Presbyterian Church of Western Springs
Safe Space Policy

PREAMBLE

… As [God] who called you is holy, be holy yourselves in all your conduct;
Tend the flock of God that is in your charge, not under compulsion but willingly,
not for sordid gain but eagerly. …
Do not lord it over those in your charge, but be examples to the flock.

… You know that we who teach will be judged with greater strictness.
1 Peter 1:15; 5:2-3; James 3:1, NRSV

The ethical and responsible conduct of all who minister in the name of Jesus Christ is of vital importance to the church because through these representatives an understanding of God and the gospel's good news is conveyed. "Their manner of life should be a demonstration of the Christian gospel in the church and in the world" (*Book of Order,* G-2.0104). Presbyterian Church of Western Springs values human life and has developed this policy to help make the Church a safer place for children, youth and adults. The goal of this policy is to lower the risk of child abuse and sexual misconduct for the children, youth, volunteers, and the church community.

Except as otherwise expressly provided, this policy governs all activities, proceedings, meetings, retreats, worship services and other functions of any kind carried on by the Presbyterian Church of Western Springs (PCWS).

A. Persons Governed by Policy. This policy governs all adult staff employed by PCWS and all adult volunteers who are engaged in any children/youth activity or function carried on by, PCWS.

B. Oversight. The Safe Space Program Team shall have oversight of this policy. They are responsible to provide an effective program of prevention and response relating to sexual misconduct and/or abuse among participants in PCWS events and programs. The prevention part of the program includes education and training. When an incident of sexual misconduct is alleged, the Program Team works with the Pastoral staff to provide for an expeditious, professional and caring response to all who are affected.

C. Responsibilities of Outside Organizations. Outside organizations are expected to inform the Church as the hosting organization of any allegations of abuse or sexual misconduct. Outside groups will be responsible for screening and training their volunteers. The Pastor/Head of Staff shall be responsible for reviewing the policies and procedures of the outside organization to verify that they are at least as restrictive as those of PCWS.

Presbyterian Church of Western Springs
Safe Space Policy

SAFE SPACE PROGRAM

A. Purpose:

Child abuse and neglect is a serious problem in our society and, unfortunately, within the Christian community. Abuse and neglect often occur in settings where children (the term children refers to children and youth) completely trust adults -- homes, schools, camps, athletic and park programs, retreats and the church. As people entrusted with the lives of children, we believe that we have a profound moral and legal obligation to reduce the possibility of abuse and neglect from happening to the children who participate in activities of PCWS. This Section describes PCWS's Safe Space Program. The purpose of the Safe Space Program is to help make PCWS activities a safer place for our children and volunteers by instituting policies and procedures that guard against abuse and neglect.

The Safe Space Program is designed to:

- Safeguard children, youth and adults from abuse.
- Provide assurance to families that their children are safe and secure at PCWS activities.
- Assure proper reporting when there is reasonable cause to believe that child abuse or neglect has occurred.

B. The Safe Space Program Team

1) **Formation.**
   The Safe Space Program Team is appointed by the Nominating Committee and accountable to the Faith Formation Committee and their staff liaison.

2) **Membership.**
   a) The Safe Space Program Team shall consist of three to seven persons who are members in good standing of PCWS. The members shall have backgrounds and skills that the Nominations Committee considers necessary or desirable, and shall reflect the racial, ethnic and gender diversity of PCWS. Initial members of the Team will serve for one, two, or three year terms. One third of the Safe Space Program Team shall be appointed by the Nominating Committee every year and shall serve for a three-year term. No person who has served continuously for six years shall be re-appointed until one full year has elapsed.

   b) The Team will select a moderator and a secretary. The Program Team shall meet at least quarterly, the meetings shall be presided over by the moderator or by another member designated by the moderator and a report made to the Faith Formation Committee.

3) Training.

The Safe Space Program Team members will receive training in dealing with the prevention of child abuse or neglect, particularly in a church environment. At least one member of The Team will receive training in dealing with sexual and professional misconduct, with specific attention to sexual and other professional conduct within a church environment.

4) Responsibilities.

a) The Safe Space Program Team shall bring awareness and provide training to the congregation on this policy, procedures and the prevention of child abuse and neglect.
b) The Program Team shall evaluate its responsibilities under this policy annually and shall recommend any necessary changes to the Faith Formation Committee for approval by the Session.
c) The Program Team shall coordinate the program of ongoing education and training of persons covered by this policy.

C. Safe Space Standards

1) Two-deep leadership.

a) Trips and Overnight Activities: At least two (2) approved unrelated adult leaders are required to provide leadership for all trips and outings. Appropriate adult leadership must be present for all overnight activities; coed overnight activities require male and female leadership, both of whom must be adults, and must have completed all required training and screening.
b) On-Site Activities: There shall be at least two (2) Approved Leaders present per room at all times in which children are present. If two (2) Approved Leaders are not available, a Roaming Adult will be monitoring the classrooms (see Approved Leader and Roaming Adult under Definitions).

