

Heritage Presbyterian Church

Safe Church Policy

**Heritage Presbyterian Church Session
April 10, 2013**

Record of Revision

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1.0 Introduction

We believe that all people are created by God, and that God has shown great love for all persons in Jesus Christ. We believe that God intended that all people should relate to one another in justice. We believe that, as God is holy, we are called to be holy ourselves in our conduct.

Sexual misconduct is an abuse of power and trust and a violation of the scriptures and of the policy of this church. It is never permissible. We seek to provide a sexual harassment-free environment for all employees and to be a place of personal safety for all children and adults who use our facilities and participate in our programs. All participants in the work and activities of the church or those who use the facilities of the church shall conduct themselves in an honorable and ethical manner and shall not engage in sexual misconduct.

This policy applies to the officers and members of this church, all persons working under its supervision, all persons serving in the program and activities of the church as Volunteers or paid employees and all those who have been given permission to use the facilities of the church for their independent activities. Teaching Elders are covered by the Sexual Misconduct Policy of the Presbytery of Chicago.

The responsibility for maintaining appropriate sexual boundaries belongs to Teaching and Ruling Elders, Staff, Volunteers and other leaders. For reporting purposes this policy recognizes no statute of limitations as to when sexual misconduct may have occurred.

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Session. It shall be a part of the training for all Staff, church officers, and Volunteers ministering to children and youth. Copies of this policy shall be posted on the church bulletin board and copies will be available to all persons through the church office. A copy of this policy will also be provided to the church's liability insurance carrier.

2.0 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is:

- To safeguard from abuse through any form of sexual misconduct, the church's Staff, members, children, youth, and others who attend our worship services, participate in our programs, and use our facilities.
- To protect church Staff and Volunteers from being subjected to false or unwarranted charges of child abuse or sexual misconduct.
- To provide assurance to families that children and youth are safe.
- To establish procedures to effectively carry out the policy.

3.0 Definitions

Abuse – The harm or the risk of harm, related to the physical mistreatment, neglect, and/or sexual molestation of a minor or an adult who lacks mental capacity.

Accused – The person against whom a claim of sexual misconduct is being made.

Accuser – The person claiming knowledge of sexual misconduct by a person covered by this policy. The accuser may or may not have been the victim of the alleged sexual misconduct.

Child – a person under the age of 14. (See also “Youth”)

Head of Staff – The Pastor, Interim Pastor employed by Heritage Presbyterian Church.

Incident – an actual or suspected event of Abuse.

Mandated Reporters - Mandated reporters are professionals who may work with children in the course of their professional duties, and are required by law to report suspected child abuse or neglect. Clergy are mandated reporters under Illinois statutes. Clergy who have reasonable cause to suspect child abuse or neglect, are required by Illinois law to report directly to the DCFS Hotline.

In addition to the state reporting statutes regarding Mandated Reporters, Teaching Elders, Ruling Elders and Deacons and Certified Christian Educators are required by the Book of Order to report knowledge of Abuse to ecclesiastical and civil legal authorities. (G-4.0302)

Parent – A custodial, biological, or adoptive parent or legal guardian.

Response - An action taken by the governing council when a report of sexual misconduct is received. There are two responses when any report of sexual misconduct is received and both types are used in every case. Those two responses are:

Investigation - This is done by team of 3 to 5 persons appointed by the Head of Staff. This Investigating Committee does fact-finding, works with the parties involved, reports findings and makes recommendations to the Session within one year of the first report of the incident, and is available to continue the process if deemed appropriate. The Investigating Committee must also be available to prosecute the case if it comes before the Session upon the Investigating Committee’s recommendation.

Support – Depending on the nature of the incident, a group constituted by either Session and/or Presbytery to facilitate the process of responding to allegations of sexual misconduct. This response group would provide spiritual support for alleged victims,

their families and others, pastoral care for the accused and their families, and education/training of the congregation and clergy. See “Guidelines for Response.”

Sexual Misconduct - The comprehensive term used to include:

1. Child sexual abuse: includes, but is not limited to, any contact or interaction between an adult and a child wherein the child is being used for the sexual stimulation of the adult or of a third person. The behavior may or may not include touching. Sexual behavior between a child and an adult is always considered forced whether or not consented to by the child. Child sexual abuse when discovered must be reported to the civil authorities immediately.

