

THE TOWSON UNITED METHODIST CHURCH  
TOWSON, MARYLAND

**POLICY OF THE TOWSON UNITED METHODIST CHURCH  
FOR THE PREVENTION OF ABUSE OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH**

**Statement of Purpose**

The General Conference of The United Methodist Church, in April 1996, adopted a resolution aimed at reducing the risk of 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...

Our Christian faith calls us to offer both hospitality and protection to the youth and children. The Social Principles of The United Methodist Church state that "children must be protected from economic, physical, emotional, and sexual exploitation and abuse" (162C).

Tragically, churches have not always been safe places for children. Child sexual abuse, exploitation, and ritual abuse occur in churches, both large and small, urban and rural. The problem cuts across all economic, cultural, and racial lines...

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 - 2004*, pp. 201-203. Copyright 2004 by The United Methodist Publishing House. Used by permission.)

The Baltimore-Washington Conference is committed to ensuring that all children and youth involved in local church or annual conference Ministries may participate in an environment of safety and spiritual growth. In that light, The Towson United Methodist Church ("**TUMC**") has developed policies and procedures to protect the children and youth involved in our ministries.

The congregation of TUMC recognizes the need to have formal, written policies and procedures to help (i) prevent the opportunity for the occurrence and/or appearance of abuse of children and youth and (ii) protect Workers from false accusations and/or suspicions. The following policies and procedures are not based on a lack of trust in Workers, but instead are intended to protect our preschoolers, children, youth, Workers and the entire church body. Workers are required to follow these policies and procedures.

**Statement of Covenant**

Therefore, as a Christian community of faith and a United Methodist congregation, we pledge to conduct the ministry of the gospel in ways that assure the safety and spiritual growth of all our children and youth as well as all Workers with children and youth. We will follow reasonable safety measures in the selection and recruitment of paid and volunteer Workers, we will implement prudent operational procedures in all programs and events, we will educate all of our Workers with children and youth regarding the use of all appropriate policies and methods (including the nature and indicators of abuse and prevention), we will have a clearly defined procedure for reporting suspected incidents of abuse that conforms to the requirements of state law, and we will be prepared to respond to media inquiries if an incident occurs.

**Conclusion**

In all of our Ministries with children and youth, this congregation is committed to demonstrating the love of Jesus Christ so that each child 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 Hymnal*, p.44).

Thus, in covenant with all United Methodist congregations, we adopt this policy ("**Policy**") for the prevention of child abuse in our church.

**Definitions:** In addition to the terms defined elsewhere in this Policy, the following terms used in this document shall have the following meanings:

**Abuse and Neglect** shall have the meanings given to such terms under Maryland law (See **Appendix A – Parts 1 and 2**).

**Campus** shall mean the buildings and property comprising the TUMC location at 501 Hampton Lane, Towson, Maryland.

**Criminal History** refers to any items reported on a person's criminal records, including arrests, charges, indictments, convictions, probations, and deferred adjudications.

**Director** shall mean the person in charge of a particular Ministry. The Director shall be responsible for coordinating applications and achieving compliance with this Policy by Workers within such Director's particular Ministry. For the following areas of Ministry, the Director is identified as:

<u>Program / Department</u>	<u>Director**</u>
Children's Ministry	Director of Christian Education
Youth Ministry	Director of Youth or Assigned Clergy
Music Ministry	Director or Assistant Director of Music
Child Development Center (CDC) Ministry	CDC Administrative or Educational Director
PATHWAYS Ministry	Chairperson of the Board
Directors, Other Staff, or Work Areas	Senior and/or Associate Pastor ("Senior Clergy")

\*\* Senior Clergy shall be an acceptable substitute for a Director who is not available.

**Ministry(ies)** shall mean On-Campus, or church sponsored Off-Campus, activities or programs involving Protected Persons, including, but not limited to, those related to child care, preschool, district, regional, and conference youth events, mission trips, Sunday School, and United Methodist Youth Fellowship.

