



Holy Cross  
Lutheran Church

Child Protection Policy

# HOLY CROSS LUTHERAN CHURCH CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

**This policy was approved by the Holy Cross Lutheran Church Congregation Council on September 12, 2018.**

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## Chapter 1. Purpose and Code of Conduct

### Purpose

Children are our sacred trust from a loving God. Holy Cross Lutheran Church (HCLC) joyfully answers the call to provide a nurturing and dynamic Christian environment that will foster our children's faith, their guiding light. Everyone can play an important part to ensure the wellbeing of children. We seek to ensure the safety of all children participating in the programs and activities of the church by establishing the following guidelines with regard to the conduct of adults and children. This Child Protection Policy (CPP) directs that supervision of activities involving children and adults be conducted in a manner that protects the children who participate in the activities sponsored by HCLC from abuse and to protect HCLC's employees and volunteers from false allegations of abuse. HCLC will, through adherence to this CPP, make every effort to ensure that persons placed in positions of responsibility and trust with respect to the children of the church deserve that sacred honor.

This CPP shall be available on the HCLC website and in the church office to all visitors, members, and staff of the church.

### Code of Conduct

Those who accept the responsibility of working with children at HCLC agree to:

- treat children with respect and dignity;
- do their best to prevent abuse, neglect, and exploitation of children participating in activities;
- refrain from engaging in or condoning acts of physical, emotional, or sexual abuse;
- comply with HCLC's CPP; and
- report any abuse, inappropriate behavior, or possible policy violations.

All members and employees of HCLC shall follow this policy. Anyone else using the building, including community groups and others not directly affiliated with the church, should acknowledge and agree to comply with the spirit and intent of the HCLC CPP. The CPP Oversight Group, as defined in Chapter 2, is responsible for overseeing the implementation and enforcement of the CPP. The CPP is intended to protect both children and the adults who work with them. The CPP is not intended to interfere with the appropriate nurturing, teaching, and supervision of children.

## Chapter 2. Definitions

**Child Abuse:** injury of a child by an adult or older child that is not accidental. It may include physical abuse, emotional abuse, or sexual abuse.

**Child and Adult:** For the purposes of this CPP, a "child" is any individual under the age of 18, and an "adult" is any person age 18 or older.

**Child Emotional Abuse:** any language directed toward a child by an adult that is intended to cause emotional anxiety, pain, or other severe emotional disturbance. It is mental or emotional injury to a child that results in an observable and material impairment in the child's growth, development, or psychological functioning.

**Child Physical Abuse:** non-accidental bodily injury of a child through physical contact or mistreatment.

**Child Protection Policy (CPP) Oversight Group:** consists of the Pastor, President of the Congregation Council, Chairpersons of the Christian Education and Youth Ministry Teams, the Sunday School Superintendent, and other Council members requested to serve. It is responsible for overseeing the CPP, reviewing applications, checking references, ensuring background checks occur, conducting sex offender reviews, conducting or arranging child protection or safe church training and collecting proof of completion from all volunteers working with children, arranging HCLC-sponsored CPP review sessions as needed and collecting signed CPP Acknowledgements, receiving reports of alleged abuse or misconduct under the CPP, investigating and following up regarding such reports as appropriate, and other related CPP responsibilities.

**Child Sexual Abuse:** any form of sexual contact or exploitation in which a child is being used for the sexual stimulation of the perpetrator. It includes behaviors that involve touching and non-touching aspects. Child sexual abuse is criminal behavior that involves children in sexual behaviors for which they are not personally, socially, and developmentally ready.

Types of child sexual abuse that involve touching include:

- Fondling,
- Oral, genital, and anal penetration,
- Intercourse,
- Forcible rape.

Types of child sexual abuse that do not involve touching include, but are not limited to:

- Verbal comments,
- Risqué or sexual jokes,
- Pornographic videos and photography,
- Obscene phone calls,
- Exhibitionism,
- Allowing children to witness sexual activity.

**Economic Exploitation:** the deliberate misplacement, exploitation, or temporary or permanent wrongful use of a child's belongings or money.

**Neglect:** the failure to provide for a child's basic needs or the failure to protect a child from harm.

**Provisional Adult (PA):** any person age 18 or older, who has:

- Consented to a background check; and
- reviewed the requirements of the CPP and submitted a signed CPP Acknowledgement to HCLC.

Sexual abuse perpetrated by an adult is any contact or activity of a sexual nature that occurs between a child and an adult. This includes any activity which is meant to arouse or gratify the sexual desires of the adult or child. Sexual behavior between a child and an adult is always considered to be abusive whether or not the child consents to it.

**Sexual abuse perpetrated by a child** is any contact or activity of a sexual nature that occurs between children when there is no consent, when consent is not possible, or when one child has power over the other child. This includes any activity which is meant to arouse or gratify the sexual desires of any of the children.

**Staff:** any person who works as an employee of HCLC who is paid for his/her services.

**Trained Adult (TA):** any person age 18 or older, who has:

- Successfully completed the application review process, including the background checks, specified in Chapter 4; and
- Met the child protection policy training requirements specified in Chapter 4 and signed a Child Protection Policy Acknowledgement form.

**Volunteer:** anyone who provides services for HCLC and receives no compensation in the form of salary, wages, or other pecuniary benefits.

## **Chapter 3. Supervision Guidelines**

### **Two-Adult Guidelines**

Generally, two unrelated (e.g., not spouse, sibling, parent or child) adults should be present at all activities involving children that are either sponsored by HCLC or take place on HCLC property. When two related adults are leading or chaperoning activities with children outside of Sunday School or Vacation Bible School, at least one additional adult must be present.