2. Sexual harassment: unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, all other verbal and physical conduct constitute sexual harassment when submission to such conduct is made, either implicitly or explicitly, a condition of an individual’s employment or status in an institution, or is used as a basis for employment decisions affecting the individual, or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive working environment based on the declared judgment of the affected individual.

3. Rape: Sexual contact by force, threat, or intimidation.

4. Sexual malfeasance: sexual advances toward those for whose spiritual welfare one is responsible by one’s position in the church. Such behavior can be verbal or physical conduct of an inappropriately sexual nature (e.g., risqué jokes, innuendos, insults, ingratiating and overly solicitous behavior, including sexually inappropriate visits and phone calls, seductions and fondling). This definition is not meant to cover relationships between spouses, nor restrict church professionals or workers from having normal mutual, social, intimate or marital relationships.

Staff – employees of Heritage Presbyterian Church.

Victim - the person alleged to have been subjected to sexual misconduct by a person covered under this policy.

Adult Volunteer – an adult who ministers with or to children or youth in a Heritage program. This includes but is not limited to chaperones and drivers, Sunday school teachers, childcare (nursery) Volunteers, VBS leaders.

Youth Volunteer – a Youth who ministers with or to children or youth in a Heritage program, including nursery. Each program may set minimum age requirements as deemed appropriate by the responsible Heritage committee or group.

Youth – A person between the ages of 14 and 18.

4.0 Responsibilities

4.1 Session:

- a. The Session is responsible for the Safe Church Policy.
- b. Shall review the policy annually, and any subsequent amendments shall be approved by Session.
- c. Session shall provide a specific annual budget for expenses involved in the administration of this policy, including background checks. Administration includes:
 - Obtaining background checks and registration of Volunteers as stated in this Policy.
 - Training and implementation.
 - Annual policy review.
 - Maintaining records required by the policy.

4.2 Head of Staff

- a. Conducting screening checks of Staff and Volunteers.
- b. Maintaining and securing records of completed and in process screening checks.
- c. Maintaining employee personnel files for church Staff.
- d. Receiving Incident Reports and initiating the Investigation and Response in accordance with paragraph 7.0.
- e. Reporting in accordance with State law, as applicable, in accordance with Appendix B.

4.3 The Personnel Committee is responsible for the administration of this policy.

- a. Ensuring screening procedures are conducted for Staff and Volunteers.
 1. Initiating screening checks for Staff by ensuring that an application for employment is completed and providing the form to the Head of Staff.
 2. Coordinating with the Christian Education for screening checks for Sunday School Volunteers.
 3. Coordinating with the Worship Committee for screening checks for nursery Volunteers.
- b. Ensuring that the Head of Staff is provided with Records associated with this policy.

4.4 Christian Education Committee

- a. Recruiting and scheduling Sunday School teachers in order to meet the requirements and guidelines of this policy.
- b. Initiating screening checks of Sunday School teachers by ensuring that a Volunteer Profile / Application (Appendix C) is completed and provided to the Head of Staff.
- c. Conducting training for Sunday School teachers, including the requirements of this Policy.

4.5 Worship Committee

- a. Recruiting Nursery Volunteers in order to meet the requirements and guidelines of this policy.
- b. Initiating screening checks of Nursery Volunteers by ensuring that a Volunteer Profile / Application (Appendix C) is completed and provided to the Head of Staff.
- c. Conducting training for Nursery Volunteers, including the requirements of this Policy.

5.0 Screening Procedures

All Staff and all Adult Volunteers involved with youth or children's programs and activities shall be subject to a background check. Any Staff or Volunteer who has admitted to, been convicted of, or otherwise found to have engaged in Sexual Misconduct shall be prohibited from working with children or youth in a Church context. If an individual is accused of Sexual Misconduct, and the investigation into the claim is inconclusive, then for the safety of the participants and the protection of the Accused, additional safeguards must be put in place to assure the protection of any children or youth with whom the individual may have future contact. A person later cleared of charges may apply to be reinstated to participate in children or youth programs. Reinstatement is not a right, and no guarantee is made that he or she will be reinstated to his or her former position.

