



Policies and Procedures for a Safe Church

Adopted by the Congregation Council, July 2022

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<http://www.flc-lynn.org>

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The People of First Lutheran Church wish to acknowledge and thank the people of Grace Lutheran Church, Hartford and St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church, Wethersfield, CT for sharing their Safe Church Policies with us. This document has incorporated much of their work.

I. Mission Statement

First Lutheran Church, as a Christian community, takes seriously its responsibility to provide a safe and nurturing environment for persons of all ages who are entrusted to its care. We also have a responsibility to protect those who have served as leaders and teachers.

Statement of Policy

It is the policy of First Lutheran Church that our Church (First Lutheran Church) be a safe place for all who come here to worship, minister, or seek Christian care or advocacy. To this end, this "Safe Church Policy" has been established to clarify specific standards for safe behavior and the appropriate reporting of and response to allegations of misconduct so that we may share the good news of Jesus Christ by respecting the dignity of all human beings. This policy shall apply to all clergy, lay employees, volunteers, and members.

As a Reconciling in Christ congregation, First Lutheran Church affirms the boundless love of God for all of God's children regardless of sexual orientation, life challenge or ability. All people are welcome to worship with us, to join our congregation, to participate in the mission and ministry to which God is calling us in our community, and to share in all aspects of our life together as the people of God.

I. Definition of Terms

- a. **Safe Church Response Team:** The team that is designated by the Council to serve for one year and comprised of the Pastor, Council President (or designee), and one other person of the Council's choosing. In the event of an apparent conflict of interest by one or more members of the team, the Council shall designate alternate team members to fill their places as long as said conflict of interest exists.
- b. **Safe Church Advocacy Team:** This team shall help in the implementation and communication of the Safe Church Guidelines. This team shall be responsible for an annual Safe Church Audit.
- c. **Safe Church Audit:** See II b below.
- d. **Youth Ministry Team:** This team shall be appointed annually by the congregation council and shall be responsible for overseeing the development and maintenance of all ministries related to youth and youth education.
- e. **New England Synod Safe Church Officer:** This is the Associate to the Bishop designated to oversee and advocate for Safe Church Policy among the congregations of the New England Synod. For the current Safe Church Officer, and for contact information, see section VIII, References, below.

II. Designated Committees

- a. Each year, the Congregation Council shall appoint a Safe Church Response Team to receive, follow up and respond to any complaints of alleged violations of First Lutheran Safe Church Policy. The designated team will include the senior pastor, Congregation president (or designee), and another member of the congregation.

In the event that a member of the Response Team is making an allegation, they shall recuse themselves from the Response Team so as to avoid any conflict of interest or lack of impartiality in responding to the allegation. In this case, the Council shall designate a temporary replacement who will act until such time as a formal response to the allegation is finalized.

- b. There shall be a Safe Church Advocacy Team, appointed by the Congregation Council, who shall make a yearly audit of First Lutheran Safe Church policy compliance.

A Safe Church Audit shall include:

1. Updating a roster of adults who work with children or youths;
2. Updating of the signed and dated acknowledgements by volunteers indicating that they both understand and shall abide by this policy;
3. Updating of all public record checks for all volunteers working with children and youths;
4. Updating any additional background checks;
5. Maintaining a list of all who have attended Safe Church training programs and making sure that all certifications by volunteers are up to date;
6. Making sure that all teams and ministries of First Lutheran have developed policies that are in compliance with these Safe Church Policies;
7. Making sure that all policies related to maintaining a safe church *facility* are up to date.

III. Communication of Policy

This Policy shall be given to and reviewed by the Congregation's clergy, employees, and those working with children and youth to ensure their understanding and support of this Policy. This review shall take place annually under the direction of the Safe Church Advocacy Team. Their signature below indicates that the individual has reviewed, understands and supports this policy statement.

In addition, the Congregation shall periodically publicize this Policy to all its members and volunteers. The means of publication and the locations of copies of this policy shall be determined by the Safe Church Advocacy Team.

IV. Sexual Misconduct

Introduction

When sexual misconduct happens in the church, the proclamation of the gospel is impaired. Everyone suffers: the abused, the perpetrator, the church and the world. If timely and thorough attention is not given to allegations of sexual misconduct, the hope of the gospel is hidden and people can become estranged from God and the church. Therefore, for the sake of the gospel and humankind, First Lutheran Church is fully committed to address the problem of sexual misconduct by awareness, preparation, education and effective policy. However, we depend on the reporting of incidents to enable us to respond faithfully.

It takes courage to report incidents of sexual misconduct. Reporting in itself can begin the process of healing and protect others from inappropriate behaviors. Reporting can also help the person guilty of misconduct receive the assistance that is needed for amendment of life. Finally, reporting improper behaviors is a necessary factor in making the church a safe place for all people.