- A. Open Space.** When many people are in the building (e.g., Sunday mornings) and contact with a child is incidental to what the adult is doing, it is sufficient that the single adult is in an open space such as the fellowship hall, kitchen, narthex, or sanctuary, and anyone can look in on them. Any room with the door shut is not considered an open space.
- B. Teens.** An exception to the two-adult guideline is when two teenagers (ages 13 to 17) are watching children in the church building during adult classes, potluck dinners, etc., or when one teenager and either one Provisional Adult or one Trained Adult watch children in the church building during church services, adult classes, potluck dinners, etc. Prior to watching children at HCLC, teens shall complete child care and child protection training. The required child care training is an online course provided by the Virginia Department of Social Services at: [http://www.dss.virginia.gov/family/cc/professionals\\_resources.cgi](http://www.dss.virginia.gov/family/cc/professionals_resources.cgi). The course completion certificate must be provided to the CPP Oversight Group. Information on the required child protection training is provided at Chapter 4.
- C. Ratios.** Activity leaders should use good judgment in requiring that an appropriate number of Trained Adults participate.

## Requirements by Activity

The chart below sets forth the requirements for common categories of activities.

| Common Categories of Activities | Adult Requirements                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | Accommodations and Requirements                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
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| Overnights Away from Church     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A ratio of at least one adult for every seven children must be maintained</li> <li>• At least one Trained Adult of each gender must accompany the children on the entire trip</li> <li>• Provided at least two Trained Adults are present, the other adults attending should be either Provisional Adults or Trained Adults</li> </ul> | <p><b>Best efforts should be made to ensure that:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- children are given appropriate privacy in the areas of sleeping, changing, and bathing.</li> <li>- children and adults do not bathe in the same facility at the same time.</li> <li>- children of the opposite gender do not change or bathe together.</li> <li>- children of the opposite gender do not sleep in the same room together, unless they are siblings and a parent has requested this sleeping arrangement.</li> <li>- children of the opposite gender may be permitted to sleep in the same room if an entire group of children along with the supervising Adults are sleeping in one big room together. In these group sleepover situations, parents should be informed of the sleeping arrangements in advance and asked to give explicit permission for their child's participation in the event. The required written permission slip from a parent or guardian should expressly acknowledge that the activity is coed.</li> <li>- the leader of the overnight activity has an emergency phone number for a parent or guardian of each child participating in the event.</li> </ul> |

|                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
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| <p>Overnights at Church</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A ratio of at least one adult for every seven children must be maintained</li> <li>• At least one Trained Adult of each gender must be present for the entire event</li> <li>• Provided at least two Trained Adults are present, the other adults should be either Provisional Adults or Trained Adults</li> </ul> | <p><b>Best efforts should be made to ensure that:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- children are given appropriate privacy in the areas of sleeping, changing, and bathing.</li> <li>- children and adults do not bathe in the same facility at the same time.</li> <li>- children of the opposite gender do not change or bathe together.</li> <li>- children of the opposite gender do not sleep in the same room together, unless they are siblings and a parent has requested this sleeping arrangement.</li> <li>- children of the opposite gender may be permitted to sleep in the same room if an entire group of children along with the supervising adults are sleeping in one big room together. In these group sleepover situations, parents should be informed of the sleeping arrangements in advance and asked to give explicit permission for their child's participation in the event. The required written permission slip from a parent or guardian should expressly acknowledge that the activity is coed.</li> <li>- the leader of the overnight activity has an emergency phone number for a parent or guardian of each child participating in the event.</li> </ul> |
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| <p>Day Trips Away from Church</p>       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A ratio of at least one adult for every seven children must be maintained</li> <li>• At least two Trained Adults must be present for the entire trip</li> <li>• Provided at least two Trained Adults are present, the other adults attending should be either Provisional Adults or Trained Adults</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | <p><b>Best efforts should be made to:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- avoid having one child alone in a car with an adult, unless the adult is the child's parent or guardian.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| <p>Regular Activities with Children</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At least two Trained Adults should be present throughout the activity</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| <p>Sunday School</p>                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As a regular activity with children, Sunday School teachers should be Trained Adults.</li> <li>• Although two adults are generally required for any activity involving children, during Sunday School, when children are attending classes in the preschool classrooms or in the conference room, it is permissible to have one adult present in the classroom, as long as there is a line of sight into the classroom and there are at least two adults present in the adjacent space (i.e., in the preschool space or in the space surrounding the conference room).</li> <li>• Related adults may work together to teach Sunday School.</li> </ul> | <p>If there is only one Sunday School teacher and one child in attendance at a Sunday School class, the Sunday School teacher should cancel the class and encourage the child to join another Sunday School class that week. The Sunday School teacher should then escort the the child to the other other Sunday School class or, if the child prefers, to the child's parents in the sanctuary.</p> |



|                                                                                |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Nursery                                                                        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At least two trained adults.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| Confirmation Mentors                                                           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Although two trained adults are generally required for any activity involving children, provided a child's parent or legal guardian consents in advance on a case by case basis, it is permissible to have one Trained Adult Confirmation Mentor present with his or her confirmation mentee.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| Vacation Bible School                                                          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provided there are at least two Trained Adults present in an adjacent space, Provisional Adults may teach Vacation Bible School classes.</li> <li>• Related adults may work together to teach Vacation Bible School.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| One-Time Activities                                                            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We prefer that adults who work with children be Trained Adults. However, when it would unreasonably impede an activity to require the adults working with children to be Trained Adults, two Provisional Adults without training may volunteer to fulfill the two-adult guideline.</li> <li>• If an adult volunteers with children five or more times in a rolling twelve-month period (substitute teacher, chaperone, parent helper, etc.), that adult shall become a Trained Adult.</li> </ul> |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| Non-Church Member Use of Building and Non-Church Sponsored Building Activities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide adult supervision for children, having at least two adults group of children.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | <p>An authorized representative of the entity shall sign an acknowledgment within the Facility Lease Agreement, agreeing to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• comply with the HCLC CPP; and</li> <li>• make people in his or her group aware of the CPP.</li> </ul> |

## **Working Alone**

If absolutely necessary, a Provisional Adult or a Trained Adult may work alone with children in a classroom with the door open, in a classroom with a window in the door, or in an open space. Prior to working alone with children, the Provisional Adult or the Trained Adult should make a reasonable effort to ensure that a second adult is present or that another adult may check in without advance notice.

