

**Unitarian Universalist Congregation  
Board Meeting Minutes  
May 8, 2014**

**Present:** Board members Laureen Blakemore, Linda Powers, Ann Norris, Kristine Reid, Beth Lyman, Glenn Skutt; ex officio members Dara Olandt, Lisa Evanylo, Karen Hager; UUC members Frank DuPont, John Kelso, and John Sangster

Laureen provided the reading, the chalice was lit, and all read the Board covenant together. Dara invited all to share something around "bridging." Linda served as Process Observer.

I. **Agenda** – Linda moved to accept the amended agenda. The motion carried unanimously.

**II. Old business**

A. **Volunteer awards** – Glenn received bios and names of nominees from LDC. No names have been submitted from the congregation. Karen will handle the LFD award to be given on June 1. The others will be presented June 1 or 8.

Glenn moved that the presenting of volunteer awards specifically at the Flower Communion service be removed from the Policy Manual and that they be presented in June during a service. The motion carried unanimously.

**III. Staff Reports**

A. **Minister's report**

1. **Witness for Love and Marriage Equality Action** – we have received our permit to assemble on May 12 at 2 PM.
2. **Dara's Preliminary Fellowship Renewal Review** – due to UUA by July 1
3. **Correction to report** – the annual meeting is on June 1 (not June 8)

B. **Administrator's report**

1. **Annual meeting letter** – Lisa will have it available on Sunday for handing out. Those not picked up will be mailed.

C. **DLFD Report**

1. **OWL training** – Karen is looking into hosting an OWL training at UUC as the others are all so far away. She talked to a UUA rep yesterday and found the person to be very unorganized about OWL. If it takes place here, it would be next summer. She is looking into whether we could make up the cost with registration fees.

IV. **Consent Agenda** - Ann moved to accept the amended minutes from April with the two changes as mentioned in Lisa's report. The motion carried unanimously.

V. **Treasurer's report** – attached. Linda stated that there is an influx of pledges coming in at the end of the year.

A. **Proposed budget** – John Sangster reported that to date, \$258,616 has been pledged. Following much discussion, Linda moved to approve the budget to include the Board budget, Budget A and Budget B with all additional funds going to debt repayment. The total expenditures are \$318,039. The motion carried unanimously. Ella Kromin, choir director, will have the option of using the allotted \$2000 to attend a workshop or to cover her salary to direct a children's choir. There was general discomfort with auction income being included in the operating budget, and next year, omitting it should be considered. It was suggested that if a congregant offers to donate to a specific line item, the suggestion should be made that he/she donate to the general fund instead.

VI. **Member's forum** – no comments were made.

## VII. Council Reports

- A. **Facilities Council** – no report
- B. **Fellowship & Governance Council** – the council is meeting this month and will work to coordinate the addition of the Governance Committee to the Council.
- C. **Finance & Administration Council** – no report
- D. **LFD Council** – see attached report
- E. **Membership Council** – no report
- E. **Pastoral Services Council** – see attached report
- F. **Social Action Council** – the Social Justice Steering Committee is working to launch listening sessions for the fall.
- G. **Worship Opportunities Council** – no report

## VIII. Action items

A. **LFDC Policy Manual revisions** – the proposed policy was sent to Church Mutual, and suggestions were received. There was no input from the congregation, nor did anyone attend the info meeting following a service. One change was suggested and made. Ann moved to approve the amended LFDC policy. The motion carried unanimously.

B. **LDC appointment** – Kristine moved to approve the appointment of Marilyn DuPont to LDC. The motion carried unanimously.

C. **Alternate delegate to GA** – Linda moved that Marilyn DuPont be approved as an alternate delegate to GA, if needed. The motion carried unanimously.

D. **Approval of slate of nominees** – Glenn moved to approve the slate of nominees as presented by LDC: Molly Lazar, president-elect; Linda Powers, treasurer; Bill Baker and Tim Pickering, members at-large. The motion carried unanimously

## IX. New Business

A. **CoM report following reflections sessions** – John Kelso presented the report (attached) which included a summary of congregational strengths, growth places, and visions.

B. **Overview of Rev. Dara's Preliminary Fellowship Renewal** – the Board is required to submit a report of Dara's first year to the UUA by July 1. Glenn will put up a Google Doc, email the link, and all should add comments. Kristine will send a doodle poll to set up a date that the Board can meet to fill out the report. The Board will then meet with Dara on June 10 at 7:30 PM, location TBA to review before the final report is submitted to the UUA.

## X. Information Items

A. **May timeline check list** – all is in order.

XI. **Process Observer** – Linda stated that the meeting went well, moving along most of the time although the budget discussion was long.

XII. **Next meeting** – June 12 at 6:00 PM. The meeting will begin with a potluck provided by the current Board and will include incoming Board members. Ann will provide the reading, and Beth will serve as Process Observer.

Dara provided the closing.

## **ACTION ITEMS:**

**Glenn** - put up a Google Doc of Dara's Preliminary Fellowship report and email the link

**All** - add comments to Google Doc

**Kristine** - send a doodle poll for Board to meet to fill out report

**AGENDA ITEMS:**

Fiduciary requirement for membership

**Stewardship Summit Agenda Items:**

Including auction income in operating budget – or not

Holding a separate fund drive to repay member loans

Piecemeal member giving outside of pledge

What financial contribution does it take to be a voting member?

Lisa Evanylo, Administrator

**UUC BOARD MEETING AGENDA**  
**Thursday, May 8, 2014, 6:30 pm**

6:30 – 6:45	<b>First Time Period</b> Chalice Lighting & Reading- Laureen Blakemore Reading of Board Covenant Check-in and offering- Rev. Dara Process Observer-Linda Powers	15 Minutes
6:45 – 6:50	<b>Review and Accept Agenda</b>	5 minutes
6:50 – 6:55	<b>Old Business</b> Volunteer Awards- Glenn	5 minutes
6:55 – 7:05	<b>Minister &amp; Staff Reports</b> Minister's Reports Administrator's Reports DLFD's Reports	10 minutes
7:05 – 7:10	<b>Consent Agenda</b> Previous Board Meeting Minutes	1-5 minutes
7:10- 7:30	<b>Treasurer's Report</b> Budget update and discussion	20 minutes
7:30 –7:45	<b>Members Forum</b> Members are invited to address the Board. Please keep your comments to 3 minutes	15 minutes
7:45 – 7:55	<b>Council Reports</b> Facilities Council Fellowship & Governance Council- Glenn Finance & Administration Council Lifespan Faith Development Council Membership Council Pastoral Service Council Social Action Council Worship Opportunities Council	10 minutes
7:55 – 8:05	<b>Break</b> Refreshments by Lisa Evanylo	10 minutes
8:05 – 8:25	<b>Action Items</b> LFDC Policy Manual-discussion Strategic Planning Committee Confirm appointments- Laureen	20 minutes
8:25 - 8:45	<b>New Business</b> Update policy regarding when awards are presented by removing Flower Ceremony constraint P&P 2 Page 7 Fiduciary requirement for membership Presentation to the Board of the CoM's report following the Reflection Sessions- John Kelso  Overview of Rev. Dara's Preliminary Fellowship Renewal Review-John Kelso Approve Slate of Board Nominees	20 minutes
8:45 – 8:50	<b>Information Items</b> May Time Line check list	5 minutes
8:50 – 8:55	<b>Process Observer Report Back</b>	5 minutes
8:55-9:00	<b>Reading, Refreshments &amp; Process Observer</b> for next meeting	5 minutes
<b>Closing-</b>	Rev Dara	

**Report to the Board, May 2014**  
**Rev. Dara Olandt, Minister, UUC**

**KEY DATES in MAY AND JUNE:**

**May 12<sup>th</sup> 2pm-3pm- Witness for Love and Marriage Equality Action** – this event will be a public interfaith and community action for Marriage Equality. Rev. Dara coordinating with interfaith and community leaders.

May 13 & 27, Rev. Dara leading Meditation, 7:00 - 9:00 p.m. – Sanctuary.

*Average attendance has been about 10 people per session. Possible, lay-led ongoing group will be explored at last session.*

**May 15<sup>th</sup>** – Child Dedication in worship service

**May 17<sup>th</sup>** - 2014-2015 Lay Pastoral Care Training

**May 18<sup>th</sup>** – Music Service with New Members recognized in service.

*We will have 2-3 new members joining.*

**May 25<sup>th</sup>** – Bridging Service

**June 8<sup>th</sup>** - **Congregational** Meeting after service

**June 15<sup>th</sup>** – Stewardship Summit – possible alternative date TBD

**June 23<sup>rd</sup> – June 29<sup>th</sup>** – Rev. Dara attending UUMA Ministry Days, followed by UUA General Assembly

**WORSHIP THEME THIS MONTH:**

“Bridging”

**Worship Services Committee and WA Program Update**

Rev. Dara and Worship Services Committee have worked collaboratively to establish the calendar of monthly worship themes for the 2014-2015 worship seasons.

**Rev. Dara’s UUA Preliminary Renewal Form Due to UUA in early July**

***What is it?***

This is part of renewing my "Fellowship" as a UU minister; my credential to serve as a full UU minister, if you will. The review the Board will create is part of my permanent file, and is assessed by what is called the UUA Ministerial Fellowship Committee (MFC). They are the group responsible for "credentialing" or "Fellowshipping" ministers.

***What else does it mean?***

After 3 consistent renewals in the same ministry setting, a minister is able to receive the category of "Final Fellowship" which means no more renewals are necessary and the MFC grants the minister the ability to supervise an intern Minister, which allows the congregation the minister serves to become a "teaching congregation".

This is often considered an honor for UU congregations. (UUC has some history of

doing this in the past.) I could have submitted renewals since I attained Fellowship a few years ago, however I waited until I was settled in a parish setting where I could submit consistent renewals from the same ministry site with a congregation.

### ***What does it entail?***

The renewal process means that I create a self-evaluation, and an ongoing professional development plan, the Board creates an evaluation, and the CoM creates an evaluation. All of these are turned in by July 1st. The requisite forms and instructions are below.