2) Adult-Child Ratios.

a) In addition to having a minimum of two adult leaders for each event, all reasonable efforts should be made to comply with the following ratios of adults to children for all programs and activities sponsored by PCWS:

b)

Youth Age	Adult	Overnight Events	Day Events
4-5 years	1	5 children	6 children
6 – 8 years	1	6 children	8 children
9 – 14 years	1	8 children	10 children
15 – 18 years	1	10 children	10 children

3) **Minimum Leadership Age.** All staff and other leadership must be at least 24 months older than the oldest child participating in the activity.

4) **No one-on-one contact.** One-on-one contact between adults and children is not permitted. In situations that require personal conferences, such as pastoral counseling, such meeting is to be conducted in view of other adults.

5) **Separate accommodations.** When engaged in overnight activities, adult supervision is required in the sleeping accommodations and the adult – child ratio as stated in paragraph C.2 above will be followed. Separate shower and bathroom facilities must be available for males and females. When separate facilities are not available, separate times for male and female use should be scheduled and posted for showers. Likewise, children and adults must shower at different times.

6) **Respect of privacy.** Adults must respect the privacy of children in situations such as changing clothes and taking showers, and intrude only to the extent that health and safety require. Adults must protect their own privacy in similar situations. Respect for privacy includes wearing proper clothing. For example, skinny-dipping or revealing bathing suits are not appropriate.

7) **Alcohol, tobacco, and controlled substances.** PCWS is a drug-free, alcohol-free, tobacco- free environment. The use of alcoholic beverages shall not be permitted by any person at any time during PCWS activities at the church, manse or any PCWS sponsored events where children or youth are present. Further, adults shall support the attitude that they, as well as children and youth, are better off without tobacco in any form. Therefore, the use of tobacco by adults shall not be permitted in the presence of children or youth. The use of tobacco by children and youth shall not be permitted at any time.

8) **Cameras, imaging, and digital devices.** While most persons use cameras and other imaging devices responsibly, it has become very easy to invade the privacy of others. It is inappropriate to use any device capable of recording or transmitting visual images in shower houses, restrooms, or other areas where privacy is expected by participants. Any transmission of sexually explicit photographs or videos electronically and any "sexting" by cell phones is prohibited.

9) **Hazing prohibited.** Hazing and initiations are prohibited and shall not be part of any activity.

10) **Bullying prohibited.** Verbal, physical, and cyber bullying are prohibited.

11) **Use of social media.** For best practices, (Appendix E).

12) **Constructive discipline.** Discipline used in PCWS events shall be constructive and reflect Christian values. Corporal punishment is never permitted.

13) **Environmental Safety.** PCWS events shall be conducted so as to minimize the risk of accidental injury. Adult leaders should familiarize themselves with basic first aid, as well as applicable safety standards for food handling, aquatic activities, other outdoor environmental hazards such as poisonous plants and lightning as well as possible indoor hazards such as electric wires and cleaning substances. Necessary protective gear, such as helmets, life jackets and sturdy shoes shall be provided.

14) **Group responsibilities.** Adult leaders of group activities are responsible for monitoring the behavior of youth participants and for interceding when necessary. If youth participants misbehave, parents shall be informed and appropriate disciplinary measures shall be taken.

15) **Participant Permission.** A Participant Registration And Release Form (Appendix F) must be signed by all persons, adult or child, participating in any PCWS event; and also by the parents of any child (under the age of 18) participating in the event.

PREVENTION - STAFF

All Staff must go through the approval process

A. Approval Process.

1. Screening Requirements

All **Adult Staff** is subject to these requirements:

a) Completed Application (Appendix A)
b) Interview with the Pastor, or their designee.
c) Reference Check.
d) Criminal Background check for all adults age 18 and older. (Appendix B)
e) Attend a training session on the Safe Space Program Policies and Procedures upon initial application and once every three years thereafter.
f) Anyone driving children or youth must complete the Transportation Form and be subject to a Drivers' License check. (Appendix C)

All **Minor Staff** are subject to these requirements:

a) Attend a training session on the Safe Space Program Policies and Procedures upon hire and once every three years thereafter.

2. Reference checks. Adult Staff shall list three personal references on the Application. References will be checked using the Reference Check Form. (Appendix D).

3. **Background checks**. Criminal background checks and sex offender reviews will be performed on all Adult Staff. Persons governed by this policy shall provide such additional information and shall give such additional consents as may be necessary from time to time to carry out the purposes of this policy.

4. **Responsibility for reference and background checks**. Responsibility for the performance of reference checks and background checks shall be as follows:

   a) Adult Staff: The Personnel Committee shall be responsible for conducting background and reference checks on Adult Staff employed by PCWS.
   b) Clergy: Background checks for clergy is the responsibility of the Chicago Presbytery and will be verified by the Personnel Committee through the Chicago Presbytery.

