

	Zion Lutheran Church CHILD PROTECTION POLICY	SOP # 20	
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Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church

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CHILD PROTECTION POLICY OF ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH

A. Mission Statement Regarding This Child Protection Policy (CPP)

In Baptism, parents and sponsors promise to help baptized children live in the covenant of Baptism and in communion with the Church. Parents and sponsors promise faithfully to bring children to the services of God's house, to teach them the Lord's Prayer, the Creed, and the Ten Commandments, to place in their hands the Holy Scriptures and to provide for their instruction in the Christian faith. The purpose of this congregation's ministry with children and youth is to support parents in fulfilling these responsibilities and to invite into participation those children and youth who have not yet been baptized.

This congregation assembles weekly around Word and sacrament. This community of faith provides opportunities for children and youth to learn about Christian faith, to develop an identity as part of the Christian community, and to serve others, following the example of our Lord Jesus. This congregation's ministry with children and youth begins by striving to provide a safe environment and to provide caring and effective leaders. In an effort to promote this safe environment, the congregation binds itself to the Child Protection Policy described in this document. To protect the safety of our children and youth employees and volunteers will be screened. The screening process is an opportunity to gather information about an applicant's past and whether they are safe with children. They will be required to subscribe to our "Two Approved Adult Rule," (stated on page __) and they will follow the guidelines set forth in this Child Protection Policy. Application forms to become an Approved Adult are located in the Appendix of this document. The Child Protection Policy Committee (CPPC) is committed to implementing and following this Child Protection Policy.

B. Definitions

Section I - Child Protective Services Definitions

According to Delaware - Maryland Child Protective Services, child abuse includes any of the following:

- Physical injury *not necessarily visible* on a child under circumstances that indicate that a child's health or welfare is harmed or at substantial risk of being harmed.

- The failure to give proper care and attention to a child including leaving a child unattended where the child's health or welfare is harmed or a child is placed in substantial risk of harm.
- An act or acts involving sexual molestation or exploitation whether physical injuries are sustained or not.
- Identifiable and substantial impairment of a child's mental or physiological ability to function.
- Finding credible evidence that has not been satisfactorily refuted that physical abuse, neglect or sexual abuse occurred.

The definition of child sexual abuse or exploitation is:

"The employment, use, persuasion, inducement, enticement or coercion of any child to engage in any sexually explicit conduct or any simulation of any sexually explicit conduct for the purpose of producing any visual depiction, including photographing, videotaping, computer, depicting or filming, of any sexually explicit conduct or the rape, sexual assault, involuntary deviate sexual intercourse, aggravated indecent assault, molestation, incest, indecent exposure, prostitution, statutory sexual assault, or other form of sexual exploitation of children."

"Sexual abuse" refers to any interaction between a child and an adult when the child is being used for the sexual stimulation of the adult or of a third person. The behavior may or may not involve touching.

Sexual abuse and harassment can include the following:

- Verbal sexual suggestions, innuendoes, or jokes
- Leering or ogling
- Intrusive touching, including pats, squeezes, hugs, pinches, kissing, brushing against someone's body
- The use of pornography
- Sexual assault or attempted sexual assault

Section II - Child Protection Policy Definitions

An **Approved Adult** is anyone over 18 years of age who has satisfied all the requirements of the Child Protection Policy and the application procedure for Approved Adults. An Approved Adult can be a volunteer or an employee of the congregation.

Approved Adults include:

- Sunday school teachers

- Vacation Bible school teachers
- Children's leaders
- Mentors
- Children's choir directors
- Other adults who have satisfied all the requirements of Approved Adults, such as nursery volunteers.

A **child** (or youth) is any person considered a minor under the laws of Delaware - Maryland, that is, a person who is under 18 years of age. A person who is incompetent is considered to be a child under this Policy irrespective of his/her age.

A **pastor** refers to the regularly called, ordained rostered leader to that congregation. In the absence of a called pastor, the Congregation Council shall appoint another called/hired staff person as the main point of contact until a called pastor assumes his/her duties in the congregation. The pastor may also appoint such a staff person to serve in their place as preferred.

Social media is forms of electronic communication (as Web sites for social networking and micro blogging) through which users create online communities to share information. Ideas, personal messages, and other content (as videos)

A **volunteer** is anyone who provides services for the church and who receives no compensation in the form of salary, wages, or benefits.

