks will be deemed eligible for ministry with children and youth upon completion of the initial training/certification (or, in subsequent years, retraining/recertification) process as provided for in Section VI below.

Information of concern

If information of a cautionary nature is revealed through a reference, child abuse, or criminal background check, the person conducting the check shall note this information in writing and communicate it to the Personnel Committee. The Pastor/Head-of-Staff and the Personnel Committee shall consider this information and decide on a course of action. The decision, which will be promptly communicated to the individual, must be documented in writing, dated, and placed in the individual's file. In such case, situation may be handled in one of the following ways:

- Accepted unconditionally
- Accepted with clearly defined restrictions
- Denied

Prohibition on Hiring

Notwithstanding the above, FPC will not hire, employ, or permit to volunteer in any capacity that involves direct contact with children any individual:

- Who has been verified by the Department of Human Services as named in the statewide database as a perpetrator with respect to a founded report of child abuse;
- Who has been convicted of any of the disqualifying crimes specified in the FPC Personnel Policy or elsewhere in the Operations Manual.

Materials subject to review

FPC reserves the right to review applications and all related materials (including, without limitation, Committee notes on reference checks and interviews and the results of background checks performed) at any time. Renewed child abuse and criminal history clearances will be required every thirty-six (36) months. Additional background, child abuse clearance, or reference checks may be requested either randomly or because of some new concern.

Inapplicability to Occasional and/or Sporadic Volunteers

The policy set forth herein is not intended to apply to non-employees who volunteer to work with children at FPC-sponsored programs or events only on an occasional and sporadic basis. This policy set forth herein shall apply to all employees of FPC, regardless of whether they will be working with children in the course of their employment. By way of example only, volunteers who volunteer to chaperone youth choir practice a few times a year should not be required to undergo the clearance process; however, a non-employee who commits to chaperone and participate in children's choir practice on a regular, routine basis, will be asked to undergo the clearance process. The occasional and/or sporadic volunteer must be accompanied by a second certified adult. Whenever a question arises about whether a volunteer's interaction with FPC-sponsored youth/child programs is occasional and sporadic, or regular, routine and consistent, the determination shall be made by the Pastor/Head-of-Staff in consultation with the Co-Directors of Christian Education.

Confidentiality

Applications and all related materials (including without limitation Personnel Committee notes on reference checks and interviews, and the results of background checks performed) will be kept by the Pastor/Head-of-Staff (or their designee) in a secure confidential location. Disclosure of the results of reference and background checks will be limited to those with a "need to know" and otherwise will be kept strictly confidential.

VI. FPC CERTIFICATION AND TRAINING REQUIREMENTS

As set forth below, all employees and volunteers who successfully complete the screening process must then be certified by FPC before they may begin working with children or youth. Employees and volunteers shall be required to undergo both initial and periodic recertification as set forth below.

Initial FPC Certification

All FPC employees and volunteers who have direct contact with children or youth, including, but not limited to, those employee and volunteers who are mandated reporters, must be certified by FPC before they may begin working with children or youth. This process shall include the following:

- Required attendance at and completion of a FPC-approved training session regarding child sexual abuse prevention;
- Receipt and review of a copy of this Policy; and

- The signing of relevant documents including an Employee or Volunteer Acknowledgment and Agreement (see sample form included in the Appendix to this Policy), confirming they have received, read, and understood this Policy and agree to comply with it.

Periodic Recertification

Every thirty-six (36) months after the initial certification, FPC employees and volunteers who have been certified in accordance with this Policy must successfully complete a recertification process to continue their work with children/youth. The recertification process shall include the following:

- Updated child abuse and criminal background checks;
- Required attendance at and completion of an FPC-approved training session regarding child sexual abuse prevention;
- The signing of relevant documents including an Employee or Volunteer Acknowledgment and Agreement (see sample form included in the Appendix to this Policy), confirming they have received, read, and understood this Policy and agree to comply with it.

Certification/Recertification Training

FPC will offer regular training opportunities so that FPC-required initial certifications and re-certifications can be accomplished in a timely fashion.

FPC will provide volunteer training pertaining to this policy and the Mandated Reporting requirements at regular intervals at the church.

Any employee or volunteer having questions about the applicability of these additional training requirements should contact their supervisor or the Pastor/Head-of-Staff for clarification.

