A SAFE SANCTUARY

Prepared Spaces | Aware Adults | Faithful Youth

What is the Safe Sanctuary Policy?

It is a policy developed by our Safe Sanctuary Committee, approved by our Joint Board and mandated by our Synod to insure adults and children, youth, and vulnerable adults are in healthy and supportive relationships during times of worship, study and fellowship.

What does it require?

- Two adult leaders are expected to be present with any group of children or youth.
- All adults who are actively responsible for children, youth, and vulnerable adults at FMC are asked to:
  - All volunteers who work with children, youth, or vulnerable adults will submit a Volunteer Application Form
  - Complete a background check.
  - Undergo a drug screen
  - Participate in annual training on topics relevant to their ministry area.



Volunteer Next Steps

Thank you for your willingness to volunteer! Here is what steps you need to take to get started.

- Read over the policy contained in this manual. Ask any questions you have. Then sign the **Policy Acknowledgement Form**. Turn this form into the Preschool/Afterschool Director, Children's Director, Youth Director, Christian Education Board Chair, or any member of the Safe Sanctuary Committee. This form will be on file in the church office.

- MCSP will coordinate the process for obtaining background check and drug screening for paid staff and volunteers.

- For new volunteers or paid staff, appropriate Friedberg Moravian ministry leaders will email name and contact information (phone, email) to Mariya Shelp at mshelp@mcsp.org.

- The volunteer/potential hire will receive an email to complete the process by providing all the necessary information for a background check and scheduling a drug test.

- The volunteer/potential hire will receive an email regarding the status of the criminal background check/drug screen.

The appropriate Friedberg individual will contact you regarding training.

FRIEDBERG MORAVIAN CHURCH

SAFE SANCTUARY POLICY STATEMENT

Purpose:

The purpose for establishing this Safe Sanctuary Policy and accompanying procedures is (1) to demonstrate our absolute and unwavering commitment to the physical and spiritual growth for all our children, youth, and vulnerable adults (2) to set forth a plan for response to allegations of abuse and establishes measures to safeguard against such abuse and (3) to limit the extent of legal liability of the congregation and the Moravian Church Southern Province.

Definitions:

- SSC – Safe Sanctuary Committee
- Child – Any person between birth and Grade 5 (usually from birth to 11 years old)
- Youth – Any person from Grade 6 to Grade 12 (usually 12 to 17 years old)
- Vulnerable Adult – Any adult who is unable to take care of or protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation
- Adult – Any person twenty-one (21) years of age or older
- Staff – Any person that is an employee of FMC
- Volunteer – refers to any person who performs an unpaid job for Friedberg Moravian Church. There are two categories of volunteers
    - *Ongoing Volunteers:* refer to volunteers who are repeatedly present (i.e. on a week-to-week basis) and includes those who chaperone overnight or off-site events. Sunday School teachers, mission trip leaders, youth fellowship leaders, Godly Play leaders, etc. fall into this category. An *Ongoing Volunteer* must be a minimum of 21 years of age.
    - *Occasional Volunteers* refers to those who volunteer infrequently to assist staff. An example would be a Women's Fellowship volunteer helping 1-2 times for their assigned month of nursery duty.
- Ministry Leader – Any person(s) responsible for overseeing a church ministry designed for children, youth, or vulnerable adults
- Youth Nursery Worker – A youth (grade 6-12) who has received approval from a parent to work in the nursery.
- Province – refers to the Moravian Church Southern Province which is the headquarters and governing body of all Moravian churches located in the Southern region, and is governed by the PEC (PEC – Provincial Elders Conference)
- Abuse - A non-accidental injury or pattern of injuries to a child, youth, or vulnerable adult, which includes:

    1. Emotional Abuse – Expressing attitudes or behaviors toward an individual that creates serious emotional or psychological damage
    2. Sexual Abuse – Any sexual behavior imposed on an individual
    3. Physical Abuse – Actions that result or could result in serious physical injury (examples: beatings, harmful restraint, use of a weapon or instrument)

4. Neglect – Any serious disregard for an individual's supervision, care or discipline

Recruitment and Screening Guidelines:

Requirements:

1. Volunteers are required to be a member in good standing of this congregation for six months. Exceptions are Boy Scouts, Cub Scouts, Girl Scouts, Preschool and Afterschool Substitutes. Additional exceptions can be made by the Board of Elders. The exception by the Board of Elders must be submitted in writing to the SSC. The volunteer must adhere to all other SS Policies.

2. They must be approved by appropriate ministry leaders before they may begin working directly with individuals in these areas.

3. Youth workers who have their parent's permission will be allowed to serve in the Nursery providing there are two adults who are lead volunteers.