5. **Recordkeeping**.
   a) The Personnel Committee shall keep the work reference checks and the background checks on the persons employed by PCWS.
   b) The Pastor, or their designee, shall maintain the Safe Space records for all Staff working with Children or Youth: all Applications, Policy Reference Checks, Disclosure and Consent Forms. A list of trained and approved staff and volunteers shall be maintained by the Pastor, or their designee, and provided to all persons in charge of activities to ensure compliance with the policy. All information gathered in the screening process shall be held strictly confidential in a secure location as designated by the Pastor, or their designee. Access is permitted only to those persons who have a legitimate interest in the information.

6. **Failure to Comply**
   Any Approved Leader or Adult Staff person who does not attend training at least once every three years, will not be allowed to volunteer until they attend a training session. Approved drivers will re-submit the application for drivers and have their driving record checked at least once every three years.

Prevention – Volunteers

Any person wanting to serve on behalf of the Church in a leadership role with children or youth must become an Approved Leader before working with children or youth.

A. Approval Process.

1. **Screening Requirements**
   All adults who serve on behalf of PCWS as a leader of children or youth activities shall be subject to these requirements:
   a) Must be a member of, or actively participating in the life of, PCWS for a minimum of one year.
   b) Submit a completed Application (Appendix A)

c) Be interviewed by the Pastor, or their designee.
d) Have References Check.
e) Are subject to a Criminal Background check for all adults age 18 and older. (Appendix B)
f) Attend a training session on the Safe Space Program Policies and Procedures upon initial application and once every three years thereafter.
g) Anyone driving children or youth must complete the Transportation Form and be subject to a Drivers' License check. (Appendix C)

2. **Reference checks.** Anyone wanting to work with Children or Youth shall list three personal references on the Application. References will be checked using the Reference Check Form. (Appendix D).

3. **Background checks**. Criminal background checks and sex offender reviews will be performed on all persons employed by PCWS and all volunteers working with children or youth. Other background checks, such as motor vehicle record reports, will be performed as needed. Persons governed by this Policy shall provide such additional information and shall give such additional consents as may be necessary from time to time to carry out the purposes of this policy.

4. **Transportation.** All persons providing transportation must complete the Transportation Form and be on the approved Driver's list. Any professional transportation provider should be bonded and provide proof of insurance.

5. **Responsibility for reference and background checks**: The Pastor, or their designee, shall perform reference checks on all Volunteers who will be working with children or youth.

6. **Recordkeeping**. The Pastor, or their designee, shall maintain the Safe Space records for all Volunteers working with children or youth: all Applications, Background Checks, Reference Checks, Disclosure and Consent Forms. A list of trained and approved staff and volunteers shall be maintained by the Pastor, or their designee, and provided to all persons in charge of activities to ensure compliance with the policy. All information gathered in the screening process shall be held strictly confidential in a secure location as designated by the Pastor, or their designee. Access is permitted only to those persons who have a legitimate interest in the information.

7. **Failure to Comply**
   Any Approved Leader or Adult Staff person who does not attend training at least once every three years, will not be allowed to volunteer until they attend a training session. Approved drivers will re-submit the application for drivers and have their driving record checked at least once every three years.

B. Education and Training.

1. **Distribution of policy**. PCWS shall provide a copy of this policy to all persons who are governed by it, and those persons will sign the Receipt and Acknowledgment Form attached as (Appendix I). The Pastor or designee shall retain the original Receipt and Acknowledgment Forms. PCWS shall also furnish copies of the policy to others on request and shall post a copy of the current policy on its website.

2. **Training**. The Safe Space Program Team will sponsor training events at least annually. Training will include, at a minimum:
   a) Those working with children will be trained to recognize the signs and symptoms of neglect and of physical and sexual abuse.
   b) Training will be given regarding procedures to follow when an incident of suspected abuse, neglect, or misconduct is to be reported.
   c) Training will be given on the appropriate use of social media, (Suggested Practices for the Use of Social Media, Appendix E)

3. Persons governed by this policy are required to attend approved training before they participate in leading programs involving children and youth, and at least once every third year thereafter. Training may be attended at any time during the third year. For example, a person who trained at any time during 2015 will be required to attend training again during 2018. He or she can attend whichever 2018 training event best fits his or her schedule.

4. The Safe Space Program Secretary, with the assistance of the staff person for this policy, shall keep records of attendance at education and training events sponsored by the Safe Space Team. The staff person shall report to the Faith Formation Committee and the Session those persons who have attended the minimum hours of education and training and are Approved Leaders.

RESPONSE TO INCIDENT

A. Immediate Safety. If there is an immediate danger to any person, all necessary steps shall be taken to insure the person's safety. These may include calling for medical assistance or reporting the incident to the police.