A **youth volunteer** is anyone who provides services for the church and who receives no compensation in the form of salary, wages, or benefits, and is under 18 years of age. Such a person should work under the supervision of two approved adults.

C. Approved Adult Criteria

Approved Adults have:

- provided positive personal references.
- had experience working with children, or demonstrated ability to learn, and are called by God to do His work;
- participated in church activities and maintained an active church membership in this congregation for six months or more; and completed successfully the application and Personal Interview, which did not reveal information of concern to the interviewer(s).

Failure to comply with the process or above criteria is grounds for disapproval.

D. Application Process to Becoming an Approved Adult

This congregation requires that adults complete the following application process in order to become an Approved Adult.

1. Complete the Approved Adult application form.
2. Give church officials the written authorization to obtain a criminal background check as deemed appropriate by the congregation. New background checks are required for all applicants. Previous checks from other sources are not valid for this process.
3. Have maintained an active membership in the congregation for the past six months and continue to be an active member after being accepted as an Approved Adult.
4. Be prepared to act in a volunteer capacity working with the children and youth of the congregation when called upon.
5. Attend a congregation-authorized training session.
6. Sign a Child Protection Covenant acknowledging that the applicant has read and understood the Child Protection Policy and agrees to comply with it.
7. Attend a Personal Interview with the Pastor and /or person(s) designated by the Pastor. This interview will include a standard inquiry about whether at any time in the past the applicant has abused or has been accused of abusing or physically neglecting children or youth or whether the applicant, himself or herself, was ever a victim of child abuse.

Evaluate each part of the screening process and watch for these signs that may indicate past behaviors or predispositions:

- Abrupt Relocation or vague employment history
- Pattern of working with a specific age and/or Gender of Children
- Poor Peer Relationships
- Obvious Kid-related activities or possessions
- Unrealistic view of children (e.g., view kids as “pure, clean and innocent”)

Applications and related papers will be locked in a confidential file under the jurisdiction of the Pastor.

E. Forms

All forms necessary for becoming an Approved Adult in a paid or non-paid capacity, as well as permission slips for events not held at the church and incident reports are located in Appendix. A brief description of each form follows.

1. Approved Adult Application

To be completed by all church members desiring to become an Approved Adult. Completed forms should be returned marked “Confidential” in a sealed envelope to the CPPC Chair.

2. Child Protection Covenant

To be signed by all church members desiring to become an Approved Adult and returned with the application, in a sealed envelope marked “Confidential” to the CPPC Chair.

This covenant is an outline of those obligations of an Approved Adult representing the congregation on any social networking site such as Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, or similar sites. All approved adults agree to comply with using their own name on all Social Networks, and to understand that at all times that they are to represent the congregation’s ministry and ensure that their postings will be appropriate to the mission. All confidential and sensitive information will be kept private and will not be posted. Should any Approved Adult have a concern about the proper nature of a posting, they agree to consult with their supervisor and/or leadership before posting.

3. Request for a criminal background check

To be completed by all church members desiring to become an Approved Adult. Completed forms should be returned in a sealed envelope marked “Confidential” to the CPPC Chair. Results of the background checks will be mailed to the applicant’s home address. A copy will be retained in church files.

Carefully review criminal background checks for offenses beyond past convictions for sexual assault or abuse. Often a first-time offender may be offered the opportunity to “plea down” to a lesser charge – and then offer you an explanation that is not true.

- Providing Alcohol/Tobacco/Pornography to minor
- Contributing to delinquency of a minor
- Indecency

- Exhibitionism
- Voyeurism
- Assault (non-sexual)
- Disorderly conduct

Never accept a self-reported explanation of a criminal charge you do not understand.

4. Personal Interview Form

To be completed by the Pastor during the Personal Interview of the church member desiring to become an Approved Adult. This form is signed by the applicant and the Pastor and placed in the applicant's file following the interview.

5. Permission Slip

Permission slips are to be completed by the parent or guardian of the child and returned to the appropriate Approved Adult sponsoring the event.

6. Incident Report Form

Used to report suspected incidents of alleged misconduct to the proper authorities.