Background Checks:

1. Criminal background checks and drug screen will be obtained for all volunteers. A background check may include criminal records, sex offender registry, child abuse registry and motor vehicle report when applicable.

2. Preschool and Afterschool Substitutes must complete a drug test and background check.

3. Successful passage of the drug screen is required.

4. A motor vehicle report documenting a valid driver's license and an applicant's driving record will be required for those who may be driving children, youth, and vulnerable adults to church related functions. All drivers must be on the FMC Approved Drivers Insurance list. Drivers must be at least 25 years of age.

5. Volunteers who have been convicted of physical or sexual abuse or neglect or convicted of a felony charge or any crime deemed inappropriate will not be allowed to work in any church-sponsored activity or program for children, youth, or vulnerable adults.

All results from applicant screening and criminal background checks will be stored, secured and locked at COE Management Group, LLC. Drug test and Background checks will be renewed every 3 years.

Orientation:

1. A copy of the "Safe Sanctuary Policy" will be provided to all volunteers upon acceptance of a position working with children, youth, and vulnerable adults.
2. Upon receipt of this policy, volunteers will be required to sign a statement that he/she has read the Safe Sanctuary Policy.
3. Policy orientation is required for all volunteers who work with children, youth, or vulnerable adults but is open to all interested parents and church members. Orientation may be done one-on-one or at available training sessions.

Outings Away From Church Property:

All church related activities requiring transportation for children, youth, and vulnerable adults as a part of the event must adhere to the following policy:

1. All children, youth, and vulnerable adults participating in events requiring transportation away from the church must have written permission from parents or guardians.
2. Staff and volunteers must have a valid driver's license and be on the FMC Approved Drivers Insurance List.
3. All drivers must be at least 25 years of age.
4. To the extent possible, in vehicles carrying more than four children, there should be one adult in addition to the driver.
5. Occupants are required to wear seat belts.
6. No smoking while in the vehicle or consumption of alcohol or drugs to include prescription drugs that may cause impairment.
7. A cell phone should be available when groups are away from the church. The cell phone should only be used for emergencies while driving. The driver will make every effort to pull to the side of the road to safely make the call. The driver must pull to the side of the road to text as required by law.
8. Drivers should refrain from the use of electronics devices such as DVD players and i-Pods.

Overnight Accommodation:

1. Both male and female leaders will be present for overnight activities when participants include males and females. Otherwise, it is expected that leaders will be of the same sex as participants.
2. Children and youth will be separated into gender-specific sleeping quarters with at least two same-gender leaders (preferably not related or from same household) overseeing each group.
3. Participants should be provided with their own beds whenever possible.
4. Private changing spaces should always be provided.
5. If middle school and high school youths have joint overnight events, then separate age-appropriate programs and supervision are strongly desired as much as possible.

Supervision of Children, Youth, and Vulnerable Adults in all venues (on or off campus):

Supervision procedures are designed to reduce the possibility of inappropriate behavior and to protect staff and volunteers from unwarranted accusations.

1. Minimum supervisory standards will include the "two-adult" rule. The two-adult rule requires that no matter the size of the group, there will always be two adults present. If there are fewer than 2 adult leaders present, the door will remain open, and a rover will pass by periodically to check each group. The use of a rover is only intended as a backup. Two adult volunteers should always be scheduled but use a rover in case of emergencies or unforeseen circumstances.

2. Each room or space where children are being cared for shall have a window in the door or the door shall be left open unless two adults are present. All activities should occur in an open view. Doors should never be locked when children are present in the room.

3. Parents of the children, pastors, and staff of the church are encouraged to visit and observe the activities, classroom, or church sponsored program at any time, unannounced.

4. No person shall supervise any age group unless he/she is at least 18 years of age and is 5 years older than the children being served.

5. Outside groups using church facilities for children, youth, and vulnerable adult activities are responsible for ensuring compliance with the Safe Sanctuary Policy while using the church facility and will be asked to sign a user's agreement.

Reporting of Inappropriate Behavior:

All adults have a responsibility to be alert for behavior directed toward children, youth, and vulnerable adults that is inappropriate. Once an incident of inappropriate behavior occurs or an allegation of an incident is made, it is crucial that it be dealt with in a timely and clearly outlined manner.

1. Inappropriate behavior can range from the appearance of such to a deliberate criminal act. Depending on what is observed or reported, the response can range from counseling for appropriate behavior to and including notifying the appropriate authorities.