**Parent(s)** shall mean, as applicable, the parent(s) or legal guardian(s) of a Protected Person.

**Protected Person(s)** shall mean children and/or youth under the age of 18 participating in any Ministry.

**Worker(s)** shall mean a person in a "position of trust" with Protected Persons such as any clergy, staff, Sunday School leader or teacher, employee, program director, youth counselor, hall or bathroom monitor, and any other person in a leadership position who is at least eighteen (18) years old and involved in a Ministry. No person under the age of 18 shall be placed in a position of supervision over Protected Persons. Younger persons (under 18) may be utilized as Worker helpers but shall always be under Worker supervision.

## 1.0 GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- .01 By fostering awareness of appropriate, as well as inappropriate, behavior with, or in the presence of, Protected Persons, TUMC, as part of the body of Christ, will demonstrate Christian love and respect for all persons.
- .02 TUMC recognizes that certain Workers have exceptional talents for teaching and supporting the growth and development of Protected Persons and wishes to encourage them to use their spiritual gifts. At the same time, however, TUMC has set certain criteria for those Workers who choose to serve in Ministries in order to promote and protect the well being of Protected Persons.
- .03 It is not the intent of the congregation of TUMC to be judgmental, for we are all accountable to God. The congregation of TUMC will rely on God's wisdom in developing, implementing, and carrying out God's will through this Policy. Compassion and truth will be the guiding forces for any investigation, reporting, or follow-up action that results from the procedures as outlined in this Policy.
- .04 Congregational support is critical for adherence to this Policy. Our desire to devote as much time and effort as possible to the work of the Lord mandates that this Policy be fully understood by every member of our congregation and church family. This will enable church staff and leadership to do what is necessary to preserve the church's resources for the work of the Lord.

## 2.0 BEHAVIOR

- .01 The following behaviors are prohibited by Workers with respect to Protected Persons:
  - Threatening to inflict, or intentionally inflicting, emotional or physical injury
  - Committing any sexual offense or engaging in any sexual contact
  - Making any kind of sexual advance or making a request for sexual favors
  - Engaging in verbal, visual, or physical conduct of a sexual nature
  - Physical discipline, such as spanking
- .02 Touching to comfort or affirm a Protected Person in an age-appropriate manner is permitted, but is acceptable only in public. Workers shall be aware of how it looks and how the person being contacted may interpret the contact.
- .03 The following are unacceptable and will not be tolerated at any Ministry:
  - Tobacco
  - Alcohol
  - Illegal drugs
  - Firearms or other weapons
  - Foul or offensive language
  - Pornographic material
- .04 The above examples are not "all inclusive." Any behavior that contravenes this Policy shall be considered prohibited behavior.

## 3.0 WORKER APPLICATION, SCREENING, TRAINING AND APPROVAL/REMOVAL

Persons shall meet the requirements and approvals for service set out herein in order to be a Worker in a Ministry.

### 3.1 Application Process

- .01 Workers shall complete an Employment or Volunteer Application (**Appendices B or C**) and a Form for Authorization for Release of Information for criminal records check (**Appendix D**).

### 3.2 Screening Process

- .01 A criminal records check shall be made on each applicant by an outside source specializing in such confidential screening and the results of such check will be given to the applicable Director. Issues requiring a discussion with the Senior Clergy will be treated with confidentiality. The applicant will be extended the care and ministry of the church in determining appropriate placement for service. Re-checks of each Worker shall be conducted as necessary, with a frequency of at least every two years.

- .02 At least two of the references found on the Employment and Volunteer Applications shall be checked by the applicable Director. The Employee and Volunteer Reference Check Form (**Appendix E**) shall be used to document discussions and findings.
- .03 A Maryland Department of Motor Vehicles records review shall be made on all applicants who will be driving Protected Persons. Workers shall be at least twenty-three (23) years of age to drive, must possess a valid Maryland driver's license for the type of vehicle they will be driving and must provide proof of current insurance coverage. A copy of each is required to be on file with the applicable Director.