Definition of Sexual Harassment and Misconduct

Sexual harassment and misconduct refers to behavior that is not welcome to the recipient and is personally offensive. It includes but is not limited to:

- a. Unwelcome sexual advances, leering, whistling, or sexual gestures;
- b. Deliberate assaults or molestation as well as impeding or blocking movements;
- c. Actual or threatened retaliation;
- d. Offering employment or other benefits in exchange for sexual favors;
- e. Questions or comments about sexual behavior;
- f. Gender-based harassment;
- g. Undesired physical contact;
- h. Inappropriate comments about clothing or physical appearance;
- i. Persistent sexually-oriented humor or language;
- j. Continued or repeated jokes, language, epithets or remarks of a sexual nature;
- k. Causing another person to engage in a sexual act by threatening that other person, placing that other person in fear or asserting undue influence over that other person;
- l. Providing or displaying pornographic media;
- m. Any attempt to engage in or perform any of the above; and

n. Any additional activity that is covered by Federal or State laws.

V. Behavioral Standards for Ministry with Children and Youth

A "Youth" is always defined as any person not having attained the age of 18. A person who has attained the age of 18 but has not graduated from high school is also always considered a youth under these rules.

In working with youth (middle school and high school), at least one adult must have attained the age of 21, AND must be at least 4 years older than the oldest youth in the group.

Adults shall not:

- a. Provide children or youth with non-sacramental alcohol, illegal drugs or pornography;
- b. Consume non-sacramental alcohol or illegal drugs or misuse legal drugs at any children's or youth event;
- c. Be under the influence of alcohol, illegal drugs or the misuse of legal drugs at any children's or youth event;
- d. Engage in illegal behavior or permit other adults or children or youth to engage in illegal behavior;
- e. Engage in any sexual, romantic, illicit or secretive relationship or conduct with any child or youth;
- f. Discuss their own sexual activities or fantasies with children or youth.
- g. Send, transmit or communicate via phone, mail, email, text message, or in any other manner without the full knowledge and consent of the parents or legal guardians of the child or youth. (When an email, text message, or other communication is sent to a youth, it should always be sent ("cc'd") to the parents or legal guardians as well.)

Ratio guideline for adults: youth are as follows (keeping in mind the two-adult rule as the default).

0-5 years old 1:5

6-10 years old 1:6

11-14 years old 1:8

15-18 years old 1:10

(Note, with the two-adult rule, the minimum number of adults will always be 2)

Other guidelines for adults working with children and youths

- a. All group activities shall be monitored by awake adults at all times.
- b. Adults shall not transport any unrelated individual youth in their vehicles.
- c. A roster of all participants and chaperones involved in the event shall be available during the event including name, contact information, signed permissions and medical info as needed.
- d. No unrelated teenager may be alone with a younger child at any time. (An adult may be within earshot.)
- e. Proper age-appropriate restraints are to be used in all vehicles transporting children and youth.
- f. Males and females shall sleep in separate quarters. Where this is not possible, reasonable separation of space is required and appropriate awake adult supervision is constant.
- g. All adults transporting children and youth will agree to a driving background check. They may be asked to have their license and insurance information on file with the church.
- h. No drivers under the age of 25 are to transport unrelated children and youth on behalf of the church.
- i. Even if taken as prescribed, the use of sedating medications by drivers is forbidden.
- j. No photographs or other recordings (for example, audio or video) of youth or children are to be used for web or print publication without the written consent of the parent(s). Such consent will outline the potential risks of publication of images and recordings. Any publications or recording will not include identifying information such as last name or personal contact information.

Anyone who knows of, or suspects a violation of these policies during a youth event shall immediately report the violation to the Pastor, Congregational Council President, or, if unable to contact either of these, the New England Synod Safe Church officer.

Screening and Selection for Ministry with Children and Youth

First Lutheran Church will conduct public record checks on ALL existing and future employees and volunteers who regularly work with children or youth.

For all NEW employees and volunteers who begin to work regularly with children or youth the following components of a background check, *in addition to* a public records check, will be conducted:

- a. An interview with the Senior Pastor and youth ministry team is to be conducted
- b. A reference check conducted by the Safe Church Advocacy Team

Volunteers should not be permitted to work with children or youths until they have been known to the clergy or congregation and have been an official member of First Lutheran Church for at least six months and have completed the steps listed above.

Regularly working with children or youth includes but is not limited to:

- a. Sunday School;
- b. Vacation Bible Camp;
- c. Youth Education (including, but not limited to Confirmation instruction and all related events);
- d. Youth programs (regardless of their location).

Monitoring Programs and Interactions with Children and Youth

Two unrelated adult rule. At all events and ministries for children and youth there shall be at least two unrelated adults present. If unanticipated circumstances result in an adult being alone with children or youth, that adult shall immediately report those circumstances to the clergy. It may be appropriate for a Sunday school class to have only one teacher so long as at least one other adult can maintain visual contact with the teacher.

Any new programs, trips, or events that involve children or youth should be given prior approval by the senior pastor of the congregation. No event for children or youth shall take place in a private residence without prior approval by the senior pastor.

Adults who have a separate and private relationship with any unrelated child from the church away from sanctioned church youth activities shall be responsible for assuring parents are fully informed and consent to all interactions.

First Lutheran Church shall conduct a "safe church audit" annually and shall publish a list of adults meeting the requirements to work with children and youth.

First Lutheran Church computers will have adequate password protection. There shall be adequate supervision of anyone using a First Lutheran Church computer to access the Internet. Any activity on a First Lutheran Church computer is not considered private and may be accessed by authorized persons. Such authorized persons shall include First Lutheran congregational officers, council members and clergy.

