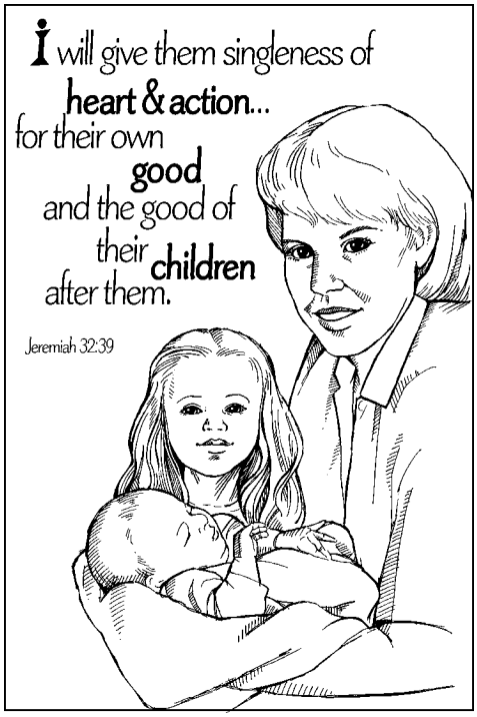
Lowell
United Methodist Church

Safe Sanctuary Policy

Requirements and Guidelines



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Safe Sanctuary Protection Policy

Lowell United Methodist Church

Carrollton, GA

Introduction

A central tenet of the Christian faith is the inherent value and worth of all children, youth, and adults. Children and youth are least able to protect themselves in our society and are particularly vulnerable to abuse and neglect. Lowell United Methodist Church is desirous of doing what it can to protect the youth and children who participate in the life of this congregation.

We believe implementing a policy and adopting procedures to protect our children recognizes that:

Our Christian faith calls us to offer both hospitality and protection to the little ones, the Children. The Social Principles of the United Methodist Church states that ". . . children must be protected from economic, physical and sexual exploitation and abuse." Tragically, Churches have not always been safe places for children. Child sexual abuse, and exploitation. . . occur in Churches, both, large and small, urban and rural. The problem cuts across all economic, cultural and racial lines. . . . God calls us to make our Churches safe places, protecting children and other vulnerable persons from abuse.

Child abuse prevention and Ministry Protection policies and procedures are essential for congregations, not only for the protection and safety of our children and youth, but also for our volunteers and staff working with youth.

The Gospel calls us to be engaged in ministry with children and youth. We should not allow the risks to undermine or stop our ministry. Rather, we must:

- *Acknowledge the risks and develop a practical plan to address these issues:*
- *Take steps to prevent harm to our children; and*
- *Continue to answer the Gospel's imperative to be in ministry with children, thus making a difference in their lives.*

I. Definitions

A. "Child" and "Youth" and "Adult"

Following the public school system, a "child" is anyone in 5th grade or under. A "youth" is anyone not a "child" and up to the age of 18. An adult is anyone 18 years of age or older and is not enrolled in high school. (A 17 year old may be considered an adult under GA Statute)

B. "Paid Staff Person," "Adult Volunteer," and "Screened Adult"

A **Paid Staff Person** is someone paid by the church, overseen by Staff Parish and screened. An **Adult Volunteer** is someone who has not been screened. They can work in a room with a Screened Adult or paid staff person. A **Screened Adult** is a volunteer who has gone through the screening process and Safe Sanctuary training. These persons may or may not be members, but they must be regular attendees and active in church activities for at least six months.

C. Youth Helpers - Youth below the age of 18 years assisting with child or youth activities. They can assist with activities but should not be considered an adult volunteer and should be supervised themselves.

D. Clergy – people appointed to serve as pastors by the Bishop of the North Georgia Methodist Conference as defined in paragraph 141 2008 Book of Discipline..