7. Medical Event Laws (To be added)

F. Appropriate Behavioral Guidelines

To ensure that a nurturing Christian environment for children and youth is maintained within the congregation, to protect children and youth who participate in activities sponsored by the church from sexual and/or physical abuse, and to protect the congregation's members from false allegations of abuse, the congregation has adopted the following policy:

- 1. Child Abuse Prohibited:** Those who accept the special responsibility of working with the congregation's children and youth shall not violate that responsibility by causing physical injury, which is non-accidental; mental injury, which is non-accidental; sexual abuse or serious physical neglect of children.
- 2. Sexual Abuse Prohibited:** Those who accept the special responsibility of working with the congregation's children shall not violate that responsibility by having any interaction with a child where the child is being used for sexual

stimulation of the adult or a third person. The behavior may or may not involve touching.

3. **Two Approved Adult Rule:** Two Approved Adults should be present during any children's church activity. Where possible, doors should be left open or a window should allow easy observation of the room.
4. **Empty Room Policy:** After an activity, check rooms to ensure that all participants have vacated the room and that the door is locked. This will prevent situations where abuse might occur.
5. **Building Supervision:** Children should not be left unsupervised in a room or in moving throughout the building or the church property. Children will be signed in and out of all events. Adult leaders will supervise the release of children after all events.
6. **Expressions of Affection:** True expressions of affection toward children can be a manifestation of Christ's love for all of us. A kind word of encouragement to a child or a pat on the back can be a small but significant act for both the adult and the child. That being said, adults must use caution and common sense when physically expressing affection toward children.
 - Respect a child's refusal of affection.
 - Never make a child feel uncomfortable.
 - Be aware of appropriate hand placement. A child or an observer could misinterpret a pat on the bottom or a bear hug.
 - Note that a body-to-body embrace, a touch on private areas (those areas covered by a bathing suit), or any type of kiss is inappropriate.
7. **Social Media – Best Practices for Online Presence:** We live in a digital age, and many of the young people and their parents with whom we work have a presence in online communities.

We encourage our team to also be present on these communities. However, it is equally important to remember that the pages and materials that we post to those pages are viewed by our young people and need to be consistent with the ministry we do with them. Our pages should not have inappropriate postings, photos, etc. on them.

We also will occasionally come across content on social networking sites that the young people and/or volunteers in our programs post that might be considered inappropriate. If we do, and if in our judgment it will jeopardize the relational ministry we might do with that young person, it is our best practice to contact them about the appropriateness of that posting.

It is also important to note that with regard to information posted or sent online, our general practices on confidentiality apply. Our best practice for an adult presence on social media is to not friend request a young person, but upon accepting a friend request from a young person, they will abide by the guidelines stated above.

Relationships with young people, whether hosted with social media or not, are precious and therefore should be handled in the same appropriate manner.

- 8. Permission Slips:** Children and youth must have permission to participate in any overnight activity or any activity that takes place away from church grounds. That permission must be in writing, signed by a parent or guardian. It must identify the activity in which the child and youth will be participating. The Permission slips will list Approved Adults who will serve as chaperons.
- 9. Overnight Rule:** Additional adult chaperons who are not Approved Adults must have a background check on file before participating in overnight activities. Overnight activities involving children shall be chaperoned by at least two Approved Adults. If the event involves children of both genders, then there should be at least one Approved Adult of each gender.
- 10. Transportation of Children:** When children and youth are transported for church activities they shall be transported in groups with at least two Approved Adults in each vehicle. The Church van may be used to transport groups with only 1 Approved Adult, but the dash cam must be on.
- 11. Personal Vehicle Transportation.** To transport children in a personal vehicle, the driver must be 18 years of age or older.