### ***How do you do it?***

The Board's role is to create a review mostly regarding the Board's work with me. Below is a useful outline of how my colleague and his congregation have done this. The Board's task is more simple than the CoM, which is why the CoM has already started in April. Again, I suggest we use the model below, which is fairly simple.

On Dec 11, 2013, at 9:18 AM, Kelly Asprooth-Jackson wrote:  
Hi Dara,

Here's how we did it in Beverly:

The CoM focused their evaluations on the congregation as a whole - they had conversations with staff members and committee chairs and got developed references for people who had been deeply involved in my work that year (for instance, folks who had experienced a major life crisis to discuss their experience of pastoral care).

**The board focused their evaluations on their experience working with me It wasn't closed off to other in-put, but they left it to the CoM to actively seek out feedback from the larger congregation. Staff aren't ex-officio here, but I and my DRE do attend all board meetings. Because it's a staff matter, the board did all of its evaluation work in executive session, so I and the DRE were not present for it. We're both very used to and comfortable with that arrangement - it comes up a few times a year for other reasons. I would think that your board should have some precedent of this sort as well.**

**What I underlined to my folks, and what they seemed to get, was that this is actually an evaluation of the whole ministry of the congregation. (It just happens to only have direct consequences for the minister.) Looking at the project that way helped to direct the conversation towards the hopes and needs of the congregation and how we were doing together in relationship to our mission. I got solid feedback about my performance, but it made the clear that it wasn't just a thumbs-up/thumbs-down on me.**

**I hope that's helpful, and I hope the process goes well and is useful for you!**

Kelly

\*\*

### **A bit more information and the forms...**

- As the UUA "Helpful hints for doing ministerial reviews document" shows, the evaluations are shared with the minister before the documents are sent to the MFC in Boston, so that this is an opportunity for shared reflection and conversation, without surprises. It is an opportunity for feedback, reflection, dialogue between minister and Board;

- Process for making it happen: Basically, as indicated above, the Board will need to identify **a subcommittee of 1-3 people to take the lead**. There needs to be at least one person who understands what this is and can help educate the Board about it so everyone has a sense of what this is. It can be the president, past president, future president or another. The subcommittee folks can assemble Board member's thoughts and then you can hold a synthesis meeting in Executive Session to get a final draft together.

I can meet with you a bit before your Executive Session if you'd like, and or I can simply meet with the Board after the Executive Session has taken place and before the Review is completed and sent in which we can talk. I will share my self-evaluation, you can share with me the Board's and we can make any shifts if we need and send the packet in. I am open to your thoughts on best ways to do it. Again, I think the model above is a good one, and I am pleased to proceed this way.

### ***Forms and Items for the Board:***

1) UUA

Overview: <http://www.uua.org/careers/ministers/support/fellowship/7538.shtml>

2) Parish Ministry Board Form: (attached)

3) Helpful Tips for Doing Ministerial Reviews:

[http://www.uua.org/documents/mfc/tips\\_for\\_ministerial\\_reviews.pdf](http://www.uua.org/documents/mfc/tips_for_ministerial_reviews.pdf)

### ***Timeline:***

The Board will need to identify a subcommittee in or by the May meeting that can work on a more detailed timeline: a Board synthesis time will need to be set, and also meeting for conference with Rev. Dara.

Form due to UUA by July 1<sup>st</sup>.

### **CONGREGATIONAL ADMIN & CONGREGATIONAL LIFE**

Rev. Dara continues to meet on consistent basis with Staff, Board, CoM, Stewardship, Worship Services Committee, Lay Pastoral Care, and Connections, to meet with Finance and other committees of UUC as needed. Rev. Dara frequently sees individuals of the congregation in 1:1 pastoral visits at homes and in office.

### **Maternity Leave Brochure**

Rev. Dara is working with key layers of lay-leadership to develop a Maternity Leave Brochure with a full schedule of worship services and guest speakers lined up during the 12 weeks of her maternity leave. Dara will be taking 6 weeks paid, 4 weeks unpaid, and 2 weeks of study leave. During the 6 weeks paid, and 4 weeks unpaid, Guest Ministers and Speakers will offer the worship services. Many of the dates have already been arranged. Rev. Karen Day of Floyd will be the on-call ministerial pastoral presence for UUC during Rev. Dara's maternity. However, beginning at the 2 weeks of study leave, Rev. Dara will become consistently pastorally available once again. The guide to Rev. Dara's Maternity Leave Brochure and Calendar of Services will be published to the UUC website, with a target date in late May/early June.

### **Stewardship Summit in June - TBD - Details forthcoming**

### **"Many Voices, One Home" - Adult RE for 2014-2015**

As a focus for next year, Rev. Dara is working with Karen Hager and ARE to offer a strengthened ARE approach focused on the theme "Many Voices, One Home" and The Pluralism Project. This will featuring a planned line up of ARE sessions in Fall and Winter (2014) focused the "Voices in UUism" Series by UU publisher Skinner House Press. (Titles include - Christian Voices in UUism, Jewish Voices in UUism, LGBTQ Voices in UUism, Buddhist Voices in UUism). Fall and spring will focus on UU identity and pluralism. The spring (2015) series will hopefully feature Interfaith Religious Leaders and Rev. Dara in dialog open to UUC and the public. More information will be shared as plans continue to develop.

## Parish Ministry - Governing Board/Supervisor Evaluation For the UUA Ministerial Fellowship Committee

Name of Minister:

Date:

Position being evaluated:

Period of evaluation: From:

To:

Congregation:

Name of Contact for this evaluation:

Contact's Phone:

Contact's Email:

### Notes Relating to Completion of Form

This evaluation should be completed by whoever is responsible for supervising the minister. In most congregations that body is the Board. In some congregations it may be a senior minister. The Board may charge a smaller task group to gather feedback and then present that to the whole Board before sharing it with the minister. For tips on how to do an assessment of a minister, please refer to the forms page on our website at:

<http://www.uua.org/leaders/leadership/ministerialfellowship/15505.shtml>

When completing this evaluation form, review the suggested considerations and then comment on the particular strengths and areas for growth of the minister. Simply checking a box is not sufficient feedback. Without detailed responses, the evaluation will be considered incomplete by the MFC. Both the minister and the MFC benefit from an honest and thorough assessment of the ministry.

Please provide the evaluation as a consensus report of the group. Do not provide individual ratings from each Board member.

The section entitled “**Comments on organizational ownership and involvement in this area**” is your opportunity to reflect on the organization’s own engagement in this particular area.

**Continuing Education/Action Steps:** When appropriate, make concrete suggestions to the minister for appropriate continuing education or action steps that will strengthen this area of ministry. (i.e., take time management course, study system’s theory, etc.)

When completed, this evaluation should be shared with the minister and the minister’s Committee on Ministry and they should share their evaluations with you as well.

**PLEASE ONLY SUBMIT TYPED EVALUATION FORMS. Forms should be submitted via email to [mfccordinator@uua.org](mailto:mfccordinator@uua.org).**

Please note that fields for your text will expand to accommodate your entries.

## Area of Ministry:

### 1. Counseling & Pastoral Care

Check One:

Strength  Satisfactory  Area for Growth  Unsatisfactory  Not Observed

General **Comments:** (*Consider availability, responsiveness, warmth, empathy, knowledge of family systems, skill level in pastoral care, confidentiality, hospital visitation, etc.*)

Comments on congregational ownership and involvement in this area:

Recommended Continuing Education/Action Steps:

### 2. Practical Arts

Check One:

Strength  Satisfactory  Area for Growth  Unsatisfactory  Not Observed

General **Comments:** (*Consider administration, organizational development in out of congregation, management of staff, attention to detail, support and leadership development, recognition and appreciation of others, delegation of responsibility and authority, follow through and completion of tasks, time management, attention to finances, fund raising, funding ministry, public relations and publicity skills, ability to work with boards and committees, clarity of roles, attention to long range plans, etc.*)

Comments on congregational ownership and involvement in this area:

Recommended Continuing Education/Action Steps:

### 3. Organizational Ministry

Check One:

Strength  Satisfactory  Area for Growth  Unsatisfactory  Not Observed

General **Comments:** (*Consider integration of new member and clients, creates a welcoming environment, encourages a sense of community, encourages growth, supports broad variety of*

*programs, involvement of others in planning and conducting programs, nurtures lay leadership, professional presentation of self, pastors to various age groups, etc.)*

Comments on congregational ownership and involvement in this area:

Recommended Continuing Education/Action Steps:

#### 4. Personal and Professional Growth

Check One:

Strength     Satisfactory     Area for Growth     Unsatisfactory     Not Observed

**General Comments:** (*Consider performance under stress, hears criticism and feedback, skillfully gives constructive criticism and feedback, conveys energy and enthusiasm, gives and receives praise, sense of humor, manages conflict, models a healthy balance of work and personal/family life, engages in a rewarding spiritual practice, etc.*)

Comments on congregational ownership and involvement in this area:

Recommended Continuing Education/Action Steps:

#### 5. Teaching (All Ages)

Check One:

Strength     Satisfactory     Area for Growth     Unsatisfactory     Not Observed

**General Comments:** (*Consider program development and coordination, seminar design and facilitations, teacher training, supports teachers in planning and conducting classes, provides program resources and support for parents, teachers, and colleagues, intergenerational activities, programs for children, youth and adults, volunteer recruitment, articulation of liberal religious education approach and philosophy, knowledge of resources and curriculum, etc.*)

Comments on congregational ownership and involvement in this area:

Recommended Continuing Education/Action Steps:

## 6. Worship

Check One:

Strength     Satisfactory     Area for Growth     Unsatisfactory     Not Observed

General Comments: (*Consider preparedness, coherence, intellectual challenge, spirituality, creativity, inspirational message, effective use of humor, effective use of ritual and liturgical arts, music, prayer and meditation, readings/stories, rites of passage, pulpit presence, voice, etc.*)

Comments on congregational ownership and involvement in this area:

Recommended Continuing Education/Action Steps:

## 7. Denominational Activities

Check One:

Strength     Satisfactory     Area for Growth     Unsatisfactory     Not Observed

General Comments: (*Consider involvement in UU denominational and District events, UUMA Chapter meetings and interfaith activities, encouragement of member involvement at the district and continental levels, informing congregation of UUA denominational concerns and issues, etc.*)

Comments on congregational ownership and involvement in this area:

Recommended Continuing Education/Action Steps:

## 8. Prophetic Outreach

Check One:

Strength     Satisfactory     Area for Growth     Unsatisfactory     Not Observed

**General Comments:** (*Consider involvement in witnessing and advocating for community/social justice issues, encourages congregational involvement in community/social justice issues, leads the congregation in addressing issues specifically related to anti-racism, anti-oppression, etc.*)

Comments on congregational ownership and involvement in this area:

Recommended Continuing Education/Action Steps:

**Administrator's Report to the Board** – Lisa Evanylo  
May 8, 2014

**Corrections to April minutes:** Frank DuPont is no longer on SP. The Board met on April 24 to discuss the budget, not May 24 as written.