B. Reporting the Incident

1. **Reporting.** Any person, Mandatory Reporter or not, having knowledge of suspected sexual misconduct or any other form of abuse or neglect shall report verbally the incident immediately to the Pastor/Head of Staff. If the Pastor/Head of Staff is unavailable or is the accused, it is appropriate to report to the Clerk of Session. Within 48 hours of making a verbal report, a written report shall be made on the Incident

Report Form and given to the Pastor/Head of Staff or, if unavailable, the Clerk of Session.

2. If reasonable cause exists to believe that sexual misconduct may have occurred, the Pastor/Head of Staff, or designee, shall make the following additional reports:

a) If the accused is a staff member of PCWS, the incident shall be reported to the Personnel Committee Moderator.
b) If the accused is a clergy member, the incident shall be reported to the Personnel Committee Moderator who must contact the Presbytery of Chicago.
c) If the accused is a volunteer, the incident shall be reported to the Pastor/Head of Staff or the designee.
d) The Pastor/Head of Staff shall also report to PCWS's insurance carrier.
e) If an allegation of child abuse or sexual misconduct on the grounds of the Church or at a Church function is supported by evidence sufficient to cause the Pastor, or designee, reasonable concern then the alleged offender, whether staff or volunteer, shall be confronted by two persons, one of the above and an officer of the church. The accused should be suspended immediately from all church duties involving supervision and/or care of children until such time as the matter is resolved. Suspension shall in no way imply an admission of guilt or be treated as an admission of guilt, but as protection for all parties involved in the allegation until further investigation can be made.

3. Report to Child Abuse Hotline. In addition to the reporting described above, if the Pastor, any person employed by PCWS, or teachers becomes aware of any suspected abuse or sexual misconduct or any questionable activity involving children, either directly or through a report submitted as required above, such person shall act as a "mandated reporter" under the Illinois Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act by making a report to the applicable state or county Child Abuse Hotline. See Appendix H.

4. Notification of Parent or Guardian. If the victim of the alleged abuse is a child, as soon as practicable after receiving the initial report of the incident, the Pastor/Head of Staff or designee shall inform the child's parent or guardian of the incident. If the parent or guardian is suspected of abusing the child, the Pastor/Head of Staff or the designee will cooperate with civil authorities regarding notification.

5. Mandated Reporters. In addition to state defined "mandated reporters," Clergy, Certified Christian Educators, Ruling Elders, and Deacons are required by the *Book of Order* to report knowledge of harm, or the risk of harm, related to the physical abuse, neglect, and/or sexual molestation or abuse of a minor to ecclesiastical and civil legal authorities (*Book of Order*, Sections G-6.0204b; G-6.0304b; G-6.0402b; G-14.0732).

a) Non-clergy staff and volunteers who are not professionals named in the IL Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act, and not required by the *Book of Order*, are not mandated reporters.

6. **Incident report form.** Within 48 hours after the incident, each person with knowledge of the incident shall complete a PCWS Incident Report Form (Appendix G) and deliver the form to the Pastor/Head of Staff or designee.

7. **Investigation.** The person or persons making the initial report to the Pastor/Head of Staff shall not conduct an investigation of the incident, but shall take all necessary steps to insure the child's immediate safety. After receiving the initial report, the Pastor/Head of Staff, or a designee, shall make sufficient inquiry to determine whether there is reasonable cause to believe that the child is an abused or neglected child. If reasonable cause exists, the Illinois DCFS will normally notify law enforcement and investigate the incident after being notified by a mandated reporter. The Church's insurance company may also conduct a separate investigation.

8. **Pastoral care and professional counseling.** The pastoral staff shall coordinate pastoral care and professional counseling as needed for the alleged victim, those reporting the incident, the accused, others affected by the allegations, and their respective families.

9. **Confidentiality.** Regardless of the circumstances, the identity of the reporting person, the accused, and the alleged victim, and the details of the situation should not be disclosed except to those who are professionally involved in the case or to the persons to whom reporting is mandated.

10. All information obtained through complaints or allegations of abuse or misconduct or from subsequent investigations shall be held strictly confidential in a secure location in the Church. Access is permitted only to those few persons who have a designated legitimate interest.

11. **Media Inquiries.** It is important to anticipate that questions from the media may arise. Media inquiries shall be directed to and addressed by the Pastor/Head of Staff or by someone designated by the Pastor/Head of Staff, unless the accused is a pastor. If the accused is a pastor, the media shall be referred to the Chicago Presbytery.

Presbyterian Church of Western Springs
Safe Space Policy
Definitions

A. **Accused.** The person against whom an accusation of sexual misconduct or child abuse or neglect is being made.

B. **Accuser.** The person claiming knowledge of sexual misconduct or child abuse or neglect by a person covered by this policy. The accuser may or may not be the victim of the alleged sexual misconduct, child abuse or neglect.