E."Child/Youth Abuse"

For purposes of this Policy, **child/youth abuse** includes any of the following:

1. **Physical Abuse**:
   Violent non-accidental contact which results in injury. This includes, but is not limited to, striking, biting, or shaking. Injuries include bruises, fractures, cuts, and burns.
2. **Sexual Abuse**:
   Any form of sexual activity with a child/youth, whether at the Church, at home, or any other setting. The abuser may be an adult, an adolescent, or another minor.
3. **Emotional Abuse**:
   A pattern of intentional conduct which crushes a child's/youth's spirit attacks his/her self-worth through rejection, threats, terrorizing, isolating, or belittling.

II. Screening and Selection of Church Staff and Adult Volunteers

"The Pastor and the Staff Parish Relations Committee are charged with the responsibility of developing, implementing and evaluating the process for recruiting, screening, selecting, training and supervising of non-appointive church staff and adult volunteers." (¶ 258.12 2008 Book of Discipline)

A. Adult volunteers who regularly work with the Church's children and youth and each church paid staff person will be screened. Those who work regularly with children/youth will be trained on child protection issues prior to beginning their regular involvement with children and youth. The procedures for screening are as follows: Each person being considered to work regularly with children and/or youth, whether as a volunteer or paid staff person, shall fill out an application form (See Appendix I). This screening is good for 5 years after which time a re-screening will be necessary.

B. Before placing the applicant in a position of responsibility with children or youth, a designated paid staff member or other person charged with specific responsibility will interview the applicant reviewing with them the written application.

   (See possible questions for interviews in Appendix II.)

C. The person conducting this interview will contact the references provided on the application form and any additional persons as the circumstances dictate. A written record of such contacts will be retained with the application form. (See Appendix III).

D. Each person applying to work with children and/or youth shall "authorize" the church to conduct a criminal background check. At a minimum, the background check will include the one offered by the Carroll County Sheriffs Dept. You must get written authorization to run a background screening.

E. For persons who have not lived in Georgia for the past five years, a national background check needs to be conducted. (See Appendix IV).

F. Before beginning work with either children or youth, each paid staff member and volunteer will sign a statement that they have read, understood, and agree to abide by this Child and Youth Protection Policy. (See Appendix V – Participation Covenant)

G. After the interview and background check have been accomplished, the decision will be made to accept or reject the applicant as a paid staff member or adult volunteer who will work with youth and/or children.

H. Where it has been determined that an applicant should **not** work with children or youth, those persons involved with the decision should handle it in a sensitive manner. The appointed clergy and supply pastors or her/his designee should inform the applicant in person. The specific reasons for the decision should be given, whenever possible.

I. It is important that all records be kept in a locked cabinet in the appointed clergy's office. There should be a system in place that gives those who need these records easy access and a safe place to be stored when they are not needed.

J. Although not required to personally accomplish the above tasks, the appointed clergy and supply pastors shall be responsible for ensuring compliance with sub-paragraphs (A) through (H) above.

III. Ongoing Education of Persons Who Work With Children and Youth

The Pastor and Staff Parish Relations Committee shall ensure that regularly scheduled (i.e., at least annually) training focused on current issues of child protection is available to and received by those working with children and youth. Attendance at this training shall be required of all paid staff members, screened and non-screened adult volunteers who work consistently with children and/or youth.

The training should include:

A. The definition and recognition of child abuse.
B. The Church's policy and procedures on child abuse and the reasons for having them.
C. The need to maintain a positive classroom environment, including appropriate discipline and age-level characteristics.
D. The appropriate behavior for teachers and leaders of child/youth events.
E. Abuse reporting responsibilities and procedures.
F. Definition of appropriate interpersonal boundaries.

IV. Supervision of Children and Youth

A. General Rules

1. All activities involving children and youth will be supervised by at least one screened adult.
2. When reasonably feasible, each room set aside for children/youth should have a door with a window. (Windows in doors tend to remove the opportunities for secrecy and isolation, conditions every child abuser seeks). Half doors should be considered for Toddler to Second Grade children to keep them from wandering outside the classroom.

3. The “Two Person Rule” is defined as having at least two people in any classroom or setting, one of which must be a screened adult volunteer or staff person.

B. Supervision of Classroom Activities

1. Crib/Toddler to Second Grade

At least one **screened** adult will be present for all classroom activities involving infants, toddlers, and children in grades K-2. When feasible, there should be two **screened** adults present, and where the two adults are family members, it is preferable that a third adult be present. In addition, a designated person should periodically check each classroom.

