

Did you know?

Simpsonwood UMC is a Safe Sanctuaries Congregation
This policy has been approved by our Administrative Council.
We have been training all adult volunteers, workers, and staff in this updated policy.
Here are the facts you need to know...

Why?

Our church is a community of faith—a safe haven and sanctuary—where children, youth, and adults can be confirmed and strengthened in the way that leads to life eternal.

Unfortunately the church is not safe from those who seek to abuse. More and more you hear of churches carrying the burden of large lawsuits because of allegations of abuse.

In 1996, The General Conference of the United Methodist Church adopted a resolution aimed at reducing the risk of child sexual abuse in the church.

SUMC's Safe Sanctuaries is designed to help us reduce the risk of abuse and protect workers and volunteers, by following a thorough and practical policy of prevention.

Bottom line: we are called to ensure that the church is a safe place where children, youth, and vulnerable adults can participate in our ministries and be "surrounded by steadfast love,... established in the faith, and confirmed and strengthened in the way that leads to life eternal" ("Baptismal Covenant II," *United Methodist Hymnal*, p. 44).

Highlights of Our Safe Sanctuaries Policy

The congregation of Simpsonwood United Methodist Church is committed to providing a safe and secure environment for all children, youth, vulnerable adults, workers, and volunteers who participate in ministries and activities sponsored by the church.

- Adult volunteers with children and youth shall observe the "Two person Rule" at all times so that no adult is left alone with children or youth on a routine basis.
- All adult volunteers and workers will be required to undergo a background check before volunteering with youth, children, or older adults.
- No adult who has been convicted of child or elder abuse (either sexual, physical, neglect, emotional, ritual, or financial abuse) will be allowed to volunteer to work with the children, youth, or older adults in any church sponsored activity.
- Adult volunteers with children, youth, and older adults shall attend regular training.
- At no time will children 18 or under be left unattended.
- Adult volunteers and workers shall immediately report to their supervisors any behavior that seems abusive or inappropriate.
- The policy charges the Trustee Committee with keeping facilities up to date and safe for use by children, youth and older adults.

**We need YOUR help to ensure Simpsonwood is a safe haven.
Please help us uphold these policies.**

A complete copy of Simpsonwood's Safe Sanctuaries Policy is available online or in the office. Questions? Contact: Michelle Wehrheim: mwehrheim@simpsonwoodumc.org or Amanda Lane: alane@simpsonwoodumc.org

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Frequently Asked Questions

Why do you need a copy of my insurance card? If there is a medical emergency, it is quicker and easier to check your child in at the hospital with a copy of the card. It's not required, but strongly suggested.

I don't know a notary public. Deborah Crowe (Director of Nursery Ministries), Linda Romarion (Office Administrator), and Michelle Wehrheim (FLC/Youth Administrative Assistant) are all Notary Publics and will be happy to notarize the card for you.

How often will I need to fill a card out? The cards are good for one year, so every year around September 1st, you will be asked to fill out a new one.

Who will see this card? Only the ministry head, and select volunteers will have access and see the card. Everything is kept completely confidential, and after a year the cards are shredded.