G. Reporting Suspected Child Abuse

An employee or a volunteer of any age or an Approved Adult who witnesses or has reasonable cause to suspect that a child involved in a childcare program or activity has been abused by anyone (including the child's family, guardians, an Approved

Adult, or volunteer) must report such knowledge or reasonable suspicions by calling the Maryland/Delaware Department of Public Welfare (DPW) Childline and Abuse Registry within 24 hours as required by law. Reporting should be done in consultation with the Pastor and/or the persons designated by the Pastor. The Pastor and/or chairperson of the CPPC may not make an independent determination of whether to forward the report of suspected child abuse. The Pastor and/or chairperson of the CPPC must forward the report of suspected child abuse to the Childline and Abuse Registry and shall notify the person who made the report as to the date the report was forwarded to the Childline and Abuse Registry. The employee, volunteer, or Approved Adult in his or her discretion may also report such knowledge or reasonable suspicions directly to the Childline and Abuse Registry. The congregation will cooperate fully with government authorities investigating allegations of abuse. The initiative for investigating alleged abuse resides with the Department of Public Welfare (DPW) and should not be carried out by the congregation. The Pastor should forward the report of child abuse to the president of Congregation Council and the chairperson of the CPPC.

All allegations of child abuse or serious physical neglect will be taken seriously by the pastor(s), Congregation Council, and the CPPC committee. All reporting steps taken will be documented, including a log of phone calls, personal visits, and written reports. Whenever possible there should be at least the Pastor and a Congregation Council president involved so that there can be verification of the reporting activity. If the Pastor and Congregation Council president are unavailable to report to the Childline and Abuse Registry, then the person who witnessed the abuse or reasonably suspects child abuse has occurred should report the suspected abuse by calling the Childline and Abuse Registry (800-932-0313). Thereafter, the person also should promptly notify the Pastor of his or her report to the Childline and Abuse Registry. The Pastor and/or the Congregation Council president shall notify the Office of the Synodical Bishop immediately about any report to the Childline and Abuse Registry about suspected child abuse.

H. Response to the Reporting of Suspected Child Abuse

1. The Pastor or Congregation Council president will notify parents or the persons suspected of the abuse. The phone call or visit will be documented.
2. The Pastor or Congregation Council president who reported the alleged child abuse to Childline will provide to the Congregation Council a written report and all the steps taken afterwards.

3. The Pastor or Congregation Council president will notify the congregation's insurance broker and/or carrier when the reporting procedures have been initiated. The phone call or written report will be documented. If the original notice is by phone, a letter memorializing that report will also be sent to the insurance broker and/or carrier.
4. The Pastor or Congregation Council president will determine whether the congregation should engage legal counsel in consultation with the insurance carrier.
5. The Pastor or Congregation Council president will authorize the Pastor or one of the Council members to act as the official spokesperson for the congregation. Only the authorized person or persons can speak for the congregation to the news media, government agencies, attorneys, or others.
6. All other steps taken to respond to an allegation of child abuse or neglect will be approved in advance by the Pastor or Congregation Council president and will as far as possible be documented by them.
7. All communications within the congregation regarding the report of suspected child abuse shall attempt to protect the dignity and privacy of those persons affected by the report including the alleged child victim and the person suspected of child abuse while at the same time ensuring that persons in responsibility and law enforcement authorities remain fully informed. There are times when allegations of abuse prove to be unsubstantiated and without merit. The Pastor or Congregation Council president should work to ensure the confidentiality of the allegations and take measures to protect the reputation and standing of the individual in the life of the church and the community.

I. Confidentiality

Church leadership must respect the confidentiality of information which they have acquired in the course of abuse accusation and investigations. Therefore, the Pastor, Council President, and lay volunteers in the church should:

- Discuss the nature of confidentiality and its limitations at the beginning of volunteer opportunities, with assurance that confidentiality will be respected.
- Disclose confidential information only for compelling professional reasons or as required by law.

- Exercise great care to limit the content of shared information when disclosure is necessary.
- Safeguard the confidentiality of information maintained in notes and files or by electronic means.

J. The Child Protection Policy Team (CPPT)

The CPPT shall consist of 4 members, including a Pastor and the Congregation Council president. The Congregation Council president will appoint members with the approval of the Congregation Council. The CPPT chair shall be elected by the committee or appointed under the care of the Pastor.

K. The Responsibilities of the Child Protection Policy Team

1. Review and make recommendations to the congregation for revising congregation policy regarding the safety of our children.
2. Provide training for all staff and volunteers working with children regarding child abuse (physical and sexual) and congregation policy. Training should be presented prior to working with children.
3. Accept all applications of church members desiring to become an Approved Adult.
4. Delegate to the chair of the CPPT and the Pastor the task of reviewing all applications.
5. Obtain a background check for all applicants.
6. Submit a list of qualified candidates for Personal Interviews. Standard Personal Interview forms will be completed by the interviewer and will be included in the personnel file for each candidate.
7. Monitor Approved Adults to ensure that policies are being followed.
8. Keep a file of all permission slips, which will be stored in the congregation office. Permission slips will be maintained in accordance with Zion's records management policy SOP # 6_kept for three years following the event. If an incident of abuse is reported relating to an event, the permission slips for that event will be maintained indefinitely.