2. Grades 3-5

At least one **screened** adult will be present for all classroom activities. Two screened adults are preferred. In addition, a designated person should periodically check each classroom. Children should be escorted to and from bathroom facilities or when otherwise leaving the room by either one of the supervising adults or by a designated floating person who checks on all classrooms. Where two adults are not available to supervise, the classroom doors are to remain open.

3. Grades 6-12

At least one screened adult will be present for all classroom activities. A designated person should periodically check all classrooms.

C. Open Door Policy

Parents, volunteers or staff of the church will be permitted, as reasonableness dictates, to visit and observe all programs and classrooms at any time.

D. Sign-in/Sign-out Procedure

Adults responsible for children who are infant through toddler should sign-in their child and indicate the names of the authorized person(s) to whom the child may be signed-out. Adults responsible for children age 2 through second grade should sign their child in and out of Sunday School and other children’s activities. Picking-up children by non-authorized persons is forbidden.

E. Supervision of Non-Classroom Activities

At least two screened adults will be present for all non-classroom activities involving children and/or youth. Any meetings held in an individual’s home will be supervised by at least two adults who are not members of the same family. Meetings held in an individual’s home must be pre-approved by the child’s/youth’s parent or guardian.

F. Counseling of Youth and Children

In instances of youth or child counseling where circumstances dictate that counseling would be most effective on a one-on-one basis, an appropriate church paid staff person may meet individually with a youth with the knowledge of at least one other paid staff member. At any counseling session with children or youth, the door of the room used should remain open for the entire session, unless there is glass in the door or wall which gives a clear view into the room. If another adult is not in the building when the counseling occurs, the session should be moved to a public place, such as a restaurant or outside where other people are present.

<u>NOTE 1</u>: At the initial meeting, the counselor should first determine if they are qualified to address the child's/youth's needs effectively. Counseling should be limited to no more than three sessions. Referral to another more qualified counselor should be considered.

<u>NOTE 2</u>: This is not meant to govern a licensed professional counselor in a paid counseling relationship with a child or youth.

G. Time Following Group Events

Following child/youth group events, it is inevitable that occasionally a child's/youth's transportation arrive after all other participants have departed. In those circumstances, a child/youth may unavoidably be supervised by one screened adult. Under these circumstances, the general rule requiring the presence of two screened adults is suspended and the screened adult is responsible for exercising his/her best judgment for the participant's well-being. Waiting should be in a publicly viewable area.

V. <u>Transportation</u>

A. General Rules

Transporting children and youth is an important concern. Their safety can be at risk in a variety of ways. Therefore, certain discretion must be used depending upon the event attended, the locale of the event, and the age group participating. This Policy includes both Requirements and Guidelines. When feasible, there should be adherence to the recommendations in the Guidelines. It is expected that the Requirements will always be followed.

B. Requirements

1. Drivers shall be known to the designated adult leader of the event.
2. When a child/youth is transported in any vehicle, the driver shall be either the child's/youth's parent/guardian, or a screened adult or a paid staff person who is at least 25 years old.
3. When a child/youth is transported in a church-owned/leased/rented vehicle, the driver shall be at least 25 years of age.
4. Drivers shall have a valid driver's license for the vehicle being operated. For example, if driving a church bus, a commercial license is required. A copy of the driver's license shall be on file at the church.
5. Drivers shall require that seat belts be used at all times and the number of passengers must not exceed the number of seat belts. All passengers must be restrained according to GA law.
6. Drivers should be advised of a designated route and should not deviate from it except in cases of emergency or road detours.
7. Drivers should not use cell phones unless required for communication with other drivers and shall not text message while driving.
8. When there is reason to believe it would not be safe for a youth to ride in a vehicle driven by another youth, the adults responsible should intervene and take reasonable steps to make alternative arrangements for all concerned.
9. When a trip is planned and the destination is expected to be 100 miles or more from the point of departure, drivers are to be listed on an "approved driver list" maintained in the church office.
10. Persons who regularly drive church owned vehicles are to be listed on an "approved driver

list" maintained in the church office.

