

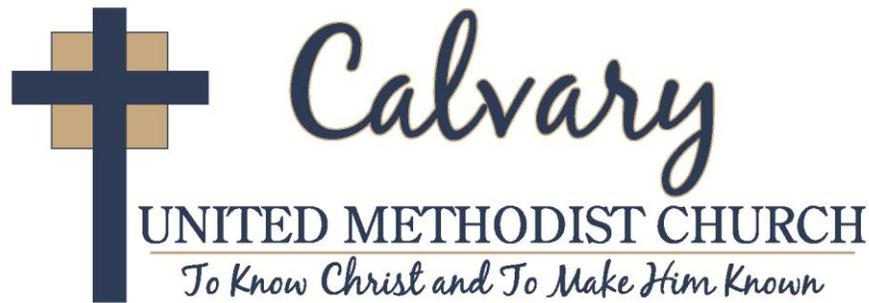
Calvary's Safe Church Covenant requires 4 forms:

Form A is to be read by the applicant and kept for their reference.

Forms B, C, **and** D - all 3 must be printed (preferably 2 sided), completed in full with signatures, and returned to the Calvary Office prior to beginning any volunteer work at Calvary.

Incomplete or missing forms will result in a delay of being cleared to work with Calvary's children, youth, or vulnerable adults.

If you have any questions, contact the Calvary Office at 701-232-5650.



Safe Church Policy

INTRODUCTION

When the crowd tried to keep the children away from Jesus, he was quick to respond, “Let the children come to me.” Jesus taught that children were to be included and provided for within the community of faith. Today, the church may be the only place where some children find the unconditional love and care they so desperately need to grow and thrive. As Christians, we must take our responsibilities to our children, youth, and vulnerable adults very seriously. We fail in our responsibilities if we neglect to take adequate precautions against abuse in our churches. It is unlikely that we can completely prevent abuse in every situation, but it is possible for us to reduce the risk by following a thorough policy of prevention. This policy attempts to do just that for the Calvary United Methodist Church ministries that deal with children, youth, and vulnerable adults. It is based on our understanding of the widespread problem of abuse throughout our country. Often abuse occurs in settings where children, youth, or vulnerable adults should have been able to feel safe—homes, schools, camps, and church. In more than three quarters of the reported incidents of abuse, the victim was related to or acquainted with the abuser.

PURPOSE

Our church’s purpose for establishing this Safe Church policy is to protect the others that come to us, to protect our staff (both paid and volunteer) from potential allegations of abuse, and to limit the extent of legal liability of our church.

STATEMENT OF COVENANT

As a Christian community of faith we pledge to conduct the ministry of the gospel in ways that provide an environment for spiritual growth and for safety of all children, youth, vulnerable adults, and staff. We will follow the measures of this policy in the recruitment and selection of paid and volunteer staff. We will implement the operational procedures of this policy. We will train and educate our paid and volunteer staff in the use of these policies. We will define and follow procedures for reporting a suspected incident of abuse that conforms to state law. We will define and follow procedures for handling an allegation of abuse. We will be prepared to respond to media interest if an incident occurs.

GENERAL PROVISIONS

The Safe Church Response Team (SCRT) will review this policy annually. Proposed revisions shall be submitted in writing to the SCRT who shall have the power to adopt such revisions as needed.