**Request for Committee Year-end Reports:** The request for the reports has been emailed to all committee chairs and will be compiled and available for the June 1 Annual Meeting.

**Annual Meeting Letter to Members:** The letter, including a copy of the proposed budget, must be mailed to all members no later than May 14 (I am away for a few days starting May 15). Per the bylaws, the letter must be mailed at least 2 weeks prior to the meeting. If possible, I would like to have the letter ready to hand out to members at the service on May 11 and then will mail the rest by May 14. The letter can also be emailed to all members.

There are several members (about 10) who did not pledge for the upcoming fiscal year nor are they currently active at UUC. Would the Board prefer that they be removed from membership as per our bylaws OR that the Connections Committee give them a call to find out if they want to be removed? There are also several members who did not pledge or request a waiver but are still somewhat active – should they be contacted also or removed from membership?

Several members are moving out of the area and will be removed at the end of the current fiscal year.

**Attendance chart:** [see file](#)

**Time off:** I will be out of town May 15-18 although I will be working on my computer on May 15 and will find a volunteer to copy the bulletins on May 16.

## **DLFD Report to the Board – May 2014**

Submitted by Karen Hager, Director of Lifespan Faith Development

### **Registration Numbers**

- CYRE: 143 (unique children and youth)

### **LFD Council**

- LFDC finished the policy manual revision and handed it out for review. See LFDC report.

### **Children's Religious Education Committee (CREC)**

- Recruitment continues for Summer PreK and Summer K-1 assistants.
- Recruitment continues for fall teachers and advisors. Our targeted finish date is June 1.

### **Youth Adult Committee (YAC)**

- YRUU attended Mountain Con April 11.

### **Adult Religious Education Committee (AREC)**

- An info session was held on our summer class The Artist's Way. Registration is now full.
- We are looking into the possibility of sponsoring a workshop on Reproductive Justice in September.
- The movie Hunger Games: Catching Fire will be shown this month.

### **OWL Committee (OWL)**

- Debriefing was held with the OWL 8-9 teachers.
- K-1 and 4-5 OWL classes were placed on the calendar for January 2015.
- Adult OWL classes were placed on the calendar for September 2014. A debriefing session was held with those teachers who recently completed training.
- We are investigating the possibility of hosting training ourselves, with a conference call planned for this week.

### **Library Committee**

- The committee will be moving some bookcases into the old coat room May 18 to make additional space in the Library.
- The committee will be meeting May 20 to begin the process of defining the committee's vision and the purpose of the library, and a collection and donation policy.

### **DLFD**

- I am planning to take a week's vacation in June and an additional week in July. Dates TBD.

## **LFDC Report to the Board – May 2014**

Submitted by Karen Hager, Director of Lifespan Faith Development, on behalf of the Lifespan Faith Development Council: Lesley Howard (chair), Dick Kates, David Lally, Molly Lazar, and Karen Hager

The LFDC has completed all revisions of the policy manual and submits it for Board approval and inclusion in the UUC P&P Manual.

Last month, the Board received an advance copy of the policy manual. There were only a few changes (additions) made to the manual and those are attached as a separate document for reference. The additions are indicated in blue and were based on suggestions made by Church Mutual; these additions were endorsed by Rev. Dara.

Besides Church Mutual, the LFDC also sent copies for review to all LFD committees (committees had extensive input at beginning of the policy revision process), and the Safety Committee. A copy was placed online and a two-week open comment period was established. This review period was advertised to the congregation via all email announcements occurring between April 15 and April 30; all LFD email newsletters occurring between these same dates; the April monthly newsletter; and the order of service insert for April 20 and April 27. LFDC also hosted a meeting after the service on April 27 to take questions and comments in person; no one outside of council members attended. No comments from the congregation were received during the open comment period.

**Board action: LFDC requests Board approval of the attached LFD Policies and that they then be submitted as part of the UUC Policies & Procedures Manual.**

Attachments:

*LFD Policies – May 2014 – final.docx*

*Changes Made to the Draft Document – May 2014*

Unitarian Universalist Congregation

# Lifespan Faith Development

Policies & Procedures

May 2014

This document supersedes all previous policy documents and applies to all Lifespan Faith Development programs, and where indicated, to all activities at UUC that include minors. All policies are reviewed periodically by the Lifespan Faith Development Council. The Lifespan Faith Development Council and Board reserve the right to amend this document as deemed necessary.

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## **A. Governing Principles**

*UUC Mission: "We are a caring and diverse community bringing spirit, love, justice, learning, and reason to the congregation and to the larger world."*

The Lifespan Faith Development (LFD) program of the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of the New River Valley (UUC) is committed to creating an environment for volunteers, students, and their families that reflects our mission, Guidelines for Right Relations, our seven UU principles, and UUC covenants.

Ours is an inclusive program: We celebrate and respect similarities and differences among individuals and families.

LFD programs do not discriminate against anyone on the basis of race, ethnicity, gender or gender identity, sexual orientation physical disability, age, national origin, religion, physical appearance, or political affiliation.

Everyone is responsible for honoring, to the best of their abilities, our shared UUC covenants, seven UU principles, and LFD-program-specific agreements.

Our goal is to support the development of each student to her or his fullest potential.

All processes are developed within the committees, with oversight by the LFD Council. The LFD Council is responsible for reviewing and amending the LFD Program Covenant (located at [uucnrvalley.org/LFD-Covenant.pdf](http://uucnrvalley.org/LFD-Covenant.pdf)) annually.

### **1. Special Needs**

LFD welcomes children, youth and adults with special needs, but recognizes that our program may have limits to the level of assistance that we are able to provide. While UUC provides a nurturing learning environment, it is also a very small organization in terms of staffing and depends on extensive volunteer involvement to accomplish its goals.

The LFD program is limited in capacity to address special needs, and can only address a narrow range of learning and behavioral challenges. The LFD program collaborates with families to find mutually-agreeable strategies, if possible, for special-needs students.

If a child has a unique medical condition that may require intervention on a timely basis, the UUC strongly encourages parents/guardians to inform the DLFD and teachers/advisors and provide any needed training.

## **B. Lifespan Faith Development Structure**

LFD programs are administered by the Director of Lifespan Faith Development (DLFD), who reports to the Minister and the Board, and is overseen by the Lifespan Faith Development Council (LFDC). Further staff support is provided by the LFD Assistant, who reports to the DLFD. Full job descriptions for staff may be found in the UUC Policies & Procedures Manual Part III, located at [http://www.uucnr.org/members\\_area/PandP-III\\_Jan\\_2014.pdf](http://www.uucnr.org/members_area/PandP-III_Jan_2014.pdf).

The LFD program is supported by the following committee structure:

- Children’s Religious Education Committee (CREC)
- Youth Adult Committee (YAC)
- Our Whole Lives Committee (OWL)
- Adult Religious Education Committee (AREC)

An ad hoc task force is also convened once every two years in support of the Coming of Age (COA) program.

The Lifespan Faith Development Council (LFDC) oversees all committee work. Membership is comprised of:

- Chair of CREC, or designate
- Chair of YAC, or designate
- Chair of OWL, or designate
- Chair of AREC, or designate
- DLFD

The above members have voting rights, at one vote per member. The Board Liaison and Minister are ex officio members of LFDC and do not have voting rights.

LFDC serves mainly to oversee all LFD policies, and to facilitate communication between the committees. Each committee is empowered to interpret policy and to develop appropriate processes to enact policies. Committees may make decisions regarding volunteers and other matters without consulting the council.

Although decisions reside within each committee, the LFDC has oversight and may, with a majority vote, override any committee decision. Further oversight is provided by the Board.

Curriculum for classes is chosen in accord with the themes designated by the LFDC and each committee. The DLFD, in consultation with each committee, chooses all curriculums.

## **1. LFD Committees**

### a) Children's Religious Education Committee (CREC)

CREC is responsible for LFD programming for children age 0 through 8th grade. Membership is comprised of 5-8 members, plus the DLFD. Members are encouraged to serve a term of 3 years. The committee chooses the chair. The Minister and Board Liaison are considered ex officio members. Voting power rests equally in all CREC members, excluding ex-officios. CREC will meet monthly during the programming year, with meeting times and locations posted on the church calendar. CREC oversees Middle School Youth Group (MSYG), which meets monthly, with exceptions approved by CREC.

In addition to the standard components of the RE program, the CREC assumes content responsibility for the physical surroundings of the downstairs RE space, the Nursery, and any other space within the church that has been assigned for RE classroom use. The committee must ensure that all physical components are acceptable, safe, and age-appropriate for the children occupying these spaces; the downstairs space and playground must also be kept in a manner acceptable to our paying tenant(s).