2. As behaviors move from the area of perception to that of poor judgment on the part of the adult, the response from the church will become more formal. A case of poor judgment can be investigated internally, with the offending adult being counseled and monitored more closely in the future. If the behavior were to be repeated or other examples of inappropriate behavior occur, the adult could be assigned to activities where they are more closely supervised by either the program director, staff member or a volunteer leader. The adult could also be required to step down from their current role.

3. If it is observed that inappropriate behavior of an adult towards a child, youth, or vulnerable adult continues and goes beyond appearance or bad judgment and becomes a criminal act, the church is to notify the appropriate civil authority and the PEC. The church will cooperate fully with the investigation.

Reporting Procedure:

1. All allegations, investigations, and reports of the alleged incident are considered confidential. Information should only be discussed with those of a need-to-know status.

2. The Senior Pastor, Associate Pastor, and/or Vice Chair of the Elders under the advice of the PEC are the only persons authorized to make statements to representatives of the media. Care should be taken to safeguard the privacy and confidentiality of all people involved.

3. Any person who observes alleged abuse or to whom such alleged abuse is reported is required to report the incident immediately to the Senior Pastor, Associate Pastor, or Vice Chair of the Elders.

4. The Senior Pastor or Associate Pastor will notify the parents of the victim and take whatever steps are necessary to assure the safety of the child or young adult until the parents arrive. The protection of and immediate needs of the child, youth, or vulnerable adult should be tended to as the situation requires.

5. Care must be exercised so that those reporting the incident are not identified or people are not falsely accused.

6. The Senior Pastor, Associate Pastor, or Vice Chair of the Elders shall immediately attempt to obtain necessary information such as the name of the alleged victim and his/her address and family information.

7. The Senior Pastor, Associate Pastor, or vice chairman of the Board of Elders is then obligated to notify the appropriate civil authorities and the PEC immediately.

8. If the Senior Pastor or Associate Pastor is the accused party, the vice chairman of the Board of Elders should report the incident to law enforcement and the PEC immediately.

9. Proper authorities will be notified even if the parents do not wish the incident to be reported.

10. If the accused is a worker, volunteer, or staff employee that is involved with the children's, youths, or vulnerable adult's activity, they will be immediately removed from further involvement with the activity.

11. Even if an allegation concerns activities or persons outside any relationship to the church related activity or event, the same procedures should be implemented. An example of this would be a child telling a staff employee, volunteer or helper about abuse by a relative at home. If this was reported, the incident should be communicated according to the procedures outlined previously.

Jessica Lundsford Act for North Carolina

The Jessica Lundsford Act (*N.C. General Statutes §§ 14-208.17, 14-208.18)* includes conditions that are placed on the participation of a registered sex offender who wishes to be part of a church community. In compliance with this law, the conditions are included on page 8.

Cyber Safety:

There is no such thing as privacy in cyberspace. Consider anything and everything on the internet as public information and adhere to the following guidelines:

1. The Permission to Photograph Form must be completed and received before photographing and/or posting images of children or youth. Never affix names to identify the images.

2. Never post personal information online such as full name, address, phone number.

3. Limit individual communications online with children, youth, and vulnerable adults. Save all confidential communications.

4. The Youth Communications Permission Form must be completed and received prior to communicating with children or youth by text, email, or other digital methods. When communicating with an individual child or youth by text, email, or other digital methods, the parent/guardian must be included in the communication.

5. Unless you are sending an email to a small, known group that needs to respond, be sure to blind copy or bcc: all recipients so that the recipients cannot reply to all.

Bullying

Bullying is not acceptable under any circumstances. Bullying means a physical act or gesture or a verbal, written or electronically communicated expression directed at one or more individuals including but limited to:

1. Aggressive behavior that involves unwanted, negative actions, particularly when such behaviors are repeated over time and/or involve an imbalance of power or strength

2. Verbal assault, including but not limited to the use of derogatory comments related to race, sex, gender, ethnicity, disability, or other personal characteristics and name-calling

3. Social exclusion or isolation, including but not limited to, spreading lies or rumors intended to harm, punish, or humiliate

4. Physical assault regardless of the severity, including but not limited to hitting, kicking, shoving, or spitting

5. Having possessions or money taken, damaged, or hidden

6. Threats or forced actions of any kind

Each of us is responsible for intervening and stopping bullying behavior when it occurs. If you are made aware of allegations of bullying, the accused and victim will immediately be separated, and either/both may be removed from the group and activity. Incidents of bullying that result in injury may warrant urgent medical care and/or intervention by law enforcement.

Arrangements for the accused and victim and parent(s)/guardian(s) of both to meet with the pastor, worker, and/or program director, will be made as soon as possible. A written record of any reported claims should be made to document patterns or trends in behavior.