## **Personal Conduct**

A. Common expressions of affection (e.g., hugs), affirmation (e.g., pats on the back, high fives), blessings (e.g., making the sign of the cross on the forehead, laying on of hands), support or physical caretaking (e.g., diaper changing), when done without sexual connotations, are appropriate in this community of caring Christians. Expressions of affection shall not be excessive or imposed upon others. No child should be made to feel guilty if they do not wish to participate in these expressions of affection. Children will be made aware that they are free to participate or not, as they feel comfortable. Children must be allowed to use the bathroom on their own with adults verifying that the bathroom is safe (e.g., no unknown adults in the bathroom, etc.) and waiting at the entrance to the bathroom for the child to finish.

B. Adults shall not touch or interact with children in any way that is or may reasonably be perceived as intended to be sexually stimulating. Any activity of this type is illegal, as well as a violation of trust.

C. Adults shall not engage in inappropriate behavior with children. Examples include but are not limited to: seeking private time with children, taking children on outings or overnight trips without other adults, swearing in front of children, or making sexually suggestive comments to children.

D. Corporal punishment or verbal abuse is never permitted.

E. Guidelines for Appropriate Expressions of Affection are attached as Appendix A.

## **Open Door Policy**

All HCLC spaces and other spaces where HCLC-sponsored activities with children are taking place, including but not limited to classrooms, rehearsal spaces, and child care rooms, shall be open to visits at any time without prior notice. These visits should be made in a manner that is not disruptive to the activity. When possible, the door to spaces where activities with children are taking place should have a window or remain open. If an activity is taking place in multiple locations within the building, the leader of the activity, if possible, should circulate among the locations.

## **Discipline**

All adults leading HCLC programs involving contact with children will be guided by the following constructive discipline guidelines in order to maintain order:

A. If a child is behaving inappropriately, the adult will tell the child specifically what he or she is doing that is not acceptable and state what the expected behavior is, e.g., “We do not throw blocks. We use blocks for building.” If this is not effective, the child should be guided to another activity.

B. If inappropriate behavior continues, the child may be placed in an area of the room where he or she will work alone, away from the other students for a brief period of time, the number of minutes not to exceed the age of the child.

C. If the child's disruptive behavior continues after these steps have been taken, the child may be taken to the parent, the Pastor, the Chairperson of the Christian Education Team, the Chairperson of the Youth Ministry Team, the Sunday School Superintendent, or other responsible adults. If a child must be removed from a classroom or other activity, the situation will be discussed with his or her parents.

- D. If misbehavior occurs at an offsite location, the parent may be called to pick up the child.
- E. In no case is an adult permitted to physically or verbally abuse a child who is misbehaving.

There will be no use of corporal punishment.

### **Permission Slips**

Children should have parental or guardian permission in advance to participate in any HCLC-sponsored overnight activity or activity that takes place away from HCLC's grounds. A Parent/Guardian Consent Form is attached hereto as Appendix H. Permission should be given in writing and signed and dated by a parent or guardian. The permission slip will identify the name and date of the activity in which the child will be participating, as well as provide a basic description of what will occur.

### **Transportation**

A. It is recommended that children be transported in groups rather than alone for HCLC-sponsored activities. A child's parent or guardian may give permission for an unaccompanied adult to drive a single child or children to or from a church-sponsored activity. Parental permission for transportation as part of a planned event should be obtained in writing.

B. Children legally required to ride in a car seat or booster seat must be transported for HCLC-sponsored activities using the appropriate safety seat. All other passengers shall wear a seatbelt while a vehicle is in motion or turned on.

C. This policy is not intended to prohibit staff or adult volunteers, when two are available to assist, from offering children a ride home from HCLC-sponsored activities in an emergency situation. The adults should make reasonable attempts to contact parents or guardians prior to providing the ride. The adults providing the ride should inform the child's parents or leave a message stating the expected departure, travel, and arrival times. The child or children should ride in the backseat.

D. No person under the age of 21 shall drive other children as part of an HCLC activity.

E. Every driver for HCLC activities should have a valid driver's license. Every driver for HCLC activities should drive a registered and insured vehicle.

F. If a group is traveling to an HCLC activity in one vehicle, there must be two unrelated Trained Adults in the vehicle. If a group is traveling to an HCLC activity in more than one vehicle, care should be taken so that a single vehicle with one adult driver is not separated from the group for an extended length of time.

### **Digital Privacy**

A key ingredient for a safe and healthy experience is the respect for privacy. Advances in technology have enabled forms of social interaction that can extend beyond the appropriate use of cameras, recording devices, and handheld electronics.

A. To ensure full participation in HCLC activities and the opportunity for a positive experience, children may be prohibited from bringing handheld electronic devices (e.g., cell phones, laptops, tablets, etc.) to youth events or other church-sponsored functions. If children do bring these items to an HCLC event, the adults in charge of the event can require that the items be placed in a box or other location away from the children for the duration of the event and then returned to the children at the conclusion of the event.

