

Safe Church Policy Executive Summary

Good Shepherd Lutheran Church
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
183 West Main Street
Westborough, Massachusetts 01581

Our congregation's purpose for establishing this Safe Church Policies and Procedures is to demonstrate our absolute and unwavering commitment to the physical safety, emotional integrity, and spiritual growth of all of our children, youth, and adults.

YOUTH SUPERVISION

Two Adult Rule

No adult will be alone in the Church, or at a church approved activity, with a child or children, unless they are related to the children. Two adults, not married to each other, must be present with a child or children under 18 years of age at all times. If the supervisors are a married couple, then a third adult must be present. If a second (or third) adult cannot be located, the class or activity will be canceled, and the children will be returned to their parent/s or guardian/s. It is permissible to have one adult per car with each car carrying a group of young people on a field trip. It is permissible to have one adult per Sunday School classroom, with a clear window in the door, and an adult supervisor monitoring the classrooms periodically.

Age Rule

Adult leaders and assistants must be at least 5 years older than the oldest child participant in the group, class, or activity.

Discipline

The purpose of discipline with youth is to maintain order in a manner consistent with the teaching of Christian responsibility, respect, and cooperation.

1. No youth will be disciplined by the use of any form of physical punishment. Verbal discipline must never be demeaning or abusive.
2. Supervisors are encouraged to listen to the youth, and clearly communicate expectations of appropriate behavior.

Appropriate Activities

Activities that involve inappropriate physical contact are not suitable recreational activities.

SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE

Reporting and Response Policy

Members of the Good Shepherd Lutheran Church community, including volunteers working in the youth ministry, are morally obligated to immediately report all reasonable suspicions of child abuse to the Safe Church Advocate or one of the mandated reporters listed below.. All reported

suspicions of child abuse will in turn be reported by the Safe Church Advocate orally to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Department of Social Services.

All allegations will be investigated with due respect for the dignity and privacy of everyone involved. Activities related to the handling of complaints or incidents will be documented, and documents will be maintained in a secure location determined by the Safe Church Advocate. When necessary, full cooperation will be given to civil authorities under the guidance of the church's attorney.

ADULT CONDUCT

Prohibition of Sexual Exploitation and Harassment

GSLC strives to create and maintain a community in which members, friends, staff, and volunteers can worship and work together in an atmosphere free of all forms of discrimination, harassment, exploitation, or intimidation. The church is strongly opposed to sexual exploitation and harassment of any kind, and such behavior is prohibited by church policy. It is the intention of the church to respond to allegations of behavior that are contrary to this policy and, if necessary, to discipline those persons who violate it.

DISCLAIMER

By signing this document, I agree to abide by Good Shepherd Lutheran Church's Safe Church Policies and Procedures, and understand that the full policy is available in the church office.

Signature_____

Date_____