5.1 Potential Volunteers must complete and submit a Volunteer Profile / Application (Appendix C), including authorization of a criminal background investigation and verification of qualifications. References from individuals (other than relatives) who are familiar with qualifications for volunteer work to be performed may be requested, at the discretion of the appropriate committee chairperson.

5.2 The applicable committee will have the responsibility for gathering, reviewing and securing applications, checking references and documenting the same using the forms provided in Appendix C. Criminal background checks will be performed by the Head of Staff.

5.3 The application and information gained from these sources will be reviewed by the Head of Staff to determine if there are any reasons to prohibit the individual from participating in children or youth ministry at Heritage, or if there are additional precautions necessary while the individual is in ministry with children or youth.

5.4 In the case of any negative or questionable feedback is received through the background or reference checks, applicants will be notified by the Head of Staff. The individual will have the opportunity to discuss this information with the Head of Staff.

5.5 The Personnel Committee will be responsible for oversight of the background checks and professional references for Staff. The church shall maintain a personnel file on all employees. The file shall contain the application for employment, any employment questionnaire, reference responses and documents related to this Policy. It shall make specific inquiries to discover if in his/her prior employment there are any civil, criminal, or ecclesiastical complaints that were sustained against him/her for sexual misconduct or if s/he was ever required to seek professional treatment for reasons of sexual misconduct. The church shall contact references for prospective employees. A written record of conversations or correspondence with an applicant's references shall be kept in said employee's personnel file. Teaching Elders' background checks are administered and completed by the Presbytery prior to employment.

6.0 Reporting of Incidents

6.1 Reporting Protocol

A Staff person, Volunteer, or any other person having knowledge of an incident of suspected Abuse, neglect or self-injury, or other violation of this Policy shall report the incident immediately to the Head of Staff. As soon as practical, but no later than 48 hours after the Incident, the person reporting the Incident will fill out the Incident Reporting Form contained in Appendix C and provide it to the Head of Staff. This Incident Reporting Form shall serve as a written statement of alleged Abuse.

For the purpose of this section of the Policy, if the Head of Staff is the accused or is unavailable to act, references to the Head of Staff shall be deemed to refer to the Clerk of Session.

6.2 Incident Reporting Guidelines

Any adult to whom a child or youth reports an incident of sexual abuse or harassment is responsible for following these Incident Reporting Guidelines.

- a. Protect the child or youth. Ensure the safety and well-being of the child or youth. Immediately remove the child or youth from the situation and all contact with the Accused or harasser. Give reassurance that this is for the child or youth's own safety and is not a punishment.
- b. Taking the report from a child or youth
 - 1). Listen attentively and stay calm. Acknowledge that it takes a lot of courage to report Abuse. It is appropriate to listen and be encouraging. Do not express shock, horror or disbelief. Assure privacy but not confidentiality. Explain that you will have to tell someone about the abuse/harassment to make it stop and to ensure that it doesn't happen to other children or youth.
 - 2). Get the facts, but don't interrogate. Ask the child or youth questions that establish what was done and who did it. Reassure the child or youth that s/he did the right thing in telling you. Avoid asking 'why' questions. Remember your responsibility is to present the child or youth's story to the proper authorities.
 - 3). Be non-judgmental and reassure the child or youth. Do not be critical of anything that has happened or anyone who may be involved. It is especially important not to blame or criticize the child or youth. Assure the child or youth that the situation was not their fault and that they were brave and mature to come to you.
 - 4). Record. Keep a written record of the conversation with the child or youth as soon after the report as you can, including the date and time of the conversation. Use the child or youth's words, and record only what has been told to you.
- c. Do Not Challenge the Accused. The adult to whom the child or youth reports an incident shall not contact the Accused. In cases of alleged Abuse, interrogation must be left entirely to law enforcement authorities. In cases of non-criminal harassment, the Head of Staff is responsible for investigating, and will be in contact with the alleged offender after the child or youth has been safeguarded from the Accused.
- d. Follow-Up. The person who reports an incident should follow up within one week to make sure the procedures in this policy are being followed. Specifically, the Head of Staff will ensure that an independent and thorough investigation into any claims of sexual abuse or harassment is conducted, after the child or youth has been

safeguarded from the Accused. Any adult against whom an allegation of sexual abuse or harassment is made will be removed from all contact with children or youth in the program until the matter is resolved. If this Policy is not being followed, the person should report the Incident to the Executive Presbyter by contacting the Presbytery of Chicago Office at (312) 243-8300.