### **3.3 Training**

- .01 Directors shall communicate the substance of this Policy to Workers and advise Workers of the availability of this Policy on the TUMC website (<http://www.towsonumc.org>). Copies of this Policy shall be provided to, and Workers shall be advised that a copy of this Policy will be provided to, any Worker who requests one. The communication to Workers will include the statutory requirements for the mandatory reporting of child Abuse and Neglect and the identification of Abuse and Neglect as defined by Maryland law (**Appendix A – Parts 1 and 2**). Workers shall agree to comply with this Policy on the Employee/Volunteer Agreement to Policy Form (**Appendix E**).
- .02 Directors may require other operational training as they may deem necessary for those Ministries under their supervision.

### **3.4 Approval/Removal**

- .01 Sunday School teachers shall be members of TUMC for six (6) or more months prior to beginning service.
- .02 Except as provided for under Section 10.0, persons having a Criminal History of any of the following types of offenses shall not be allowed to serve in any Ministry:
  - Child abuse, whether physical, emotional or sexual, or neglect
  - Violent offenses, including murder, rape, assault, domestic violence, etc.
- .03 Other offenses, depending on their nature and how recently and/or frequently they have occurred, may also preclude an applicant or Worker from serving in a Ministry. This will be determined on a case-by-case basis by the Senior Clergy and the applicable Director. In such cases, the determining factors will be the best interests, safety, and well being of the Protected Persons. Any applicant or Worker whose Criminal History is such that his or her approval is subject to decision by the Senior Clergy and the applicable Director will be given the opportunity to explain the circumstances to the Senior Clergy and the applicable Director.
- .04 Persons having a Criminal History of DUI or DWI conviction within the eight (8) years immediately prior to application shall not be allowed to act as a driver. Other violations on the applicant's motor vehicle record may prevent the applicant from serving as a driver as required by the church's insurance.
- .05 Lying on an application may result in removal from service in a Ministry.
- .06 Workers who refuse to comply with this Policy or repeatedly fail to follow it shall be subject to dismissal.
- .07 Workers who do not attend mandatory training are subject to dismissal.
- .08 Persons may begin working in a Ministry when the application paperwork and certification work is complete and the person is found to meet the acceptance standards. Exceptions to this Policy in connection with the operation of the CDC will be permitted in accordance with past practice and in compliance with applicable law.

## **4.0 GENERAL POLICIES**

### **4.1 Staffing**

- .01 A minimum of two (2) Workers shall be present in any room or area where Protected Persons are present. The following exceptions to the above rule are recognized:
  - Escorting Protected Persons between On-Campus buildings or in hallways
  - Monitoring the arrival or departure of Protected Persons
  - In cases of emergency care

- Understanding that there is safety in numbers, in large indoor areas or outside, one Worker can be supervising or working with multiple Protected Persons so long as they are in line of sight of other Workers.
- .02 If the required number of Workers cannot be obtained for the number of rooms or areas, then the group shall be combined with another group or other arrangements acceptable to the Director of the applicable Ministry shall be made.
  - .03 There shall always be a Director or their designated Worker on duty while an On-Campus Ministry is in session that shall make random checks.
  - .04 When family members work together (husband/wife/Parent/child/siblings/etc.), an additional Worker shall be present.
  - .05 At least a five (5) year age difference between the ages of the Worker and the Protected Persons being supervised shall exist. Persons being closer than five (5) years in age to those supervised may not be counted toward meeting the Worker requirements of this Policy, but may assist as Worker helpers with appropriate Worker supervision to assure compliance with this Policy.
  - .06 At the Director's discretion, and in limited situations, adults who have not applied for approval as Workers through this Policy may be allowed to work with Protected Persons within a Ministry; however, these adults may not be counted toward meeting the Worker requirements of this Policy. Approved Workers shall monitor the activities of these adults to assure compliance with this Policy.