### b) Youth Adult Committee (YAC)

YAC is an intergenerational committee within the UUC, responsible for LFD programming for youth in grades 9-12. Membership is comprised of 6-10 members, and the DLFD. YAC will strive to always have a youth majority membership. Youth are encouraged to serve a term of 1-2 years. Adults are encouraged to serve a term of 3 years. One adult and one youth serve as co-chairs of YAC. The Minister and Board Liaison are considered ex officio members. Voting power rests equally in all YAC members, excluding ex-officios. YAC will meet monthly during the programming year, with meeting times and locations posted on the church calendar. YAC oversees Young

Religious Unitarian Universalists (YRUU), our high school youth group, which meets weekly, with exceptions approved by YAC.

c) Adult Religious Education Committee (AREC)

AREC is responsible for LFD programming, for ages 18+. Membership is comprised of 5-8 members, plus the DLFD. Members are encouraged to serve a term of 3 years. The committee chooses the chair. The Minister and Board Liaison are considered ex officio members. Voting power rests equally in all AREC members, excluding ex-officios. AREC will meet monthly during the programming year, with meeting times and locations posted on the church calendar.

d) Our Whole Lives Committee (OWL)

OWL is responsible for the Our Whole Lives sexuality education program, for all ages. Membership is comprised of 3-5 members, plus the DLFD. Members are encouraged to serve a term of 3 years. The committee chooses the chair. The Minister and Board Liaison are considered ex officio members. Voting power rests equally in all OWL members, excluding ex-officios. OWL will meet during the programming year as needed, with meeting times and locations posted on the church calendar.

e) Coming of Age Task Force (COA)

COA is responsible for the Coming of Age mentoring program, for youth in grades 8-9. Membership is comprised of 2-3 members, plus the DLFD. The task force convenes for a period of 4-6 months every two years. The Minister and Board Liaison are considered ex officio members. Voting power rests equally in all COA members, excluding ex-officios. COA meets as needed, with meeting times and locations posted on the church calendar.

## **C. UUC Child Abuse Prevention Policy**

### **1. Purpose**

This policy has been written with the following objectives:

- To provide guidelines and procedures that will promote a safe and caring environment for children and youth who participate in programs offered by the UUC.

- To provide guidelines to decrease the risk of physical, sexual and emotional abuse while an infant, child or youth is in the care of a UUC staff person or volunteer. (See below for definition of these forms of abuse.)
- To provide guidelines and procedures regarding the selection, training, and supervision of adult staff and volunteers.
- To provide a caring and appropriate response to victims of abuse.
- To provide guidelines for dealing with a report of abuse and for communicating with authorities and with the press in such an event.
- To help reduce the UUC's exposure to risk and liability in our programs for children and youth.

## **2. Definition of Child Abuse**

The Commonwealth of Virginia defines child abuse in these terms:

Under section 63.1-248.2 of the Code of Virginia (1950), as amended, an abused child is defined as one who is less than eighteen years of age, whose parents or other persons responsible for his/her care create or inflict, or threaten to create or inflict, or allow to be created or inflicted upon such a child a physical or mental injury by other than accidental means, or create a substantial risk of death or disfigurement, or impairment of bodily or mental functions. This includes the following: failure to provide care necessary for health; abandonment; committing or allowing sexual exploitation; endangerment or neglect. Child abuse may be physical, sexual, emotional, or mental, and may be the result of action or the failure to act (e.g., lack of care for a child).

### **a) Physical Abuse**

A physical injury, threat of injury, or creation of a real and significant danger of substantial risk of death, disfigurement, or impairment of bodily functions. Such injury or threat of injury, regardless of intent, is inflicted or allowed to be inflicted by non-accidental means. Example: asphyxiation; bone fracture; brain damage, skull fracture, subdural hematoma; burns, scalding; cuts, bruises, welts, abrasions; internal injuries, poisoning; sprains, dislocations; gunshot, stabbing wounds.

## b) Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse includes any act defined in the Code of Virginia that is committed, or allowed to be committed, upon a child by his/her parent or other person responsible for the child's care. Examples of such abuse are: sexual exploitation, sexual molestation, intercourse, oral or anal penetration, exposing a child to sexual activity or pornography, verbal comments of a sexual nature, obscene phone calls, exhibitionism.

## c) Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse includes actions or verbal statements that are intended to intimidate, shame, harass, or diminish a person's sense of self-worth. Examples are name-calling, teasing that creates fear or emotional distress, threats of physical or other punishments that are outside of the accepted discipline procedure outlined below.

### **3. Selection and Screening of Volunteers**

It is the policy of the UUC that no one who has been convicted of any crime involving an infant, child or youth, or who has had such a conviction expunged, will be permitted to work with children and youth. This would include crimes such as contributing to the delinquency of a minor, or other non-sexual crimes.

In order to meet the variety of needs and positions required to provide education and supervision for infants, children and youth while they are in the care of the UUC, two different levels of volunteers will be selected and screened. These levels are described below.

- **Primary Volunteer:** A primary volunteer is an adult who is at least 18 years of age and works with infants, children, or youth on a regular basis within UUC's approved and on-going programs. Specific programs may set a higher age limit as meets the needs of the children and youth who participate. Examples of primary volunteers would be RE teachers who are assigned to a class or YRUU advisors.
- **On-Call Volunteers:** An on-call volunteer is an adult who is at least 18 years old and works with infants, children, or youth on an occasional basis within UUC's approved and on-going programs. Examples would be sitters for UUC events, chaperones for lock-ins, one day summer RE teachers, or substitute teachers.

a) All primary volunteers must be active participants in the life of the congregation for at least six months before being considered for any positions involving children or youth. This requirement may be waived if a potential volunteer has been active in another congregation and is given a favorable reference by the minister and/or religious education director of that congregation.

b) With the exception of parents assisting in their child's program as required or as requested, all staff and all volunteers assigned to work with infants, children and youth on an on-going basis must agree to a criminal background check by an agency approved by the UUC Board. The purpose of this check is to ascertain if a potential volunteer has ever been convicted of a crime with a child. These checks will be repeated every fourth year of a volunteer's service. The congregation will bear the cost of this check.

c) Background checks will not be required for one-time volunteers, as long as a background-checked person will also be in attendance when contact with a child or children occurs.

d) Background checks will be performed by an entity approved by our insurance carrier. Volunteers may also submit a letter from a current employer verifying successful completion of a background check within the past four years in lieu of the UUC initiating the background check.

e) The background check reports will go directly to the Minister and/or DLFD and the individual being checked. The specific information from the report will not be shared with any other volunteers. The Minister has the authority to veto a volunteer on the basis of the information received from the background check or other confidential information regarding the volunteer. Volunteers have the right to discuss a veto with the Minister and to take action on their own behalf, which may include an appeal to the Board.

f) The Administrator has authority to conduct and review background checks (in addition to the Minister and DLFD).

g) All volunteers in the LFD program that work with minors will submit a formal application including two references and will have an interview with the DLFD. The DLFD or LFD Assistant will conduct reference checks and keep a written record of references.

h) Screened on-call volunteers will be utilized whenever possible to fill unexpected, one-time needs in our programs for children and youth. In the event that a screened on-call adult volunteer is not available to fill an

unexpected, one-time need, a parent may be utilized to fill the vacancy, as long as the second adult present is a screened volunteer, and the DLFD or another screened staff member or adult is in the vicinity. The DLFD also has the discretion of using a screened Teen Assistant as the second volunteer, if there are no more than two children present. If a second volunteer is not available, the children or youth will be returned to their parents or guardians or placed in another classroom.

#### **4. Training and Supervision of Volunteers**

All primary volunteers will be required to complete online policy training prior to volunteering with minors. Volunteers who have completed training within the last four years will not be required to complete training for subsequent volunteer years unless there has been a relevant change in the legal statutes regarding child abuse.

a) This online training will cover the congregation's policies regarding relationships between adult volunteers and children or youth, information on child abuse and how to recognize child abuse, and how to handle an incidence of child abuse or the report of child abuse.

b) All primary and on-call volunteers will receive a copy of the UUC policy on child abuse prevention.

#### **5. The Two-Adult Standard**

It is the policy of UUC that on-going activities and classes for infants, children and youth shall be supervised by two screened and approved volunteers.

a) In the event that an adult volunteer becomes incapacitated and unable to carry out assigned responsibilities, the DLFD or the person in charge of the program or activity shall be notified and appropriate arrangements shall be made for the care of the infants, children or youth in attendance.

b) The UUC may choose to provide childcare for meetings, programs, classes and other events that are a part of congregational activities, at the discretion of the Administrator. If childcare is not arranged by the UUC, parents or guardians may arrange with the Administrator to use the facilities of UUC for childcare. The parents or guardians of these children are responsible for hiring and supervising the sitter(s) for their children. The

Administrator will provide a list of screened sitters as a courtesy, but UUC accepts no responsibility for sitters hired by the parents or guardians.

c) If a staff person or primary volunteer wishes to meet with a child or youth one-on-one outside of normal classroom or program activities, the parent or guardian of that child or youth must give explicit permission for the meeting to occur. If the child or youth does not want the parent to be notified of the meeting, then a second staff person must be present for the meeting. In the case of high school youth, a second young person of the same gender as the youth requesting the meeting may sit in.

## **6. Open Classrooms**

a) Classrooms will be arranged so that windows are not totally obstructed and dividers or curtains are partially open.

b) The DLFD or someone appointed by the DLFD to act in her/his place will observe classrooms without prior notification to the teachers each Sunday.

c) Parents and guardians are welcome to observe RE classrooms at any time. However, whenever possible, we strongly encourage parents to inform the teacher and/or DLFD in advance, as unannounced visits can be disruptive.

## **7. Parents and Guardians**

Parents and guardians have an important role to play in the prevention of sexual and physical abuse. To support parents and guardians as they educate and instruct their children about this issue, the UUC will offer a workshop on the topic of sexual and physical abuse of children, upon demand.

## **8. Parental Involvement in the Classroom**

While parents are welcome to visit a classroom without notice, a parent's ongoing presence in the classroom is still subject to the Child Abuse Prevention Policy. The policy states that all adults involved in ongoing contact with minors in classrooms are required to have background and reference checks.

There is an expectation that a child will be able to be separate from his/her parents for a one hour class, in order for a child to be enrolled. However, LFD recognizes that children may experience separation anxiety in new classrooms, particularly in settings with younger children, and is committed to helping children and parents through this transition, within the boundaries of the Child Abuse Prevention Policy.