VII. SUPERVISION REQUIREMENTS

Those to whom this Policy applies shall comply with the following requirements when supervising children and youth:

Two-Adult/Age Policy

At least two certified adults (one of whom will be no less than 25 years old) will supervise all FPC programs, services, and activities involving children and youth, whether on or off campus. Adults must always remain in sight of one another except in an emergency situation. For purposes of the two-adult requirement, spouses count as one certified adult as do a parent and their children.

The two-adult requirement can be eased in a situation involving vehicular transportation as it is permissible for one certified adult driver to transport several children and/or youth in a single vehicle in a convoy of vehicles traveling to and from an event. The CEFY committee will, if at all possible, avoid situations where a volunteer is alone in a vehicle with a child/youth.

Adult/Child or Youth Ratios

For any ministry program with children or youth that is within a contained classroom there shall be at least one certified, appropriately aged adult for every ten children/youth; gender balance is recommended.

For any ministry program with children or youth that is held in a gym, or is outside or off campus there shall be at least one certified, appropriately aged adult for every eight children/youth; gender balance is recommended.

For overnight trips there shall be at least one certified, appropriately aged adult for every six children/youth; gender balance is required.

One-on-One Situations

In those limited situations where it is necessary for an adult to be alone with a child or youth, the adult should notify another non-related adult before and after the period in which they are alone with the child or youth. Additionally, any such one-on-one contact should be carried out in a public setting or otherwise in plain view of others.

Open Door Policy

It is recommended that doors remain open to rooms in which children and youth involved in church activities are present. If noise or fire code restrictions apply, or air conditioning is running, doors may be shut as long as there is clear glass in at least one door into each room and nothing impedes vision through the glass.

Nurseries

A sign-in/out system will be used for all nursery children. This system will enable the caregivers in the nursery to correctly identify a parent or guardian when a child is picked up. Only assigned caregivers and staff are allowed to stay in the nursery. Parents/guardians may enter the room to sign-in/out their child, but must exit the room promptly. All others should remain outside the room.

Use of Pastor's, Employee's, and Volunteer's Homes

Children and youth are not allowed into any Pastor's, Employee's, or Volunteer's home without at least two certified, appropriately aged adults being present. The adult/child and adult/youth ratios set forth in Section IV.B. shall apply.

Use of Private Vehicles

The following policies, which shall apply when private vehicles are being used to transport children and/or youth in connection with church-related activities, are intended to ensure and protect the safety of our children and youth.

All vehicle drivers must:

- Be at least 25 years of age.
- Be currently certified according to this Policy.
- Have a valid driver's license and current automobile insurance and provide photocopies of the license and proof of such insurance to the CEFY Committee in advance of transporting any children or youth in connection with church-related activities.
- Have a good driving record, i.e., shall have had no major moving violations within 12 months prior to the proposed transport of children/youth (determination of what constitutes "major" shall be made by the Personnel Committee), and no convictions or deferred adjudications for driving under the influence of a controlled substance within ten years prior to the proposed transport of children/youth.
- Authorize FPC to check their driving records.

No tobacco products shall be used in the vehicles.

No alcoholic beverages shall be allowed in the vehicles.

No firearms or other weapons shall be allowed in the vehicles.

All persons, including the driver, shall wear seat and shoulder belts or be seated in such other age/weight appropriate safety seats (car seats, booster seats, etc.) as required by law.

Nothing shall extend out of the windows.

The maximum number of people in the vehicle shall be the same as the number of adult seats in the vehicle with seat belts.

The driver shall have complete authority over the passengers and full responsibility for the safety of the passengers at all times.

No driver shall drive more than a continuous two hours at any one time without a rest stop, and no one driver shall drive a total of more than eight hours in any one day. A driver making a rest stop shall stop the vehicle and rest for a period of time equal to

ten minutes for each hour driven before stopping. Drivers may rest while an alternate driver takes over. On trips of eight hours or more, the driver shall have available an alternate approved driver to relieve the primary driver if necessary.

For at least 12 hours prior to driving the vehicle, no driver shall have consumed any alcoholic beverages.

Drivers shall operate vehicles in compliance with speed limits and traffic laws and consistent with safe driving given the prevailing road conditions.

In the event of an accident, with or without injury, the driver (or another person if the driver is unable to do so) shall report the incident to the proper police authority and to the Pastor/Head-of-Staff within 24 hours of its occurrence. If anyone requires medical treatment or hospitalization, the Pastor/Head-of-Staff shall be notified by telephone as soon as possible.

In the event of an accident, a Private Vehicle Accident Report Form (see sample form included in the Appendix to this Policy) must be promptly completed and submitted to the Pastor/Head-of-Staff or their designee.