9. Keep Congregation Council apprised of all activities of the committee.
10. Submit periodic educational statements regarding the activities of the committee for publication in the church newsletter. Have a posted list of Approved Adults as a reference.
11. Determine appropriate disciplinary action or disqualification in response to a violation or violations of the Child Protection Policy.

L. Creating a Safe Church Environment

In addition to creating a church where Approved Adults are trained to keep children safe from abuse, the church should be a place which is safe and hospitable for children of all ages throughout the facility. Among the many areas to consider, the following are suggestions of ways to create a safe and healthy church environment:

- Toys and books for younger children, whether in nursery or Sunday school classrooms or in activity bags for use during worship, should be safe, clean, and age appropriate.
- Cleaning supplies and other harmful chemicals should be kept in higher cabinets which are secured with child-proof latches. Similarly, rooms which can be unsafe for children, such as workrooms, basements, cleaning closets, boiler/HVAC rooms, and balconies should be kept locked at all times.
- Playgrounds, roadside property, and other outside gathering areas should be fenced in.
- Electrical outlets should be properly child proofed.
- Care should be taken when making decisions about furniture and accessories throughout the building.

M. Violations of Child Protection Policy

Persons who admit to or plead guilty to or are convicted in a court of law of any form of physical or sexual abuse of a child will be immediately, permanently, and completely disqualified by the CPPT from working with children in the congregation. Persons who admit to the CPPT any type of physical or sexual abuse of a child but who have not appeared in a court of law will be disqualified from working with children in the congregation. The Congregation Council shall disqualify any person from working with children in the congregation while allegations of sexual or physical abuse are being investigated. The CPPT can temporarily or permanently disqualify any person(s) from working with children as the team deems appropriate. Alleged violations of the policy, other than abuse, shall be immediately reported to

the CPPT chair who will report it to the Pastor and the president of Congregation Council, if deemed appropriate. The alleged violations of the policy will be investigated by the CPPT that shall meet with the person(s) involved. If the person(s) is found to be in violation of the policy the CPPT will determine what disqualification or disciplinary action, if any, is necessary. The CPPT can temporarily or permanently disqualify any person(s) from working with children as the committee deems appropriate.

Appendix A: Resources

ChildLine and Abuse Registry: 1-800-932-0313

Department of Public Welfare/Child Protective Services: Child Abuse Neglect Maryland - www.dhr.state.md.us

Maryland Megan's Law: www.megans-law.net

ELCA Legal Counsel: <http://www.elca.org/legal/riskmanagement.html>

The Reducing the Risk II kit is an educational and training kit available to buy from www.reducingtherisk.com (telephone 1-800-222-1840) at \$49.95.

To conduct a Maryland background check through the Criminal Justice System: www.publicrecodrs.com

For information about private companies that perform national background checks, visit <http://www.elca.org/legal/congregations/staffVolunteers.html>

For a completely online resource: www.protectmyministry.com

Social Media Resource: <http://www.elca.org/Who-We-Are/Our-Three-Expressions/Churchwide-Organization/CommunicationServices/Resources/Web-Ministry/Social-Media.aspx>

Appendix B: Application to Become an Approved Adult

Zion Lutheran Church
107 West Main Street, Middletown MD
301-371-6500

Application to Become an Approved Adult

This application is a mandatory part of a process to assist the congregation in providing a safe, nurturing Christian environment for our children. Persons responsible for the supervision and care of our children are in a special position of trust and confidence. Therefore, all adults (18 years of age or older) seeking to work with the children of Zion Lutheran Church congregation must complete this application.

PERSONAL INFORMATION

Please attach photographic identification, e.g. copy of driver’s license

- (1) Name _____ (2) Date of Application _____
- (4) Driver’s License (State) _____
- (5) Current Residence and Mailing Address _____
- (6) Tel (home) _____ (7) Tel(work) _____ (8) Cell Phone _____
- (9) E-mail Address _____
- (10) Permanent addresses you have maintained during the last five years, beginning with the most recent.