11. In order to be listed on the "approved driver list" of drivers, drivers must submit a copy of a driver's license valid in the state of GA and proof of insurance.
12. Drivers will read and sign an acknowledgement form indicating that the Safe Sanctuary Policy has been read and will be followed (See Appendix IV).

C. Guidelines

1. Drivers should be accompanied by at least one other adult.
2. Drivers should receive training for the church owned/leased/rented vehicle being operated.
3. Youth who drive their own vehicles should be reminded regularly of the importance of vehicle safety.

VI. Trip and Retreat Supervision

Trip and Retreat settings can call for different child/youth protection requirements depending on the circumstances. What follows are Requirements and Guidelines of this Policy. The Requirements should always be implemented. Depending on the circumstances of the setting, who is in attendance, etc., some or all of the Guidelines should be implemented. Those in charge of the trip or retreat should be mindful of both Requirements and Guidelines, in addition to applying their own wisdom to the needs of a given occasion.

A. Requirements

1. There will be at least two **screened** adults present for all trips, retreats and other events where the children and/or youth gather overnight at, or away from, the church campus.
2. There will be at least one **screened** adult for each gender present at co-ed overnight events. At single gender overnight events, at least one of the two screened adults present shall be of the same gender as the child/youth.
3. The person in charge of youth/children for any off campus event and/or retreat shall carry parental permission slips including permission for emergency medical care and a medical information form. (See Appendix VI & VII)
4. No adult shall share a bed with an unrelated child/youth.

B. Guidelines

In a hotel type setting, rooms should be assigned as follows:

1. Separate rooms for adults and child/youth should be assigned with at least two children youth per room.
2. Assignments should be made so that an adult room is between two children/ youth rooms.
3. Adults should make random monitoring hall trips and room checks at night by two adults of the same gender as those being checked.
4. A hotel should be selected where the rooms open to the interior of the building (i.e., do not open to the outside).

VII. On-line Safety

It is acknowledged that the use of computers and other electronic means of communications may be useful tools in supporting child and youth ministries. However, these forms of communication also potentially pose a unique risk. Church computers for guests or program

participants that access the internet should be in high-traffic places and randomly monitored by staff. Controls shall be in place prevent access to inappropriate content.

VIII. Responding to Allegations of Child Abuse

Georgia Statute entitled "Mandatory Reports" states that: "*Any person who knows, or has reasonable cause to suspect, that a child is abused, abandoned, or neglected by a parent, legal custodian, caregiver, or other person responsible for the child's welfare, as defined in this chapter,… shall report such knowledge or suspicion to the department*"

While the statute is limited to situations involving abuse by a parent, custodian, caregiver or other persons responsible for a child's welfare, the moral imperative to protect children extends to other situations where abuse is suspected. Suspected abuse within the context of a church day school or pre-school does fall within the description of the Statute and a report is required.

Clearly, when child abuse is suspected or observed, the moral imperative, and potentially the legal requirement, is to call the Child Abuse Hotline 1-800-CHILDREN (1-800-244-5373)

The following steps shall be taken:

A. Immediately, yet with dignity and respect for the sacred worth of the accused, remove the accused from further involvement with children and/or youth. Once the proper authorities have been contacted and the safety of the child or youth is secured, the appointed clergy or other designated persons should inform the accused that abuse has been reported.

B. If abuse is observed by, disclosed to, or suspected by a volunteer and/or paid staff member of the church, the observer shall report the incident immediately to the appointed clergy. If the appointed clergy are not available, the matter should be reported to the District Superintendent.
If the accused is the appointed clergy or a member of her/his family, the allegations shall be immediately reported to the District Superintendent and immediately reported to the proper authorities as required by state or local law. The District Superintendent will take responsibility and act according to established rules of The Book of Discipline with respect to claims against a pastor. If the District Superintendent is not available, the incident should be reported to the Bishop's office in Atlanta.

C. Notify the parents of the victim and take whatever steps are necessary to assure the safety and well being of the child or youth until the parent(s) arrive. **NOTE**: If one or both of the parents is the alleged abuser, follow the advice of the authorities concerning notification of others.