VIII. REPORTING ABUSE OR SUSPECTED ABUSE

This Policy, the Book of Order, and the law make the responsibility for reporting abuse of a child or youth, or suspected abuse of a child or youth clear.

All FPC employees and volunteers who, in the course of employment or volunteer work, come to learn of any occurrence of abuse or a situation that presents reasonable cause to suspect that abuse may have occurred are required to make a report as set forth in this Policy. Such report shall be made promptly after the occurrence in question becomes known, as required by law, first to the authorities and immediately thereafter to the Pastor/Head-of-Staff (see Reporting Checklist included in the Appendix to this Policy). All such reports, including the identities of all persons making such reports, shall be kept confidential to the extent permitted by law.

Similarly, any report of child/youth abuse made by an individual about their care by a parent, guardian, youth, adult, or FPC employee or volunteer, must be reported promptly, as required by law, first to the authorities and immediately thereafter to the Pastor/Head-of-Staff. All such reports shall be kept confidential to the extent permitted by law. The FPC Incident Report found in Attachment G will be used for such reports.

In the event that the Pastor/Head-of-Staff is unavailable or is the alleged abuser, the report referred to above by a FPC employee or volunteer of alleged or suspected abuse shall be made to the Clerk of Session (see Reporting Checklist included in the Appendix to this Policy).

Iowa law provides that individuals who make a good faith report of actual or suspected child abuse are immune from any civil or criminal liability that might otherwise result from making the report. In addition, Iowa law imposes criminal liability for willful failure to report actual or suspected child abuse by mandated reporters.

For any injury to a child under age 18 requiring medical assistance, an incident report should be completed with one copy given to the parent/guardian and one copy to either the Pastor/Head-of-Staff or one of the Co-Directors of Christian Education. If the Co-Directors of Christian Education nor the Pastor/Head-of-Staff are present on church premises, the accident report should be left in the Pastor's labeled mailbox in the work room of the church office. See Attachment G for a copy of the Incident Report Form.

IX. RESPONDING TO ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE OR SUSPECTED ABUSE

In the event of an allegation of abuse to a child or youth, or suspected abuse to a child or youth, and after completion of the above-mandated reporting, the procedures set forth below must be followed at FPC:

Every allegation shall be taken seriously. Adequate care, respect and confidentiality shall be offered to alleged victims and perpetrators until the allegation is substantiated or cleared. The identity of any individual who makes a report of alleged or suspected abuse and/or cooperates in a subsequent investigation of such a report in accordance with this Policy shall be kept confidential to the extent permitted by law.

The Pastor/Head-of-Staff, with the employee or volunteer who made the report, will immediately notify the parent(s) or legal guardian of the alleged victim.

The Pastor/Head-of-Staff will then contact FPC legal counsel and, where appropriate, FPC's liability insurance carrier.

In consultation with the FPC's legal counsel and any appropriate law enforcement, the Pastor/Head-of-Staff may, but is not required, to notify the accused individual.

FPC employees and volunteers are required to cooperate fully with investigative authorities, such as the Department of Human Services or law enforcement officials.

With respect to inquiries other than those from investigative authorities (for example, from uninvolved church members or members of the media), FPC employees and volunteers will refer any inquiries regarding the situation to the Pastor/Head-of-Staff, except that in the event the Pastor/Head-of-Staff is unavailable or is the alleged abuser, FPC employees and volunteers will refer any such inquiries to the Clerk of Session. The Pastor/Head-of-Staff or Clerk of Session, if the Pastor/Head-of-Staff is unavailable or is the alleged abuser, or any Session-approved legal counsel, shall be the only person(s) authorized to release any information on behalf of FPC regarding an abuse allegation except where the law requires others to provide information.

Subject to applicable confidentiality laws, the Pastor/Head-of-Staff will provide the Session with a report of the incident and of all steps taken afterwards.

When appropriate, the Pastor/Head-of-Staff will be responsible for arranging a meeting with parents and guardians of FPC's children and youth to explain the situation and answer questions. The Pastor/Head-of-Staff shall act in accordance with all applicable confidentiality laws at all times, including in any discussion that occurs at such a meeting.

When appropriate, a brief statement will be prepared and sent to the congregation explaining the situation. That statement should not assign blame, interfere with the victim's privacy or any investigation, or violate confidentiality concerns.