(11) Are you 18 years of age or older? Yes No

Before you answer questions 12 through 18 on this application, please read the page attached to this application on which appear definitions of child abuse and child sexual abuse or exploitation. In the questions below, the words “abuse,” “abusing a child” or “child abuse” are intended to include the conduct described in the definitions of child abuse and child sexual abuse or exploitation.

(12) Is there any reason why you should not work with children? Yes No

If yes, please explain.

(13) Have you ever abused a child (a person less than 18 years of age?) Yes No
If yes, please explain.

(14) Have you ever been accused of abusing a child? Yes No
If yes, please explain.

(15) Have you ever been involved in a child abuse investigation as a witness,
alleged victim, or alleged abuser? Yes No
If yes, please explain.

(16) Were you ever abused as a child? Yes No
If yes, please explain

(17) Was the abuse reported? Yes No

If yes, please explain

(18) Have you ever been arrested for or convicted of or plead guilty to a criminal offense against a person? Yes No

If yes, please explain

CHURCH OR CHILD-RELATED WORK

(19) Name and address of church (if any) of which you are now a member, if other than the congregation.

(20) Names and addresses of all churches you have attended on a regular basis at any time during the last five years.

(21) Describe any church work you may have done with children at any time during the last five years. Include the church's name, address, dates of participation, and the names of persons that would know about your work.

(22) Describe any non-church related work you may have done with children at any time during the last five years. Include the organization's name, address, dates of participation, and the names of persons that would know about your work.

(23) List your talents, training, education, etc., that might help enrich the lives of our children. Describe the type of work you prefer.

SOCIAL MEDIA

(24) Do you actively participate in any level of social media? Yes No
If so, what applications do you access?

What is your screen name?

PERSONAL REFERENCES

(24) Give the name, address, and phone number of two persons, not relatives, who have known you for at least five years.

(1) _____
(2) _____

I agree that the information contained in this application is correct to the best of my knowledge.

Applicant's Signature

Date

Appendix C: Applicant's Permission for Disclosure

APPLICANT'S PERMISSION FOR THE DISCLOSURE OF INFORMATION ABOUT THE APPLICANT AND APPLICANT'S RELEASE OF ALL CLAIMS AGAINST PERSONS OR ENTITIES THAT DISCLOSE INFORMATION OR GIVE OPINIONS ABOUT THE APPLICANT

I understand and agree that the congregation may contact the churches and references identified above and others who may be identified by those listed above. I authorize these references or churches or others to give you any information (including opinions) that they may have regarding my character and fitness for work with children. I also understand and agree that law enforcement authorities or any other person or entity with access to records of criminal arrests or convictions may be contacted during the consideration of this application. I authorize these law enforcement authorities or any other person or entity to provide information regarding criminal arrests or convictions. In consideration of the receipt and evaluation of this application by the congregation, I hereby release the congregation and any individual, church, youth organization, employer, reference, or any other person or entity, including record custodians, both collectively and individually, from any and all liability for damages of whatever kind or nature which may at any time result to me, my heirs, or family, on account of any person's or entities disclosure of information about me or the expression of an opinion about me. I further state that I have carefully read the foregoing release and understand its content. I am signing this release freely and voluntarily.

Applicant's Signature _____ Date _____

Definitions

According to Delaware - Maryland Child Protective Services, child abuse includes any of the following:

- Physical injury not necessarily visible of a child under circumstances that indicate that a child's health or welfare is harmed or at substantial risk of being harmed.
- The failure to give proper care and attention to a child including leaving a child unattended where the child's health or welfare is harmed or a child is placed in substantial risk of harm.
- An act or acts involving sexual molestation or exploitation whether physical injuries are sustained or not.

- Identifiable and substantial impairment of a child's mental or psychological ability to function.
- Finding credible evidence that has not been satisfactorily refuted that physical abuse, neglect or sexual abuse occurred.