D. Take all allegations seriously and reach out to the victim and the victim's family. Show care and support to help prevent further hurt. Extend whatever pastoral resources are needed. Remember that the care and safety of the victim is the **first** priority. Respond in a positive and supportive manner to the victim and the victim's family.

E. The church should provide a supportive atmosphere to all those who are affected, offering both objectivity and empathy as it seeks to create a climate in which healing can take place.

F. After having reported the suspected abuse to the proper authorities, the appointed clergy is to report the incident immediately to the District Superintendent. If the District Superintendent is unavailable, the incident should be reported to the Bishop's office.

G. Keep a written report of the steps taken by the Church in response to the reported abuse. (See Appendix VII). The report should be brief and contain only factual information relevant to

the situation. It should be kept in a secure place. It should be written in ink or typed to prevent it from being changed.

H. Any contact with the media should be handled by the appointed clergy or a **pre-determined** spokesperson selected by the appointed clergy. **NOTE**: The Conference Communications Department is a good source of help when media questions arise. The church spokesperson should generally convey a spirit of concern for the spiritual, physical, and emotional wellbeing of all who are affected, and that the matter is being diligently and appropriately handled.

NOTE: The question that sometimes arises is: What about a "confidential communication" with a clergy person?

Georgia law states that "*a member of the clergy shall not be required to report child abuse reported solely within the context of confession or other similar communication required to be kept confidential under church doctrine or practice. When a clergy member receives information about child abuse from any other source, the clergy member shall comply with the reporting requirements of this code section, even though the clergy may have also received a report of child abuse from the confession of the perpetrator".* Thus a clergy person may be confronted with the dilemma of discovering or suspecting abuse in the setting of a privileged conversation. While the church has historically placed a high value on clergy keeping such confidences, the 2008 *UM Discipline*, par. 341.5, provides an exception in cases of suspected child abuse or neglect.

Again, the moral imperative is to do that which will best protect the child/youth.

VIII. Implementation

Unless otherwise specifically stated, it shall be the responsibility of the Staff Parish Relations Committee to implement this Safe Sanctuary Policy, to design and conduct future training, and to ensure the ongoing effectiveness of this Safe Sanctuary Policy.

IX. Application

All of those who participate in the life of this congregation and use its facilities – individuals, organizations, and groups within and outside this congregation -- are expected to respect, implement, and adhere to these provisions as a minimum.

Adoption

This Safe Sanctuary Policy is adopted by action of the Church Council of Lowell United Methodist Church this _____ day of _____, 20__.

_____ _____

Appointed clergy Chair, Staff Parish Relations Committee

SSP APPENDIX I CHILD/YOUTH WORKER APPLICATION

Full Name: _____

Home Address: _____

Daytime Phone: _____ Evening Phone: _____

Occupation: _____

Employer: _____

Current Job Responsibilities: _____
_____

Previous Experience with Children/youth: _____
_____

Special Interests, Hobbies, Skills: _____

Availability to Work? (Check One or More)
Days: _____ Evenings: _____ Weekends: _____

Can You Make a One-Year Commitment? Yes or No

Do You Have Your Own Transportation? Yes or No

Do You Have a Valid Driver's License? Yes or No; If Yes Please Provide Your License Number:
_____

Initial here that we have your permission to check and obtain a report of your driving record and to share that information with those persons who will act on this Application?
_____ Yes No _____ Initials_____ Date initialed: _____

Why Do You Want To Work With Children/Youth? _____

_____

What Gifts, Education, Training, or Interests Do You Have That Would Help You Work With Children/Youth?

What are your views on appropriate ways to discipline?