POLICY DEFINITIONS

- **Abuse** means harm or threatened harm to the health and welfare of a child, youth, or vulnerable adult.
- **Activity/Event/Function** means any activity or program in which children, youth, or vulnerable adults are under supervision of persons (staff or volunteers) in charge of these activities.
- **Ratio Rule** Adults are only allowed to be alone with individual students when transporting to and from church events or during one-on-one contacts to be conducted in a public place or in open view within the church.
- **Appropriate** means conduct that one would reasonably assume would be acceptable and permissible by a child, youth, or vulnerable adult's parent or guardian.
- **Calvary, Calvary UMC, Church, We** means the Calvary United Methodist Church.
- **Child, Children, or Youth** means any person under the age of 18.
- **Conference** means the Dakotas Conference of the United Methodist Church.
- **Hiring Director** means the person responsible for hiring staff or selecting volunteers for a specific Calvary ministry.
- **Leader** means anyone directly responsible for supervising and overseeing the specific Church-related function, event, or activity.
- **Parent or guardian** means any parent, stepparent, foster parent, grandparent, or appointed guardian with the general responsibility for the health, education, and welfare of a child, youth, or vulnerable adult.
- **Person in charge of activities** means the volunteer or employee responsible for the conduct of the activity.
- **Persons required to report abuse** means persons, who, in the course of their employment, volunteerism, occupation, or practice of their profession, come into contact with children, youth, or vulnerable adults.
- **Safe Church Response Team (SCRT)** means the individuals, collectively, appointed by the Senior Pastor of Calvary United Methodist Church with responsibility for the development and communication of the SCRT policies.
- **Sexual abuse** means engaging in any sexual contact, sexual penetrations, sexual exploitation, or sexual harassment of a child, youth, or vulnerable adult; the dissemination, exhibiting, or displaying of sexually explicit material to a child, youth, or vulnerable adult, regardless of whether such conduct is with or without the knowledge or consent of the child, youth, or vulnerable adult. This abuse may be violent or nonviolent. It includes any conduct that involves a child, youth, or vulnerable adult in sexual behavior for which they are not personally, socially, emotionally, or developmentally ready.
- **Sexual contact** means the intentional touching of the intimate parts or the clothing covering the immediate area of the intimate parts of a child, youth, or vulnerable adult.
- **Sexual exploitation** means allowing, permitting, or encouraging a child, youth, or vulnerable adult to engage in prostitution or in the photographing, filming, creating electronic or computer generated images or other forms of depicting a child, youth, or vulnerable adult engaged in actual or suggestive sexual conduct.
- **Sexual harassment** means any unwanted sexual advances or demand, either verbal or physical, which is perceived by the recipient as demeaning, intimidating, or coercive.
- **Staff** means any paid employee or volunteer at Calvary United Methodist Church.
- **Volunteer** means a person 18 years of age or older who assists in conducting church activities.
- **Vulnerable adult** means any person over 18 years of age with diagnosed diminished physical, mental, or emotional capacities.

REQUIREMENTS FOR EMPLOYEES AND VOLUNTEERS

- All employees and volunteers applying to work with children, youth, or vulnerable adults on an ongoing basis will be interviewed by the Hiring Director and are required to provide written permission for a background check. The results of the interview will be confidential and only discussed with those persons needing this information in order to make a decision as to whether the applicant should be accepted as an employee or volunteer.
- All volunteers applying to work with children, youth, or vulnerable adults must faithfully attend Calvary for 3 months before they are eligible to begin. However, such individuals may begin the application and background check process at any time during that 3-month period.
- Each room or space where children, youth, or vulnerable adults are being cared for or taught shall have a window in the door or the door will be left open. All activities should occur in open view.
- The church nursery will require all parents to sign their child in for events, according to the church nursery policy.
- No one shall serve as an employee or volunteer who, in the belief of the leader, sponsoring agency, or Hiring Director may represent a potential threat of committing abuse or violating this policy.
- No one shall serve as an employee or volunteer if she/he is known to have been previously convicted of or pled guilty or no contest to any crime arising out of any act or conduct involving abuse whether or not such conduct involved a child, youth, or vulnerable adult.
- No one shall serve as an employee or volunteer if she/he has had a verdict or judgment rendered against her/him in any civil action arising out of any personal act or conducts related to abuse of child, youth, or vulnerable adult. This qualifying rule shall apply no matter how long ago the civil verdict occurred and judgment was rendered.

SCREENING PROCESS

- Hiring Director distributes the following forms to the employee/volunteer for review and completion.
 - Form A - Safe Church policy
 - Form B - Covenant Statement
 - Form C – Application (volunteer only)
 - Form D - Authorization to Conduct Background Search
- Employee/Volunteer signs Forms B, C, and D and returns to the Hiring Director.
- Hiring Director submits select documents to the SCRT representative who conducts a criminal background search.
- SCRT representative notifies Hiring Director of background check result for employee/volunteer.
- All signed documents, background check results, and references will be securely stored.
- List of all approved employees and volunteers will be available to all Ministry Leaders.