The definition of child sexual abuse or exploitation is:

"The employment, use, persuasion, inducement, enticement or coercion of any child to engage in any sexually explicit conduct or any simulation of any sexually explicit conduct for the purpose of producing any visual depiction, including photographing, videotaping, computer, depicting or filming, of any sexually explicit conduct or the rape, sexual assault, involuntary deviate sexual intercourse, aggravated indecent assault, molestation, incest, indecent exposure, prostitution, statutory sexual assault, or other form of sexual exploitation of children."

"Sexual abuse" refers to any interaction between a child and an adult when the child is being used for the sexual stimulation of the adult or of a third person. The behavior may or may not involve touching.

Sexual abuse and harassment can include the following:

- Verbal sexual suggestions, innuendoes, or jokes
- Leering or ogling
- Intrusive touching, including pats, squeezes, hugs, pinches, kissing, brushing against someone's body
- The use of pornography
- Sexual assault or attempted sexual assault

Appendix D: Child Protection Covenant

Zion Lutheran Church
107 West Main Street, Middletown MD
301-371-6500

Child Protection Covenant

I accept the responsibility to nurture the Christian faith and wellbeing of the children and youth of **Zion Lutheran Church**, and to care for them as Christ cares for me.

“I ... will tend the flock of God that is in my charge... willingly, as God would have me do it...” --I Peter 5:2

When I am representing the congregation on any social networking site such as Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, or similar sites, I understand and agree to comply with the following:

I will use my own name;

I understand I represent the congregation’s ministry and my postings will be appropriate to the mission;

I will keep all confidential and sensitive information private and will not post such information;

I have read the congregation’s policies on use of the internet and social media; and if

I have a question, uncertainty or concern about the proper nature of a posting, I will consult with my supervisor and/or leadership before posting.

I have read and understand and agree to abide by the Child Protection Policy of **Zion Lutheran Church**.

_____	_____
<i>Signature</i>	<i>Date</i>
_____	_____
<i>Signature of Witness</i>	<i>Date</i>

Appendix E: Instructions for Requesting a Criminal Background Check

Those who have direct interaction with children during a ministry sponsored event associated with Zion must pass a background check. The background checks are done by CIA Research. The cost of the background checks are to be absorbed by Zion Lutheran Church.

Those under 18 years of age who are working with the youth as a mentor do not need complete a background check.

Which background check is required?

- Staff with direct one-on-one Youth Interaction (office volunteers and those who only work in the church office and do not participate in youth activities do not need to have a background check completed): All Inclusive Check - Includes Identity Verification, National Criminal Database Search, and National Sex Offender Registry. All criminal records will be reverified, Order Current County of Residence and Motor Vehicle Report for current state.
- Youth Volunteer/Chaperone: Basic Starter - Includes Identity Verification, National Criminal Database Search, and National Sex Offender Registry. All criminal records will be reverified. This level does not include a motor vehicle report and therefore are not eligible to drive the church van or any rental vehicles used to transport children for church ministries. This includes Sunday School teachers, VBS volunteers who have direct leadership responsibilities (excludes parents who are helping in a classroom in which their child is participating).
- Driver – Vehicle Plus - Includes Identity Verification, National Criminal Database Search, and National Sex Offender Registry. All criminal records will be reverified and Order Motor Vehicle Report for current state. This person is eligible to drive and transport children either with the church's vehicle or a rental.

How often does the background check need to be completed?

- Every 2 years, a background check will need to be repeated by those wishing to serve in this capacity. The church office will maintain a list of those who have completed background checks and will remind those who need to renew their checks to complete it in a timely fashion.
- Those who fail to complete a background check will not be eligible to offer leadership in any youth activities.

- Those who fail a background check will need to speak with the pastor about the nature of the failure. The pastor will need to involve the executive committee if it deemed appropriate for the individual to continue to work with the youth in a leadership role.

Appendix F: Personal Interview Form

Zion Lutheran Church
107 West Main Street, Middletown MD
301-371-6500

Personal Interview Form [To be completed by interviewer when interviewing an applicant seeking to become an Approved Adult.]

Interview Date: _____ Final Approval Date _____
Interviewed By: _____

Name of Applicant _____

Address _____

Phone (home) _____ Phone (work) _____ Phone (cell) _____

[The interviewer should carefully read the application completed by the applicant and ask any relevant questions raised by the applicant's answers to the questions on the application. If the answers on the application do not raise any questions, the Interviewer, at a minimum, should read each question below to the applicant and mark the appropriate response.]

