

Safe Sanctuary Policy
Landrum United Methodist Church
Landrum, South Carolina

The General Conference of The United Methodist Church, in April 1996, adopted a resolution aimed at eliminating any potential for child sexual abuse in the church. The adopted resolution includes the following statement:

Jesus said, "Whoever welcomes a child welcomes me." (Matthew 18:5). Children are our present and our future, our hope, our teachers, our inspiration. They are full participants in the life of the church and in the realm of God.

Jesus also said, "If any of you put a stumbling block before one of these little ones..., it would be better for you if a great millstone were fastened around your neck and you were drowned in the depth of the sea." (Matthew 18:6) Our Christian faith calls us to offer both hospitality and protection to the little ones, the children. The Social Principles of The United Methodist Church state that "...children must be protected from economic, physical and sexual exploitation and abuse." (para. 162C)

Tragically, churches have not always been safe places for children. Child sexual abuse, exploitation and ritual abuse (ritual abuse refers to abusive acts committed as part of ceremonies or rites; ritual abusers are often related to cults, or pretend to be) occur in churches, both large and small, urban and rural. The problem cuts across all economic, cultural and racial lines. It is real, and it appears to be increasing. Most annual conferences can cite specific incidents of child sexual abuse and exploitation in their churches. Virtually every congregation has among its members adult survivors of early sexual trauma.

Such incidents are devastating to all who are involved: the child, the family, the local church and its leaders. Increasingly, churches are torn apart by the legal, emotional, and monetary consequences of litigation following allegations of abuse.

God calls us to make our churches safe places, protecting children and other vulnerable persons from sexual and ritual abuse. God calls us to create communities of faith where children and adults grow safe and strong. (From *The Book of Resolutions of The United Methodist Church*. P. 384-386)

Thus, in covenant with all United Methodist congregations, The Landrum United Methodist Church adopts this policy for the prevention of child abuse in our church.

Purpose

Our purpose for establishing this Child Abuse Prevention Policy and accompanying procedures is to demonstrate our total and unwavering commitment to the physical, emotional and spiritual safety of all our children, youth, and vulnerable adults. We will strive to insure that no child, youth, or vulnerable adult will be placed in a position of being in one on one association with an adult during church sponsored activities.

Covenant Statement

The Landrum United Methodist Church hereby pledges to conduct the ministry of Jesus Christ in ways that assure the physical and emotional safety and spiritual growth of all of our children and youth as well as all of our workers with children and youth. We will follow reasonable safety measures when selecting and recruiting workers; we will implement prudent operational procedures in all areas of programming and care; we will train our workers with children and youth on our procedures and policies; and we will have a clearly defined procedure for reporting a suspected incident of abuse that conforms to the requirements of South Carolina law.

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To implement this Covenant Statement, the Landrum United Methodist Church requires that

1. Volunteers and/or Staff who work with children, youth, or vulnerable adults will be at least 21 years of age and be at least 5 years older than the oldest child/youth participating in the church sponsored activity. Volunteers must have been either a member or affiliate member of Landrum United Methodist Church for at least 6 Months.
 - a. Youth of driving age and vulnerable adults shall not provide transportation to/from off site church sponsored activities.
 - b. Accredited adults providing transportation must have current auto insurance (medical and liability) coverage.

2. All adults 18 years of age or older (participants, volunteer or staff persons) who have regular and direct contact with children, youth and vulnerable adults must complete a background check through Trak-1. This is done on-line, with a copy of the getting started page included as Attachment 1. There is a cost associated with the background check normally paid by credit card. If this represents a problem, please contact the Church Office for assistance.

All records will be kept by the accredited outside organization (Trak-1). Landrum United Methodist Church will only receive a pass/fail response from Trak-1. An accreditation list will be kept in the Church office in a locked file. Notification of accreditation will be made by the Pastor of Landrum United Methodist Church

Every three (3) years, another background check must be made to be included in the accreditation list.

Additionally, the following guidelines associated with church sponsored activities will be considered at all times:

- A. Whenever supervising activities involving children and youth at Landrum United Methodist Church
 - Two non-related adults will be present at all times if at all possible.
 - For church sponsored activities beyond the immediate area of Landrum United Methodist Church, children and youth will provide a release form signed by a parent/legal guardian prior to departing for the activity. Examples of such events that would require a release form would be Salkehatchie, Youth Ski Weekend, Carowinds trip, Rafting in North Carolina, etc...Release forms would not be required for going to SAMs Club/Costco to purchase items for the food pantry, Community Meal delivery, Sunday lunch as a group, etc..
 - They will have access to a telephone, cell phone or pager when groups are at or away from the church facility
 - One-on-one interactions with children, youth, and vulnerable adults will be with either with an open door and/or be visible to all.
- B. Whenever Landrum United Methodist Church sponsors an activity involving children or youth,
 - Any Member, Affiliate Member, or Church Staff, including Spartanburg District staff, has the right to visit and observe the church-sponsored activity at any time, unannounced.

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- All classroom and office doors will have a window or visibility from hallway or remain open while occupied.
 - All adults actively involved in a sponsored Landrum United Methodist Church activity (such as leaders, drivers, teachers, chaperones, etc...) will have passed accreditation by the outside organization used by Landrum United Methodist Church.
 - Windows will be kept free from adornment
- C. Whenever Landrum United Methodist Church transports children or youth away from the church campus,
- Adults should never transport child/youth by self
 - The driver/vehicle owner will have a current automobile policy to include both medical and liability insurance. Landrum United Methodist Church insurance does not cover the use of personal vehicles for Church Sponsored Events

 - Landrum United Methodist Church will carry an auto insurance policy to cover potential liability claims against the Church for auto accidents. This policy will also include physical damage insurance for rental vehicles.

Whenever Landrum United Methodist Church hosts an activity involving children or youth from another church or community organization or rent the facility for any purpose, the Safe Sanctuary policies will be provided to that group as part of the LUMC Facility Use Policy

Landrum United Methodist Church volunteer and paid staff will be given the opportunity to attend training about Safe Sanctuary policies, procedures and child abuse issues on a regular basis.

If a suspected incident of child abuse or neglect occurs at or is revealed to a volunteer/paid staff person at a Landrum United Methodist Church sponsored activity, the adult in charge of the activity will

- Insure the safety of the child or youth
- Call the church pastor or designee
- Call the County Office of DSS

Landrum United Methodist Church will review the adherence to this policy plus feedback from the congregation to continuously improve upon this Safe Sanctuary Policy. Modifications to our facility will be considered to improve adherence to this policy.

Conclusion

In all of our ministries with children, youth, and vulnerable adults, this congregation is committed to demonstrating the love of Jesus Christ so that each child, youth and vulnerable adult will be "surrounded by steadfast love...established in the faith and confirmed and strengthened in the way that leads to life eternal." (Baptismal Covenant II, *United Methodist Book of Worship*, p.96).

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Trak-ITechnology – Training Program

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Welcome to our Volunteer Screening Program

The South Carolina United Methodist Conference pledges to be a safe sanctuary for all who come to worship in our churches. As a volunteer or staff member at your local church, you are being called to undergo background screening to ensure that you, too, are committed to creating a safe community of faith for all in our community.

Welcome

Please enter your details below. An invitation will be sent to your email to initiate the background screening process.

First Name:

Last Name:

Email:

[Send Invite](#)

[Already a user? Click here to login.](#)

CALL M-F 8:00AM-5:00PM CST
(918) 779-7000

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