Parents may attend a class, or a portion of a class, for three visits, to help the child transition. If further parental involvement is still required after three visits, the parent will meet with the DLFD to jointly develop a transitional plan. In this plan, the parent will leave the classroom for longer periods each week until the child is fully independent.

Should a child require parental involvement to ease separation anxiety at some future date after the initial transition has occurred, a new period of transition will begin, with the parent again able to attend classes for three visits, before a transition plan must be developed.

Parents of children with special needs may be requested or required to attend classes with their child(ren) by a teacher or the DLFD. This attendance is allowed within the confines of the Child Abuse Prevention Policy, without the requirement of a background and reference check, and with no expectation of separation, or transition plan, required.

## **9. Reporting Suspected Abuse**

Both the Minister and Director of Lifespan Faith Development are regarded as mandated reporters if they suspect that abuse or neglect of a child has occurred. As advocates for the welfare of all children, the UUC strongly encourages all adults who suspect the abuse or neglect of a child make a report to either the Department of Social Services or the local police.

We recognize that the issue of potential abuse must be handled with the appropriate respect and privacy for the individuals/families involved. The alleged victim, their family members, and the person accused of the abuse shall be treated with respect and dignity.

UUC will respond promptly to investigate any accusation of sexual abuse. All accusations of sexual abuse will be taken seriously. It is important to be appropriately respectful to the needs and feelings of those who allege sexual abuse and those who have been accused of sexual abuse.

- a) In order to facilitate the appropriate management of a report of suspected child abuse, the UUC Board, in consultation with the Minister, will appoint a Task Force. The members of this Task Force should have some professional knowledge about the topic of child abuse and family issues.
- b) The purpose of the Task Force is to be available to give counsel to the Minister, DLFD and President of the Board, to meet with the alleged victim and their family and also with the person accused of the abuse. The work of this Task Force is to be held in strict confidence. The names of the members of the Task Force will be posted online.
- c) All volunteers and the non-mandated staff of the UUC are strongly encouraged to report suspected child abuse, endangerment, or neglect to the appropriate authorities within 72 hours of determining that abuse or neglect may have occurred. Anyone making a report of child abuse as per above should also report his or her suspicions to the Minister, the DLFD or the President of the Executive Board. The person who receives the report will then notify the other staff person and the President.
- d) When a report of suspected child abuse is made, the President will notify the District Executive of the Southeast District and the agent representing the congregation's insurance company. These contacts should be made within 24 hours of the initial report. If the President is not available, the President-Elect or a member of the Task Force should make these reports.
- e) If the person who first suspects the abuse declines to make the report, the Minister or DLFD will make a report to the appropriate agency. If the Minister or DLFD are unavailable, the President or a member of the Task Force will contact the appropriate agency.
- f) All reports of suspected child abuse will be documented using the appropriate forms at the time that the report is made. The person writing the report will sign it and the staff person who first received the report of the incident shall keep a copy.
- g) Anyone suspected of child abuse will not be permitted to have contact with children or youth of this congregation while on UUC property pending resolution of the allegation. Staff accused of abuse shall be immediately relieved of any responsibilities involving children or youth and are forbidden to have any contact with UUC children or youth on or off UUC property with the exception of their own family members, pending resolution of the allegation.

h) In the event that an accusation of abuse is made against the Minister, the President will notify the Task Force, the UUA Department of Ministry and the District Executive. If the President is not available, the President-Elect will make the contacts. The President or President-Elect will convene an emergency meeting of the board to inform the board of the allegations.

i) The President of the Board, in consultation with the board, the Minister, the DLFD, and the Task Force will determine how information about the allegation of child abuse will be communicated to the congregation. If the allegation is against the Minister, DLFD, Board member or Task Force, the Board will consult with the alleged party regarding timeline and the communication plan. The Board may also meet in session closed to the alleged party. The Board will make final determination regarding course of communication.

## **10. Managing Convicted Sex Offenders**

Adults, youth and children who are known to have criminal charge pending or pled guilty to or have been convicted of either child sexual or physical abuse, or as a sex offender, will not be allowed to work with children or youth.

UUC may allow a person known to be a sexual offender to remain or become a member of the congregation but they must adhere to specific guidelines. If it becomes known that a convicted sex offender is attending the church or any church activities, the following steps shall be taken.

a) The Minister will check the local sex offender registry and meet with the individual to discuss the concerns that have been raised.

b) The person will then be asked to meet with the Task Force.

c) The individual will be asked to sign a release form so that the Minister can contact his/her sex offender treatment provider and/or current therapist, as well as the person's parole officer. The therapist and the parole officer will be asked for their professional assessment of the likelihood that the sex offender will re-offend and whether additional restrictions beyond the standard Limited Access Agreement ought to be placed on the person's participation. The individual may also be asked to go for a professional assessment with a therapist who specializes in working with sex offenders. If the offender refuses permission to contact the therapist or refuses to go for an assessment, the congregation may refuse participation in any congregation activity.

d) If the assessment indicates that the person has completed or is participating successfully in treatment and is not at high risk for recidivism, the Task Force will develop a Limited Access Agreement, which predetermines the official activities the sexual offender is permitted to attend. A known sexual offender must report in and be assigned an escort who will accompany the person at all times. If the professional assessment indicates that the person is at high risk for re-offending, the person will be denied involvement in the faith community until treatment is successful at reducing the risk.

e) All persons with past histories of sexual offenses will be asked to sign a Limited Access Agreement. Upon entry into the congregation and depending on the circumstances, the person may be asked to sign one annually. If the offender refuses to do so, he/she may then be denied access to congregation functions and church property.

f) The Task Force will meet at least quarterly with any individual with whom it has a Limited Access Agreement to review the arrangement and address any concerns.

g) The identity of the sexual offender will be disclosed to the congregation. The President of the Board, in consultation with the board, the Minister, the DLF and the Task Force will determine how information about the presence of a convicted sex offender will be communicated to the congregation.

## **11. Managing the Media**

a) In the event that a report of suspected child abuse becomes public, the Minister and the President of the Congregation will be the contacts for the media. The Minister and the President should be in frequent contact with each other to maintain consistency in the information that is released to the media.

b) In the event that either the Minister or the President is accused of child abuse, the President-Elect shall be the second contact person for the press and the congregation.

c) The advice of the District, the UUA and an attorney should be sought before a public statement is released. Statements should be factual and should avoid blaming or speculation of the outcome of any investigation or prosecution.

## **12. Policy Review**

The Child Abuse Prevention Policy of the UUC shall be reviewed annually by the Lifespan Faith Development Council which may make suggestions for changes to the Board.

## **D. Multi-Age Childcare Procedures for Events at UUC**

### **1. Child Caretakers**

In accordance with the State of Virginia's guidelines for adult to child ratios for center-based care, adult caretakers 18 years or older will be assigned using these guidelines:

- Infants (1:4)
- Young toddlers (1:5)
- 2 and 3 years (1:10)
- 4 years (1:12)
- School age (1:20)
- Multi-age should use an appropriate ratio based on the age of the children attending, or, if unknown, default to the ratio for lowest age child expected to attend.

In addition to adults, there may be youth volunteers assisting with childcare.

### **2. Nametags**

All adults and teens involved in providing childcare will wear a nametag, which also identifies them as "Childcare Staff". All children will wear nametags so that staff can identify all children by name.

### **3. Sign In**

Parents will sign-in on a list requesting parent's names and children's names and ages in case staff needs to locate them during the event. A copy of these guidelines will be posted for parents to read.

## **4. Outdoor Playground**

An adult must be present on the playground at all times when children are playing there. Adults must read and enforce playground rules.

## **5. Pick up**

At the end of the event, children will not be released from the childcare area until they are picked up by the parents.

## **6. Alcohol Policy**

Alcohol may not be consumed by caregivers in areas where UUC is providing childcare.

## **E. Safety Rules for Parents**

1. Parents are responsible for the supervision of their children before and after RE classes, inside and outside the UUC building, or anywhere on our grounds.
2. Parents are asked to greet their children as soon as RE classes end each Sunday, in accordance with the release policy (page 24 of this document).
3. Outside boundaries that are acceptable play areas for children include any of the grassy areas. The wooded areas on the UUC property are off-limits to children, as they are out of sight of the UUC building and lawn, and are often littered with potentially dangerous materials. The drainage ditch adjacent to the playground may be approached by children only under adult supervision.
4. Children are asked to follow the same behavioral expectations at church as they do at their school or educational gathering. For the safety of our very young and very old attendees, no running is allowed indoors.
5. Parents are asked to discuss the expectations and rules for safety with their children.

## **F. Behavioral Policies**

In all policies, the goal of UUC is to affirm our seven UU principles. Because children, youth and adults are at different stages of development, we recognize that reasonable expectations of their accountability and responsibility are also different. The LFD program expects all participants, at all ages and stages, and in all roles, to covenant with each other and to model our UU principles, consistent with their developmental stage.

The following are prohibited during all UUC-sanctioned LFD activities:

- Sexualized behavior of any kind.
- Possession and/or use of drugs and alcohol.
- All forms of violence (physical, verbal, sexual, and otherwise).
- Weapons.

Additional behavioral guidelines specific to LFD roles are below.

### **1. Guidelines for Children and Youth**

Our goal is to aid in the development of each student to the student's fullest potential. The following policies are specific to LFD children and youth:

- Children and youth must ask, and be granted permission by an adult LFD volunteer or the DLFD, before leaving the classroom or meeting space during LFD program time.
- Supplies and property must be respected and not wasted or destroyed.
- Everyone waits their turn to speak.
- Everyone cleans up their own messes.
- Disparaging comments and put-downs will not be tolerated. Students are encouraged to recognize and resist stereotypes and biases and to challenge prejudice.

### **2. Guidelines for Adult LFD Students**

Adult students and adult RE teachers will abide by the Guidelines for Right Relations and all other UUC behavioral covenants for adults. In addition to the LFD policies noted above, classroom teachers and attendees may also form classroom covenants as a guideline for behavior.

### **3. Guidelines for Teachers, Advisors and Other LFD Volunteers**

UUC aspires to support its teachers, advisors and volunteers in creating and sustaining safe, inclusive classroom and group experiences. We view the LFD program as a partnership with parents. Consistent communication between volunteers and parents is essential.