Have you ever been charged with, convicted of, or plead guilty to a crime, either a misdemeanor or a felony (including but not limited to drug-related charges, child abuse, or other crimes of violence, theft or serious motor vehicle violations)? Yes or No

If “Yes” explain:
_____
_____

Have you ever had to deal with a child abuse situation in any way, including being abused, being accused of abuse, knowing someone who was abused, etc.? Yes or No

If Yes, please explain: _____
_____
_____

If Yes, what was your role: _____
_____

References: Please list three personal references (i.e., people who are not related to you by blood or marriage) and provide a complete address and phone number for each.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Daytime Phone: _____ Evening Phone: _____

Relationship to Applicant: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

Daytime Phone: _____ Evening Phone: _____

Relationship to Applicant: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

Daytime Phone: _____ Evening Phone: _____

Relationship to Applicant: _____

Do we have your permission to contact these references as well as anyone else in order to obtain information about you for the purpose of considering you for a position of one who would work with children and / or youth? _____Yes No _____

Do we have your permission to share this information with those persons who will participate in acting on this Application? _____ Yes No _____

Date:_____ _____

Signature of Applicant

SSP APPENDIX II

INTERVIEW GUIDELINES

There are a number of interview questions that can help in determining the motives behind why people want to work with children. Other questions can help to identify traits often found in child abusers. By asking questions, keeping notes and sharing your concerns and thoughts with other interviewers you may be able to screen-out potential abusers in the early stages of the pre-employment process.

• Tell me about yourself. This begins the interview with less threatening, open-ended questions. It allows the candidate some control in what he/she wants to share. They often reveal information in response to this question that you could not or would not think to ask.

• Summarize your employment history. Look for frequent moves, gaps in employment, and reasons for termination.

• Tell me about your experiences with children. Have you worked or volunteered for other youth serving organizations? Watch for adults whose lives seem to revolve around spending time with children.

• Share with me a favorite family memory. Adults raised in abusive households may have issues that they haven't dealt with. The majority of abusers have been abused as a child.

• What strengths can you bring to this job?

• Why do you want to work with children? Once again, watch the candidate who is too child focused or those who want to work with children because they are "pure", "innocent", "trusting", "non-judgmental", "clean", etc. Adults should want to work with children because they have something to offer children. Beware of the adult who wants to work with children because children meet then- adult needs for control, love, or affection.

• What do you do in your spare (leisure) time? What are your hobbies or interests? Watch for those who prefer to spend their free time with children and those whose hobbies are more appealing to children than they are to most adults (i.e., video games, photography, models, magic, etc.).

• What ages of children do you prefer to work with? Child sexual abusers generally have a specific age they prefer. Does the candidate indicate a preference for sex, age, certain traits?

• Do you have any reservations about working with children of different ages? Same as above.

• Do you think there are any reasons to treat boys and girls differently? Listen closely to their reasons or rationale. Does it feel right?

• How were you disciplined as a child? How did you feel about this way? Watch for families that used physical punishment as a method to resolve problems. Does the candidate have unresolved issues related to their upbringing or do they condone this type of discipline?

• What do you consider acceptable discipline? Watch for the adult who needs to control or those with positive attitudes toward corporal punishment. Listen for signs that the candidate may use psychological abuse to punish. Does their response indicate that they lack respect for children's thoughts and feelings?

• How do you tend to deal with stress? Can the candidate recognize when they are under stress? Do they have a plan for dealing with it? Is it acceptable? What makes you angry? How do you deal with anger? Same as above.

• If you saw another teacher/staff/volunteer, one you liked and respected, strike a child, what would you do? Make sure at some point the candidate plans to tell a supervisor.

• Have you ever been reprimanded at work? For what? Was the reprimand related to their ability to deal with children?

• Who are your best friends? Adult's best friends should be other adults.

• Do you relate better with adults or with children? Why? Be cautious of anyone who relates better to children than adults.

• How would you react to any accusation of child abuse? Watch for a comfort level, a reasonable response, a panic look, a carefully thought out manipulative response.

• What would you do if a child told you a secret? Make sure the candidate does not make a promise not to tell.

• What would you do if a child asked you a question about sex? Is the candidate comfortable with the topic? Do they share only what the child is asking?

• Ask other "what if questions. Watch for a candidate whose responses are consistent with you philosophy, who asks other staff for help and support; one who is a team player. Note how quickly they resort to punitive punishment and how realistic or honest the responses are.

• Ask other interview questions pertinent to the position you're interviewing for.

