

Union Evangelical Lutheran Church

Exploitation, Ministerial Conduct and Youth Protection Policy

Incident Reporting Procedure

- ❖ Incidents or reasonable suspicions involving improper touching, physical abuse, or exploitation of a child or youth shall be brought to the attention of a pastor or, when unavailable or impractical, to the president of the congregation.
- ❖ Once reported and deemed credible by a pastor or the president of the congregation, a written incident report will be completed by a staff member or the president of the congregation which shall include the following information:
 - Name of alleged child or youth involved and their parents
 - Name of the alleged worker/adult/other individual involved
 - Specific statement of the allegations of misconduct
 - Date, time and location that the incident is alleged to have occurred
 - Witnesses or other individuals with knowledge or information about the allegation
- ❖ Notification of all appropriate parental, legal or insurance authorities, Childline (1-800-932-0313) and the Lehigh County Office of Children and Youth (610-782-3064) will be made by the individual in charge of completing the incident report or his/her designee.

Response to Allegations

It will be the policy of Union Evangelical Lutheran Church to deal with allegations of improper conduct, as outlined in the policy statement, with respect and dignity for all persons involved. The opportunity for spiritual and emotional support will be offered to all persons involved. Union Evangelical Lutheran Church will remain supportive to all persons involved, recognizing that incidents of abuse allegations are devastating to both the accuser and the accused, and therefore the above policies of reporting will be carried out tactfully, discreetly and without bias on the part of the reporting agent.

All reports of allegations of exploitation, harassment and ministerial misconduct will be confidential, and reporting agents will maintain the confidentiality of all parties, to the extent allowed by law, with the exception of required reporting to parental, legal and social welfare authorities, and the church's insurance and legal counsel.