C. **Approved Leader.** A Person who has submitted an Application form, Background Check form, attended training, been interviewed, and approved to work with children and youth.

D. **Activity.** A program or event sponsored by or under the control of PCWS.

E. **Child.** Any person under the age of eighteen years and any person with a disability under the age of twenty-two years. A youth is a child between twelve - eighteen years.

F. **Emotional Abuse.** Unusually harsh, offensive or insensitive conduct toward another person that causes or is likely to cause emotional distress. Examples can include criticism, badgering, teasing, ridicule, rejection, humiliation, blame or unfavorable comparisons with other children or adults.

G. **Misuse of Technology.** The use of technology that results in sexually harassing or abusing another person, or emotionally abusing any child, including texting or emailing suggestive messages and images to persons. It is never appropriate to view pornography with or in view of children. If pornography includes a person under the age of eighteen, it is considered child abuse.

H. **Neglect.** The failure of a parent or responsible caretaker to provide adequate supervision, food, clothing, shelter, medical care, education or other basic necessity to a child or an adult without the mental capacity to consent.

I. **Parent.** A parent or legal guardian of a child who is participating in an activity.

J. **Physical Abuse.** Any act that results in non-accidental injury to another or involves harmful, potentially harmful or offensive touching of another.

K. **Presbyterian Church of Western Springs or Presbytery.** A mid-level council of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.); for purposes of this policy, the term 'PCWS' shall include any corporation controlled by PCWS through which PCWS employs staff and carries on its programs and activities.

L. Response. The action taken by the appropriate PCWS staff or entity when a report of sexual misconduct or child abuse or neglect is received. It may include inquiry into facts and circumstances, or possible disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment, or removal from office and/or membership.

M. Roaming Adult. Approved Leader who monitors classrooms and assists when necessary.

N. Sexual Abuse. Any offense involving sexual conduct in relation to:

1. any person under the age of eighteen years or anyone over the age of eighteen years without the mental capacity to consent; or

2. any person when the conduct includes force, threat, coercion, intimidation, or misuse of office or position (D-10.0401c).

O. Sexual Harassment. Conduct that includes, but is not limited to, unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, tormenting based on gender, and other verbal, visual or physical conduct of a sexual nature. In particular, sexual harassment occurs if:

1. submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment or of his or her participation in PCWS activities;

2. submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is the basis for employment decisions or other PCWS-related decisions affecting that individual;

3. such conduct has the purpose or effect of interfering with an individual's work performance or participation in PCWS activities by creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment;

4. such conduct, regardless of its intention, is objected to by the person at whom it is directed; or

5. such conduct includes unsolicited and unwelcome contact such as the following:

   a. written contact, such as sexually suggestive or obscene letters, notes, emails, text messages or invitations;

   b. verbal contact, such as sexually suggestive or obscene comments, threats, slurs, epithets, jokes or sexual propositions;

   c. physical contact, such as intentional touching, pinching, brushing against another's body, impeding or blocking movement, assault or sexual coercion; and

d. visual contact, such as leering or staring at another's body, gesturing, displaying sexually suggestive objects or pictures, cartoons, posters, or magazines.

P. Sexual Misconduct. Any sexual abuse of children or adults and/or any sexual harassment.

Q. Social Media. Social media are web-based and mobile technologies, such as Facebook and Twitter, that allow people to share, express themselves and interact with one another.

R. Staff or **Employee.** A person employed by or contracted with the PCWS.

S. Victim. A person who has allegedly suffered an act of sexual misconduct or physical or emotional abuse, or, a child or an adult without mental capacity to consent who has allegedly suffered neglect.

T. Volunteer. A person who provides services for PCWS and receives no benefit or remuneration. Volunteers include, but are not limited to, persons elected or appointed to serve on boards, committees, and other groups.

Presbyterian Church of Western Springs
Safe Space Policy
APPENDIX A
Application to Work with Children and Youth

Safe Space Policy
Presbyterian Church of Western Springs

This application and information form supports our efforts to help the church provide a safe and protected environment for children, youth and adults who participate in our programs and use our facilities. It is used in connection with the Safe Space Policy of the Presbyterian Church of Western Springs (PCWS). The information recorded on the form will be kept confidential and reviewed only by the pastoral staff, Christian Education Administrator and will be kept on file in a secure location. Thank you for your interest in working with children and youth! Please complete the entire form prior to coming in for your interview, and be prepared to discuss during the interview.

Today's date: _____

Legal Name: _____
Last First Middle

Address: _____

_____

Home Phone: _____ Email: _____

Cell Phone: _____

Current occupation: _____

Work Phone: _____

Presbyterian Church of Western Springs/Church Activity/Interest Areas

1) When did your relationship with PCWS begin? _____

2) Are you a member of PCWS? Yes _____ No _____ When did you join? _____

3) Have you had leadership or volunteer experiences with children or youth? If yes, please list.