RESPONDING TO ALLEGATIONS/MISCONDUCT

Reporting:

- Once an incident of abuse occurs or allegation of an incident is made, it is crucial that it be dealt with in a clearly outlined manner. The person who observes alleged abuse or to whom such alleged abuse is reported shall report the incident immediately to the Hiring Director or directly to a SCRT member.
- Upon receiving such information, the Hiring Director will speak to a SCRT member. The SCRT member will call the North Dakota Department of Human Services – Child Protection Services to make a report. **1-800-472 2622**
- A SCRT member, with a pastor present, will ask the accused person to temporarily refrain from involvement of all Calvary UMC children, youth, or vulnerable adult activities until the incident report is resolved. In the temporary removal of an accused person from any activities, care will be

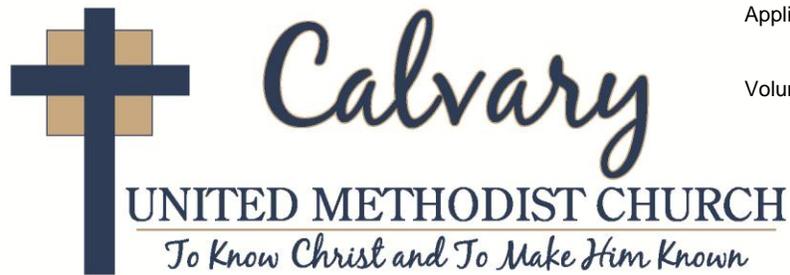
taken to handle this in a confidential and discreet manner, recognizing that an investigation is being conducted.

Action:

- A quick, compassionate, and unified response to an alleged incident of abuse will be conducted.
- All allegations will be taken seriously. In all cases of reported or observed abuse, all employees or volunteers involved in that activity will cooperate fully with all official investigating agencies.
- The Senior Pastor, or his/her SCRT designee, is the only person authorized to make statements to representatives of the media.
- If allegations are made against an employee, the Staff Parish Relations Team shall be contacted immediately.
- Where validity of the complaint cannot be determined, other options will be made available to both parties.
- If the investigation reasonably establishes that the alleged conduct did not occur, the complainant shall be informed that false abuse claims will not be tolerated under this policy. Appropriate action will be recommended to assure the wrongly accused person that the false charge will not affect his/her employment or volunteer involvement at Calvary UMC.

Non-retaliation:

- This policy prohibits retaliation against anyone who, in good faith, reports allegations of abuse or assists in investigating charges.
- Anyone found to have participated in retaliatory actions will be contacted by the SCRT and appropriate action will be taken which may include termination as a volunteer or employee of Calvary United Methodist Church.



Applicant Name _____

Volunteering for: _____

Volunteer/Employee Covenant Statement

The congregation of Calvary United Methodist Church is committed to providing a safe and secure environment for all children, youth, vulnerable adults, staff, and volunteers who participate in ministries and activities sponsored by the church. The following statements reflect our congregation's commitment to preserving this church as a holy place of safety and protection for all who enter; as a place where all people can experience the love of God through relationships with others.

1. No adult who has been convicted of abuse (either sexual, physical, or emotional) should volunteer to work with children, youth, or vulnerable adults in any church-sponsored activity. A person who has been so convicted by law will be welcomed into the redemptive fellowship of the congregation and may serve in other areas, but should not volunteer or be employed to be with children, youth, or vulnerable adults.
2. Survivors of abuse are offered the love and support of our congregation. Any survivor who desires to volunteer or be employed in some capacity to work with children, youth, or vulnerable adults is encouraged to discuss his/her willingness with our church's Senior Pastor. The Senior Pastor will communicate with the Hiring Director.
3. All volunteers supervising children, youth, or vulnerable adults of our church need to be active in the life of the congregation for at least 3 months before beginning a volunteer assignment. "Active involvement" will be determined by the Hiring Director.
4. Volunteers or employees supervising children, youth, or vulnerable adults shall attend training and educational events provided by the Hiring Director to keep informed of church policies and state laws regarding abuse.
5. Volunteers or employees shall immediately report to their Hiring Director any behavior that seems abusive or inappropriate.