Be cautious of candidates who seem overly anxious to be hired, those who seem "too smooth" and those who try to take over the interview.

SSP APPENDIX III **REFERENCE CHECK**

Applicant name: _____

Reference name: _____

What is your relationship to the applicant? _____

How long have you known the applicant? _____

How well do you know the applicant? _____

How would you describe the applicant? _____

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

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

How would you describe the applicant's ability to relate to adults? _____

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

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

Do you have any knowledge that the applicant has ever been charged with or convicted of a crime? If so, please describe. _____

Please list the names of other people you feel it would be beneficial for us to contact before making a decision on whether or not the Applicant should work with children or youth and please indicate a means of contacting them.

Please list any other comments you would like to make:

Reference inquiry completed by: _____ _____
Signature Date

Thank you very much for your response!
You may return this form to: Lowell United Methodist Church
180 Lowell Lane
Carrollton, GA 30116

SSP APPENDIX IV

AUTHORIZATION AND REQUEST FOR CRIMINAL RECORDS CHECK

I, _____, HEREBY AUTHORIZE Lowell United Methodist Church to request any local, state or federal law enforcement department or agency to release information regarding any record of any investigations, charges or convictions contained in its files, or in any criminal file maintained on me, whether said file is a local, state, or national file, and including but not limited to accusations and convictions for crimes committed, against minors, to the fullest extent permitted by local, state and federal law. I release any and all law enforcement departments, agencies, and their employees from all liability that may result from any such disclosure made in response to this request. I also give my permission for this information to be shared with those persons who will participate in making decisions with respect to my application.

You are authorized to rely upon a photocopy or fax copy of this document.

_____

Signature of Applicant Date

Print applicant's full name: _____

Print all other names that have been used by applicant (if any):

_____

Date of birth: _____ Place of birth:_____

Social Security number :_____

Driver's license number: _____State in which license was issued:_____

License expiration date: _____

Request sent to: _____

Name:_____

Address:_____

Phone: _____

SSP APPENDIX V

PARTICIPATION COVENANT STATEMENT

The congregation of Lowell United Methodist Church is committed to providing a safe and secure environment for all children, youth, and volunteers who participate in ministries and activities sponsored by the church. The participation covenant statement reflects our congregation's commitment to preserving this church as a holy place of safety and protection for all who would enter and as a place in which all people can experience the love of god through relationships with others.

No adult who has been convicted of child abuse (either sexual abuse, physical abuse, or emotional abuse) shall work with children or youth in any church-sponsored activity.

All adults involved with children or youth of our church must have been active participants of the congregation for at least six months before beginning a volunteer assignment.

All adults involved with children and youth of our church shall observe the Safe Sanctuary Policy at all times.

All adults involved with children and youth of our church shall attend regular training and educational events provided by the church to keep volunteers informed of church policies and laws regarding child abuse.

All adults involved with children and youth of our church shall immediately report to their supervisor any behavior that seems abusive or inappropriate.

Do you agree to observe and abide by all church policies regarding working in ministries with children and youth? ____ Yes No ____

I have read this Participation Covenant Statement and I agree to observe and abide by the policies set forth above.

_____

Signature of Applicant Date

SSP APPENDIX VI

PARENTAL CONSENT AND MEDICAL AUTHORIZATION

Name of child/youth: _____Grade:____Age:___

Address: _____
Street/Apt Number City Zip code
Daytime Phone Number: _____ Evening Phone Number: _____

As the parent (or legal guardian) of: _____
Child/Youth's Name

I understand that my child/youth will be participating in a number of activities for the calendar year ____, which carry with them a certain degree of risk. Some of the activities are swimming, boating, hiking, camping, field trips, sports and other activities which the church may offer. I consent for my child to participate in these activities.

Please indicate any restrictions on your child's/youth/s activities:

_____I represent that my child/youth is physically fit and has the necessary skills to safely participate in these activities.

_____I represent that my child/youth has restrictions on the following particular activities:

_____I also understand and give consent for my child to travel to and from these events in transportation provided by volunteer drivers.