Any use of a computer or other device that uses First Lutheran wireless internet connection (Wi-Fi) shall not be considered "private" and shall be overseen by a responsible adult.

Non-church related use of the Wi-Fi (such as for homework or other personal purposes) shall only be done with the permission and knowledge of the pastor or a supervising adult.

Education and Training

First Lutheran Church clergy, employees and volunteers who work with children or youth shall attend training on how to prevent child abuse and promote healthy boundaries in church settings.

Records of training will be recorded in the Safe Church Audit. The SCAT will recommend to council for approval the curriculum and trainers for the requisite training. Training recommended by the New England Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is preferred.

Reporting Concerns

Anyone who knows of or suspects a violation of these policies shall immediately report the violation to the senior pastor, the president of the congregation's council or their designated representative.

Anyone who knows of a violation of these policies by a clergy person shall immediately notify the Bishop's Office of the New England Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America at (508) 791-1530 extension 105.

Anyone who suspects that child abuse has taken place at church or in another setting shall bring it to the attention of the senior pastor and council president. In the event that they are unable to reach either of these persons, they may bring it to the attention of the New England Synod Safe Church officer.

Under Massachusetts law, clergy are mandated reporters of suspected abuse or neglect of children. As mandated reporters, clergy are required to (1) make an oral report to the Department of Children and Families (DCF) Hotline within 12 hours of suspecting that a child has been abused or neglected; and (2) make a written report (using DCF form 136) within 48 hours of making the oral report.

The Hotline number is (800) 792-5200.

DCF form 51A is available at <https://www.mass.gov/orgs/massachusetts-department-of-children-families> (all reports must be made by telephone to the hotline number above).

When making a written report it is advisable to keep a copy of the report and to mail the report first class/return receipt requested so that there is documentation that the report was made as required by law.

Follow Up to Reports of Sexual Misconduct

- a. Each incident that is reported will be promptly followed up by the Safe Church Response Team with confidentiality, care and concern for all involved.
- b. Follow up will include interviews of all concerned.
- c. Follow up will include review of all relevant documentation.
- d. The follow up will be conducted in such a way as to maintain confidentiality to the extent practicable under the circumstances. Should an individual's words or conduct be determined to constitute misconduct or harassment, recommendations for action will be developed and appropriate action will be taken.

- e. The designated committee will be sensitive to the needs of all involved and shall provide any support necessary, including access to counseling, during the follow up and response.
- f. The designated committee will review all information available or uncovered during the follow up and, when deemed necessary and with the advice of the New England Synod, will seek legal counsel to assist in the investigation and resolution.

Response to Reports of Sexual Misconduct

- a. Upon reaching a course of action, the committee will communicate the results and resolution by meeting separately with the person filing the complaint and then with the accused.
- b. The committee may recommend a course of action that may include counseling, education, or disciplinary action.
- c. If a complaint is not substantiated, all parties will be informed both orally and in writing.
- d. First Lutheran Church will not engage in or tolerate retaliation against any clergy person, lay employees, or volunteer for making a good faith claim of misconduct or harassment or providing information relating to such complaints.

Sex Offenders

- a. The Congregational Safe Church Advocacy Team shall regularly (at least yearly) check Massachusetts's Sex Offender Registry for names of offenders that may be members or attendees of First Lutheran
- b. Convicted Sex Offenders must be disclosed to the parents and guardians of minors.
- c. Charged and Convicted Sex Offenders must have a covenant approved by the church council that specifically outlines their relationship to the faith community including all requirements to maintain a safe environment for all. They are never to be in a church facility or Sponsored Institution unaccompanied.

VI. Concerns Related to the Elderly and Those with Developmental Disabilities

Suspected Abuse

Anyone who suspects that the abuse of a person with disabilities has taken place at church or in another setting shall bring it to the attention of the senior pastor and Council president. In addition, they shall make a report to the Disabled Persons Protection Commission.

<https://www.mass.gov/orgs/disabled-persons-protection-commission> . Under Massachusetts law, clergy are mandated reporters of suspected abuse or neglect of the elderly. If there is suspicion of abuse, neglect (including self-neglect) or exploitation of a person 60 years or older, reporting to the Executive Office of Elder Affairs is required.

Reports are made by calling (800) 922-2275 24/7. Reports must be made within 5 calendar days of suspecting that an elder has been abused or neglected.

<https://www.mass.gov/service-details/who-is-a-mandated-reporter-of-elder-abuse>

Visitation of Home Bound Members

It is strongly encouraged that, whenever possible, the "two unrelated adults" rule should apply to any ministry visits by members of First Lutheran to its home bound members. If this is not possible, it is strongly encouraged that a visit takes place at a time when a family member of the home bound person is present.

VII. Other Safety Related Policies:

Firearms

Firearms are prohibited from the church property or at any church activity. The senior pastor of the congregation may make special exceptions for off-duty police officers or others who are required by law to carry firearms.

Alcohol or Tobacco Use:

No non-sacramental alcohol shall be consumed or served on Church property. (See First Lutheran Rental Policy on the Use of Alcoholic Beverages for further details.)