In classroom situations, teachers will guide students to create age-appropriate rules and consequences. With older children, a covenanting process may be used. Covenants or rules that are created for classrooms will be posted in class and reviewed periodically.

In addition to the overall behavioral guidelines noted above, teachers, advisors and other LFD volunteers are expected to follow the policies below:

- No corporal punishment or verbal abuse (ridicule) will be used.
- Teachers, Advisors and other LFD volunteers will develop and enforce classroom/group covenants and rules with their students.
- Repeated, or serious, violation of classroom/group covenants or rules will be brought to parent/guardians' attention through written and/or verbal communication, at the teacher or DLFD's discretion.
- If significant, intentional damage to property or physical injury occurs, there will be an Accident/Incident report written and given to the parent, and held in a confidential file in the DLFD's office.
- Because a single child will not be permitted to compromise the experience for the entire class, it may be necessary in some cases for the child to be placed under the supervision of the parent or guardian during RE class time.

Teachers, advisors and other volunteers will consult the DLFD about specific or ongoing behavior problems.

### **4. Guidelines for Parents**

When at UUC, parents/guardians are responsible for their children's behavior and well-being at all times other than activities sponsored by classes or youth groups.

Acceptance and adherence to the LFD Program Covenant is required for registration of children into the LFD program. Violation of UUC/LFD rules

and/or policies may result in removal from, or denial of registration for, LFD programming.

## **5. Emergency Suspension**

Any child, youth or adult, whose presence poses an immediate danger to persons and/or property, and/ or an ongoing threat of disruption, may be removed from the UUC property immediately. Processes regarding suspension will occur as soon as practicable thereafter.

## **6. Consequences**

The DLFD, in consultation with the Minister, will determine the appropriate consequences for policy violations and/or a substantive breaking of covenant. The DLFD and Minister may consult with any LFD volunteer deemed necessary for best discernment.

Should the DLFD's child be involved in such an incident, the Minister will assume the role normally held by the DLFD to determine consequences. Should the Minister's child be involved in an incident, the Board Liaison for LFD will assume the Minister's role of consultant to the DLFD. In both cases, the DLFD or Minister is free to participate in the role of parent.

The DLFD and Minister may choose to inform any and all volunteers engaged in supervisory roles in LFD programs, if their leadership in programs will be best supported by knowledge of policy violations, broken covenants, and/or subsequent consequences.

The DLFD will maintain a record of such incidents in a confidential file, located in the DLFD's office.

## **G. Classroom / Youth Group Policies**

The following policies apply to all UUC classes and youth group meetings that are attended by minors, including minors in the Nursery. All activities and meetings will be held in accordance with the requirements of the UUC Child Abuse Protection Policy. All volunteers will be supervised in their role with the youth. The DLFD or Minister may attend or be present at all classes and meetings.

## 1. Registration

Children and youth should be registered annually each fall in the appropriate programs. Registration information will be sent to returning families in late summer for fall registration. New families may register at any time during the year. Special programs, such as OWL and Coming for Age, may hold separate registration drives at a time appropriate for the program.

Registration per group:

- Nursery: open to children age 0-3 years old
- RE classes: open to children age 3 through 8th grade
- MSYG: open to youth in grades 6-8
- YRUU: open to youth in grades 9-12
- OWL: open to children and youth in appropriate age designation for class (grades K-1; 4-6; 8-9)
- Coming of Age: open to youth in grades 8-9

## 2. Curriculum

Curriculum for all classes is chosen by the DLFD, in consultation with the appropriate committee. Classes or events chosen for inclusion on the LFD calendar will be promoted in UUC advertising venues. Choice of venue and timing is at the discretion of the DLFD, in consultation with the Administrator.

Individuals or groups who would like LFD to sponsor a class or event should submit a prospectus to the DLFD and the appropriate committee, which will review class suggestions at their monthly meetings. LFD retains the right to choose the timing and teachers/facilitators for all offerings. (See Process for Becoming a LFD Sponsored Class or Activity, located at [www.uucnrv.org/scp.pdf](http://www.uucnrv.org/scp.pdf).)

LFD sponsored activities are bound by the UUC Communications Policy, and are to be advertised as UUC events. All advertising must be approved by the DLFD and/or Communications Committee.

Individuals who book space independently to hold a class or discussion group for adults are not considered as part of the LFD program. These classes are not advertised at UUC. Rental space is booked through the Administrator.

LFD retains the right to change its class or event offerings at any time with no notice.

### **3. Confidential Information**

Teachers and advisors may come in contact with information of a confidential nature during check-ins or classes/meetings. A child/youth's confidentiality should be respected, except under the following circumstances:

- If a child is doing harm to themselves
- If a child is doing harm to another
- If someone else is doing harm to a child

Under these circumstances, the parent/guardian of the child/youth, or the DLFD or Minister, should be informed. The safety of the child/youth must be the primary driver.

If a volunteer is uncertain as to whether or not information should be shared, s/he can speak to the DLFD or Minister, who will maintain confidentiality if it is determined that confidentiality should not be breached. When in doubt, the Minister will make the final decision on whether or not information should remain confidential.

Additionally, in keeping with UUA best practices, LFD teachers and advisors who are married or involved in a romantic partnership may not serve as the sole two adult primary volunteers in a classroom or other program. Although they may both volunteer for the same activity, attendance at the activity must be on different dates, or in the presence of a third adult volunteer, approved by the DLFD. Married/romantically involved adults may volunteer together in on-call volunteer positions.

### **4. Recruitment**

With the exception of the circumstances outlined in section 3. *Confidential Information*, LFDC believes that it is important to respect the privacy of youth at older ages.

To that end, parents/guardians of children registered in YRUU will not be recruited or approved as YRUU advisors.

We will also not recruit or approve parents/guardians as OWL teachers at grades 8-9 or above for classes in which the parent's child is registered.

Except for these circumstances, parents are free to volunteer in other activities in which their own child(ren) are registered.

## **5. Youth Group Advisor Guidelines**

Youth groups should strive to have at least one adult of each gender on an advisor team. 4-6 advisors will be recruited annually for each youth group.

Two adult advisors are required to be present with youth at all times. If needed, permissible additional adult advisors may be other team members, committee liaisons, and/or parents approved by advisors and/or DLFD. The adult-to-youth ratio will be no less than 1:7.

Any offsite meetings must be approved in advance by the DLFD and/or the governing committee.

At the end of all meetings, advisors will ensure that all youth are picked up by parents, or have a designated ride, before leaving UUC or the offsite meeting location.

## **6. Substitute Teachers**

If a substitute is required for a class or meeting, teachers and advisors should attempt to arrange for a substitute in this order:

- a) Other team members
- b) Substitute from approved list (DLFD will provide a substitute list)
- c) Parents of child in the classroom or group

For Sunday morning classrooms with no more than 2 children present, a Teen Assistant may be used as an assisting teacher.

## **7. Medical Policies**

### **a) Food Allergies**

- Parents are encouraged to inform the DLFD of food or other allergies that a child may be in contact with during their time at UUC. The DLFD will notify teachers accordingly.
- No outside food may be brought into classrooms or the Nursery. If needed, snacks will be provided by the CREC, DLFD or teachers.
- Because peanut and nut tree allergies are highly prevalent, no snack will be provided downstairs that contains nuts or has ingredients processed in a facility that also processes nuts. If a teacher is providing a snack, the teacher will ensure that no ingredient with nuts

is used, or that no other ingredient listed on a child's registration as an allergen is used.

- If outside volunteers are asked to provide food for a children's party, volunteers will be asked to provide food that is nut-free. If there are a large number of food allergies among children, volunteers may be asked to provide an ingredient list for prepared food.

#### b) Confidentiality

- All information concerning a child, including, but not limited to, medical conditions, learning or developmental disabilities, or discipline issues is considered confidential and will not be shared beyond the DLFD, Minister, teaching team and/or governing committee.

## **8. Flame Policies**

No open flames are allowed in any classroom downstairs. Please use a LED candle or chalice alternative. Use of flame upstairs is at the discretion of the lead teacher or advisor. No smoking is allowed of any kind on either floor, including sage and other incense.

## **9. Release Policy**

Children registered in RE in preschool through Grade 3 may not leave the RE classrooms until picked up by their parents or a designated guardian after the service. Children grade 4 and up may wait for their parents in the RE lobby if their classroom is downstairs, or in Elarth Hall if their classroom is upstairs. No child may exit the building without permission of a parent or guardian.

Class time ends at approximately 11:15. If the service ends before 11:15, parents may wait in the RE lobby and hallways until class is over, or may be invited into the classroom at the discretion of the teacher. When the service runs past 11:15, children must remain in their classrooms.

## **10. Classroom Supplies**

Each classroom will have its own RE supply cabinet to store curriculum materials and supplies that are used regularly. There is also a main supply closet downstairs for all teachers to use, that will contain classroom materials used less frequently. All cabinets in all classrooms will be organized in the same way for consistency. Teachers should assist by putting supplies back in the proper place.

Teachers should check with the DLFD before purchasing any additional items.

## **11. Door and Key Policy**

For the safety of our students, the downstairs outside doors will remain locked during classroom time, or during planned activities in which a large group of children are present downstairs. Outside of classroom time, the outside doors may be unlocked at the discretion of the DLFD. Locking the doors will occur without notice to parents and children.

Teachers and Assistants wishing to use the outdoors for classes may sign out a key in the RE Office. Keys must be returned to the RE Office immediately following the class or activity and may not be loaned to others.

## **12. Movie & Electronic Media Policy**

When using movies and electronic media for classrooms and youth groups, the selection of an appropriate movie should be made that is mindful of the age and experience diversity within the classroom/group, and is respectful and inclusive to all.

Movies are chosen by the group viewing the movie:

- YRUU members chose movies for YRUU, with approval by YAC.
- MSYG advisors chose movies for MSYG, with approval by CREC.
- OWL teachers chose movies for OWL, with approval by the OWL Committee.

The DLFD and parents will be informed of any movies that will be shown in advance of the showing and provided a link for a movie review from the Parents Guide at [www.imdb.com](http://www.imdb.com).

