

Appendix A

St. Mark's United Methodist Church

Safe Sanctuary Policy Definitions

DEFINITIONS

It is important to have a common understanding of key terms in this policy.

In *Safe Sanctuaries, Reducing the Risk of Abuse in the Church*, 2008, Discipleship Resources, Nashville, TN, Joy Thornburg Melton defines and describes five types of abuse:

- **Physical Abuse** is abuse “in which a person deliberately and intentionally causes bodily harm to another through violent attack with a weapon (knife, belt, strap, etc.), burning, shaking, kicking, choking, fracturing bones, or any of a wide variety of non-accidental injuries to a person’s body”. (Melton 2008, pages 29-30)
- **Sexual Abuse** is abuse “in which sexual contact occurs between a child, (youth or vulnerable adult) and an older or more powerful person, where the vulnerable person is not capable of consenting to or resisting such contact... (because of) physical or psychological dependence. Examples of sexual abuse may include fondling, intercourse, incest, the exploitation of and exposure to pornography or prostitution.” (Melton, 2008, page 30)
- **Emotional Abuse** is abuse “in which a person exposes another person to spoken or unspoken violence or emotional cruelty... sending a message of worthlessness, badness, being unloved and undeserving of love and care. Emotional abuse may include locking someone in a closet, depriving a child or youth of parental affection, constantly telling someone they are bad or stupid, allowing or forcing a minor to abuse alcohol or drugs. Emotional abuse is very difficult to prove and devastating to the victim.” (Melton, 2008, page 30)
- **Neglect** is abuse “in which someone’s health, safety or welfare is endangered through negligence. Some forms of neglect are: withholding food, clothing, medical care, education, and even affection and affirmation of self-worth.” (Melton, 2008, page 30). If a parent cannot provide adequate care for a child due to poverty, infirmity or other disability, their negligence is not legally categorized as abuse, although the neglected person still needs to be cared for.
- **Ritual Abuse** is abuse “in which physical, sexual, or psychological violations of a person are inflicted regularly by someone responsible for the vulnerable person’s welfare. The abuser may appeal to a higher authority or power to justify the abuse. Such abuse may include actual or threats of cruelty to a person, animals, or others.” (Melton, 2008, page 30)

Assistant/Helper - persons who aid the Staff/Volunteer.

Criminal History - refers to any items reported on a person’s criminal records including arrests, charges, indictments, convictions, probations and deferred adjudications.

Floater – trained Staff/Volunteer who will document

Appendix A
St. Mark's United Methodist Church
Safe Sanctuary Policy Definitions

Ministry(ies) - shall mean on church campus, or church sponsored off-campus, activities or programs involving Protected Persons, including but not limited to those related to child care, district and conference youth events, mission trips, Sunday School, and youth fellowship.

Pastor – The ordained and appointed clergy of St. Mark's UMC.

Staff - Every person hired for a paid staff position, (hereinafter referred to as "Staff"), regardless of whether the position is full-time, part-time, permanent or temporary and regardless of whether such position directly or routinely involves the care of children, youth, or vulnerable adults will be subject to this Policy. Staff includes, but is not limited to, the director of the program/event, interns, staff of camps or events under the direction of the board or agency, and child care workers. Staff does not include speakers, short-term presenters, facilitators, or performers.

Staff-Parish Relations Committee (SPR) – The committee which hires, evaluates, counsels and supports staff. They are also responsible for identifying and recruiting person to the ordained ministry.

Volunteer – shall mean a person in a “position of trust” with Protected persons such as Sunday School leader/teacher, youth leader, hall-floater and any other person in a leadership position, who is at least eighteen (18) years old, and involved in a Ministry. Individuals must be approved by the (??? Staff Parish Committee). No person under the age of 18 shall be placed in a position of supervision over protected persons. Younger persons (less than 18) may be utilized as helpers but shall always be under supervision.

Vulnerable Adult - shall mean any person, 18 years or older, who because of physical or mental infirmity or emotional disability or other physical, mental or emotional dysfunction may be vulnerable to maltreatment. Vulnerable Adults can also be adults who have been abused either as a child or an adult; or, adults who in their work with children, youth and vulnerable adults can be in a position where accusations of abuse could mistakenly arise.