First Lutheran buildings and grounds shall be smoke free.

Computer and Internet Use:

First Lutheran Church computers will have adequate password protection. There shall be adequate supervision of any youth using a First Lutheran Church computer to access the Internet. Personal use of any of First Lutheran computers is strongly discouraged. The only exceptions to this is in the case of an emergency or where such use can be reasonably understood as an extension of or is congruent with First Lutheran official ministries.

Any use of a computer or other device by a youth that uses First Lutheran wireless internet connection (Wi-Fi) shall not be considered "private" and shall be overseen by a responsible adult. Non- church related use of the Wi-Fi (such as for homework or other personal purposes) shall only be done with the permission and knowledge of the pastor or a supervising adult.

Any adult who accesses the internet via First Lutheran Wi-Fi, is strongly encouraged to do so in a way that would not violate the values of this congregation. The access to sites that feature nudity, pornography, glorified violence, or other degrading material is prohibited.

Safety Issues related to the Building and Grounds

- a. Keys should be returned by those who no longer need them.
- b. A record of all key holders and those with knowledge of the security/lock codes shall be maintained in the church or Sponsored Institution's office.
- c. Periodic (approximately 6 months) audits shall take place to insure the accuracy of these records.

See attached document for other policies concerning safety issues related to the Buildings and Grounds.

Approval and Adoption

The Congregation Council of First Lutheran Evangelical Lutheran Church has approved this policy as of July 14, 2022.

VIII. References

New England Synod, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America Misconduct
<https://www.nelutherans.org/safechurch>

Specific details about performance of background checks, norms for various types of youth events, and supervision of compliance with this policy can be obtained: at training events offered by the Synod; from your Congregation's Safe Church Advocacy Team; or from the Synod Safe Church Officer.

The Bishop's Office of the New England Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America can be reached at (508) 791-1530 extension 105.

Suspected abuse or neglect of children is reported to the Department of Children and Families at (800) 792-5200

Suspected abuse or neglect of the elderly is reported to the Executive Office of Elder Affairs (800) 922-2275 24/7

Suspected abuse or neglect of adults with developmental disabilities is report to the Disabled Persons Protection Commission
<https://www.mass.gov/orgs/disabled-persons-protection-commission>

IX. Acknowledgement by Volunteers and Leaders

My signature indicates that I have reviewed and understand First Lutheran Safe Church Policy (official version 1.0) and that I agree to abide by all its intents expressed and implied.

Name _____ Date _____

Signature

Position / Role

Please detach this page, upon signing, and return it to the Office where it will be kept on file.

Background Record Check Permission Form (Appendix A)

Your signature on this form grants First Lutheran Church permission to perform only the reports checked off below.

- County Courthouse Check
- National Criminal Background Check
- National Sex Offender Registry
- Social Security Number Verification
- Motor Vehicle Record Check
- Credit Report

Clearly print your full name _____

Print any alias names used _____

Social Security Number _____ - _____ - _____

Date of Birth _____ Place of Birth _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Please list any state you have lived in during the past ten years (we do not check juvenile records)

State _____	City _____	Dates _____
State _____	City _____	Dates _____
State _____	City _____	Dates _____
State _____	City _____	Dates _____
State _____	City _____	Dates _____
State _____	City _____	Dates _____
State _____	City _____	Dates _____

Have you ever been arrested, charged or convicted of any crime? _____

If so, please give details:

For employees and volunteers only:

Is there any information that First Lutheran Church might find pertinent when making a decision on whether or not to recommend you for a volunteer or paid position? If so, please give details:

I acknowledge the right of First Lutheran Church to fully examine and check any pertinent information about those applying for paid or volunteer positions within the church, including previous criminal records. I hereby give permission to First Lutheran Church to conduct a background check about myself, in any state in which I have lived during the past twenty years. I hereby confirm that all the information I have recorded on this page is complete and true.

Date _____ Signature _____



THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
 EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF PUBLIC SAFETY AND SECURITY
 Department of Criminal Justice Information Services
 200 Arlington Street, Suite 2200, Chelsea, MA 02150
 TEL: 617-660-4640 | TTY: 617-660-4606 | FAX: 617-660-5973
 MASS.GOV/CJIS



**Criminal Offender Record Information (CORI)
 Acknowledgement Form**

To be used by organizations conducting CORI checks for employment, volunteer, subcontractor, licensing, and housing purposes.

_____ is registered under the
 (Organization)
 provisions of M.G.L. c.6, § 172 to receive CORI for the purpose of screening current and otherwise qualified prospective employees, subcontractors, volunteers, license applicants, current licensees, and applicants for the rental or lease of housing.

As a prospective or current employee, subcontractor, volunteer, license applicant, current licensee, or applicant for the rental or lease of housing, I understand that a CORI check will be submitted for my personal information to the DCJIS. I hereby acknowledge and provide permission to _____
 (Organization)

to submit a CORI check for my information to the DCJIS. This authorization is valid for one year from the date of my signature. I may withdraw this authorization at any time by providing _____
 (Organization)

with written notice of my intent to withdraw consent to a CORI check.