No R-rated movies will be shown to MSYG. MSYG advisors should choose a movie with unrestricted access, such as G, PG, and PG-13. For all groups, efforts should be taken to choose movies that do not promote or glamorize disrespectful relationships or behavior; unsafe sex, or casual sex without commitment; senseless, disturbing and/or glamorized violence; or the use of illegal substances or unhealthy lifestyles.

YRUU and OWL will be required to seek permission from their overseeing committee and the DLFD before showing an R-rated movie. Efforts should

first be made to acquire a suitable movie with a lower rating to ensure inclusion of all youth. Before approving an R-rated movie, committee members and the DLFD will view the movie to determine appropriateness of youth viewing.

No youth will be required to view a chosen film. Parents will be required to sign a permission form for R-rated movies.

## **12. Approved Driver Policy**

A minimum of two LFD approved adult volunteers (age 21 or older) must chaperone all offsite officially scheduled events. At least one volunteer must be a primary volunteer with the group traveling offsite (i.e. YRUU advisor for YRUU events; MSYG advisor for MSYG events; RE Teacher for RE events).

Any person planning to drive youth to an offsite event must be an Approved Driver. Approved Drivers are required to:

- Complete a Volunteer Application
- Submit to a background check
- Submit to a reference check
- Complete a Driver Information form
- Show proof of a valid driver's license, and proof of current insurance covering injury and loss of life in their vehicle and other involved vehicles should there be an accident
- Have a good driving record

The minimum adult-to-youth ratio will be no less than 1:7.

Before embarking on any trip outside the New River Valley, the LFD group will develop a travel plan that will include route, waypoints, and a plan for staying in touch.

If the group size requires only one vehicle, two approved adults must travel in that vehicle. If the trip requires two or more vehicles, only one Approved Driver (serving as the driver) is required in the vehicle, up to a maximum of 7 youth per one adult driver, as long as vehicles have come to agreement about how to stay in touch. If two or more vehicles are not traveling together in communication, but are instead traveling essentially on their own, two approved adults must travel in each vehicle.

Ten or fifteen passenger vehicles require two approved adults to travel in the vehicle, one of which must be an Approved Driver (serving as the driver). For trips longer than 5 hours or 350 miles away, both adults must be

Approved Drivers, so that no single driver will have to drive for too many hours before getting a break.

When two drivers are required per car and an approved adult volunteer who is not an Approved Driver is used as the second adult, the second adult in a car may be the parent of another child in the car, but may not be the other parent of the driver's child. The second adult may also be an LFD volunteer who has a current background check on file.

When youth are carpooling to the event location, transportation will be a personal decision between parents and not subject to LFD Policies.

### **13. Lock-ins and Cons Policy**

When scheduled, lock-ins will be considered a part of the program and will be planned to promote the mission of the LFD group. The primary goal of conducting the lock-in must be the emotional safety and well-being of our youth. During a lock-in, all LFD policies remain in effect.

Lock-ins may only be held on the premises of the UUC and will be held no more than twice per year. Each participant will need a signed permission form from his/her parent/guardian.

Lock-ins will occur on evenings that provide sufficient time the next morning for clean-up and wrap-up of activities. Despite the high-energy potential of lock-ins, it is recommended that lock-ins have lights-out by midnight, to ensure adequate sleep.

The following rules are publicized and followed:

- Sexualized behavior of any kind is not permitted at a UUC sanctioned event.
- Possession or Use of Drugs and Alcohol are prohibited.
- All forms of violence, physical, verbal, sexual, or otherwise will not be tolerated during any UUC sanctioned event. Weapons are not permitted.
- Separate housing arrangements shall be provided for males and females under the age of eighteen or for others upon request, at all UUA sponsored or financed youth events. Adequate adult supervision shall be provided when this is not feasible.

Under no circumstances should a planned lock-in be announced on the UUC website or advertised to the general public.

## **14. Attendance by Minors at Adult RE Classes**

AREC classes, events and activities are intended for those ages 18 and older. Youth participants require advance permission from the teacher/ facilitator or the DLFD, and must be accompanied by a parent or guardian. Youth participants are expected to participate fully in the class or activity as adults.

A permission form signed by a parent/guardian will be required for any minor attending the viewing of an R-rated movie at UUC.

## **15. Parent Communication for Youth Groups**

a) Parents will be invited to a kickoff at the beginning of the year, hosted by the advisors, with the assistance and support of the governing committee, in which plans for the year will be presented and questions and/or issues may be addressed.

b) Parents will receive contact information regarding advisors, parents, and participating youth.

c) Advisors will provide parents with information about upcoming activity plans during the year on a regular basis either through mail, e-mail, or the UUC newsletter. Parent feedback will be invited and shared among the advisors, committee, and DLFD.

## **H. LFD Visitor Guidelines to Committee and Council Meetings**

The LFD program welcomes open communication between the committees and our congregants. If a congregant has feedback or issues that s/he would like to discuss, we recommend that the first avenue of communication be with the DLFD, the appropriate committee or council chair, a committee's Congregant Liaison, and/or the Minister. An initial conversation can help determine the best course of action for official communications that need to move forward to the committee or council level. Congregants wishing to address the committee/ council as a whole may request time on a meeting agenda or avail themselves of the brief time allowed at the beginning of all LFD meetings for congregant input.

Because each LFD committee/council undertakes a large workload, productive meetings are essential. To ensure that the committee/council has enough time during the planned meeting to accomplish the needed work while also ensuring that the committee/council is accessible to UUC congregants, LFD has created these guidelines.

## **1. Meeting Observation:**

- a) Any member/friend of the congregation may observe any LFD meeting, with the exception of conversations about minors, families and volunteers that are considered confidential or private, pursuant to UUC policy and legal requirements (See Executive Session).
- b) LFD Committees/Council requests that those desiring to observe a LFD meeting make their intentions known in advance of the meeting date so that the agenda can be arranged, as much as possible, to accommodate their presence. Meeting dates may be found online at [www.uucnr.org](http://www.uucnr.org) in the Calendar. Participation of those observing in the meeting itself is limited to the constraints placed by the committee or council.

## **2. Addressing the Committee/Council:**

- a) Any congregant may request to be added to any LFD committee or council meeting agenda. LFD asks for requests to be made one week or more in advance of the posted meeting date (see Calendar at [www.uucnr.org](http://www.uucnr.org)).
- b) Requests made with less than one week notice will be added to the agenda, only if the agenda is light enough to allow the item's inclusion. If declined, the item will be added to the agenda for the meeting the following month.
- c) LFD reserves the right to limit the time allowed for congregants to address the committee. Items will be added to the agenda on a "first come, first served" basis, with consideration for urgency.
- d) If a congregant attends a meeting and requests to address the committee/council with no prior notice, each congregant will have three minutes to identify his/her issue.
- e) LFD reserves the right to limit the number of congregants addressing a committee/council at any one meeting to three. A special meeting may be called at the discretion of the committee/council.

- f) Should a congregant have an issue which s/he feels cannot wait until the next planned meeting, the congregant may contact the DLFD, the committee/council Chair, the Congregant Liaison, and/or the Minister.

### **3. Executive Session:**

- a) Confidential or private information will be discussed only in Executive Session, open only to committee/council members, the Minister, and the LFD Board Liaison. During Executive Session discussions that involve a minor, the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the child may also attend and participate.
- b) By process, a committee/council will announce their intention to move into Executive Session citing the need for confidentiality. No names or other details will be given. Decisions made in Executive Session will be reflected in the minutes only if they do not violate confidentiality.

### **4. Committee/Council Response:**

- a) For all issues brought to the committee/council by congregants, the committee/council will decide if the issue will be addressed at that meeting or if a later response is appropriate. For issues that are not addressed at that meeting, the congregant will receive a written response within three days. Responses may include:
  - i) A request that the congregant attend another meeting for more in-depth discussion, and placement of the item on the agenda for the following month.
  - ii) Designation of a committee/council member to speak with the congregant within one week.
  - iii) A determination that the issue is not appropriate for the LFD committee/council, with a suggestion of the appropriate committee/council for bringing forth the issue.
  - iv) An approximate timeline for review, if the Committee's/Council's "response" will take more than 72 hours.

### **5. Recourse:**

- a) Disputes with the decisions of any LFD committee may be taken to the LFD Council.

- b) Disputes with the decisions of the LFD Council may be taken to the Minister, Committee on Ministry and subsequently to the Board, as needed. The decisions of the Board are considered final.
- c) Once a Board decision is rendered, the issue is considered closed by the committee and council and the committee/council will no longer accept discussion of this issue during meeting time.

## **I. LFD Visitor Guidelines for Meetings and Classes of Minors**

The following guidelines apply to RE classes, OWL classes, Middle School Youth Group meetings, YRUU meetings, Coming of Age meetings, and any other meeting that is predominately attended by minors.

In classroom and youth group settings, safety is the predominant concern of the Lifespan Faith Development program. UUC and LFD use Safe Congregation recommendations in creating policy governing adult interactions with minors.

At the heart of all policy is the Child Abuse Prevention Policy, located in the UUC Policy and Procedures Manual Part I. This policy mandates background and reference checks for adult volunteers in ongoing relationships with minors, as well as the presence of two adults in all classroom and youth group settings.

LFD has additional long-standing policies around adult attendance in rooms with minors:

- With the exception of a parent with a child in the class/meeting, no adult may attend a RE or OWL class or youth group meeting, or other meeting predominantly attended by minors, without prior approval of the DLFD, Minister, or lead teacher/advisor.
- Other than the DLFD, the Minister, or youth group advisors, adult attendance at YRUU meetings and OWL meetings of grade 4 and above may also be subject to approval by the youth in YRUU/OWL. Parents who wish to attend a YRUU meeting or OWL class may be requested to wait to join the meeting/class until after check-in is complete, and are requested to contact an advisor or teacher prior to attending.

### **a) YRUU Visitation**

Former members of YRUU may return to visit YRUU meetings once bridged, but may not regularly attend meetings.

