

# First United Methodist Church Evanston

## Youth Ministry Volunteer Covenant 2022-23

Volunteers with the Youth Ministry program must meet with the Director of Youth Ministry prior to service with youth, complete the Safe Gatherings online training and background check, and agree to the following covenant.

As a volunteer, I will:

- Use age-appropriate language around youth and refrain from using curse words.
- When transporting youth, follow all traffic laws, including speed limits, in order to ensure the safety of youth.
- Provide two weeks' notice of any planned absences/dates I am unable to volunteer.
- Avoid situations where I am alone with children and/or youth while volunteering, always following the two adult rule.
- Be knowledgeable of and adhere to the all applicable aspects of the Safe Gatherings training.
- Use positive reinforcement and communication rather than criticism, unhealthy competition, or comparison when working with children and/or youth.
- Honor the equality of all people, avoiding all forms of discrimination and respecting the dignity of each person without regard to economic status, age, gender, race, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, or physical or mental abilities.
- Report suspected abuse to the pastor, administrator, or appropriate supervisor and the local Child Protection Services agency. I understand that failure to report suspected abuse to civil authorities is, according to the law, a misdemeanor.
- Cooperate fully in any investigation of abuse of children and/or youth.

As a volunteer, I will not:

- Smoke or use tobacco products in the presence of children and/or youth.
- Use, possess, or be under the influence of alcohol at any time while volunteering.
- Use, possess, or be under the influence of illegal drugs at any time.
- Pose any known health risk to children and /or youth (i.e., no fevers or other contagious situations).
- Use physical discipline in any way for behavior management of minors. No form of physical discipline is acceptable. This includes spanking, slapping, pinching, shaking, hitting or any other physical force as retaliation or correction for inappropriate behavior of a minor.



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- Humiliate, ridicule, threaten, or degrade children and/or youth nor tolerate those behaviors in the environment for which I am responsible.
- Touch a child and/or youth in a sexual or other inappropriate manner.
- Use any discipline that humiliates or demeans children and /or youth.
- Use profanity in the presence of children and/or youth.
- Some forms of physical affection have been used by adults to initiate inappropriate contact with minors. In order to maintain the safest possible environment for minors, the following are examples of affection that are inappropriate and are not to be used:
  - a. Inappropriate or lengthy embraces
  - b. Kissing
  - c. Holding minors over two years old on the lap
  - d. Touching bottoms, chests or genital areas
  - e. Showing affection in isolated areas of the facility such as bedrooms, closets, staff only areas and other private rooms
  - f. Sleeping in bed with a child
  - g. Touching knees or legs of minors
  - h. Wrestling with minors
  - i. Tickling minors
  - j. Piggyback rides
  - k. Any type of massage given by a minor to adult
  - l. Any type of massage given by an adult to a minor
  - m. Any form of unwanted affection
  - n. Compliments that relate to physique or body development

I understand that violation of this covenant may result in losing the opportunity to serve with youth.

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Signature

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Date



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