#### **4.2 On-Campus Policies**

- .01 Doors to rooms shall be kept open or, in the case of rooms with "Dutch doors," the top half of the door shall be kept open. It is acceptable to close the door to a room if there is a window to the hallway that allows observation of activities in the room. Under no circumstances shall a Worker be alone with a Protected Person behind a closed door with no window. Doors shall never be locked while occupied by Workers and Protected Persons, unless such doors are of the Dutch door variety, and the top portion of said doors are left completely open.
- .02 Classes shall remain in the assigned room location. If there is to be a change of location, a sign shall be posted on the door providing notice of any change of location.
- .03 Workers are not required to wear nametags while working in a Ministry; however, Directors may require nametags for specific events as necessary. If required by a Director for a specific event, nametags will signify, by a style or symbol, that the Worker is approved under this Policy.
- .04 For their own safety and security, except when in transit to or between Ministry programs or events, children and youths under the age of eighteen (18) are not to be unsupervised while on Campus. During scheduled Ministry events or programs, all children and youths who are not participating in any such event or program must be in the company of one of their Parents. If a Worker finds one or more unsupervised children or youths, such Worker shall endeavor to see that appropriate supervision is provided by either locating a Parent or a second Worker to assist for such purpose.

#### **4.3 Discipline**

- .01 The applicable Director shall advise Workers on the best Age Appropriate Discipline Methods (**Appendix G**).
- .02 The behavior of a Protected Person who is a continuous disruption shall be discussed with his or her Parents and the applicable Director. Parents shall be asked to attend the Ministry to observe or control the problem behavior. A Protected Person who is a danger to him/herself or others shall be removed immediately by the Worker, and the Parents and the applicable Director shall be promptly notified.

#### **4.4 Continuing Education/Additional Training**

- .01 Directors shall encourage, and may require, Workers to attend continuing education or additional training opportunities.
- .02 Directors shall provide refresher training on the substance of this Policy to Workers at least every two years.

- .03 Directors shall encourage, and may in certain circumstances require, first aid and CPR certification so that there may be present at least one trained Worker at all activities and events.

#### **4.5 Communication with Parents**

- .01 Workers should attempt to keep open lines of communication with Parents.
- .02 Parents shall always be permitted to observe in a classroom.
- .03 Parents shall be advised by the applicable Director where to report suspected Abuse or other concerns regarding a situation and be assured that reports shall remain confidential.
- .04 Parents shall be advised by the applicable Director that they must pick up their respective Protected Person no later than ten (10) minutes after the Ministry is over unless special arrangements have been made with the Workers concerned.
- .05 Information concerning the sleeping accommodations for Protected Persons at any overnight event shall be provided to Parents by the applicable Director.
- .06 A signed Parental Release And Medical Form (General) (**Appendix H**) shall be obtained for each Protected Person in order to participate in any Ministry.
- .07 A signed Event Participation Agreement (**Appendix I**) shall be obtained for each Protected Person in order to participate in any Off-Campus Ministry.
- .08 Parents shall be informed that the protection afforded under this Policy ends upon the completion of a Ministry event, and that transportation to and from the event is the Parents' responsibility.

#### **5.0 ADDITIONAL POLICIES FOR MINISTRIES OF CHILDREN BELOW GRADE SIX**

- .01 For Ministries with Protected Persons through fifth grade (including the CDC program), the Parent shall complete a registration, emergency, or other form that identifies who may pick up the Protected Person and where the Parent(s) are likely to be found while the Protected Person is participating in the Ministry. Except as provided in Section 5.03 below, only a Parent or other person(s) specifically designated by a Parent may pick up a Protected Person. Personal identification may be required if the person picking up the Protected Person is not known to the Worker.
- .02 Each Ministry may have its own policies and procedures intended to provide additional measures to safeguard Protected Persons, which shall be communicated to, and should be understood by, each Worker in such Ministry. Except as specifically permitted in this document, in no event shall such policies and procedures offer less protection to Protected Persons than is afforded by this Policy.
- .03 With the written consent of the Parent, third, fourth, and fifth graders may be released from Sunday School without being picked up.
- .04 Parents shall be asked to provide the Director with any special information regarding a possible child custody dispute. When such information is provided, it will be shared with the applicable Workers, who will exercise an even higher level of vigilance to ensure that the appropriate person picks up the child.
- .05 Diaper changing shall be done in the open and not behind closed doors.
- .06 When children through first grade are using restroom facilities, the two-Worker rule shall apply. Exceptions to this policy shall be permitted by the CDC operating in accordance with past practices and procedures and in conformity with applicable law; provided, however, that in no event shall a Worker enter a restroom with a child unless the restroom door is left open.
- .07 The applicable Director shall maintain a student information file. This file shall contain a listing of the students enrolled in the Ministry with references or remarks as to any Parent's instructions or special information regarding a child in such Ministry.