Accidents and Injuries

Supplies for treating minor injuries are kept at the Church Office, kitchen, gym, children's center, and youth center. AED's are located outside of the gym and sanctuary. Ziploc baggies of ice can be provided by the adult leader. All accidents (even seemingly minor ones) should be reported to the adult leader immediately. If an adult leader is not available, the accident should be reported to the Church Office. The adult leader (or other supervisor) will inform you if an accident report should be filled out – when in doubt, fill one out! Accident report forms are kept in the Church Office. Accidents include bumps that leave a bruise and/or require your attention, cuts and burns incurred during an event held at the Church, and anything you think a parent will be even mildly concerned about.

Extreme caution is advised when treating any injury or unusual condition. Make sure an injured or ill child is always accompanied by an adult. When a child is ill or injured, he/she must be accompanied to a church staff member. The church staff members will then make all necessary arrangements. No phone call is to be placed to a parent without the church staff member's knowledge.

General Safety:

The safety of all children, youth, and vulnerable adults is our first priority. To that end, they may never be left unsupervised and/or placed in situations that might compromise their health and/or safety. Staff members and volunteers are responsible for ensuring that the following rules be enforced at all times:

a. Children may not ever take medication unless dispensed by the parent or legal guardian or a staff member or volunteer designated by the parent or legal guardian. Children MUST NOT be allowed to dispense medication to themselves – this includes such seemingly benign things as cough drops, aspirin, Children's Tylenol, cough syrup, etc.

b. Children are to be dismissed only to their parents, legal guardians, or other authorized caregivers. If there is any doubt whatsoever as to the identity or authority of an individual who seeks to remove a child or youth from the campus, bring that individual to the church staff member at once. DO NOT release the child to that person's care until identity and authority has been confirmed.
c. There should be communication between volunteers and parents of children with allergies, asthmatic conditions, or other potentially dangerous medical conditions, and how to respond to emergencies involving such conditions.

Weapons

Any type of firearm, weapon, or explosive device at congregational-sponsored activities or events specifically for youth, children, and/or vulnerable adults is discouraged. Firearms with a valid permit may be stored securely in an individual's vehicle while the vehicle is parked on Church premises.

Safe Sanctuary Committee:

The SSC will coordinate and monitor the implementation of the Safe Sanctuary Policy (SSP). The SSC will meet at least quarterly to review and discuss compliance with this policy, and to review any changes that may be needed. The SSC Chair shall not be an employee of FMC or MCSP.

The Safe Sanctuary Committee shall include:

- Director of Children's Ministry
- Director of Youth Ministry
- Preschool Director
- Preschool Committee Representative
- At Least 2 Congregational Lay Representatives
- Christian Education Board Chair
- Elder Representative
- Trustee Representative

The Safe Sanctuary Committee is responsible for the administration and implementation of the policy with the following duties:

a. Ensure all who work with children, youth, and vulnerable adults adhere to FMC's Safe Sanctuary Policy.

b. Provide Safe Sanctuary training at least annually to all volunteers.

c. Ensure that all volunteers have completed successful screening.

d. Make updates as needed to provide a safe environment for our children, youth, and vulnerable adults.

e. Ensure that training in First Aid and CPR is provided and received by designated staff and volunteers as needed.

f. Provide an annual budget to the Board of Trustees for screenings.

g. Serve as the primary contact and administrator for the congregation on this policy.

Friedberg Moravian Church

Safe Sanctuary Policy for Children, Youth, and Vulnerable Adults

In Response to the Jessica Lundsford Act for North Carolina

1. We, as the church, invite all people to be a part of the worshipping community of faith. However, we must weigh the duty to protect the children and youth of the church with the right of all people to experience God's redeeming love through worship. In compliance with North Carolina law a registered sex offender who wishes to be part of a church community should expect to have conditions placed on his/her participation.

2. No adult who has been convicted of child abuse (including sexual abuse, physical abuse or emotional abuse) shall be permitted to work/volunteer with minors in any church sponsored activity. N.C. General Statute § 14-208. 17(a) (2008)

3. A registered sex offender shall not be in attendance at any church event where children or youth are the primary audience. These events include, but are not limited to, Friedberg Youth Fellowship activities, Vacation Bible School, Upward and scouting activities.

    - If a registered sex offender does attend such an event, he/she will be told to leave and a report will be made to the appropriate law enforcement officials.

4. A registered sex offender shall not be within 300 feet of any location on the church property intended primarily for the use, care and supervision of minors.

    N.C. General Statute § 14-208.18(a) (2) (2008)

5. A registered sex offender shall not be in any area of the property intended primarily for the use, care or supervision of minors, including but not limited to, the nursery, preschool classrooms, children's Sunday School classrooms and playground.