B. While attending, or in connection with, HCLC activities, children and adults shall not send sexually explicit or suggestive texts, images, videos, or other inappropriate content electronically. Children and adults shall not post sexually explicit materials on websites or social media sites.

C. Photos or videos of children will not be used on the HCLC website, social media sites, and/or in the other publications unless the parent or legal guardian of each such child has been notified in

advance that he or she may opt out of such use. Names of children will not be used. The HCLC Vacation Bible School application materials may include a photo release provided in Appendix I that is specific to photos of children taken during HCLC Vacation Bible School.

D. HCLC will take down or remove any photos from its website or social media pages immediately upon request.

## **Chapter 4. Application, Screening and Training Guidelines**

### **Application Process**

Working as a leader among the children and youth in our congregation is a privilege. All adult volunteers who seek to work with children at HCLC on a consistent basis (more than five times in a rolling twelve-month period) must have been a member of HCLC for at least three (3) months. All adult volunteers and employees who seek to work with children at HCLC on a consistent basis must submit an application (including references), participate in an interview with one or more members of the CPP Oversight Group (if requested), complete a child protection or safe church training and provide proof of completion to the CPP Oversight Group, attend an annual meeting to review the requirements of HCLC's Child Protection Policy, and submit a signed CPP Acknowledgement to the CPP Oversight Group.

### **Screening and Background Checks**

A. Applications are reviewed and an interview may be required with one or more members of the CPP Oversight Group. Applications and related papers are confidential and maintained in secure files with access limited to the CPP Oversight Group.

B. An initial criminal background check will be completed prior to working with the children. Updated criminal background checks will be performed periodically, as deemed appropriate, usually every 5 years. The cost of the background checks will be paid for by HCLC.

C. HCLC will also conduct a registered sex offender review, in addition to the criminal background check referenced above, by using a commercial background check service to search the individual's name on the Department of Justice National Sex Offender Public Website and with other law enforcement agencies. The registered sex offender review may be repeated at various times throughout the individual's service as an employee or volunteer who works with or comes into contact with children.

D. There is a procedure for reviewing background checks and other sensitive information from references, interview, sex offender review, the application, etc.

- a. Types of information that may merit additional consideration include but are not limited to: criminal acts and criminal behavior, sex crimes, financial crimes, and drug crimes.
- b. When the background check (or other information) is received, at least one member of the CPP Oversight Group will review it. Each background check is considered individually and all decisions are made on a case-by-case basis. CPP Oversight Group members will be reminded of the sensitive and confidential nature of the information they possess and asked that any discussions about the information be limited to the confidential CPP Oversight Group meetings.
  - i. If no information of concern is contained in the report or other application materials, the applicant will be able to work with children.

- ii. If there are any concerns, a meeting is called with at least two members of the CPP Oversight Group to discuss the concerns and a decision will be made by vote. Minutes of this meeting will be kept with the application materials.
    - 1. If an individual will not be allowed to work with children, the Pastor or the Congregation Council President will arrange a personal meeting with the individual to notify the individual.
    - 2. If an individual is allowed to work with children, the Pastor or the Congregation Council President will arrange a personal meeting with the individual to notify the individual.
  - iii. Background check records shall be stored securely by HCLC's background check contractor. With the exception of background check records, HCLC shall securely store any application materials related to working with children electronically. To the extent the CPP Oversight Group creates or obtains any paper documents during the application process, such documents shall be securely shredded.
- c. Applicants deemed by HCLC to pose a threat to children will not be permitted to participate in HCLC's activities for children and may be required to be with an assigned chaperone when participating in general church activities where children may be present.

## **Training**

A. All adults seeking to work regularly with children must complete a child protection or safe church training and provide proof of completion to the CPP Oversight Group. Individuals may be asked to retake or update the training periodically. Training to meet this requirement is provided online by the Virginia Department of Social Services at: [http://www.dss.virginia.gov/family/cc/professionals\\_resources.cgi](http://www.dss.virginia.gov/family/cc/professionals_resources.cgi). The course completion certificate must be provided to the CPP Oversight Group. Other training to meet the requirement may be approved by the CPP Oversight Group.

B. All adults seeking to work regularly with children must also attend an annual meeting to review the requirements of the CPP and sign a CPP Acknowledgement as evidence that they have been informed of and understand the requirements of the CPP. The responsibility for ensuring the CPP review is conducted regularly shall rest with the CPP Oversight Group.

C. We encourage all adults of the congregation to attend the review of the CPP to better understand the goals of the policy and to help safeguard our children and the adults working with children.

## **Chapter 5. Reporting and Responding**

In maintaining our protection of children, adults are to report abuse, suspected abuse, or neglect to the Pastor or Congregation Council President. A person may suspect abuse by noting signs of abuse, being told of abuse, or witnessing conduct that is of concern. Some signs of child abuse are included in Appendix B, and guidelines for reporting abuse are included in Appendix C. Do not hesitate to report abuse. When you report what you have seen or heard, you may help a child to stay safe. If you have noticed the warning signs of abuse and neglect, please contact any member of the CPP Oversight Group. If you do not report your suspicions, the abuse of a child might continue. You should have a reasonable suspicion of the abuse, but you do not have to "prove" the abuse or be positive that it occurred. If you report in good faith, you are immune from civil or criminal liability.