MEDICAL TREATMENT AUTHORIZATION
It is my understanding that the Church will attempt to notify me in care of a medical emergency involving my child/youth. If the church cannot reach me, then I authorize the church to hire a doctor or health-care professional, and I give my permission to the doctor or other health-care professional, to provide the medical services he or she may deem necessary. I will pay for any medical expenses so incurred.

I will notify the church if I feel there are any health considerations that would prevent my child/youth's participation in any of the activities listed above.

Allergies or other health considerations:

Insurance Company: _____Policy/Group # _____

Signature of Parent or Guardian_____
Notary Stamp/Seal, Date and Signature
_____

SSP APPENDIX VII

Medical Information for Individuals

(Every Participant Needs to Fill Out This Form)

Please complete the following and give to leader. LEADER SHOULD RETAIN THIS FORM ON SITE TO USE IN CASE OF EMERGENCY.

Name_____ **Dates of trip** _____

1. **Blood type**_____
2. **Information about any prescriptions I use:**
3. **I am allergic to:**_____
4. **Name of contact person**_____
   a. **Street Address**_____
   b. **City**_____**State**_____**Zip**_____
   c. **Phone (work)** _____**(Home)**_____
   d. **Relationship to volunteer**_____
5. **My health insurance company is**_____
   a. **Policy number**_____
6. **Physical limitations or concerns:**
7. **I am diabetic**: Yes_____ No_____
8. **I have a history of seizures:** Yes_____ No_____
9. **Please provide other helpful health information:**

10. **I consider myself healthy enough to take part in this event. Yes** _____ **No** _____

I, _____ (individual's signature or signature of parent/guardian in case of a minor), authorize _____ (event leader) to consent to any necessary examination, anesthetic, medical diagnosis, surgery, or treatment and/or hospital care rendered under the general supervision and on the advice of any physician or surgeon licensed to practice medicine by the state in which they practice, during the duration of the trip identified above and further authorize the release of medical information from my personal medical records for the following purpose:
_____ **but I do not give permission for any other use or re-disclosure of this information.**

SSP APPENDIX VIII

Safe Sanctuary Incident Report Form

Reason for report: _____

Date-of-incident: _____ Time:_____

Place of incident: _____

Name of reporter: _____ Title: _____

Name(s) of Child(ren)/Youth: _____ Age(s): _____

Briefly describe what happened:

_____

_____

_____

Were there any witnesses? ____ Yes No ____ If Yes, list.

What action did you take?

_____

_____

Has the incident been resolved?: ___ Yes ____ No Explain:

_____

Have the following people been notified?

Pastor	_____	Bishop's Office	_____
Parent	_____	Police	_____
SPRC Chairperson	_____	Sheriff	_____
District Superintendent	_____	Other	_____

Signature of reporter: _____ Date: _____

Report submitted to: _____

SSP Appendix IX

Emergency Contact Information

Appointed clergy: _____

Chairperson of SPRC: _____

Director of Christian Education: _____

Director of Youth Ministries: _____

District Superintendent: _____

Police Department:_____

Sheriff's Department:_____

County Child Abuse Reporting:_____

Georgia Child Abuse Hotline: 1-800-CHILDREN (1-800-244-5373)

SSP APPENDIX X

Driver's Application

Name:_____ _____
(Date)

Address: _____ _____ _____ _____
(Street) (City) (State/Province) (Zip/Postal Code)

Addresses for the past three years:

Dates Code	Street	City	State	Zip
1.)				
2.)				
3.)				
4.)				

Date of Birth _____ Driver's License Number_____

□ Commercial Driver's License □ Passenger Endorsement □ Air-brake Endorsement
Vehicles qualified to operate: □ Car □ Van □ Bus □ w/Trailer (towed by previously checked vehicle)

Driving Record – List all accidents and traffic convictions during the past three years:

Dates	Nature of Accident/Traffic Conviction
1.)	
2.)	
3.)	
4.)	

Personal Auto Insurance Company:
_____

This certifies that this application was completed by me, and that all entries on it and information in it are true and complete, to the best of my knowledge.

_____
(Date) (Applicants Signature)