



## Safe Sanctuaries Policy

The Leadership and congregation of Bethel United Methodist Church is committed to providing a safe and secure environment for all children, youth, volunteers, and staff who participate in ministries and activities of the church. The following policies reflect BUMC's commitment to preserving this church as a sacred place of safety and protection for all who would enter and as a place in which all people can experience the love of God through relationships with others.

### **BUMC Policies for working with children and youth:**

1. All adults working with children/youth must attend Safe Sanctuaries Training and submit to a background check. Recertification is required every 5 years.
2. All adults working with children/youth shall always observe the two-adult rule, unless in a room with an open door or a clear window. The two adults should be from different families/households.
3. No one who has been convicted of child abuse of any kind will be allowed to work with children and youth.
4. Children and Youth workers must participate in the ministries of the church for a minimum of six (6) months prior to gaining a leadership role with children and youth.
5. A 5-year age difference between the volunteer and the children and youth is recommended.
6. Behavior that is deemed harmful towards a child/youth will result in the immediate dismissal of staff/volunteers involved with children and youth ministries (i.e. drug/alcohol abuse, reckless driving, demeaning/abusive language, inappropriate boundaries, etc.).
7. Inappropriate or abusive behavior must be reported to the Pastor immediately.
8. Inappropriate clothing should not be worn by leaders/teachers and could result in the dismissal of staff/volunteers. Inappropriate clothing includes (but is not limited to) clothes that advertise drugs/alcohol/tobacco products, messages contrary to the beliefs of the church and/or messages of a suggestive nature.
9. Adults driving children/youth to church functions away from the building need to be approved by the Pastor and must provide a copy of their Driver's License and Insurance.
10. Leaders/Teachers (staff and volunteers) are expected to adhere to the following:
  - a. **Commitment/Consistency:** Whatever time commitment you make we ask that you follow through with it. Failure to do so limits our ability to effectively minister to our children/youth and causes "burn out among other staff/volunteers who were expecting your help. Your help is needed. Our kids notice when you're not consistent with your attendance, time, or preparation.
  - b. **Courtesy:** We understand that people get sick, spouses deploy and the unexpected happens all the time. If for some reason you are unable to show up or follow through with your commitment, please notify the person(s) you were suppose to help as soon as you can.



## Children/Youth Worker Covenant

As a children/youth ministry staff/volunteer I, \_\_\_\_\_ enter into this Covenant (Promise) with the Children and Youth of Bethel UMC in that I will:

1. Maintain an active prayer life and faith walk
2. Set limits for myself to avoid "burn out"
3. Commit my time and talents to the spiritual growth of children/youth
4. Treat them with respect and understand that I cannot be their "friend" but must behave as their Adult Leader by setting appropriate limits and behavioral expectations
5. Have Christlike motives for working with children/youth and not participating for my own purposes
6. Attend worship service regularly
7. Understand that my behavior in the community is just as important as my behavior in the church
8. Report any abusive/inappropriate behavior to the Pastor immediately.
9. Take my commitment to children/youth seriously, understanding that my behavior and actions make an impact on those in my care
10. Refrain from making negative comments about other children/youth or adults
11. Maintain appropriate physical, spiritual and emotional boundaries with children/youth
12. Submit to a background check
13. Set a positive example through my actions and words
14. Attend periodic training sessions and volunteer meetings to the best of my ability
15. Commit to keep all areas of ministry compliant Safe Sanctuaries policies and procedures.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_