	Yes	No
Have you read and understand Zion's Child Protection Policy?	___	___
1. Do you have any specific questions regarding that policy? (If so, please list below.)	___	___

2. Have you ever been accused of and/or have a previous record of child abuse?	___	___

3. Concerning your previous experience with children, what would you say have been the highlights of that experience? (Please list specifics.)

4. In what specific areas would you particularly like to work with children? (i.e. Sunday School, Youth Group, etc.)

5. Employment and/or Volunteer History

6. References

Applicants Signature _____

Appendix G: Permission Slips

Zion Lutheran Church
Permission Slip for the 20__ / __ School Year

Student Information:

Name: _____

Address: _____

Date of Birth: _____ Age: _____ Grade for
20__ / __ school year: _____

Insurance Company Name: _____

Insurance Policy & Group #s: _____

PLEASE INDICATE on the back of this notice: Please list any health conditions, allergies or diet/mental/ physical restrictions that your child may have and medications that he/she may be using to treat this condition. You may also include the name of the hospital or doctor of your preference and their phone numbers; we will do our best to honor such requests in the case of an emergency.

Household Information:

Name of Parents or Guardians: _____

Address: _____

Preferred Phone #: _____ Alternate Phone #: _____

Relationship to Student: _____

Emergency Contact:

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone Number: _____

Relationship to Student: _____

The following adults have my permission to pick up my child from a youth function. If there are changes to this list, I will notify the pastors.

Please list any pertinent information regarding your child the leadership should be aware of:

I, _____ (Participant's Parent/Guardian's Name), hereby grant permission for my

child, _____ (Participant's Name), to participate in the 2024-2025 church and youth events. I acknowledge that there are inherent risks associated with any activity, and I assume full responsibility for those risks.

I understand that travel may be involved, and I hereby give permission for my child to travel with the adult leader or leaders of this activity, including transportation by car, bus, train, airplane, or any other means.

I understand that it may be necessary for emergency medical treatment to be administered if an injury or illness occurs during activities. I grant permission to an adult leader of this activity, my appointed agent if needed, to provide consent for any medical diagnosis or treatment including x-ray examinations; dental services; surgery and hospital care advised by a licensed physician, surgeon or dentist in the state where these services are rendered. This may include visits at a doctor's office as well as hospitals.

I understand that it is incumbent upon me and/or my child to follow all rules as set forth by the church. Further, I acknowledge that any misconduct or misbehavior on the part of my child or myself may result in immediate dismissal from the event, at the sole discretion of the church staff. I also agree to release and hold harmless the church and its staff from all liability related to injury or illness that may occur to my child in relation to this event or any activity associated with it.

In the event of an emergency, I consent to medical treatment provided by a doctor or hospital of the church's choice. I have read and understand all regulations associated with this event, as well as the above statements.

Signature of Parent/Guardian: _____ Date: _____

Printed Name: _____

Zion Lutheran Church _____ has my permission _____ does not have my permission to use my child's photograph for publicity purposes.

Health conditions, allergies or diet/mental/ physical restrictions that your child may have and medications that your child may be using to treat this condition:

Preferred name of the hospital or doctor of your preference and their phone numbers

Appendix H: Incident Report

Zion Lutheran Church
107 West Main Street | Middletown, MD 21769
301-371-6500

Name of child_____

Date of report_____

Parents/Guardians of child _____

Person(s) involved in alleged misconduct_____

Date, time and location of incident _____

Description of incident _____

Were there any other witnesses? Yes_____ No_____

Please comment_____

_____ I am a mandatory reporter.

_____ I choose to remain anonymous regarding this incident.

_____ I have reported or intend to report this incident to criminal authorities.

THE ABOVE INFORMATION IS FREELY PROVIDED AND IS TRUE TO THE BEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE.

Reporter's signature

Relationship to child

I have received this report and agree to follow appropriate policy and procedures.

Signature_____ Date_____

APPENDIX I: Medical Event Log

Participant Name: _____

ALLERGIES or Special Conditions: _____

Dates: _____

Date	Event & Treatment	Initials

Care provided by: _____ Signature: _____

Off-site follow-up: Yes _____ No _____