## **Reporting and Documentation**

- A. If the child is in immediate danger or there is an emergency situation, call 911.
- B. If you suspect that a child is physically, sexually, or emotionally abused or neglected, call the Fairfax County Child Protective Services Hotline, 703-324-7400, or local law enforcement, as soon as possible.
- C. All knowledge about abuse or suspected abuse should also be shared, as soon as possible, with the Pastor and Congregation Council President.
- D. If inappropriate behavior or policy violations are observed that warrant concern but do not involve abuse, as soon as possible notify one of the members of the CPP Oversight Group.
- E. Misconduct by a Rostered Minister of the ELCA in this congregation shall be promptly reported to the office of the Bishop of the ELCA Metropolitan Washington D.C. Synod, 202-417-3678, extension 3680.
- F. Please document what you have seen and to whom you have reported it. The Incident Report Form (Appendix J) may be used to document details of abuse, suspected abuse, inappropriate behavior, or non-abuse policy violations. As soon as possible give a copy of any documentation to one of the members of the CPP Oversight Group.
- G. It is HCLC's policy to report child abuse to the appropriate governmental authority, as required by state law and church regulations. HCLC will cooperate fully with government authorities in the investigations of allegations of child abuse.
- H. Any concerned person can report suspicions of child abuse and neglect. Reports may be made confidentially or anonymously. Every state provides immunity from civil liability for persons who report suspected abuse in good faith and without malice. "In good faith" means that the person submitting the report believes what he or she is reporting to be true.

## **Responding**

All persons involved in reporting or documenting any alleged incident of abuse should hold information in confidence, subject only to such disclosures as are required under church procedures and as necessary to facilitate investigation of allegations of abuse and resolution of the situation.

- A. The CPP Oversight Group will maintain a confidential written record of each report of abuse received.
- B. The CPP Oversight Group will determine a response which may include the alleged perpetrator being:
  - 1. asked to meet with some or all of the CPP Oversight Group to discuss the situation.
  - 2. removed from any position involving contact with children at HCLC until the allegation is resolved.
  - 3. asked to refrain from activities involving contact with children for a specified period of time or indefinitely, depending on the nature of the behavior.
  - 4. reported to the Fairfax County Child Protective Services and/or the police.
  - 5. required to have an assigned escort (designated member of the congregation) any time he or she is at HCLC.
- C. The Pastor or the Congregation Council President will be in contact with parents or guardians of alleged victims and those accused of allegations, as necessary, and will make proper reports to government and law enforcement authorities. If the Pastor is the perpetrator, another member of the CPP Oversight Group will assume those responsibilities.

- D. If abuse occurs, a designated spokesperson for HCLC, generally the Pastor or Congregation Council President, will inform the congregation about the situation when appropriate to do so (i.e., disclosure of the situation will not jeopardize the investigation or cause undue hardship to the victim and accused), protecting the identities of those involved as needed,
- E. to avoid rumors and the spread of false information.

## **Reporting Abuse—Summary of Who to Contact and What to Do**

### **Immediate danger or Emergency situation**

1. Call 911 to notify police of situation and request help.
2. Do what you can to make sure the child is safe.
3. As soon as possible, contact the Pastor or the Congregation Council President to report what has occurred.
4. Document what was observed and reported. You can use the Incident Report Form (Appendix J).
5. Give the documentation to the Pastor or the Congregation Council President as soon as possible.

### **Suspected abuse or neglect**

1. Call the Fairfax County Child Protective Services Hotline, 703-324-7400, to make a report.
2. Do what you can to make sure the child is safe.
3. As soon as possible, contact the Pastor or the Congregation Council President to report what has occurred.
4. Document what was observed and reported. You can use the Incident Report Form (Appendix J).
5. Give the documentation to the Pastor or the Congregation Council President as soon as possible.

### **Observe inappropriate behavior or policy violations that warrant concern but are not abuse**

1. Contact a member of the CPP Oversight Group to share your concern.
2. Document what was observed. You can use the Incident Report Form (Appendix J).
3. Give the documentation to the Pastor or the Congregation Council President.

## **Appendix A. Guidelines for Appropriate Expressions of Affection**

**There are many ways for adults who are unrelated to children and youth to demonstrate affection while maintaining positive and safe boundaries with children and youth. Some positive and appropriate forms of affection are listed below:**

- Brief hugs.
- Pats on the shoulder or back.
- Handshakes.
- High-fives and hand slapping.
- Fist bumps.
- Verbal praise.
- Touching hands, faces, shoulders and arms of children or youth.
- Arms around shoulders.
- Holding hands while walking with small children.
- Sitting beside small children.
- Kneeling or bending down for hugs with small children.
- Holding hands during prayer.
- Pats on the head when culturally appropriate. (For example, this gesture should typically be avoided in some Asian communities).

**The following forms of affection are considered inappropriate for adults who are unrelated to children and youth:**

- Full body hugs or embracing a child or youth for an inordinate amount of time.
- Kisses on the mouth.
- Holding children older than preschoolers on the lap.
- Touching bottoms, chests or genital areas other than appropriate diapering, toileting or dressing of infants and toddlers.
- Showing affection in isolated areas or locked areas bedrooms, closets, staff only areas, or other private rooms.
- Occupying a bed with a child or youth.
- Caressing knees or legs of children or youth.
- Wrestling with children or youth.
- Tickling children or youth.
- Piggyback rides.
- Any type of massage given by a child or youth to an adult.
- Any type of massage given by an adult to a child or youth.
- Comments or compliments (spoken, written, or electronic) that relate to physique or body development. Examples would be, "You are developing," or "You look really hot in those jeans."
- Snapping bras or giving "wedgies" or similar touch of underwear whether or not it is covered by other clothing.
- Privately giving gifts or money to individual children or youth.
- Private meals in non-public venues with individual children or youth.
- Frequent association with individual children or youth outside of church-related activities by an adult who is not a Confirmation Mentor.
- Any form of unwanted affection.