Subject to applicable confidentiality laws, the Pastor/Head-of-Staff or Clerk of Session, if the Pastor/Head-of-Staff is unavailable or is the alleged abuser, will inform either the Stated Clerk of the Presbytery or the Executive Presbyter of the alleged abuse and of all steps that have been taken to investigate and report the allegation.

The Pastor/Head-of-Staff and/or Clerk of Session will maintain a log of all actions taken regarding the allegation including telephone calls, personal interactions, and any correspondence. This log and all documentation relating to the matter shall be kept in a secure confidential file.

The following additional steps may be taken when deemed appropriate:

- The Pastor/Head-of-Staff and/or the Personnel Committee and/or the Session may conduct an internal investigation in addition to that which will be carried out by the authorities.
- The Pastor/Head-of-Staff shall immediately place an accused employee on leave. Such leave may be with or without pay. The Pastor/Head-of-Staff shall immediately remove an accused volunteer from service.
- Additionally, to protect the child or youth from further possible abuse or harassment, FPC will prohibit the accused individual access to the alleged victim and other children and youth in FPC programs, services, and activities.

If an employee or volunteer is determined to be a perpetrator with respect to a founded report of child abuse, such individual's employment or volunteer relationship with FPC will be immediately terminated.

With the exception of a termination of employment that results from a determination that an employee is a perpetrator with respect to a founded report of abuse, an employee has the right to appeal the decision to the Personnel Committee. The Personnel Committee will address the situation with the Session in a timely and appropriate manner.

With the exception of a termination of a volunteer relationship that results from a determination that a volunteer is a perpetrator with respect to a founded report of abuse, a volunteer has the right to appeal the decision to the Session, which will address the situation in a timely and appropriate manner.

In all cases except those where an allegation of abuse is ultimately determined to be founded, the Pastor/Head-of-Staff in consultation with the Personnel Committee will make a determination as to whether the formerly accused individual will be allowed to resume working with/supervising children and youth as an employee or volunteer at FPC.

In the event the Pastor/Head-of-Staff is unavailable or is the alleged abuser, actions to be taken by the Pastor/Head-of-Staff as set forth above in Section VI shall be taken by the Clerk of Session.

X. VULNERABLE ADULTS

Vulnerable adults will be accorded the same protections as children and youth under this policy in regards to programming sponsored by First Presbyterian Church. The two-adult rule does not apply to providing member care or pastoral care with those who are in care facilities or hospitals. It is specific to vulnerable adults who are participating in programming sponsored by First Presbyterian Church.

XI. HEALING THE CONGREGATION

As God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience. Bear with one another and if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other; just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which in deed you were called in the one body. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one another in all wisdom; and with gratitude in your hearts sing songs to God. And whatever you do, in word and deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him. (Col. 3:12-17)

At First Presbyterian Church of Davenport we take every precaution we possibly can to protect our children; however, we have to recognize that incidents may occur. These situations can have a tremendous impact on the individuals, as well as the entire congregation. To help the community of faith deal with this betrayal of trust, these are five main components necessary for the healing process:

- **Truth telling:** We have to acknowledge what has happened. Ignoring the issue could only make things worse.

- **Sharing and validation of feelings:** There are many emotions that surround the betrayal of trust: i.e. shock, anger, disbelief, and fear. In order to help the community of faith acknowledge and validate these feelings as well as find some resolution, we encourage group mediation with a trained pastoral counselor.
- **Education:** Commitment to the safety and well-being of children and youth is our number one priority. We have to communicate that commitment to the congregation in order for trust to be reestablished. We also must reeducate members on how we can collectively protect our children.
- **Spiritual reflection:** In a community of faith, we turn to God for guidance and direction, especially during difficult times. We turn to scripture, like the words Paul gave to the Colossians (Col. 3:12-17) during their crisis, or the comforting words of Psalm 23, and we pray that the “peace of Christ will rule in our hearts.” We turn to God in prayer and emphasize the grace of Jesus Christ that will lift us up and love us forever.
- **Where do we go from here?** As a congregation and as the body of Christ, answering the questions: What else do we have to do in order to be able to heal? Where do we go from here? What do we need to do to mend ourselves so that we can go about the mission of the church - which is to glorify and serve God?

XII. POLICY REVIEW AND REVISION

The Committee will review this Policy at least annually and recommend revisions to Session as appropriate.