## **6.0 ADDITIONAL POLICIES FOR MINISTRIES OF YOUTH (GRADES SIX THROUGH TWELVE)**

- .01 The two-Worker rule shall be followed, except as noted below:
- Planned one-on-one Worker/Youth or Director/Youth activities are permissible provided (i) they are held in public places, (ii) written permission has been given by the Parent, and (iii) separate transportation is used unless specifically authorized by the Parent.
  - Youth/Director and/or Youth/Worker conferences are permissible provided (i) either before or immediately after the conference, the Director informs a Worker or the Worker informs the applicable Director (as applicable) of the meeting, and (ii) all other On-Campus policies are followed.
  - Before or after Ministry events, a Worker may pick up or drop off a youth provided written permission has been given by the Parent.
- .02 Before participating in any youth Ministry, the participant and his/her Parents shall complete the Covenant of Conduct form (**Appendix J**).

## **7.0 ADDITIONAL POLICIES CONCERNING DRIVING AND OVERNIGHT ACCOMMODATIONS**

### **7.1 Driving Rules**

- .01 When one vehicle is used for an event, the two-Worker rule applies. When multiple vehicles are required, the Director shall make reasonable efforts to comply with the two-Worker rule; however, it is recognized that exceptions shall, from time to time, be necessary. Except as permitted under Section 6.01, in no event shall one Protected Person ride with one Worker.
- .02 Occupants of vehicles shall wear seatbelts. Buses not equipped with seatbelts are exempt.
- .03 Protected Persons twelve (12) years old and younger shall not sit in the front seat of vehicles with air bags. Weight and height of front seat riders shall also be considered when determining if young riders should be allowed in the front seat of vehicles with air bags.
- .04 As specified in Section 3.2.03, Workers shall be at least twenty-three (23) years of age to drive, must possess a valid Maryland driver's license for the type of vehicle they will be driving and must provide proof of current insurance coverage. A copy of each is required to be on file with the applicable Director.

### **7.2 Overnight Accommodations**

- .01 The two-Worker rule is required throughout the trip.
- .02 When staying in a hotel, Workers shall sleep in separate rooms from Protected Persons; or if necessary for Protected Persons to share a room with Workers, Workers shall sleep in separate beds from Protected Persons.
- .03 As provided in Section 4.5.05, information concerning the sleeping accommodations for Protected Persons at any overnight event shall be provided to Parents by the applicable Director.

## **8.0 WAIVERS**

- .01 Waivers may be made to the policies outlined in Sections 4.0 through 7.0 utilizing the following procedure:
- The Director shall fill out a Waiver Form (**Appendix K**) highlighting those areas where the policies will not be followed and the duration of the waiver.
  - If the waiver relates to an ongoing Ministry, the Parents of the affected Protected Person(s) shall be notified of the waiver.
  - If the waiver relates to a specific Ministry event, the Parents of the affected Protected Person(s) shall consent to the waiver by signing and dating the completed Waiver Form.
  - A member of the Senior Clergy shall approve the waiver by signing the completed Waiver Form.
- .02 Parents may revoke any waiver for which their consent was previously required. The revocation shall be in writing and given to the applicable Director.