Adults, youth, or friends of members can visit YRUU meetings with advanced notice to the advisors; visiting adults are **not** encouraged to be present for YRUU check-in due to confidentiality. YRUU members may request that the visitor sit out of check-in.

## **J. Policies Regarding Use of RE Facilities**

### **1. Nursery & Playground Use Guidelines**

Use of the Nursery and Playground are governed by the *Unitarian Universalist Congregation Policy and Procedures Manual*. See [www.uucnrv.org/members\\_area/PandP-I\\_Jan\\_2014.pdf](http://www.uucnrv.org/members_area/PandP-I_Jan_2014.pdf) for more information.

### **2. Use of Children's Garden Supplies**

Our downstairs RE area is rented by the Children's Garden preschool. Children's Garden may leave out toys and items, at their discretion. Our children and teachers are welcome to use these items as long as they are treated with respect. Non-reusable items, such as craft supplies, should not be used; use supplies belonging to RE instead. All items belonging to Children's Garden should be returned to the spot in which they were found. No item belonging to Children's Garden may be removed from the premises. If an item belonging to Children's Garden is damaged or broken, the DLFD should be notified at once.

## **K. Evacuation Plan**

In the event that evacuation is necessary, parents should not attempt to go downstairs and retrieve their children. Parents should follow their own evacuation plan while the RE staff and teachers will evacuate the children.

We will ensure that reunion occurs once danger has passed. Below follows the evacuation plan for children.

## **1. Evacuation Areas**

- a) The designated evacuation areas for UUC are the farthest points from the building in the meadow behind the church; an alternate evacuation point is the center parking area. If the DLFD determines that the designated evacuation areas do not provide adequate protection for the children, a previously determined alternate evacuation assembly area will be utilized.
  - i) Outdoor Assembly Point: Meadow, with access through hedge to street behind UUC
  - ii) Site Evacuation Point: The Second Tier Parking Area
  - iii) Off-Site Evacuation Point: The Blacksburg Community Center
  - iv) Transportation arrangements: Blacksburg Transit
- b) In the event of an evacuation the designated transportation (Blacksburg Transit) will be sent to the church for assisting in the transportation of the children.
- c) The emergency response team will assist in the orderly evacuation of the children.
- d) If an evacuation is ordered by the town emergency response organization, the Incident Commander for the Town will identify the route and location of the nearest evacuation shelter.

## **2. Portable Emergency Kit**

The Portable Emergency Kit shall be located in the DLFD's office. This kit shall contain: Essential documents (sign-in record and child emergency information), the first aid kit, a battery operated flashlight, and a battery operated radio. The Portable Emergency Kit shall be carried by a caregiver at all times during any evacuation.

## **3. Sheltering / Sheltering-In-Place**

In the event of a natural emergency (e.g. tornado, severe storms, or hazardous airborne chemicals incident outside the church's facility) the children and other occupants of the building will shelter in place in the

prearranged designated areas as necessary. Sheltering **in place** is defined as moving people into the building and isolating the building environment from the outside.

During a Shelter-in-Place evacuation:

- Staff and students shall remain calm and assemble in either the hall bathrooms or in classroom 2.
- Staff shall ensure all students are accounted for.
- Any items that may fall on sheltered people will be removed to a safe place.
- Windows and doors will remain closed and, in the event of a hazardous airborne materials emergency, all air intake vents will be covered to provide protection.
- If necessary, emergency response personnel will shut off all HVAC systems to isolate the outside air from the building if the system has not already shut down.
- Staff and students shall remain in the building until notified by the emergency response authorities that the situation has been resolved or that an evacuation has been ordered.

## **4. Evacuation of Building**

The decision to evacuate the church building will be made by the DLFD. When the decision is made to evacuate the building, the DLFD will make the announcement in the most expeditious way possible that all persons are to evacuate to their assigned assembly area and await further instructions and/or activate the building fire alarm. The DLFD will notify appropriate personnel.

Teachers will evacuate their children as follows:

- Collect clipboards with attendance sheets and portable Emergency Preparedness Kit.
- Gather children in a group and supervise an orderly evacuation to the designated assembly area (Meadow).
- Middle school class should evacuate through the Nursery and assist Nursery personnel with small children.
- Account for all children, staff, and visitors during the evacuation process. Attach and display green sign to front of clipboard if all children are accounted for and no help is needed; attach and display red sign to front of clipboard if all children are not accounted for, or if immediate help is needed.

- Remain in assembly area until either: 1) the DLFD determines the need for an alternative on-site evacuation point; 2) the DLFD determines the need for an evacuation off church grounds; or 3) the DLFD clears the return to the evacuated facility.

## **5. Evacuation of UUC Grounds**

In the event of an emergency requiring an evacuation away from UUC premises, UUC shall coordinate necessary provisions for Blacksburg Transit to transport the staff and children to The Blacksburg Community Center. Teachers shall remain with the students until all children are able to evacuate to their homes with a parent/guardian or emergency contact person.

### Evacuation Procedures

The following measures should be taken during an evacuation of church grounds:

- Collect the clipboard with Attendance Record to use during the evacuation and take it along during transport to host facility.
- Leave the building in a safe and orderly manner as quickly as possible.
- Upon arrival at the Assembly Site, account for all children, staff, and visitors during the evacuation process. Hold up a green or red sign in accordance with procedure above.
- Transport all necessary supplies, records, emergency numbers, and cell phone in Portable Emergency Kit.
- Determine host facility based on situation. (Primary location: Blacksburg Community Center)
- Confirm transportation and arrival time with Blacksburg Transit.
- Contact host facility with estimated time for arrival of children and staff.
- Notify families of evacuation and host facility information
- Make arrangements for support of children at host facility until reunited with families or returned to evacuated facility.

### Initiating an Evacuation from Church Grounds:

The DLFD is responsible for notifying building occupants to initiate evacuation of the building, ensuring that the building has been safely evacuated, and for ensuring accountability for all occupants.

Evacuation duties:

- Initiate evacuation procedure by either pulling the fire alarm box and/or verbally notifying building occupants.
- Report to the designated assembly area.

- Account for all students and staff.
- Determine if evacuation area provides adequate safety of children. Initiate further evacuation to other facility if necessary.
- Coordinate with the town emergency response personnel as needed.
- Notify UUC of evacuation initiation.

The Teachers are responsible for ensuring that all occupants in their assigned areas safely and properly evacuate to their designated assembly areas.

## **6. Contact Persons during an Emergency:**

- Liaison between church and emergency services: Chair of Safety Committee. This person will be responsible for greeting fire/rescue/police personnel, and for reporting all known details of the situation. In absence of the Safety Committee Chair, another committee member will serve as alternate.
- Media contact: the Minister and the President of the Congregation will be the contacts for the media. The Minister and the President should be in frequent contact with each other to maintain consistency in the information that is released to the media. If either is unavailable, the media contact will be the Past President or President-Elect, in that order.

## **7. Reunion between Children and Parents/Guardians:**

- Parents will follow their own evacuation plans and should not attempt a reunion with their child(ren) until it has been determined that all danger is past.
- The DLFD and Safety Committee Chair will determine when reunion may occur and will make an announcement to parents.
- Teachers will remain with children until all children have been reunited with parents.

*Many thanks to The Children's Garden for their help in developing this plan.*

## **C. UUC Child Abuse Prevention Policy**

### **9. Reporting Suspected Abuse**

Both the Minister and Director of Lifespan Faith Development are regarded as mandated reporters if they suspect that abuse or neglect of a child has occurred. As advocates for the welfare of all children, the UUC strongly encourages all adults who suspect the abuse or neglect of a child make a report to either the Department of Social Services or the local police.

We recognize that the issue of potential abuse must be handled with the appropriate respect and privacy for the individuals/families involved. The alleged victim, their family members, and the person accused of the abuse shall be treated with respect and dignity.

UUC will respond promptly to investigate any accusation of sexual abuse. All accusations of sexual abuse will be taken seriously. It is important to be appropriately respectful to the needs and feelings of those who allege sexual abuse and those who have been accused of sexual abuse.

### **10. Managing Convicted Sex Offenders**

Adults, youth and children who are known to have criminal charge pending or pled guilty to or have been convicted of either child sexual or physical abuse, or as a sex offender, will not be allowed to work with children or youth.

UUC may allow a person known to be a sexual offender to remain or become a member of the congregation but they must adhere to specific guidelines. If it becomes known that a convicted sex offender is attending the church or any church activities, the following steps shall be taken.

- a) The Minister will check the local sex offender registry and meet with the individual to discuss the concerns that have been raised.
- b) The person will then be asked to meet with the Task Force.
- c) The individual will be asked to sign a release form so that the Minister can contact his/her sex offender treatment provider and/or current therapist, as

well as the person's parole officer. The therapist and the parole officer will be asked for their professional assessment of the likelihood that the sex offender will re-offend and whether additional restrictions beyond the standard Limited Access Agreement ought to be placed on the person's participation. The individual may also be asked to go for a professional assessment with a therapist who specializes in working with sex offenders. If the offender refuses permission to contact the therapist or refuses to go for an assessment, the congregation may refuse participation in any congregation activity.

d) If the assessment indicates that the person has completed or is participating successfully in treatment and is not at high risk for recidivism, the Task Force will develop a Limited Access Agreement, [which predetermines the official activities the sexual offender is permitted to attend. A known sexual offender must report in and be assigned an escort who will accompany the person at all times.](#) If the professional assessment indicates that the person is at high risk for re-offending, the person will be denied involvement in the faith community until treatment is successful at reducing the risk.

e) All persons with past histories of sexual offenses will be asked to sign a Limited Access Agreement. Upon entry into the congregation and depending on the circumstances, the person may be asked to sign one annually. If the offender refuses to do so, he/she may then be denied access to congregation functions and church property.

f) The Task Force will meet at least quarterly with any individual with whom it has a Limited Access Agreement to review the arrangement and address any concerns.

g) [The identity of the sexual offender will be disclosed to the congregation.](#) The President of the Board, in consultation with the board, the Minister, the DLF and the Task Force will determine how information about the presence of a convicted sex offender will be communicated to the congregation.