Revision History

| Date | Author | Changes |
|-----------|---|-----------------|
| 9-16-2024 | Rev. Dr. Kris Schondelmeyer Marty Bowles Edwards Abby Schondelmeyer | Initial version |

XIII. APPENDIX

The following sample forms (and Reporting Checklist) will be used in connection with the Policy:

| | |
|--------------|--|
| Attachment A | Reporting Checklist |
| Attachment B | Employee/Volunteer Acknowledgement and Agreement |
| Attachment C | Example Private Vehicle Accident Report Form |
| Attachment D | Example Incident Report Form |
| Attachment E | Example Photo/Video Release Form |

Attachment A

First Presbyterian Church of Davenport Reporting Checklist

Following the procedures explained in FPC's Child and Youth Protection Policy, any suspected or actual case of child abuse or neglect must immediately be reported, first to the authorities, in the manner set forth below, and then to the Pastor/Head-of-Staff.

Reporting Child Abuse or Neglect to the Authorities

An initial report of suspected or actual child abuse or neglect must be made either to the local police department or via the **Toll-free Iowa Department of Human Services Child Abuse Hotline at 800-362-2178**.

When to Also Call 9-1-1

If you are in immediate danger of injury

If you suspect a child is in immediate danger of injury or if the abuse or injury is happening right now

If there is a need to collect evidence or maintain a chain of custody of evidence

Please note that calling 9-1-1 does not eliminate the requirement to report the matter to the Department of Human Services and to the Pastor/Head-of-Staff.

Reporting Child Abuse to FPC

Immediately after an initial report of suspected or actual child abuse or neglect is submitted to the authorities, the person making the report shall make a report to the Pastor/Head-of-Staff. If the Pastor/Head-of-Staff is the alleged abuser, this report shall be made the Clerk of Session.

Attachment B

First Presbyterian Church of Davenport

Child and Youth Protection Policy Employee/Volunteer Acknowledgment and Agreement

In furtherance of my commitment to be certified to work with children and youth at FPC, I hereby acknowledge that I have received a copy of the FPC Child and Youth Protection Policy (Policy) and that I have had an opportunity to read the Policy, that I understand my obligations under the Policy, and that I have completed training regarding child and youth protection. I understand that any violation of the Policy or misrepresentation of information that I have provided in order to work with children/youth at FPC may result in termination of my employment or volunteer service with children/youth.

Intending to be legally bound, I hereby agree to comply in all respects with the Policy.

Applicant's Signature

Date

Applicant's Printed Name

Signature of Youth Applicant's Parent/Guardian

Date

Date Child Protection Policy Training was Completed

Attachment C
First Presbyterian Church of Davenport
Example Private Vehicle Accident Report

Date of accident:_____ Time of accident:_____

Location of accident (be specific):_____

Driver of vehicle from FPC:_____

Driver's license #:_____ Vehicle plate:_____

How accident occurred (be specific):_____

Extent of damage to vehicle (be specific):_____

Extent of damage to other vehicle:_____

Other(s) Driver's license #:_____ Vehicle plate:_____

Driver's address:_____

Make of vehicle:_____

Attachment D

First Presbyterian Church of Davenport

Example Incident Form

**Accident / Injury / Incident Report Form for Children / Youth
First Presbyterian Church of Davenport**

You are being asked to fill out this form because we are committed to the safety and well-being of our children/youth and the adults who work with them. Please give all known information.

Date and time of accident / injury / incident:

Name of child / youth:

Age of child / youth:

Address/phone of child / youth:

Location of accident / injury / incident:

Parent / Guardian:

Parent / Guardian notified ~ date, time, by whom:

Names of persons who witnessed accident / injury / incident:

Name:

Phone:

Name:

Phone:

Name:

Phone:

Describe accident / injury / incident:

If medical care was received, briefly describe what and by whom administered:

Signature of Person Making Report: _____ Date: _____

(Please give this report to the Pastor/Head-of-Staff or a Co-Director of Christian Education)

Attachment E

First Presbyterian Church of Davenport

Example Photo/Video Release Form for Minors (under 18)

First Presbyterian Church of Davenport has my permission to use photographs or video of me or my child publicly to promote the church. I understand that the images may be used in print publications, online publications, presentations, websites, and social media strictly for church purposes. I also understand that no royalty, fee, or other compensation shall become payable to me by reason of such use.

Parent/Guardian's signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent/Guardian's Printed Name: _____

Child's Name: _____

Phone Number: _____

Note: This form or one similar to it shall be on file for each child who regularly participates in FPC programming. All precaution should be taken not to publish photos or videos including children for whom we do not have express written consent.