    N.C. General Statute § 14-208.18(a) (1) (2008)

6. A registered sex offender must be accompanied by an unrelated, same gender adult covenant partner provided by the church with the exception of worship services in the sanctuary.

7. A registered sex offender should identify himself/herself as a registered sex offender to the Senior Pastor or Associate Pastor.

8. A registered sex offender who wishes to be part of our church community shall read and sign a Church Participation Covenant Statement. The Senior Pastor and the Associate Pastor will also sign this document. The signed document will be kept in the file at the church.

Friedberg Moravian Church

Registered Sex Offender

Church Participation Covenant Statement

The congregation of Friedberg Moravian Church is committed to providing a safe and secure environment for all children and youth. In compliance with N.C. General Statutes §§ 14-208.17, 14-208.18, all registered sex offenders who wish to be part of our worshipping community must abide by the following procedures:

1. As a registered sex offender, I will have and abide by conditions placed on my participation in the church community.

2. While on church property, I will be accompanied by an unrelated, same-gender adult covenant partner with the exception of worship services in the sanctuary. Providing a covenant partner will be the responsibility of the church.

3. I will not be permitted to work/volunteer with children or youth in any church-sponsored activity. N.C. General Statute § 14-208.17 (2008)

4. I will not be in attendance at any event where children or youth are the primary audience. This includes, but is not limited to, Friedberg Moravian Church Youth Fellowship activities, Vacation Bible School, Upward, and scouting activities. N.C. General Statute § 14-208.18 (a) (3) (2008) If I attend such an event, I will be told to leave and a report will be made to law enforcement officials.

5. I will not be within 300 feet of any location intended primarily for the use, care or supervision of minors. N.C. General Statute § 14-208.18 (a) (2) (2008)

6. I will not be in any area of the property designated for the use, care or supervision of children or youth. N.C. General Statute § 14-208.18 (a) (1) (2008) These areas include, but are not limited to, the nursery, preschool classrooms, children's Sunday school classrooms and playground.

_____ _____

Pastor's Signature Date

_____ _____

Associate Pastor's Signature Date

_____ _____

Covenant Person Signature Date

FRIEDBERG MORAVIAN CHURCH

Safe Sanctuary Policy Statement

Acknowledgement Form

Name: _____ _____

Last Name First Name

Address:

_____

House/Apt. # Street

_____ _____ _____

City State Zip Code

Phone: (____)_____ E-mail_____

The Friedberg Moravian Church congregation is committed to providing a safe and secure environment for our children, youth, adults and volunteers who participate in the ministries and activities sponsored by the church. The Safe Sanctuary Policy Statement reflects our congregation's commitment to preserving this church as a holy place of safety and protection for all who enter. I acknowledge that I have received, read and agree to comply with the Safe Sanctuary Policy Statement of Friedberg Moravian Church. I understand that failure to do so could result in dismissal from my responsibilities with the children, youth, and/or vulnerable adults of the church. I further understand I may be subject to random drug screening.

_____

Print Name

_____ _____

Signature Date

We appreciate your willingness to volunteer and serve at Friedberg Moravian Church. If you are able to help with the cost of your background check and/or drug screening of $50.00 you can make a donation to the church designated "safe sanctuary screening."

FRIEDBERG MORAVIAN CHURCH
GUIDELINES FOR VOLUNTEERS
WHO WORK WITH YOUTH AND CHIDLREN

DO

1. Meet in public places when meeting with minors.
2. Always have another adult when counseling minors.
3. Advise other staff members of activities away from the group: where, when and with whom you meet.
4. Always have two adults taking younger children to the bathroom.
5. Always have two adults present when changing children's clothing.
6. Keep physical contact public and minimal. Simple "hello" hugs are permissible, for example.
7. Always have a minimum of two adults on field trips, especially overnight trips.
8. Keep groups together, perhaps using a buddy system.
9. Be gender sensitive. Little girls may do better with female staff and boys with male staff. If there is a mixed group it is good to have both female and male staff members.
10. Be willing to be cheerfully accountable to parents and staff members.

DON'T

1. Meet one to one with minors behind closed doors.
2. Have secret meetings with minors.
3. Meet alone with minors, especially with the opposite sex.
4. Check a minor for injuries under clothing without another adult present except in serious emergencies.
5. Exchange kisses with children or youth.
6. Allow older children to take younger children to the bathroom.
7. Transport a child or youth by yourself except for real emergencies.

REVISED & JOINT BOARD APPROVED
March 2026

REVISED & JOINT BOARD APPROVED
May 2026
PEC Commission on Congregational Development (CCD) Reviewed & Approved May 2026