6.3 Suspected Child Abuse not Related to Church Activities

If the Head of Staff or any Mandated Reporter determines that reasonable cause exists to suspect child abuse or neglect, he or she shall immediately call the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) Hotline. The oral report must be followed by a written report on the applicable State reporting form. If the Head of Staff has insufficient information to determine whether reasonable cause exists, he or she shall make further inquiry sufficient to make the determination. See Appendix B for information on child abuse hotline and Mandated Reporters.

6.4 Notification of Parent or Guardian

As soon as possible after receiving the initial report of the Incident, the Head of Staff shall inform the child's parent or guardian of the Incident.

6.5 Suspension/Administrative Leave

After receiving the initial report, the Head of Staff shall immediately suspend the accused Staff person or Volunteer from all activities involving contact with children. The suspension shall remain in effect until the Head of Staff, in consultation with the Session, determines that the accused does not pose a special threat to children.

6.6 Additional Reports

If the accused is a Teaching Elder or Commissioned Ruling Elder against whom a written statement of alleged offense is filed, the Executive Presbyter shall be informed and consulted on procedures relative to the PCUSA Book of Order. The PCUSA disciplinary proceedings as outlined in the Presbytery of Chicago, Child Protection Policy, shall apply.

7.0 Investigation and Response

The person or persons making the report shall not conduct an investigation of the incident, but shall take all necessary and reasonable steps to ensure the child's immediate safety. The Head of Staff shall notify the Session that an Incident has been alleged, and without naming the Accused or the nature of the Incident.

The Session shall appoint an Investigating Committee for the specific Incident. The Investigating Committee shall have no more than five, but no less than three members, and may not include members of the Session. The Session will refer the Incident immediately to the Investigating Committee.

Additional investigations may be conducted by appropriate ecclesiastical and civil legal authorities. If reasonable cause exists, the applicable State child protection agency will normally notify law enforcement and investigate the incident. Heritage's insurance company should also be notified and may choose to conduct their own investigation.

7.1 Investigation

The Investigating Committee shall follow established policies and practices of the PC(USA) as provided in the Book of Order section D-10.0200 and supplementary materials to protect all involved.

7.2 Confidentiality of Investigation and Related Documents

In accordance with both civil laws and Presbyterian polity, the accused is presumed innocent until proven guilty. While the incident is being investigated, all persons with knowledge of the incident shall maintain strict confidentiality and shall share information with others only as required or permitted by appropriate ecclesiastical and civil legal authorities. The Head of Staff and the Investigating Committee, if any, shall be in exclusive possession of all reports and other written materials pertaining to the incident. No other person shall keep copies of reports or other records concerning the incident without authorization from the Head of Staff. All third-party requests for information (including the media) shall be referred to the Head of Staff.

7.3 Guidelines for Response

- a. Responding to the Needs of the child or youth. There will need to be a cohesive and managed team approach to supporting the child or youth after an allegation report. The child or youth is likely to feel embarrassed, confused, and may become withdrawn and appear to be avoiding members of the Church. After a report of harassment or Abuse, child or youth may or may not want to remain in child or youth programs at the Church.
- b. It may be difficult for Church members to understand how the child or youth is feeling, but it would be helpful for the child or youth to know that the Church remains a support for them. Church members and their families may experience ambiguity toward their roles and may feel unclear regarding their boundaries. However they need to do whatever is necessary to reassure the child or youth of their support at all times.
- c. Appropriate Response for Addressing Issues within the Church for Allegations Made Against Church Members or Non-Members. When addressing an allegation of abuse or harassment, the most important concern is the safety of the child or youth. Church members should not speculate, attempt to cover up, make editorial comments, or offer personal opinions that could potentially hinder any police or criminal investigations. Church members should be cautioned about speculating or commenting on the matter during the investigations.
- d. Comments made about alleged victims in support of Accused persons do not support our statement of conduct or Church ideals. Comments made against an Accused could lead to a slander or libel claim filed against the Church or Church Members by the Accused.

