

accompanying procedures is to demonstrate our absolute and unwavering commitment to the physical safety and spiritual growth of all our children and youth.

The purpose also is to implement sexual conduct policies and procedures previously adopted by Central United Methodist Church (CUMC) on February 27, 2000 (CUMC 2000), and amended on March 6, 2005. Together, these documents represent the congregation's earnest attempt to prevent sexual misconduct and sexual or physical abuse; to protect the rights and reputations of minors, workers, volunteers, members, and guests; and to prepare for the legal defense of the church if and when it is alleged that our best efforts have failed.

The cornerstones of this plan include (a) screening of employees and volunteers; (b) responsible supervision of employees, volunteers, and minors; (c) heightened awareness and training; (d) clear, well-publicized reporting procedures and points of contact; (e) effective procedures for responding to allegations. Churchworkers and officeholders may look for guidance in *Reducing the Risk of Child Sexual Abuse Training Manual* (Hammar, Klipowicz, and Cobble 1993), *Reducing the Risk of Child Sexual Abuse in Your Church: A Step-By-Step Guide To Implementing A Prevention Program* (Cobble 1994), *Safe Sanctuaries: Reducing The Risk of Child Abuse In The Church* (Melton 1998), and other authoritative reference materials.

Statement of Covenant

Therefore, as a Christian community of faith and a United Methodist congregation, we pledge to conduct the ministry of the gospel in ways that assure the safety and spiritual growth of all of our children and youth as well as all of the workers with children and youth. We will follow reasonable safety measures in the selection and recruitment of workers; we will implement prudent operational procedures in all programs and events; we will educate all of our workers with children and youth regarding the use of all appropriate policies and methods (including first aid and methods of discipline); we will have a clearly defined procedure for reporting a suspected incident of abuse that conforms to the requirements of state law; and we will be prepared to respond to media inquiries if an incident occurs.

Authority

Upon approval by the Administrative Council and Board of Trustees, the responsibility for administering this plan will reside with the Staff-Parish Committee. The Staff-Parish Committee will submit the plan for review and approval by the Attorney General of the 9th Judicial District of the State of Tennessee.

Screening of Employees and Volunteers

In accordance with current hiring practices, all prospective employees will be required to submit at least three letters of reference. Any suggestion of prior sexual misconduct or sexual or physical abuse will be taken seriously and will be addressed on a case-by-case basis.

All churchworkers, including all employees and all volunteers directly instructing or supervising minors, must submit a formal application and screening form. All churchworkers will be screened for evidence of prior