Sign below to indicate agreement to all 5 of these requirements.

1. As a volunteer applying to work with children, youth, or vulnerable adults in this congregation, I agree to abide by the "3-month rule" before beginning a volunteer assignment.
2. As a volunteer or employee applying to work with children, youth, vulnerable adults in this congregation, I agree to participate in training and education events provided by the Hiring Director.
3. As a volunteer or employee applying to work with children, youth, vulnerable adults in this congregation, I agree to abide by the Ratio Rule at all times.
4. As a volunteer or employee applying to work with children, youth, vulnerable adults in this congregation, I agree to inform the Hiring Director if I have ever been convicted of abuse.
5. As a volunteer or employee working with children, youth, vulnerable adults in this congregation, I agree to promptly report abusive or inappropriate behavior, by myself or others, to my Hiring Director.

I have received and read the Calvary United Methodist Church Safe Church Policy packet and as a potential Volunteer/Employee at Calvary UMC, I agree to observe and abide by the policies set forth above in the Safe Church Policy packet and this Volunteer/Employee Covenant Statement.

Print full name _____

Date _____

Signature of Applicant _____

Please complete and return to: **Calvary United Methodist Church**
ATTN. Safe Church Response Team
4575 45th Street South
Fargo, ND 58104

Do you have your own transportation? YES _____ NO _____

Do you have a valid driver's license? YES _____ NO _____

Do you have automotive liability insurance? YES _____ NO _____

(List policy limits and name of carrier if you might transport children, youth, or vulnerable adults in a Calvary United Methodist Church activity.)

Why would you like to work with children, youth, or vulnerable adults? _____

What qualities do you have that would help you work with children, youth, or vulnerable adults?

Adult survivors of abuse are offered the love and support of our congregation. Have you ever been a victim of abuse?

NO _____ YES _____

Have you ever been charged, convicted of, or pled guilty to a felony or misdemeanor crime?

NO _____ YES _____ if yes, please explain fully: _____

Would you be available for periodic training sessions at Calvary United Methodist Church?

YES _____ NO _____

References:

Please list three references that you have known for at least 1 year. References should be of an institutional nature. These may include employers/co-workers or persons involved with the individual in an organization or volunteer opportunities. References may not be related to you by blood or marriage and cannot be a CUMC staff person. **References are confidential.**

Provide complete address and phone number information for each.

1. Name: _____

Address: _____ City _____ St _____ Zip _____

Daytime phone: _____ Evening Phone: _____

Relationship to reference: _____

2. Name: _____

Address: _____ City _____ St _____ Zip _____

Daytime phone: _____ Evening Phone: _____

Relationship to reference: _____

3. Name: _____

Address: _____ City _____ St _____ Zip _____

Daytime phone: _____ Evening Phone: _____

Relationship to reference: _____

I give my permission to Calvary United Methodist Church to contact the persons who I have given as references.

Signature of Applicant

Date

Please complete and turn in to: **Calvary United Methodist Church**
ATTN. Safe Church Response Team
4575 45th Street South
Fargo, ND 58104

This section is to be used to list all counties and states of residence since high school graduation or age 18.

CITY/TOWN

COUNTY

STATE

COUNTRY

I hereby certify that all information provided in this consent form is true, correct, and complete. All offers of employment/volunteer are contingent upon my successful completion, as determined in employer's sole discretion, of this criminal background check.

Signed this _____ day of _____, 20_____

APPLICANT (PRINT NAME) _____

APPLICANT'S SIGNATURE _____

Please complete and turn in to: **Calvary United Methodist Church**
ATTN. Safe Church Response Team
4575 45th Street South
Fargo, ND 58104