_____

_____

_____

2) Do you have any training or education that has prepared you to work with children or youth? If yes, please list.

_____

_____

_____

3) Are you currently involved in any church ministries and activities?

_____

_____

4) Age / Grade Ministry you would most like to serve: _

PERSONAL REFERENCES:

Name Address Phone

_____

Occupation Relationship

Name Address Phone

_____

Occupation Relationship

Name Address Phone

_____

Occupation Relationship

Presbyterian Church of Western Springs
Safe Space Policy

Affirmation of True and Complete Information

I certify that this volunteer application was completed by me and that all of the information on this application is true and correct to the best of my knowledge. I understand that any falsification, misrepresentation, or omission of facts called for herein will result in my disqualification from further consideration as a leader for Children and Youth Activities. I understand that this application is not valid without my signature.

I understand that the information I provided may be verified if necessary, by contacting persons or organizations named in this application or persons or organizations that may have relevant information concerning me. I hereby release and agree to hold harmless from liability any person or organization that provides information in good faith. In signing this form, I affirm that the information I have given herein is true and correct.

Signature of Applicant _____ Date _____

If a minor, please provide signature of a parent or guardian:

_____ _____

Signature Date

Interview Date: _____ Print Name: _____

Signature of Interviewer _____

Presbyterian Church of Western Springs
Safe Space Policy
APPENDIX B
Background Screening Consent Form
Presbyterian Church of Western Springs

I, _____, hereby authorize Presbyterian Church of Western Springs and/or its agents to make an independent investigation of my background that may include: references, character, past employment, education, adult criminal or police records, and motor vehicle records including those maintained by both public and private organizations and all public records for the purpose of confirming the information contained on my Application and/or obtaining other information which may be material to my qualifications for service now and, if applicable, during the tenure of my employment or service with Presbyterian Church of Western Springs. In addition, if I am convicted of any applicable future offense, I will notify PCWS.

I release Presbyterian Church of Western Springs and its agents and any person or entity, which provides information pursuant to this authorization, from any and all liabilities, claims or law suits in regards to the information obtained from any and all of the above referenced sources used. The following is my true and complete legal name and all information is true and correct to the best of my knowledge:

Full Name (Printed) _____

Maiden Name or Other Names Used _____

Social Security Number: _____ Date of Birth*: ____/____/____
(mm/dd/yyyy)

Present Address _____

_____

City State Zip

How Long at Present Address? _____ If less than 7 years at current address please complete:

How Long at Former Address _____

Former Address: _____

_____

City State Zip

Please list all states and counties of residence since turning age 18:

_____

(Please circle any of the following states in which you have lived: CA, CO, DE, LA, MA, SD, VT, WV, WY)

Driver's License Number: _____ State of License: _____

_____ _____

Signature of Applicant Date

*NOTE: The above information is required for identification purposes only, and is in no manner used as qualifications for employment, internship, or service as a volunteer.

Presbyterian Church of Western Springs
Safe Space Policy

APPENDIX C

Children/Youth Transportation Form
Safe Space Policy
Presbyterian Church of Western Springs

All those who will transport non-related children/youth within the scope of a church program are to complete this form.

Please attach copies of: Current driver's license
Proof of insurance ("Illinois Insurance Card")
Current vehicle registration

Name: _____

Address: _____

_____

Phone: (*incl. area code*) _____

Home: _____ Work: _____ Cell: _____

Driver's License Number: _____ State: _____ Expires: _____

Your vehicle: Make: _____ Model: _____ Year: _____

Color: _____ License Plate # _____ State _____

Maximum number of passengers (including driver and with proper restraints): _____

Is your vehicle in good repair and equipped with appropriate safety restraints: _____

Have you ever had your driver's license revoked or suspended? _____ If so, please explain:

_____

_____

_____

_____

Presbyterian Church of Western Springs
Safe Space Policy

In transporting children/youth, I agree to:

- obey all traffic regulations, including speed limits and safety restraint requirements,
- transport no more than the number of persons my vehicle is equipped with working seatbelts to carry,
- require the use of seatbelts by all passengers, including the driver,
- use car seats as required by law,
- not to drive when under the influence of alcohol or performance-impairing drugs, and
- drive only directly to and from authorized sites.

I certify that the information given above is true and complete to the best of my knowledge and belief. If, in the future, changes in my drivers license status, insurance, or vehicle registration would prohibit me from being an approved driver under this policy, I promise to notify PCWS.

Signed:_____ Date: _____

APPENDIX D
Presbyterian Church of Western Springs
Safe Space Policy
REFERENCE CHECK FORM

Reference check for: _____

Reference name: _____Reference Phone : _____

Reference name: _____Reference Phone : _____

Reference name: _____Reference Phone : _____

Church will be contacting these references and asking some of the following questions:
How long have you known this person?