## 9.0 NOTIFICATION AND REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

### 9.1 Imminent Threat

- .01 Any Worker with knowledge or information about an imminent threat of continued or additional Abuse shall immediately contact another Worker and take steps to ensure the safety of the Protected Person. In connection therewith, any needed emergency healthcare shall be provided, such as first aid, emergency services, and/or transportation to a hospital emergency room. The alleged victim shall be immediately removed from contact with the suspected abuser. The Protected Person's safety and well being are paramount before any notifications or reporting.

### 9.2 Internal Notification Requirements

- .01 Workers having reason to believe that a violation of this Policy has occurred or having reason to believe a child has been subjected to Abuse or Neglect by any person shall immediately notify the applicable Director, and the Director shall immediately notify the Senior Clergy. However, in cases where the alleged wrongdoer is the person to whom notification should be given, he or she shall be considered absent for purposes of this notification procedure, and the notification shall be made to that person's immediate supervisor.
- .02 The Director and Senior Clergy, with the person making the notification, shall complete an Accident/Incident Report form (**Appendix L**).
- .03 Subject to the provisions of this Section 9.2 and the obligation under Maryland law to make a report as set forth in Section 9.3 below, any person making and/or receiving notice of Abuse or Neglect or preparing an Accident/Incident Report form shall keep the applicable information strictly confidential with due respect for the privacy of the alleged victim and others involved in the incident.
- .04 Allegations shall be taken seriously, and no pre-judgments shall be made.
- .05 The person providing notification under this Section 9.2 or making a report under Section 9.3 shall provide only the facts known by them with respect to the incident.

### 9.3 State Reporting Procedure

- .01 In addition to the internal notification requirements of Section 9.2 above, Workers having reason to believe a child has been subjected to Abuse or Neglect by any person are required by state law to make a report to the appropriate local office of the Department of Social Services/Child Protective Services for the State of Maryland ("**CPS**"). In the case of Abuse, such a report may alternatively be made to an appropriate law enforcement agency. Pertinent portions of the law relating to timing and substance of such reports are set forth in **Appendix A - Parts 1 and 2** attached hereto. Since such law may be changed from time to time, the reporting person should contact the CPS or church counsel to ensure that current law covering such reporting procedures is being followed.

A form for reporting suspected child Abuse/Neglect can be found in **Appendix A - Part 3**, together with a list of the local CPS offices. The appropriate office of the CPS to contact is the office of the city/county where the allegedly abused or neglected child lives or, if different, where the Abuse or Neglect is alleged to have taken place.

- .02 Under Maryland law and the *Book of Discipline* of the United Methodist Church, reporting is mandatory for all Workers, including clergy. There is no obligation (or ability) to maintain the confidentiality of communications which indicate that child Abuse or Neglect has occurred.
- .03 Persons who in good faith make or participate in making a report of Abuse or Neglect are, by law, immune from civil liability or criminal penalty in connection therewith.

#### **9.4 Responding to a Notice of Policy Violation (not an incident of Abuse or Neglect)**

- .01 The Senior Clergy receiving a notice of a violation of this Policy which does not relate to an incident of child Abuse or Neglect shall:
- Document the alleged violation (see Section 9.2.02 above).
  - Counsel the Worker allegedly violating this Policy.
  - Make recommendations as to the necessary corrective actions to the Staff-Parish Relations Committee (SPRC), which may include dismissal.

#### **9.5 Responding to a Notice of an Incident of Abuse or Neglect**

- .01 The Senior Clergy receiving a notice of an incident of child Abuse or Neglect shall:
- Immediately contact the Parents of the alleged victim and inform them of the alleged incident. If one Parent is the alleged wrongdoer, neither Parent shall be contacted until after the CPS has conducted its initial investigation or determined that an investigation is not warranted.
  - If Worker misconduct is alleged, (i) immediately contact TUMC's legal counsel and insurance company, (ii) consult with the applicable Director to determine whether it is necessary or advisable to suspend the applicable Worker from all positions of responsibility relating to children and youth and take additional steps as necessary to ensure that the alleged wrongdoer has no contact with the alleged victim or other Protected Persons, and (iii) determine if it is necessary or advisable to notify the appropriate representative of the Baltimore-Washington Conference.

