

Safe Sanctuaries Policy for the Crete United Methodist Church

Purpose:

Our purpose for establishing the Safe Sanctuaries Policy and the 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.

Pledge:

The Crete United Methodist Church pledges to conduct the ministry of Jesus Christ in ways that assure the physical, emotional, and spiritual safety of all children and of those who work with our children, youth, or vulnerable adults.

Workers and Volunteers:

The Crete United Methodist Church will follow reasonable safety measures when selecting and recruiting workers and volunteers.

- Workers and volunteers will be trained on our procedures and policies.
- We will have and maintain a defined procedure for reporting a suspected incident of abuse.
 - o This procedure will conform to the requirements of Illinois Law.

All paid workers and volunteers, who work with children, youth or vulnerable adults, will:

- Undergo a criminal background check at no expense to the worker or volunteer.
 - o Individuals with any convictions of physical or sexual abuse or neglect, will not be permitted to work at any program or church-sponsored event for children, youth, or vulnerable adults.
- Prior to working in any children or youth department, employed workers or volunteers must undergo training and shall be familiar with this policy.
 - o Workers and Volunteers will furthermore be encouraged to attend regular training and educational events.
 - o Workers and Volunteers will be informed of any changes to this policy or state laws regarding child abuse.
- Prior to working with children, youth, or vulnerable adults, workers or volunteers will read and sign the church's Participation Covenant Statement.

Youth Events inside and outside of the CUMC

This applies to the Youth Group of CUMC as well as any group that uses the facilities of CUMC.

- The 2 Adult rule will apply to all events.
- For supervision purposes, it is recommended that a ratio of one adult will be present for every four youth that are present.
- There will be separate sleeping rooms for boys and girls.
- All workers and volunteers will have a current background checks.
- At least one adult will be trained in First Aid and CPR

Open Door Counseling

At the Crete United Methodist Church, we counsel children, youth and adults in an open-door setting.

- Doors will remain open during all counseling events.
 - o If, for confidentiality, the door is to be closed, the room must have a window that is able to be opened.
- This is for the protection of both adults and children.

Conclusion:

In all of our ministries with children, youth, 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, p96)

Working with Children, Youth, and Vulnerable Adults.

Five-Year Rule: All who supervise children/youth in our church will be at least 5 years older than any children/youth they supervise.

Definition of Staff and Volunteers:

- **Staff:** A member of staff is paid, by the church, for specific duties laid out in a job description.
 - o Staff members must be 18 years of age, or older.
 - o They must be 5 years older than the oldest child or youth that they are working with.
- **Peer Volunteer:** A peer volunteer is a volunteer who is less than 5 years older than the oldest youth that they are working with. This label is only used for youth that are working with children or other youth.
- **Core Volunteer:** A volunteer who is 5 years older than the oldest youth member they are working with.

For the safety of all volunteers and participants, peer volunteers will fall under the supervision of Staff and Core Volunteers

Two Adult Rule: Two, unrelated adults will be present at all times during any church-sponsored program or ministry even that involves children, youth or vulnerable adults.

- Every classroom or meeting room will be maintained by a minimum of two adults.
- If every classroom or meeting room does not have two adults for some reason, another adult will be designated to "float" through the education floor while those classrooms are in use in order to maintain a second adult presence and set of eyes.

Transportation:

- No youth should drive to or drive from events.
- No youth shall drive another youth to or from the church or events
 - o The only exception to this rule will be if parents have met with the Youth Director and given expressed written consent.
 - o Permission will only be granted for transport to or from the church, not for Church-sponsored events.
- At no time will there be one adult and one child or youth in a vehicle.
 - o This does not apply if the adult is the parent of the one child.
 - o An exception will be considered if the parent has met with the Church Pastor or Youth Director and has given expressed written consent.
- All drivers will undergo the same screening process as volunteers.