How would you describe this person's ability to work with children and youth?

Do you have any reason to believe this person would not be fit for ministry? If so, please describe.

Is there anything else you'd like to tell me about this person?

Reference Completed By: (name printed) _____

Signature _____ Date _____

All responses will be kept confidential and shared only with those who have a legitimate need to know.

Presbyterian Church of Western Springs
Safe Space Policy
Appendix E
SUGGESTED PRACTICES FOR THE USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media are positive and enriching resources that connect people and enrich ministry. However, intrinsic differences between the digital and physical worlds can create confusion that affects pastoral relationships. The following suggested practices are designed to support the use of social media in faith communities.

Commonly Accepted Principles of Healthy Boundaries and Safe Congregations

- Adults have more power than children and youth.
- Because of the expectations and assumptions surrounding their role, clergy generally have more power than people with whom they have a pastoral relationship.
- The mutuality of a truly egalitarian friendship does not exist when there is a disparity of power.

General Information about Digital Communications

- THERE IS NO CONFIDENTIALITY ON THE INTERNET. All digital communication, be it through email, texting, social media, blogs, etc., can be searched by others or reposted publically.
- Healthy boundaries and safe church practices are as essential in the digital world as they are in the physical world.
- Interactions in the digital world should be as transparent as those in the physical world.
- In the digital world, a "friend" is anyone with whom you are willing to communicate. In the physical world, expectations for friendships include more intimacy, and self-disclosure than are typical in the digital world.
- Laws regarding mandated reporting of suspected abuse/neglect/exploitation of children, youth, elders and vulnerable adults apply in the digital world as they do in the physical world.

Recommended Practices and Guidelines for Interactions with Children and Youth

- Adults who minister to children and youth are strongly encouraged to set very stringent privacy settings on any social networking profile.
- Adults should not initiate "friend" requests to children or youth. Youth may feel uncomfortable about declining such requests due to the disparity of power between youth and adults.
- If an adult chooses to accept friend requests from children or youth who are associated with their community of faith, other adult leaders must have full access to all aspects of that adult's profile and correspondence.
- Adults who want to connect via a social networking website with youth to whom they minister are strongly encouraged to set up a closed group account that youth may join. Youth requesting to "friend" an adult can then be invited to join

this dedicated group rather than be accepted as a friend on an adult's personal profile account. The purpose of maintaining two separate accounts or profiles is to create a line of privacy and maintain healthy boundaries between youth and real family, friends and colleagues.

Dedicated Groups on Social Networking Sites

- Dedicated groups should have at least two unrelated adult administrators as well as at least two youth administrators.
- Dedicated groups for youth groups should be closed, but not "hidden."
- Behavioral covenants should be created to govern what content is appropriate and inappropriate for each dedicated group. The covenant should be readily available to any person who wishes to join the dedicated group.
- Dedicated groups for youth should be open to the parents of the current youth members.
- When adult leaders and youth group members leave the dedicated group, they should be removed from digital communication with that dedicated group and its current members.

Recommended Practices and Guidelines for Interactions with Adults

- Clergy are strongly encouraged to set stringent privacy settings on any social networking profile.
- Clergy should generally not initiate "friend" requests to parishioners and others to whom they minister. Parishioners may feel uncomfortable about declining a friend request from their pastor. Any parishioner who does not receive a friend request may feel slighted.
- Clergy who want to connect via a social networking website with parishioners are strongly encouraged to set up a dedicated group account that all parishioners may join.
- Clergy should consider the impact of declining a "friend" request from a parishioner. These encounters may create a tension in "real world" relationships.

Recommendations for digital communications and content

- Remember that materials posed on any site are NOT CONFIDENTIAL.
- Ask – 'Are your posts consistent with the values and mission of the church or ministry that you serve?'
- Ask – 'Will your social media participation affect your job duties?'
- Ask - 'Who, how and when may photos be tagged?'

Recommendations for Posting Content Online

- Faith communities must inform participants when they are being taped. If the video will be posted on the web or broadcast through other media, participants must be informed accordingly.

- Photographs or videotapes of children and youth shall not be posted unless the faith community has a signed parental release.
- The names, especially last names, ages, grades, and other identifying information of children and youth should not appear in any media, especially online.

Other Recommendations

- Email is generally not an effective communication method for matters that are pastorally or legally sensitive, emotionally charged or require extensive conversation.
- Humor or sarcasm can be easily misinterpreted.
- Think before clicking 'send.'
- If there is a computer room in the church that is accessible to youth or visitors, the usage should be monitored and cookies should be regularly cleared.