**If there is doubt about whether a type of touch is appropriate, it is best to avoid the gesture.**



## Appendix B. Recognizing Signs of Child Abuse

**Child abuse** includes physical abuse, physical neglect, sexual abuse and emotional abuse/neglect of a child less than 18 years of age by a parent or other caretaker.

**Physical abuse** is a non-accidental injury to a child by a parent or caretaker.

**It may be physical abuse when you see a child with:**

- Questionable burns, bites, bruises, broken bones, welts or black eyes.
- Fading bruises or other marks after an absence from school.

**It may be physical abuse when the parent or other caregiver:**

- Offers an unconvincing explanation for an injury.
- Describes the child as "bad" or "stupid".
- Uses harsh physical discipline.

**Physical neglect** is a parent's failure to give the child food, clothing, hygiene, medical care and/or supervision. Physical neglect can be hard to judge...sometimes what you see is simply poor judgment, but not neglect. Sometimes what you see is the result of poverty, not parental neglect.

**It may be physical neglect when a child:**

- Steals food or money from classmates, often seems hungry.
- Lacks medical or dental care.
- Says that no one is home to care for him.
- Lacks proper clothing for the weather.
- Often appears dirty or tired.
- Abuses alcohol or drugs.
- Appears indifferent to a child's needs.
- Seems apathetic or depressed.
- Consistently fails to keep important appointments or to take medicines.

**Emotional abuse/neglect** includes severe rejection, humiliation and actions intended to produce fear or extreme guilt in a child.

**It may be emotional abuse or neglect when the child:**

- Displays self-destructive behavior, like cutting or burning himself.
- Becomes overly compliant and passive or extremely demanding and aggressive.
- Acts inappropriately adult-like (such as parenting other children) or inappropriately infantile (such as frequent rocking or head banging).
- Can't make or keep friends.
- Constantly puts down or blames a child.
- Rejects the child outright.
- Makes unreasonable demands on the child without regard to his abilities or developmental level.
- Gets defensive or refuses to consider help for the child's school problems.

**Sexual abuse** ranges from non-touching offenses, such as exhibitionism, to fondling, intercourse or using the child for pornographic materials.

**It may be sexual abuse when the child:**

- Can't walk or sit easily.
- Has injuries or redness around the genitals.
- Displays unusual sexual knowledge or behavior, such as being seductive.
- Withdraws, seems depressed or can't get along with peers.
- Abuses drugs or alcohol.
- Has unexplained money or gifts.
- Expresses thoughts of suicide and low self-worth.
- Was sexually abused as a child himself.
- Abuses drugs or alcohol.
- Lacks social and emotional contacts outside his family.
- Restricts a child's contact with those of the opposite sex.

## **Appendix C. Reporting to Child Protective Services**

The Fairfax County Department of Family Services' Children, Youth and Families Division includes programs designed to protect children from harm, prevent child abuse and neglect, support families, and help them remain together safely for the long-term emotional and physical health of the children.

If you're concerned about a child's well-being — or if you would like advice, counseling, resources or help for yourself or others — call the Fairfax County's Child Protective Services Hotline at 703-324-7400.

**If you feel that a child is in immediate and severe physical danger, call the Fairfax County Child Protective Services Hotline at 703-324-7400 or local law enforcement immediately.**

Specially trained social workers validate, investigate and assess reports of child abuse and neglect in accordance with state statutes.

### **Reporting Suspected Child Abuse**

Deciding whether or not to report suspected child abuse can be difficult, yet it is an important first step toward protecting a child who might be in danger.

- You must have a reasonable suspicion of child abuse.
- You do not have to be able to prove the abuse or be absolutely certain that it occurred.
- You might be mistaken, but it is better to err on the side of the child.
- Not reporting your suspicions may mean that abuse will continue.
- If you make a report in good faith, you are immune from civil or criminal liability.

Only if the child is at risk of serious harm will she or he be taken away from the home. Removing the child from the home is not a routine or usual occurrence. Even if the child must be removed, the goal is to keep the family together.

- After receiving a valid report, Child Protective Services (CPS) assesses the situation to determine if there is immediate danger to the child.
- If caseworkers find that maltreatment has occurred, or services are needed to prevent abuse and neglect, CPS has a number of options.
- These include working out a plan with the family — to protect the child and to help the parents solve the problems which are leading to abuse or neglect.

Under the Code of Virginia the following persons may take a child into custody for 72-96 hours without prior approval of the child's mother, father or guardian: a physician, a child protective service worker, or a law enforcement officer when he is investigating a complaint of child abuse or neglect.

### **Confidentiality of Reports**

Reports may be made anonymously, but it helps a great deal if you give your name. Giving your name will ensure that the CPS worker who investigates the case can contact you and that important information will not be forgotten or lost.

Your name will be kept confidential. CPS will not release identifying information about the person who made the report to the family who was reported.

Usually the name of the person making the report will be made known only if a court orders it or if court testimony is involved.

You will receive a letter of acknowledgement from CPS, but otherwise you may not know the outcome, except by seeing changes in the child and family. CPS works under strict confidentiality rules, for the protection of everybody involved.

## Appendix D. Child Protection Policy Acknowledgement

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Please read the copy of the Holy Cross Lutheran Church Child Protection Policy provided to you. Please sign below to indicate that you have read and understood the Policy, and you agree to comply with the policies and procedures outlined therein when working with children.