FOR EMPLOYMENT, VOLUNTEER, AND LICENSING PURPOSES ONLY:

The _____ may conduct
 (Organization)
 subsequent CORI checks within one year of the date this Form was signed by me, provided, however, that
 _____, must first provide me
 (Organization)
 with written notice of this check.

By signing below, I provide my consent to a CORI check and affirm that the information provided on Page 2 of this Acknowledgement Form is true and accurate.

Signature of CORI Subject

Date



**THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF PUBLIC SAFETY AND SECURITY
Department of Criminal Justice Information Services**
200 Arlington Street, Suite 2200, Chelsea, MA 02150
TEL: 617-660-4640 | TTY: 617-660-4606 | FAX: 617-660-5973
MASS.GOV/CJIS



SUBJECT INFORMATION

Please complete this section using the information of the person whose CORI you are requesting.
The fields marked with an asterisk (*) are required fields.

* First Name: _____ Middle Initial: _____

* Last Name: _____ Suffix (Jr., Sr., etc.): _____

Former Last Name 1: _____

Former Last Name 2: _____

Former Last Name 3: _____

Former Last Name 4: _____

* Date of Birth (MM/DD/YYYY): _____ Place of Birth: _____

* Last **SIX** digits of Social Security Number: ____ -- ____ No Social Security Number

Sex: _____ Height: ____ ft. ____ in. Eye Color: _____ Race: _____

Driver's License or ID Number: _____ State of Issue: _____

Father's Full Name: _____

Mother's Full Name: _____

Current Address

* Street Address: _____

Apt. # or Suite: _____ *City: _____ *State: _____ *Zip: _____

SUBJECT VERIFICATION

The above information was verified by reviewing the following form(s) of government-issued identification:

Verified by:

Print Name of Verifying Employee

Signature of Verifying Employee

Date

Statement of Compliance (Appendix B)

I acknowledge that I have read and understand the *Policies and Procedures for a Safe Church* of First Lutheran Church and I agree to follow that document in my activities involving youth.

To indicate your understanding and compliance with the conditions set forth by First Lutheran Church please initial each of the following paragraphs and complete the final lines of this document.

- **I understand that I am required to report child abuse and neglect.** If I have reasonable cause to believe, or have been told, that abuse and/or neglect of a youth has occurred in any of First Lutheran Church, I am required to file an *Incident Report Form* (Appendix E) with the Safe Church Committee within 24 hours as per the *Policies and Procedures for a Safe Church*.
_____ (Initials)
- **I understand that I am required to report and fully comply with the investigation of any crime that takes place on the property of First Lutheran Church, or which involve the staff or volunteers of First Lutheran Church, or which involve authorized renters and their employees and contractors acting in their capacity as such.** I am required to immediately call the police and file a report and then notify the Pastor. I am required to file an *Incident Report Form* (Appendix E) with the Safe Church Committee within 24 hours as per the *Policies and Procedures for a Safe Church*.
_____ (Initials)
- In compliance with the *Policies and Procedures for a Safe Church*, **I should not be alone in any rooms of First Lutheran Church with a youth other than my own at any time.**
_____ (Initials)
- When the activity for which I am responsible is concluded, before I leave the building, **I will be sure that the church doors are locked and the lights are out.**
_____ (Initials)
- I acknowledge that I am an agent of First Lutheran Church and **agree to abide by all policies and procedures regarding the use of the building and properties of First Lutheran Church.** I understand that failure to comply with *any* of the provisions set forth in this document may result in the loss of my standing as an authorized volunteer or staff person.
_____ (Initials)
- I understand that there are copies of the *Policies and Procedures for a Safe Church* available in the church office and that **I have both the right and responsibility to familiarize myself with those documents.** I also understand that I may contact a member of the Safe Church Committee for any clarifications I need.
_____ (Initials)

Signature

Date

Print Name

A copy of this document will be on file with the Safe Church Committee.

Key or Electronic Access Code Receipt Form (Appendix C)

Please check and complete one of the following:

_____ I am receiving access as a member of First Lutheran Church for the following purpose(s):

_____ I am not a member of First Lutheran Church and am receiving access for the following purpose:

Please initial each of the following paragraphs to indicate your understanding and compliance with the conditions set forth by First Lutheran Church.

- I acknowledge receipt of key/access code # _____ and agree that
 - I will **not lend** this key or share this code to *anyone* else
 - I will **not duplicate** this key for *any* reason
 - I will be **entirely responsible** for the security of this key/access code and I will return the key I no longer have the responsibility for the above named purpose or when Congregation Council or the Safe Church Committee requests its return.

_____ (Initials)

- In receiving this key/access code, I acknowledge that I am an agent of First Lutheran Church and agree to abide by all policies and procedures regarding the use of the building and properties of First Lutheran Church.

_____ (Initials)

- I understand that, as a key/access code holder, **I am required to report child abuse and neglect as defined and set forth by the Department of Social Services.** If I have reasonable cause to believe, or have been told, that abuse and/ or neglect of a youth has occurred in any of First Lutheran Church and/ or its properties, I am required to file an *Incident Report Form* (Appendix E) with the Safe Church Committee as per the *Policies and Procedures for a Safe Church.* Failure to do so may result in my loss of privilege to be a key holder.

_____ (Initials)

- I understand that, as a key/access code holder, **I am required to report and fully comply with the investigation of any crime that takes place on the property of First Lutheran Church, or which involve the staff or volunteers of First Lutheran Church, or which involve authorized renters and their employees and contractors acting in their capacity as such.** I am required to immediately call the police and file a report and then notify the Pastor. I am required to file an *Incident Report Form* (Appendix E) with the Safe Church Committee within 24 hours as per the *Policies and Procedures for a Safe Church.*

_____ (Initials)

- I understand that, as a key/access code holder, I am responsible for the *Policies and Procedures for a Safe Church* while any properties and/ or facilities of First Lutheran Church are unlocked by the key that I hold. **I should not be alone in any rooms of First Lutheran Church’s building and/ or properties with a youth other than my own at any time.**

_____ (Initials)

- I will **turn off the lights and lock the church’s doors upon leaving**, regardless of whether there are other groups meeting or scheduled to meet in the building.

_____ (Initials)

- I have received my copy of the *Policies and Procedures for a Safe Church* and I will familiarize myself with those documents. I also understand that I may contact the Safe Church Committee for any clarifications I need.

_____ (Initials)

- I understand that failure to comply with *any* of the provisions set forth in this document may result in my loss of privilege to be a key/access code holder.

_____ (Initials)

Signature

Date

Print Name

Street Address City/ Town State Zip Code

Home Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____

A copy of this document will be on file with the Safe Church Committee.

Driving History

Do you have a valid driver’s license? Yes _____ No _____ In which state? _____

License Number _____

Has your driver’s license ever been suspended or revoked? Yes _____ No _____

Do you have auto insurance? Yes _____ No _____

Policy Carrier and Number _____

Church Attendance

For how long have you been attending First Lutheran Church? _____

Please list the names and addresses of other churches you have attended for a significant period of time during the past 10 years.

CHURCH

ADDRESS

Please list **two references**, not family members, who can be contacted to serve as references to any of the information given on this application.

NAME

RELATIONSHIP

PHONE NUMBER

1.

2.

Legal Background

1. Have you ever been convicted of a criminal offense (felony or misdemeanor, except for minor traffic violations)? You will need to answer “yes” if you have entered into a plea agreement, including a deferred sentence or deferred judgment arrangement, in connection with a criminal charge. () Yes ()No

If you have been convicted of such and offense, please attach a statement or explanation, including nature of the offense, date, court where conviction was entered, and any other relevant information. You do not need to disclose information contained in sealed or expunged records.

2. Have you ever been charged with a sexual offense, offense relating to children, or crime of violence? () Yes () No

If you have been charged with such and offense, please attach a statement or explanation, including nature of the offense charged, date, law enforcement agency making the charge, and any other relevant information. You do not need to disclose information contained in sealed or expunged records.

3. Have you ever been reported to a social services agency, law enforcement authority, child abuse registry, or similar organization regarding abuse or misconduct involving children? () Yes ()No

4. Have you ever been subjected to expulsion, reprimand, or other discipline by a church, denomination or other religious organization? () Yes ()No

5. Have you ever been the subject of a civil lawsuit involving sexual misconduct, sexual harassment, or other immoral behavior or conduct, involving adults or children? () Yes ()No

6. Have you ever been the subject of a complaint or disciplinary proceeding against a professional license or other license held by you, including but not limited to a license to provide childcare or similar services? () Yes ()No

7. Have you ever been the subject of any disciplinary action, transfer, or dismissal, or been named as a defendant in a civil or criminal lawsuit, as a result of a mishap involving children? () Yes ()No

8. Have you ever been subject to any disciplinary action (including discharge) or investigation by a church, religious or other organization, or by an employer? () Yes () No

I attest that the information set forth in this application is true and complete. I understand that any misrepresentation or omission may be grounds for rejection of consideration for, or termination of, the position I am seeking to fill. I acknowledge that it is my duty to amend the responses and information I have provided if I come to know that the response or information was incorrect when given or, though accurate when given, the response or information is no longer accurate.

I authorize First Lutheran Church to respond to inquiries about me, to supply verification of the statements I have made, and to comment on and state opinions regarding my background and character. I hereby release them from all liability and responsibility arising from their responses, comments, and statements made in good faith and without malice.

First Lutheran Church's volunteer recruitment process involves the distribution of information regarding applicants to Congregation Council, committees, employees, other volunteers, and other persons both inside and outside of First Lutheran Church. To that end, I authorize First Lutheran Church and its agents to circulate, distribute, and otherwise share information gathered in connection with this application. I understand that First Lutheran Church will share with me information gathered about me if I request it to do so.

Applicant's Signature

Date

Printed Name

Incident Report Form (Appendix E)

This form is to be used to register all injuries and mishaps that take place during church programs or events that take place on or off church premises. It is also to be used for all suspicions of child abuse or neglect.

Date & Time of Occurrence: _____

Location of Occurrence: _____

Authority Contacted (i.e. police, ambulance): _____

Which Representative of First Lutheran Church Was Contacted and When:

Church Representative's Name	Date & Time Contacted
------------------------------	-----------------------

Name of Injured Person (if applicable):

_____ Male _____ Female _____

Home Address: _____
 Number & Street City/ Town State Zip Code

Phone Number: (_____) _____ E-mail: _____

Name of Reporter: _____

Reporter's Home Address: _____
 Number & Street City/ Town State Zip Code

Reporter's Phone Number: (_____) _____ E-mail: _____

1. Briefly describe the nature and extent of the injury, accident, or abuse.

2. Describe the circumstances under which you became aware of the incident. Include the names of witnesses in the spaces provided.

Name of **Witness 1**: _____

Witness 1's Address: _____
Number & Street City/ Town State Zip Code

Witness 1's Phone Number: (_____) _____

Witness 1's E-mail: _____

Name of **Witness 2**: _____

Witness 2's Address: _____
Number & Street City/ Town State Zip Code

Witness 2's Phone Number: (_____) _____

Witness 2's E-mail: _____

Name of **Witness 3**: _____

Witness 3's Address: _____
Number & Street City/ Town State Zip Code

Witness 3's Phone Number: (_____) _____

Witness 3's E-mail: _____

If there were more witnesses please attach a separate sheet of paper with the above information for each witness.

3. Indicate action taken by staff and/ or volunteer(s). Include the names of the staff and/ or volunteer(s).

Once you have determined that a report is necessary, contact a member of the Safe Church Committee, the Pastor, or a member of Congregation Council within 24 hours. That church representative will assist you in completing this report form. *Incident Report Forms* (Appendix E) and a listing of how to contact a church representative are available in the church office.

For Office Use Only:

Date Report Received: _____ **Report Received by:** _____

(If the injured person is a youth) Copy submitted to parents/ guardians: Yes _____

Date submitted: _____

Submitted by: _____

Copy submitted to the reporter of the incident: Yes _____

Submitted by: _____

Further Action:

Was the incident reported to First Lutheran Church's insurance company?

Yes _____ **No** _____

If so, when, by whom, and to whom?

Insurance company claim number assigned: _____

First Lutheran Church of Lynn, MA
Permission Slip and Medical Release Authorization Form
(Appendix F)

The following youth activity/ event is planned at a location away from the First Lutheran Church premises:

EVENT:	DATE of EVENT:	

Transportation will be provided by:	Leaving:	Returning:

Participant's Name: _____

Age and Date of Birth: _____

Address: _____
 Number and Street City/ Town State Zip Code

Home Phone #: (_____) _____ Cell Phone #: (_____) _____

e-mail: _____

Name of Parent/ Guardian: _____

Address: _____
 Number and Street City/ Town State Zip Code

Home Phone Number: (_____) _____

Business Phone Number: (_____) _____

Cell Phone Number: (_____) _____

e-mail: _____

Name of Other Parent/ Guardian (if applicable): _____

Address: _____
 Number and Street City/ Town State Zip Code

Home Phone Number: (_____) _____

Business Phone Number: (_____) _____

Cell Phone Number: (_____) _____

e-mail: _____

Medical Information:

Allergies (especially to medicines): _____

Medications Being Taken: _____

Which, is any of these, are in the youth's possession: _____

Physical Handicaps: _____

Medical Insurance Company: _____

Policy Holder's Name: _____ Policy/ Group #: _____

Youth's Physician: _____ Phone Number: _____

Youth wears: Contact lenses Glasses Dental application Other

(if you checked "Other", please explain: _____)

Any other pertinent facts to which a physician should be alerted: _____

I give permission for my child to join the youth of First Lutheran Church of Lynn, Massachusetts, in any of the activities or trips sponsored by the church, its staff and sponsors.

RELEASE: I HEREBY RELEASE FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH OF LYNN, MASSACHUSETTS, ITS EMPLOYEES, AGENTS, VOLUNTEERS, AND ACTIVITY SPONSORS FROM ANY LIABILITY FOR INJURY, ILLNESS OR ACCIDENT THAT MAY OCCUR TO MY CHILD DURING THE CHURCH-SPONSORED ACTIVITY COVERED BY THIS DOCUMENT.

In the event of an emergency, I hereby authorize an adult leader of this activity as agent for me, to consent to any x-ray examination, medical, dental, or surgical diagnosis, treatment, and hospital care advised and supervised by a physician, surgeon, dentist (as appropriate), licensed to practice under the laws of the state where services are rendered, either at a doctor's office or in any hospital. I assume financial responsibility for emergency care if such care is not covered by the church's insurance. I expect to be contacted as soon as possible.

It is my understanding that every precaution for safety will be taken for those attending and that proper supervision will be provided by the church. My participant and I understand that the adult leaders chaperoning are in charge and my participant will follow all rules set for this activity/ event.

Parent/ Guardian's Signature

Date: Mo/Day/Yr

Person to Release My Child to at the Conclusion of the Event/ Activity:

Please Print: _____

I am the person who is authorized to pick up this participant:

Signature: _____

Church Representative Contact List (Appendix G)

PASTOR

The Rev. Jon Niketh
781-598-0481 (church)
781-584-6631 (parsonage)
e-mail: pastor@flclynn.org

CONGREGATION COUNCIL OFFICERS

John Benedict, President
(781) 599-3145
e-mail: jrbenedict62@hotmail.com

New England Synod First Contact Team:

Ms. Lyn Wasilewski, Executive Assistant to the Bishop
(508) 791-1530 x105
lwasilewski@nesynod.org

The Rev. Sara Anderson, Associate to the Bishop (508) 791-1530 x301
sanderson@nesynod.org

Other Contact Information and Community Resources

Department of Children and Families—Lynn Office
330 Lynnway, Suite 201
Lynn, MA 01902
(781) 477-1600

Essex Children's Advocacy Center
10 Federal Street, 5th Floor
Salem, MA 01970
(978) 984-7535

Jane Doe Inc.
14 Beacon Street Suite 507
Boston, MA 02108
(617) 248-0922
www.janedoe.org

Lynn Police Department
(781) 595-2000

continued on the next page

Massachusetts Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children
399 Boylston Street, 3rd Floor
Boston, MA 02116
(617) 587-1500
www.msppcc.org

National Center for Missing & Exploited Children
1-800-843-5678

National Coalition Against Sexual Assault
912 North 2nd Street
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 17102
(717) 232-7480

Parental Stress Hotline
1-800-632-8188

Parents Anonymous
1-800-882-1250

American Association of Pastoral Counselors
9504A Lee Highway
Fairfax, Virginia 22031
(703) 385-6967

Department of Children and Families (DCF) Child-At-Risk Hotline
1-800-792-5200

Department of Children and Families—Boston Office
600 Washington St, 6th Floor
Boston, MA 02111
(617) 748-2000
<https://www.mass.gov/orgs/massachusetts-department-of-children-families>

*** Formal 2022 Policy ends on p. 31***

2018 policy practices (following) for training & implementation purposes:

- A. Performance of backgrounds checks as required by insurance, law and these policies
 - 1. Massachusetts CORI Check
 - 2. Social Security Number Validation Check
 - 3. Nationwide Criminal Background Check (US OneVERIFY)
 - 4. Nationwide Sex Offender Registry Check
 - 5. Credit Report (for working with church funds only)
 - 6. Motor Vehicle Record Check (drivers only)
- B. First Lutheran Church reserves the right to repeat the above-mentioned background checks on an annual or regular basis, and when specific circumstances, reports or questions so require.
- C. If First Lutheran Church intends to make an adverse decision based on the results of the background checks, the applicant will be notified immediately. The applicant shall be provided with a copy of the criminal record and First Lutheran Church's *Background Check Policies and Procedures*, advised of the part(s) of

Building and Classroom Safety

- D. All classroom doors must have glass openings, clear for viewing into and out of the room.
- E. A First Aid Kit must be readily available on each floor of the church.
- F. Fire escape plans need to be placed in public areas and all staff and volunteers must be trained in fire evacuation. Fire exits must be clearly posted.
- G. All Sunday School teachers will be trained at the beginning of each Sunday School year on emergency escape procedures. As part of the Sunday School orientation, the teachers will have the students participate in a drill to learn these emergency escape procedures.

Field Trips

- H. Parents or guardians must sign a *Permission Slip and Medical Release Authorization Form* (Appendix F) when youth are participating in church sponsored outings. The destination and expected time of return must be posted near the church entrance and be given in writing to the parent or guardian. A copy will be made of this and kept in the church office locked file. The original form will accompany the youth (in the care of the adult chaperones) on the field trip
- I. Permission slips will include specific information about medications and allergies of participants.
- J. Adults supervising the specific outings must have a list of all participants' names, emergency contacts and medical conditions with them at all times.
- K. There must be a minimum of two adults with the group and at least one supervising adult must carry a cell phone or have access to a telephone at all times in the event of an emergency.

- L. All drivers must be at least 21 years of age and must have a valid driver's license and up-to-date car insurance. A copy of the driver's insurance policy and driver's license will be filed confidentially in the church office locked file.
- M. All participants must wear seat belts and children under 54 inches tall who weigh less than 80 pounds must be in appropriate car seats.
- N. A First Aid Kit will travel with the group.

Key Policy

Any person who seeks possession of a key to First Lutheran Church will have a clearly stated reason for needing a key and will be approved by the Congregation Council if necessary.

- O. All permanent and temporary key holders to First Lutheran Church will be subject to Background Checks as outlined in Chapter VI.
- P. Certain people are authorized by virtue of their position in the church to hold keys. These people include paid employees, officers of the church, committee chairpersons, and other congregational leaders. Others must receive the approval of Congregation Council to be in possession of a key.
- Q. The keys will be assigned following approval of the recipient.
- R. Records of key holders will be maintained by Congregation Council to monitor who is in possession of keys. Keys shall be returned when they are no longer needed by the holder, and the return will be documented. Congregation Council will request the return of keys from persons no longer authorized to hold them.
- S. Keys are not to be loaned to unauthorized persons, duplicated, or kept beyond the time that they are needed. Authorized key holders may loan their key to their spouse/partner if the spouse has signed the *Key Receipt Form* (Appendix C) and the *Statement of Compliance* (Appendix B).
- T. Key holders will familiarize themselves with the *Policies and Procedure for a Safe Church*, sign a *Statement of Compliance* (Appendix B), and submit a *Key Receipt Form* (Appendix C).