8.0 Confidentiality of Records

All information obtained in connection with the administration of this Policy shall be kept confidential and stored in a locked file cabinet in the Head of Staff's office and used for the sole purposes defined in this Policy and for no other purpose.

9.0 Training

The Christian Education, Personnel and Worship Committees will be jointly responsible for annual training for all Volunteers ministering with children and youth and Staff. Training will include at a minimum:

- An overview of the Safe Church Policy, its purpose and contents.
- Safe Church Policy requirements and guidelines for church activities as outlined in Appendix A.
- Recognition of the signs and symptoms of neglect, physical and sexual abuse.
- Incident reporting procedures to follow when an incident of neglect, abuse, or misconduct is suspected (Section 9.0).
- Emergency procedures.
- Each Volunteer and Staff will be provided with a copy of Heritage's Safe Church Policy. An acknowledgement of receipt of the policy and agreement to abide by its provisions shall be signed by the Volunteer/Staff.
- A record of the training and signed acknowledgement shall be retained as records per Section 10.0.

The appropriate Committee chairperson will be responsible for the above training of those ministering with children and youth who start such service at a time after the group training has been completed for the year.

Staff and those ministering with children and youth must attend an annual refresher program.

10.0 Use of the Church by Outside Organizations

All non-Heritage groups using the church property for activities involving children or youth must agree in writing to adhere to the "Rules and Guidelines for the Safe Church" provided as Appendix A. In addition, the group shall hold the church harmless from any and all claims relating to this policy. It is the responsibility of the Committee sponsoring the group to ensure the outside party submits these documents, in conjunction with the standard approval process for use of the facilities.

Appendix A - Requirements and Guidelines for Ministry to Children and Youth and the Safe Church Policy

Requirements

1. Staff and Volunteers shall maintain appropriate boundaries with children, youth and adults.
2. Staff and Volunteers shall assure the physical and emotional safety of those in their care and are to be aware of signs indicating neglect or Abuse.
3. The Christian Education and Worship Committees will seek Volunteers in sufficient numbers to provide adequate oversight and supervision of child and youth activities within the church facility and other venues. Church school teachers and Nursery attendants must be members of Heritage Presbyterian Church or regular participants in good standing for at least six months before acceptance to Volunteer status. In special circumstances, waivers may be approved by Session based on requests and recommendations of the respective Committee Chairperson.
4. Each room set aside for children or youth must have a door with a window or half door. Otherwise, the door should be left ajar in order to provide some visibility and hearing from outside the room.
5. One adult shall not be alone with any one child in the building, unless such adult is the Parent, as defined herein.
6. Bathroom use by children - Parents will be strongly encouraged to have their children visit the bathroom prior to leaving them with the Volunteer/Staff running the program activity, and it is preferable for parents to be asked for assistance in bathroom use if the need arises. If necessary, and where possible, two adults should provide such assistance. (Note: This provision does not cover a situation where an adult is using the bathroom, and a child enters on their own.)
7. Staff or Volunteer adults shall not touch or interact with a child, youth or adult in any way that is intended to be sexually stimulating, emotionally demeaning, or exploitive. Common expressions of affection and affirmation (such as hugs or pats on the back), holding hands, physical care (such as diaper changing or administering first aid) and offering spiritual support (such as prayer) are appropriate in a community of faith. Care must be given that physical expressions of affection are not excessive or rendered in a manner that may be misinterpreted by the child/youth.
8. Coed overnight programs shall have both male and female chaperones on site for the duration of the event. If it is a same sex event, a minimum of two chaperones of the same sex shall be present for the duration of the event.
9. When there is one-on-one contact with a child or youth, it shall be in a public setting. If the contact is of a sensitive (disciplinary) or personal nature, then the child's parent or another Staff/Volunteer shall be present. If this contact is in the home of the child or youth, a parent shall be present and the meeting should be in a high traffic or open area of the home (e.g.: living room, kitchen and family room) and never with the door closed.
10. If discipline is necessary, it shall be administered with love and kindness. Staff and Volunteers shall not administer corporal punishment of any kind. Appropriate discipline establishes clear expectations, provides rewards and incentives for acceptable

behavior. Appropriate discipline uses verbal disapproval, loss of privileges and redirection to teach acceptable behavior.

11. Alcoholic beverages, tobacco, illegal drugs, contraband or anything else that is prohibited by law to minors shall not be used during any activities involving children and youth.
12. Church computers shall not be used to view, store or transmit pornographic material.

Additional Guidelines

1. Paid and Volunteer Staff should, if possible, work in pairs and preferably the adults should be unrelated.
2. Safety is a top priority for our children or youth programs. Safety should be considered in all activity choices.
3. Movies or other pre-recorded video or audio productions shown as part of church activities for or including children or youth should be age-appropriate.
4. Transportation - The following rules apply when transportation is being provided for children and youth for organized church activities originating and ending at the church building.
 - Driver shall be at least 21 years of age, have a valid state driver's license for the vehicle being operated, and proof of insurance.
 - All drivers shall adhere to the law at all times.
 - An unaccompanied adult who is not the child's or youth's parent or guardian should not transport a single child or youth in a vehicle during a church sponsored activity, if practical.

Appendix B – Child Abuse Hotline

Child Protection statutes

Illinois has child protection statutes that provide for reporting incidents of child abuse or neglect. The Illinois statute is the Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act, 325 ILCS 5/1 et seq. administered by the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS)

Mandated Reporters

Mandated reporters are professionals who may work with children in the course of their professional duties. Mandated reporters are required by the applicable child protection statute to report to state authorities when they have reasonable cause to suspect that child abuse or neglect may have occurred. The Illinois statute names seven categories of mandated reporters: medical personnel, school personnel, social service/mental health professionals, law enforcement personnel, coroner/medical examiner personnel, child care personnel and members of the clergy. The Illinois statute requires that mandated reporters sign a statement acknowledging their status as mandated reporters before they commence employment. The statement is made on one of two DCFS forms, entitled Acknowledgment of Mandated Reporter Status and Acknowledgment of Mandated Reporter Status (Clergy). The acknowledgment forms shall be retained by the church.

Child Abuse Hotline

A mandated reporter who has reasonable cause to suspect child abuse or neglect is required to immediately report or cause a report to be made to DCFS. In most cases, the reporting requirement will be satisfied if the Head of Staff makes the report, but if the Head of Staff fails to report, the mandated reporter must nevertheless make the report if he or she has reasonable cause to believe that child abuse or neglect may have occurred. Note, however, that the Illinois statute requires that mandated reporters who are staff members of a medical or other public or private institution, school, facility or agency or a member of the clergy, must make the report personally, and may not rely on the institution, school, facility, agency or church to make the report.

The initial report is an oral report made by calling the Child Abuse Hotline. In Illinois, the Department of Children and Family Services: 1-800-252-2873.

The oral report to the Child Abuse Hotline must be followed by a written report on the applicable state reporting form. In Illinois, the written report must be made within 48 hours after the initial hotline report.

In addition to mandated reporters, persons who are not mandated reporters are also permitted to make reports of suspected child abuse or neglect. Whether or not the person making the report is a mandated reporter, his or her identity is protected by statute, and a person who makes a report in good faith is immune from civil or criminal liability.

Criteria needed for a child abuse or neglect investigation:

- The alleged victim is a child under 18 years or person of diminished capacity.
- The alleged perpetrator is a parent, guardian, foster parent, relative caregiver or any person responsible for the child's welfare at the time of the alleged abuse or neglect.

- There is a specific incident of abuse or neglect or a specific set of circumstances involving abuse or neglect.
- There is demonstrated harm to the child or a substantial risk of physical or sexual injury to the child.

Additional Information

For additional information: <http://www.state.il.us/dcfs>.

Appendix C - Forms

Adult Volunteer Profile / Application

Name: _____ Birth date (M/D/Y): _____

Address: _____ Home Phone: _____

_____ Cell Phone: _____

E-Mail: _____ Work Phone: _____

Employer Name and Address: _____

Emergency Contact Name: _____ Phone: _____

Emergency Medical Information (allergies, etc.): _____

Previous church membership/participation: *(please include name and address of previous church if attending Heritage for less than 2 years)* _____

Previous experience with children/youth: _____

Skills and interest: _____

A copy of valid photo identification must be attached.

Have you ever been convicted of a felony? _____

Have you ever been subject to any court order involving any sexual, physical or verbal abuse including but not limited to any domestic violence or civil harassment injunction or protective order? _____

WAIVER/CONSENT/RELEASE

I hereby give my permission to Heritage Presbyterian Church to investigate, verify and obtain information given in this affidavit, including searches of law enforcement and published records (including driving records and criminal background checks), contact with former employers and reference interviews. I understand that this information will be used in part to determine my eligibility for a Volunteer position with the Church child or youth programs. I also understand that as long as I remain such a Volunteer, the criminal history records check may be repeated at any time. I understand that I will have an opportunity to review the criminal history and that there is a procedure available for clarification, if I dispute the record as received.

I specifically acknowledge that the Church or its agents will inquire about and I authorize them to verify my prior employment, experience, personal references, background, including criminal background checks which may contain arrest and conviction data. I waive any right to assert that such an investigation or request constitutes an invasion of my privacy. I recognize that such inquiries are in the interest of all persons involved in the Church child or youth programs and I fully consent to such investigations.

I have read and agree to abide by the Heritage Safe Church Policy.

The above information that I have provided is true and correct.

I do not know of any reason why I should not serve as a Volunteer with children.

Adult Volunteer Signature: _____ Date: _____

Signature – Committee Chairperson: _____ Date: _____

Official Use Only

Attended Training? Yes _____ Date: _____

Background Check Required: Yes _____ No _____

Background Check Completed? _____ Date: _____

Mandated Reporter Status (if required) completed: _____

Updated: _____ Date: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Signature – Committee Chairperson: _____ Date: _____

Youth Volunteer Profile / Application

Name: _____ Birth date (M/D/Y): _____

Address: _____ Home Phone: _____
_____ Cell Phone: _____

E-Mail: _____

School: _____ Grade: _____

Parent's names:

Emergency Contact Name: _____ Phone: _____

Emergency Medical Information (allergies, etc.): _____

Previous church membership/participation: *(please include name and address of previous church if attending Heritage for less than 2 years)* _____

Previous experience with children/youth: _____

Skills and interest: _____

A copy of valid photo identification should be attached if possible.

I have read and agree to abide by the Heritage Safe Church Policy.

The above information that I have provided is true and correct.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Signature of Committee Chairperson: _____ Date: _____

I give permission for _____ to work as a youth Volunteer in Heritage programs. I do not know of any reason why my child should not serve as a Volunteer with younger children.

Signature of Parent/Legal Guardian: _____ Date: _____

Official Use Only

Attended Training? Yes: _____ Date: _____

Updated: _____ Date: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Signature – Committee Chairperson: _____ Date: _____

REFERENCE LIST

Please list three personal references (people who are not related to you by blood or marriage, with at least one that has no affiliation to Heritage Presbyterian Church) and provide a complete address and phone information for each. References and responses are confidential.

Adult or Youth Name: _____

Date: _____

Reference 1

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State & Zip: _____

Daytime & Evening Phone: _____

Relationship to reference: _____

Reference 2

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State & Zip: _____

Daytime & Evening Phone: _____

Relationship to reference: _____

Reference 3

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State & Zip: _____

Daytime & Evening Phone: _____

Relationship to reference: _____

**Reference Check
For Staff or Volunteer**

Applicant name: _____

Reference name: _____

Address: _____

Home Phone: _____ Work Phone: _____

What is your relationship to the applicant? _____

How long have you known the applicant? _____

How would you describe the applicant? _____

How would you describe the applicant's ability to relate to children or youth? _____

How would you describe the applicant's leadership abilities? _____

How would you feel about having the applicant as a Volunteer worker with your child and/or youth? _____

Do you know of any characteristics that would negatively affect the applicant's ability to work with children and/or youth? If so, please describe. _____

Do you have any knowledge that the applicant has ever been arrested for any reason? If so, please describe. _____

Please list any other comments you would like to make: _____

Reference inquiry completed by: _____

Signature _____ Date _____

Responses will be kept confidential and seen only by those who have legitimate need to know.