Presbyterian Church of Western Springs
Safe Space Policy
APPENDIX F
PARTICIPANT REGISTRATION AND RELEASE FORM
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF WESTERN SPRINGS

Name of Event: _____

Address: _____

Date of Event: _____

Cost to Attend: _____

Please make payment for all participants with one check payable to "Presbyterian Church of Western Springs"

Name of Participant(s) - *Please print* _____

_____

_____

THE COVENANT

At this gathering, we will be doing our best to live and play together as a family in Christian community. Family life is based on love, respect, trust, support, and on spending time together. To create and maintain this relationship of family and community, each participant agrees:

1. To follow the JUPY/UPY rules of no smoking, no alcoholic beverages, no illegal drugs, and no inappropriate sexual behavior.
2. To treat every JUPY/UPY Advisor and participant with respect and Christian love.

I recognize that I am joining this Christian family and community for this event. I agree to abide by this covenant while I am a member of this community. I understand that if I break this covenant, I may be sent home at my parent's expense and my church session may be notified.

Signature(s) of Participant:_____

Signature(s) of Participant:_____

Signature(s) of Participant:_____

TO BE SIGNED BY PARENT/GUARDIAN (for any participant under age 18 at the time of the event)
I have read "the covenant" and I understand that if my son/daughter breaks the covenant and a decision is made to send him/her home, it will be at my expense.

I also give permission for my son/daughter to ride from the Presbyterian Church of Western Springs to this event, and then back to the church with an Approved Leader.

Signature of Parent/Guardian: _____ Date: _____

PHOTO RELEASE
The Presbyterian Church of Western Springs occasionally will use photographs and/or videos of events in publicity materials. We will be taking photographs at this event. I give my permission for photographs of my child to be used in PCWS newsletters, Facebook Page, Website and other publicity materials.

Signature of Parent/Guardian: _____ Date: _____

Presbyterian Church of Western Springs
Safe Space Policy

APPENDIX G

INCIDENT REPORT FORM

Date of Report: _____

1. REPORTER INFORMATION (please print)

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone & Email: _____

Description of Incident (please print using as much space as needed.)

Please describe the incident of misconduct, including as much of the following as possible

(1) the name and contact info of the victim
(2) the name and contact info of the alleged abuser
(3) the date of incident
(4) the time of incident
(5) the location of incident
(6) Please include if medical assistance or first aid was provided, if any other adult leaders were witnesses, or any other information that could be useful.

Presbyterian Church of Western Springs
Safe Space Policy
APPENDIX H
Child Abuse Hotline

Child Protection Statutes

Most states have 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, namely: 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 Acknowledgement of Mandated Reporter Status and Acknowledgement of Mandated Reporter Status (Clergy). The acknowledgement forms must be retained by the employer. Presbyterian Church of Western Springs staff and volunteers who are not teaching elders and who are not among the categories of professionals listed in the applicable child protection statute are not mandated reporters.

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, DHS or the applicable child protection agency. In most cases, the reporting requirement will be satisfied if the Pastor or designee makes the report, but if the Pastor or designee 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 congregation to make the report. Presbyterian Church of Western Springs staff members and volunteers who are teaching elders, therefore, should make the report themselves and should inform the Pastor that they have made the report.

The initial report is an oral report made by calling the Child Abuse Hotline. Following are hotline numbers:

In Illinois, the Department of Children and Family Services: 1-800-252-2873.

National Child Abuse Hotline: 1-800-422-4453
1-800-4-A CHILD

Illinois Elder Abuse Hotline: 1-866-800-1409 (For suspected mistreatment in the home).
1-800-252-8966 (For suspected mistreatment in facilities)

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. (This applies only to filing a report with DCFS. Any person who abuses a child must be reported under the other provisions of this policy)
- There is a specific incident of abuse or neglect or a specific set of circumstances involving suspected abuse or neglect.
- There is demonstrated harm to the child or a substantial risk of physical or sexual injury to the child.

Information the reporter should have ready to give to the Hotline:

- Names, birth dates (or approximate ages), genders, races, etc. for all adult and child subjects.
- Addresses for all victims and perpetrators, including current location.
- Information about the siblings or other family members, if available.
- Specific information about the abusive incident or the circumstances contributing to risk of harm.
- When the incident occurred and the extent of the injuries.
- How the child says it happened and any other pertinent information.

- Reporters should be prepared to provide phone numbers where they may be reached throughout the day in case the Hotline must call back for more information.

Additional information:

For additional information on reporting statutes and procedures, check the applicable state child protection website. In Illinois, the website is at http://www.state.il.us/dcfs.

Presbyterian Church of Western Springs
Safe Space Policy
APPENDIX I
RECEIPT AND ACKNOWLEDGMENT FORM

I have received the Presbyterian Church of Western Springs Safe Space Policy, acknowledge its contents, and agree to abide by its standards.

Date: _____, _____

Signature: _____

Name: _____
(please print your name)