I, (print name) \_\_\_\_\_, accept the responsibility to nurture the Christian faith and well-being of the children of Holy Cross Lutheran Church and to care for them as Christ cares for me. Jesus said, “Whoever welcomes a child, welcomes me.” (Matthew 18:5). Children are our present and our future, our hope, our teachers, our inspiration. They are full participants in the life of the church and in the realm of God. Jesus also said, “If any of you put a stumbling block before one of these little ones, it would be better for you if a great millstone were fastened around your neck and you were drowned in the depth of the sea.” (Matthew 18:6).

I have read and understood the Holy Cross Lutheran Church Child Protection Policy and accept it. I promise to exhibit appropriate behavior and conduct when working with children. I hereby affirm that I have not resigned from or been terminated from a position for reasons relating to an allegation of child abuse, as defined in the Child Protection Policy. I further affirm that I am not a registered sex offender and I do not have any pending or resolved cases with the civil authorities concerning the welfare of children. I affirm that I will not use my position of trust in the church to abuse or harm any child.

I HAVE READ and UNDERSTAND and AGREE TO ABIDE BY the Child Protection Policy of Holy Cross Lutheran Church.

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**Signature**

**Date**

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**Printed Name**

## **Appendix E: Important Phone Numbers and Contact Information**

### **Church Contacts**

Current as of 10 April 2018. Up-to-date contact information is provided each week in the bulletin.

Church Office: **703-437-1883**

Pastor Margrethe Kleiber: **571-217-6918**; [pastor@holycrosslutheranchurch.net](mailto:pastor@holycrosslutheranchurch.net)

Deborah Reilly, Congregation Council President: **202-3597450**; [dbereilly62@gmail.com](mailto:dbereilly62@gmail.com)

### **To Report Abuse or Suspected Abuse**

Police Emergency Phone Number: **911**

Police Non-Emergency 24-Hour Phone Number (Herndon, VA): **703-435-6846**

Fairfax County Child Protective Services Hotline: **703-324-7400**

Virginia State Hotline to Report Child Abuse: **1-800-552-7096**

### **Childhelp National Child Abuse Hotline**

The Childhelp National Child Abuse Hotline **1-800-4-A-CHILD (1-800-422-4453)** is dedicated to the prevention of child abuse. Serving the United States, its territories, and Canada, the Hotline is staffed **24 hours a day, 7 days a week** with professional crisis counselors who, through interpreters, can provide assistance in 170 languages. The Hotline offers crisis intervention, information, literature, and referrals to thousands of emergency, social service, and support resources. **All calls are anonymous and confidential.**

### **Department of Justice National Sex Offender Public Website**

[www.nsopw.gov](http://www.nsopw.gov)

Includes the national sex offender search feature.

### **Virginia State Criminal Records and Sex Offender Registry Information**

Virginia State Police, 7700 Midlothian Turnpike, North Chesterfield, VA 23235 (804)674-2000; Criminal Records at [www.vsp.state.va.us](http://www.vsp.state.va.us); Sex Offender Registry at [sex-offender.vsp.virginia.gov](http://sex-offender.vsp.virginia.gov)

## Appendix F. Application to Work with Children

DATE of APPLICATION:

This application is a confidential part of a process to help the church provide a safe, nurturing environment for our children. Persons responsible for the supervision and care of our children are in a special position of trust and confidence. Therefore, persons seeking to work with children at Holy Cross Lutheran Church are asked to complete this application.

**PERSONAL INFORMATION – Contents not to be disclosed, discussed, or shared with individuals unless they have a direct need to know in performance of Holy Cross Lutheran Church duties.**

|                                                             |           |          |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|----------|
| NAME, SSN, and DATE of BIRTH                                |           |          |
| MAILING ADDRESS                                             |           |          |
| CITY                                                        | STATE     | ZIP CODE |
| TELEPHONE # (Home)                                          | (Cell)    | (Work)   |
| EMAIL ADDRESS                                               |           |          |
| VOLUNTEER POSITION CONSIDERING                              |           |          |
| WHY WOULD YOU LIKE TO VOLUNTEER WITH CHILDREN AND/OR YOUTH? |           |          |
| In Case of Emergency Notify                                 | Telephone |          |

1. How long have you been attending Holy Cross Lutheran Church, Herndon, VA?
2. Are you 18 years or older? **No Yes**
3. Can you make a one-year commitment to this volunteer role? **No Yes**
4. Have you ever been convicted of any criminal offense? **No Yes**
5. Do you currently have any criminal actions pending in which you are a defendant? **No Yes**
6. Are you currently on probation or parole? **No Yes**
7. Have you ever been charged with or convicted of physical or sexual abuse of children or adults?  
**No Yes**
8. Have you ever been charged with or convicted of child neglect? **No Yes**
9. Have any complaints or allegations of misconduct involving children ever been made against you?  
**No Yes**

If you answered “yes” to any of the questions 4 through 9, please explain, including in which state the conviction or charge occurred (use the back side of this application or a separate sheet of paper, as needed):

**CHURCH OR YOUTH WORK EXPERIENCE**

List any education, experience, certifications, or other training relevant to this volunteer position, and provide a point of contact who can verify each such experience, including a phone number:

**PERSONAL REFERENCES**

Please furnish personal references from individuals who can speak to your work with children at churches, schools, community and civic organizations where past work with children was done. If you have no previous work with children, include other volunteer work or activities. The individuals listed below may be duplicates of individuals listed under “Church or Youth Work Experience” above.

| Name | Address | Phone | Occupation | Relationship |
|------|---------|-------|------------|--------------|
|      |         |       |            |              |
|      |         |       |            |              |
|      |         |       |            |              |



I understand that the Child Protection Policy (CPP) Oversight Group of Holy Cross Lutheran Church may contact the references I have provided as part of the process of reviewing this application. I hereby release from any liability any person or organization that provides information to aid this process. I understand that a background review will be conducted by the CPP Oversight Group, and I understand that my ability to volunteer with HCLC is contingent upon the results of the background review. In addition to contacting references, I understand that the CPP Oversight Group will gather additional relevant information including a criminal background check through the Virginia State Police and a registered sex offender check through the Department of Justice National Sex Offender Public Website. 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 falsifications, misrepresentation, or omission of facts called for herein will result in my disqualification from further consideration as a volunteer. I understand that this volunteer application is not valid without my signature.