#### **9.6 Investigation**

- .01 All investigative actions shall be performed by the appropriate legal authorities.

#### **10.0 REINSTATEMENT/APPLICATION OF CLEARED WORKERS/PERSONS**

- .01 When a Worker accused of Abuse or Neglect has been cleared of all allegations or charges, the Worker may apply for reinstatement of his/her position within the church. If such application is made, a committee shall be formed, consisting of the Senior Clergy, the applicable Director, and the church's legal counsel to evaluate the option of reinstatement. The committee may approve or deny the request for reinstatement in its sole discretion.
- .02 For persons who seek service within the church and who have past cleared allegations or charges of Abuse or Neglect from outside TUMC, this same committee shall be formed to evaluate the option of allowing this service. The committee may approve or deny the request for service in its sole discretion.

#### **11.0 MEDIA RESPONSE PLAN**

- .01 In the event an incident of child Abuse or Neglect is alleged to have occurred On-Campus, during a TUMC Ministry and/or involving a Worker, and such allegations have become or are likely to become a matter of public knowledge, the Senior Clergy shall:
- Select a spokesperson to handle dissemination of information to staff, media, and the congregation. In his or her absence, the Senior Clergy will be the spokesperson.
  - Have ready for release a clear position statement outlining TUMC's policies and procedures regarding the Abuse or Neglect of Protected Persons and the safeguards established pursuant to this Policy.
- .02 The Church spokesperson shall:
- Use text or a prepared public statement to answer questions from the media and/or inform the congregation.
  - At all times, strictly maintain the identity, privacy, and confidentiality of those involved.
  - Anticipate media questions.
- .03 Guidelines for Spokesperson
- Be prepared
  - Be candid and honest
  - Be clear, concise, and in context
  - Do not ask for quote review
  - Do respond to calls and questions as quickly as possible
  - When an answer is unknown, the spokesperson shall simply state, "I don't know, but I'll do my best to find out the information for you." Never say "no comment."

## **12.0 POLICIES APPLICABLE TO OUTSIDE ORGANIZATIONS**

- .01 Any outside organization, group(s), or individual(s) who uses any of the facilities of TUMC (“**Organization**”), shall sign an Indemnification Agreement (**Appendix M**) stating that they understand and are in compliance with this Policy as appropriate for the Organization’s activity. Specifically, in addition to those policies and procedures as appropriate for the Organization’s activity, the Organization shall adhere to Section 2.0 Behavior, and Section 4.1 Staffing. This Section shall not apply to any wedding or funeral at which a TUMC clergy person is officiating.
- .02 Notwithstanding the foregoing, certified leaders of the Boy or Girl Scouts of America shall be subject to their own respective organization’s rules and regulations concerning safety of those individuals for whom they are charged with caring.

## **13.0 APPLICATION OF POLICY AT CONFERENCE AND DISTRICT EVENTS**

The Baltimore-Washington Conference has in place certain Safe Children and Youth Procedures and is in the process of developing additional policies for the protection of children and youth. At all Conference events, the Baltimore-Washington Conference policies and procedures shall apply in place of this Policy.

## **14.0 AMENDMENT TO POLICY**

This Policy may be amended as needed and approved by The TUMC Administrative Board upon the recommendation of the SPRC. Notwithstanding the foregoing, any of the Appendices to this Policy may be modified or amended from time to time with the written consent of the SPRC.

(Approved By TUMC Administrative Board – May 19, 2008)

[While TUMC is happy to share its Policy for the Prevention of Abuse of Children and Youth for use by other churches, we make no representation as to its completeness, accuracy or appropriateness in connection with the development of a similar policy by any other church. We strongly encourage all churches engaged in this process to seek the guidance of legal counsel in their consideration of the issues raised by this subject generally and those which are specifically addressed in the Policy. While our Policy is based upon a policy currently in use by another church, it has been extensively rewritten to accommodate TUMC’s Ministries, needs and other circumstances. We anticipate that a similar effort will be required by any other church which seeks to begin this process with the Policy we have drafted.]