APPLICANT'S SIGNATURE:

DATE:

Received by \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix G. Reference Check Form

**CONFIDENTIAL**

|                                                             |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|
| APPLICANT NAME                                              |
| REFERENCE CONTACTED                                         |
| NAME OF PERSON CONTACTING THIS REFERENCE                    |
| METHOD OF CONTACT: telephone, letter, personal conversation |

“Hello, my name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I am contacting you on behalf of Holy Cross Lutheran Church in Herndon, Virginia. (Name of applicant name) \_\_\_\_\_ applied to work with children at Holy Cross Lutheran Church, listed you as a reference, and gave us written permission to contact you. Would you please answer the following questions to the best of your ability? This should only take a few minutes and is very important to our church programs. Thank you.”

### QUESTIONS:

- A. How long have you known the applicant?
- B. In what capacity?
- C. Based on your experience, would you say that the applicant would work well with children? Why or why not?
- D. Would you entrust your child to this person?
- E. Are you aware of any problems that would affect his/her work with children?
- F. Are you aware of any allegations of child abuse?
- G. Any other comments?

REFERENCE INQUIRY COMPLETED BY:  
PRINT NAME

SIGNATURE:

DATE:

## Appendix H. HOLY CROSS LUTHERAN CHURCH PERMISSION SLIP

I, \_\_\_\_\_ (parent/guardian) give my permission for  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ (child) to attend and participate in the  
following activity: \_\_\_\_\_ Name  
and Address of Facility: \_\_\_\_\_

Dates of Attendance: \_\_\_\_\_

I give my permission to adult leaders associated with Holy Cross Lutheran Church children's and youth ministry to authorize emergency medical care if needed.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### Insurance and Physician Information:

Company \_\_\_\_\_

Policy Number \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Physician: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

### EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION:

Contact #1:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship to youth: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact #2:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship to youth: \_\_\_\_\_

### Additional Information (Allergies, Excluded Activities, etc.):

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix I. Holy Cross Lutheran Church Photo Release for Minors

Minor's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

I hereby grant Holy Cross Lutheran Church (HCLC) permission to use my child's likeness in photographs, video recordings or electronic images in any and all of its publications, including the Key and website and social media entries, without payment or any other consideration. I understand and agree that these materials will become the property of HCLC and will not be returned. I hereby irrevocably authorize HCLC to edit, alter, copy, exhibit, publish or distribute these images for purposes of publicizing HCLC's programs or for any other lawful purpose. In addition, I waive the right to inspect or approve the finished product, including written or electronic copy, wherein my child's likeness appears. Additionally, I waive any right to royalties or other compensation arising or related to the use of my child's image. I hereby hold harmless and release and forever discharge HCLC from all claims, demands, and causes of action which I, my heirs, representatives, executors, administrators, or any other persons acting on my behalf or on behalf of my estate have or may have by reason of this authorization.

I have read this release before signing below and I fully understand the contents, meaning and impact of this release.

I hereby certify that I am the parent or guardian of \_\_\_\_\_, named above, and do hereby give my consent without reservation to the foregoing release on behalf of this person.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Parent/Guardian's Signature)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Date)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Parent/Guardian's Printed Name)

## Appendix J. Incident Report Form, Page1

Name of person providing information:

Name of person recording information (if applicable):

Individual of concern:

Name of child involved:

Date and time of occurrence:

Type of concern:

- Inappropriate behavior with a child
- Non-abuse policy violation with a child
- Possible risk of abuse
- Suspected abuse
- Observed abuse
- Other concern:

Please describe the situation. Attach additional sheets as needed.

(a) What happened?

(b) Where did it happen?

(c) When did it happen?

(d) Who was involved?

(e) Who else was present?

(f) Did anyone else observe the behavior of concern?

(g) Was the parent of the child present?

(h) Did the parent observe the behavior of concern?

(i) What was the parent's reaction?

(j) If the parent was not present, do you know if the parent has been notified? \_\_\_ YES \_\_\_ NO

## Reporting and Responding Documentation Form, Page 2

If reported to the police or child protective services, what was their response and recommended course of action?

Was the incident reported to the police or 911? \_\_\_YES \_\_\_NO

Was the incident reported to child protective services? \_\_\_YES \_\_\_NO

Who from the church was contacted? \_\_\_YES \_\_\_NO

If YES, \_\_\_Pastor \_\_\_Congregation Council President \_\_\_Other (name \_\_\_\_\_)

To your knowledge, has this type of situation happened before? If so, please describe what you know.

If so, do you know what, if any, action was taken? Who was involved? Who was questioned?

Do you know if police or child protective services were called for the earlier situation? \_\_\_YES \_\_\_NO

Have you spoken to anyone else about this incident? \_\_\_YES \_\_\_NO If so, who?

Would you like someone to call you to discuss this situation?

---

I certify the above information is true to the best of my knowledge.

Signed:

Date: