

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF BRANFORD

Safe Church Policy

Adopted: September 24, 2006

Revised: April 21, 2021

Mission Statement of the Staff of First Congregational Church

May we be guided as we intentionally pray for our church, petitions brought to us, and each other. As a staff, we strive to treat each other as we'd like to be treated, and we vow to provide a safe place for each other to express our diverse opinions and views. As colleagues, we will respect one another and in doing so, hold all staff interactions and conversations in confidence. To maintain a healthy environment, we promise with the help of God, to honor ourselves and others.

Welcome Statement

The First Congregational Church of Branford affirms the full diversity of God's creation and welcomes persons of differing views, of all national and ethnic backgrounds, and of all sexual orientations, without regard to worldly condition. We hope you will share your particular gifts and faith journeys with us and join us in our worship and work.

The Safe Church Policy of the First Congregational Church, United Church of Christ, Branford, CT, provides for a safe and nurturing environment for all who participate in its programs.

Section I – INTRODUCTION

A. Policy Statement

The First Congregational Church, United Church of Christ, Branford, CT, hereafter referred to as "the Church," is committed to creating and maintaining a worship and work community in which members, friends, staff and volunteers can worship and work together in an atmosphere free of all forms of discrimination, harassment, exploitation or intimidation. The church prohibits all forms of sexual, physical and emotional abuse, and sexual harassment as defined below, in any activities sponsored by the Church. It is the intention and responsibility of the Church to take whatever action may be needed to prevent and correct behavior which is contrary to this policy. These actions include screening staff and volunteers, training staff and volunteers, setting guidelines for working with youth, publicizing reporting procedures, and responding effectively to reports of abuse.

All persons engaged in the ministry of the Church (including elected or appointed leaders, employees, volunteers and authorized ministers) are

responsible for knowing the possible impact of their words and actions in ministering to the emotional, mental, and spiritual needs of persons who come to them for help or over whom they have any kind of authority. Sexual harassment or sexual exploitation of parishioner(s) or other individual(s) by anyone engaged in the ministry of the Church is unethical and unprofessional behavior and will not be tolerated within this congregation.

Because ministers (including elected or appointed leaders, employees, volunteers and authorized ministers) often deal with individuals who are emotionally and psychologically fragile or otherwise personally vulnerable, it is imperative that those engaged in the ministry of this church maintain their own psychological, emotional and spiritual health and that they have adequate preparation and education for helping those individuals they seek to serve in ministry. It is the policy of the Church to encourage its leaders, authorized ministers, employees and volunteers to nurture safety within ministerial relationships by being attentive to self-care, education, and the importance of referring those in need to supportive and helpful resources. The Church is committed to creating a safe and healthy environment in which young people can learn about and experience God's love. It is the policy of the Church to provide adequate supervision for all youth activities.

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Church Board.

B. Definitions

Minister

A person engaged by the Church to carry out its ministry. "Minister" includes elected or appointed leaders of the Church, employees and volunteers as well as authorized ministers.

Authorized Minister

A person who holds ordained ministerial standing or has been commissioned or licensed by an association of the United Church of Christ.

Ministerial Relationship

The relationship between one who carries out the ministry of the church and the one being served by that ministry.

Child Abuse

An abused child is one less than eighteen years of age whose parent or other person legally responsible for his or her care:

Inflicts or allows to be inflicted serious physical injury to that child.

Creates or allows to be created a substantial risk of serious physical injury.

Commits or allows to be committed a sex offense against the child including: rape, sodomy, forcible touching; patronizing, promoting or

permitting prostitution; incest; and using a child in a sexual performance, such as promoting a sexual performance by a child in person, on video, on computer, or in a still photo.

Child Maltreatment (including Neglect)

Maltreatment means that a child's physical, mental, or emotional condition has been impaired, or placed in imminent danger of impairment, by the failure of the child's parent or other person legally responsible to exercise a minimum degree of care by:

Failing to provide sufficient food, clothing, shelter, education.

Failing to provide proper supervision, guardianship, or medical care (refers to all medical issues, including dental, optometric, or surgical care).

Inflicting excessive corporal punishment, abandoning the child, or misusing alcohol or other drugs to the extent that the child is placed in imminent danger.

Poverty or other financial inability to provide the above is not considered maltreatment.

Sexual Harassment

Repeated or coercive sexual advances toward another person contrary to his or her wishes. It includes behavior directed at another person's sexuality or sexual orientation with the intent of intimidating, humiliating or embarrassing the other person, or subjecting the person to public discrimination. Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitute sexual harassment when:

Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly to a term or condition or circumstances of instruction, employment or participation in any

church activity;

Submission to, or rejection of, such conduct by an individual is used as a basis for evaluation in making personnel or church-related decisions affecting an individual; or Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's performance or participation in church activities or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive work or church environment.

Prohibited sexual harassment includes unsolicited and unwelcome contact that has sexual overtones, particularly:

Written contact, such as sexually suggestive or obscene letters, notes, or invitations;

Verbal contact, such as sexually suggestive or obscene comments, threats, slurs, epithets, jokes about gender-specific traits or sexual orientation, sexual propositions;

Physical contact, such as intentional touching, pinching, brushing against another's body, impeding or blocking movement, assault, coercing sexual intercourse; and,

Visual contact, such as leering or staring at another's body, gesturing, displaying sexually suggestive objects or pictures, cartoons, posters, or magazines.

Sexual harassment also includes continuing to express sexual interest after being informed directly that the interest is unwelcome -- and using sexual behavior to control, influence, or affect the career, salary, work, learning or worship environment of another. It is impermissible to suggest, threaten or imply that failure to accept a request for a date or sexual intimacy will affect a person's job prospects, church leadership or comfortable participation in the life of the Church. Given the nature of the type of discrimination, the Church also recognizes that false accusations of sexual harassment can have serious effects on innocent men and women.

Sexual Exploitation

Sexual activity or contact (not limited to sexual intercourse) in which a minister engaged in the work of the Church takes advantage of the vulnerability of a participant to engage in sexual behavior with that minister.

Section II - PERSONNEL POLICIES

A. Screening process

All ministers who work with minors will complete the forms included in this document. Completed forms will be kept in a locked file, access to which is restricted to Authorized Ministers and individual immediate supervisor(s), except as required by law.

Paid staff will complete the following forms:

Criminal Records Check Consent Form
Disclosure Form

The Operations Team will be responsible for screening applicants for paid staff positions.

Volunteers who work with minors will complete the following forms:

Criminal Records Check Consent Form
Volunteer Application/
Disclosure Form

The Faith Formation Coordinator and the Chair of the Discipleship Team will be responsible for screening these applicants.

Any adult who provides transportation to minors for the Church will submit a current and valid driver's license to be kept on file.

B. Selection Criteria

All paid staff and volunteers who work with minors are subject to these restrictions:

An individual with an undisclosed criminal history will not be considered (per the disclosure form).

An individual with a known conviction involving child abuse will not be considered.

An individual who has any criminal history or history of child abuse which may impair his or her ability to effectively perform the functions of the position for which he or she is applying will not be considered.

C. Training

1. All ministers who work with minors will be given a copy of the Safe Church Policy. They will be trained about their responsibility in preventing and reporting allegations of sexual, physical, and emotional/psychological abuse or sexual harassment.

2. Training of ministers who work with minors will cover the following:

Basic orientation to the facts about sexual, emotional and physical abuse, and sexual harassment.

Description of what to look for in order to prevent abuse.

Explanation of the Safe Church Policy and the reporting procedures.

How to respond to reports of abuse.

State requirements.

3. All paid ministers will be trained in Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) and First Aid. The training should include the use of universal precautions, e.g., gloves and mouth to mouth barriers. This training should be optional to the volunteer ministers and any cost involved will be assumed by the Church. The Church will keep a copy of each person's certification or program completion card on file.

4. At the Fall Sunday School teachers meeting each teacher will review his/her classroom and locate the nearest emergency exit to their room. A safe location outside of the building will be identified for each classroom by the Faith Formation Coordinator. A form to document completion of this training will be completed. In addition, the teacher will be shown the location of First Aid supplies and determine the location of the nearest fire extinguisher.

5. Training on the correct use of Fire Extinguishers will be given to all paid staff and offered to volunteers as an option.

6. Dates will be determined for a minimum of two (2) fire drills per year, one to be held in September and one in the spring. Smoke detectors should also be tested at these times.

7. The Safe Church Policy will be made available to all members and prospective members of the Church who request it. The Church will provide at least one training session per year and will offer training more frequently, if needed. All standing board members are encouraged to attend the training sessions.

SECTION III - SUPERVISION

A. Supervision of Minors

1. CHILDREN ARE TO BE UNDER DIRECT ADULT SUPERVISION AT ALL TIMES.

2. When adults are supervising children away from the main church campus or Killam's Point the following guidelines will be followed:

a) If any child is to participate in a chaperoned or supervised church activity away from the Church or Killam's Point, a field trip form must be submitted to the appropriate leader.

b) Any person transporting children in a motor vehicle must complete the Transporting Children in a Motor Vehicle Form and provide a copy of his/her valid driver's license.

B. Discipline

1. Discipline must be administered in such a way as to help each child develop self-control and assume responsibility for his or her actions through clear and consistent rules and limits appropriate to the ages and development of the children in care. Adults in charge must use acceptable techniques and approaches to help children solve problems.

a) Any discipline used must relate to the child's action and be handled without prolonged delay on the part of the staff, so that the child is aware of the relationship between his or her actions and the consequences of those actions.

b) Isolating a child in a closet, darkened area, or any area where the child cannot be seen and supervised by an adult is prohibited.

c) Where a child's behavior harms or is likely to result in harm to the child, others, or property, or seriously disrupts or is likely to seriously disrupt group interaction, the child may be separated briefly from the group, but only for as long as is necessary for the child to regain enough self-control to rejoin the group. The child must be placed in an area where he or she is in the view of, and can be supervised and supported by, an adult. Interaction between an adult and the child must take place immediately

following the separation to guide the child toward appropriate group behavior.

d) Corporal punishment is prohibited. Corporal punishment means punishment inflicted directly on the body including, but not limited to, spanking, biting, shaking, slapping, twisting or squeezing; demanding excessive physical exercise, prolonged lack of movement or motion, or strenuous or bizarre postures; and compelling a child to eat or have in the child's mouth soap, foods, hot spices, or other substances.

e) Withholding or using food, rest, or sleep as a punishment is prohibited. Methods of discipline, interaction, or toilet training which frighten, demean, or humiliate a child are prohibited.

C. Supervision of Ministers

1. It will be the responsibility of the Church's Authorized Ministers to supervise all volunteers who work with minors to ensure compliance with the Safe Church Policy.
2. The supervision of Authorized Ministers is the responsibility of the Church Board and the Operations Team. The supervision of other staff members shall be as defined by the Church's bylaws.

D. Incident Reporting

1. All staff and volunteers will adhere to the following reporting procedures in the event of a reported or observed incident of sexual, physical, or emotional abuse or sexual harassment:
 - a) Any and all incidents will be reported within 24 hours to the Senior Minister, **Chairs of the Discipleship, Worship and Operations Teams**, and Moderator of Church Board.
 - b) The incident will be documented in writing by the person who received the report using the Misconduct Incident Report Form.

Section III - RESPONSE TO REPORTS OF ABUSE

A. Introduction

The Church staff and/or Church Board will treat every allegation of sexual, physical and/or emotional abuse or sexual harassment seriously. They will treat every allegation in a prompt and professional manner. The accused will be treated with respect and dignity during the process. Every effort will be made to comfort and protect the victim of the alleged abuse and to ensure that the victim's needs are being met. Confidentiality of all parties will be ensured.

B. Formation of a Response Team

A response team will be formed to review and act on any report of abuse. It will remain in place until the incident is deemed resolved. The response team will include an **Authorized Minister, Chairs of the Discipleship, Worship and Operations Teams, the Moderator and one at-large member**. If the Chair of one of teams or Moderator is involved in the incident, a person appointed by the Senior Minister will be substituted. One member of the response team will be designated the Church's media spokesperson.

C. Response Team Actions

1. The Response Team will:

- a) Immediately notify the parent or guardian of any minor involved in the incident.
- b) Notify the Church's insurance carrier.
- c) Notify and discuss allegations with the Church's legal counsel to ensure that all legal requirements are met in the response process.
- d) Notify the congregation as appropriate.
- e) If the accused is an Authorized Minister, the Committee on Ministry of the New Haven East Consociation of Churches and Ministers shall also be notified.
- f) If child abuse is alleged, the appropriate secular authorities shall also be notified.

2. After the above notifications have been made, the Response Team's actions may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- a) The Response Team shall gather statements or other information from the individuals involved in the alleged incident(s) and from others who may have pertinent information and present such information to the supervisor and supervisory body (i.e., Pastoral Relations Committee, Discipleship Team, etc.) of the accused individual(s).
 - b) The Response Team shall make determinations and take actions appropriate to resolve the matter. These may include:
 - 1) Finding that sexual exploitation or harassment has occurred and that the appropriate body of the Church is called upon to take action accordingly. Such action may include one or more of the following:
 - Formal reprimand with defined expectations for changed behavior, including possible public notification;
 - Recommending or requiring a program of growth that may include education and/or counseling;
 - Probation, with the terms of the probation clearly defined;
 - Dismissal from employment or volunteer leadership position, and, in extreme cases, affiliation with, or membership in, the Church.
 - 2) Finding that no sexual exploitation or harassment occurred.
 - c) If the accused is an Authorized Minister the Response Team, without the Authorized Minister, shall inform the New Haven East Consociation Committee on Ministry of its findings and actions. The Church will cooperate fully in any procedures of the United Church of Christ related to the person's ministerial authorization while retaining the right and responsibility to employ or designate its leadership as it determines best.
 - d) If allegations of possible child abuse are included in the complaint(s), the Church shall cooperate fully in any investigation. This policy shall continue to be followed to determine the continuance of the individual(s) in leadership positions in the Church.
3. A written summary of the Response Team's proceedings in such cases will be maintained in a secure file.
 4. In determining whether alleged conduct constitutes sexual harassment or exploitation, consideration shall be given to the record of the alleged incident(s)

as a whole and to the totality of the circumstances, including the context in which the alleged incident(s) occurred.

5. Any person bringing a sexual harassment or exploitation complaint or assisting in investigating such a complaint will not be adversely affected in terms and conditions of employment, church membership or affiliation, or otherwise discriminated against or discharged.

6. If the complainant(s) or accused person(s) is not satisfied with the disposition of the matter by the Response Team, he or she has a right to appeal to the Church Board.

Section IV - YOUTH PROGRAM GUIDELINES

A. Introduction

In order to protect children, who are especially vulnerable to abuse, the following guidelines will be observed.

B. Program settings

1. Children's programs will take place either in open areas, rooms with glass doors, or rooms with open doors, and never in remote or private spaces.

2. Two or more adults will be present at all children's programs whenever possible. An Adult is a person age 18 or over. Adults will avoid placing themselves in compromising situations by being alone with a child out of sight of other adults. If a child has not been picked up on time by parents, two supervising adults will remain with the child whenever possible. Children will not be driven home by a lone supervising adult whenever possible. Instead, parents should be asked to pick up the child or children, or with parental consent, two supervising adults will bring the child home whenever possible.

3. All program participants will remain with the group throughout the program. Children will not be permitted to separate from the group activity or from adult supervision.

4. The Killam's Point facility is covered by the First Congregational Church, Branford, CT, Safe Church Policy for all its programs, day camps, services, etc., in addition to those policies required by the State of Connecticut.

C. Interacting with children

1. When touching children, adults will follow these guidelines:

- Adults will touch children only in appropriate ways and places such as on the hand, shoulder or upper back, avoiding discomfort or over-stimulation of the child.
- Adults will not touch children against their will except to protect the child or other people.
- Adults will not touch a part of a child's body that would be covered by a bathing suit, except in cases of clear medical necessity or when changing a diaper or helping young or handicapped people use the toilet.
- Adults will not initiate or encourage physical contact such as wrestling, horseplay, or any other high-contact games.

2. Children will not be disciplined through the use of spanking, hitting, slapping, or any other form of physical punishment. Verbal reprimands will not include destructive criticism, insults or shouting, threats, or intimidation. When an adult encounters a particularly difficult situation, he or she should seek assistance from the person in charge, such as the Sunday School Superintendent or a Minister.

3. Guidelines for toileting young children:

- All adults will wait outside the bathroom door for children while they are performing personal sanitary functions.
- When able, a child should take care of her/his own clothes after toileting. When a child needs help, the adult should have the child step out of the stall into an open area.
- Any adult who is helping a child go to the bathroom should inform the other adult in the room that this is what they are doing.

4. When helping children to clean up from crafts and to wash hands, the door to the bathroom should be left open.

Section V – USE OF FACILITIES BY OUTSIDE GROUPS AND/ INDIVIDUALS

1. **One Time Use:** All groups and/or individuals who request permission to use the facilities of the Church and/or Killam's Point will fully complete and sign the Church Use Policy Agreement. They will be given a copy of the guidelines for church use including a requirement that minors be properly supervised.
2. **Repeat Use Policy:** All groups and/or individuals who have formed an agreement to use the Church, for weekly or monthly events (such as piano lessons, community groups, etc.) will be made aware of the Safe Church Policy of the Church and will agree to abide by the provisions.
3. **Scouts:** Boy Scouts, Cub Scouts, and Girl Scout Troops are youth programs supported by the Church and must abide by the policies of the Boy Scouts of America and the Girl Scouts of America which have the same goals as this policy.
4. **Child Development Center:** The Child Development Center is subject to state laws governing nursery schools and must abide by their policies and procedures for maintaining a safe environment for children. Specific information can be obtained from the Child Development Center's Director.

Section VI – EMERGENCIES

A. Definitions:

Emergencies will include, but are not limited to, accident, injury, illness, fire, explosion, motor vehicle accident or intruder.

B. IN THE EVENT OF A FIRE, THE FIRE ALARM SHOULD BE PULLED IMMEDIATELY AND ASSISTANCE WITH EVACUATION PROVIDED.

C. Injuries and Illness

In the event of an injury or illness, an immediate determination will be made by a supervising adult as to the severity of the injury or illness. If it is serious or even in question, the following steps should be taken.

Call 911 and give exact information as to the nature of the injury or illness. The location of the patient should be given, as well as the nearest entrance to the building for emergency personnel.

The Faith Formation Coordinator, or the Minister in charge of the activity will be notified and he or she will ensure that someone goes outside to meet arriving emergency personnel. If the incident is an injury or illness, appropriately trained personnel will respond to assist prior to arrival of professional help. If the Faith Formation Coordinator is not immediately available, he or she will be notified forthwith. Upon receiving notification of the incident, the Faith Formation Coordinator will notify parents or guardians.

The Senior Minister and/or Faith Formation Coordinator will determine if any children or adults may need counseling as a result of the incident and, if so, make the necessary arrangements.

An incident report is required and must be completed and filed with the Senior Minister within 24 hours.

Minor injuries, which only require first aid, and illnesses should be treated by trained personnel and the Faith Formation Coordinator shall be notified. An incident report will be filled out and the Faith Formation Coordinator, as appropriate, will notify parents or guardian.

D. Intruders

In the event of an intruder or any emotionally disturbed person (EDP) entering the building, any supervising adult is authorized to take the following steps:

Announce that, **"Mr. Lock is here,"** an indication of a problem and the code for an immediate lockdown.

If it is determined that the building and/or children are not safe, any supervising adult will announce, **"Evacuation plan John,"** indicating that all children and adults will be moved to the Baptist Church, once the evacuation route is deemed to be safe; or **"Evacuation plan Thomas,"** meaning children and adults will be moved to the Episcopal Church. The choice of plan depends upon the location of the danger and the safety of the proposed evacuation route.

E. Persons with Criminal Records

In the event that a member of the Church becomes aware that a person (or persons) who is (or are) a known criminal (or criminals) is (or are) attending our services or other church functions and may interact with the children, it is the member's duty to notify either the Senior Minister, the Faith Formation Coordinator, or a member of the Worship Team of this person's presence. The identification may be made from a web site, news article, or other source. Once notification has taken place, the following steps will be taken:

Confirmation of the information and a determination of whether or not this person may pose a threat. Charges and/or convictions that would indicate a threat include, but are not limited to, rape, assault, endangering the welfare of a child, kidnapping, and child molestation.

After confirmation, an appropriate plan of action will be agreed upon. This may include such steps as prohibiting any access to the Sunday School and its classrooms, no participation in any youth activities, limiting the individual to Sunday services and fellowship in Pilgrim Hall after services, etc.

The person involved will be informed of the plan of action which will also be communicated to the staff by the Senior Minister or a designated member of the Church. It is incumbent upon the Church staff to ensure that the plan of action is being followed. If it is not, local authorities will be contacted.

Section VII: Digital Policies

A. Off-site Contact

Many cases of organizational abuse occur off-site and outside of regularly scheduled activities. This contact outside of regularly scheduled activities may put staff, volunteers, and The Church at increased risk. The Church strongly recommends that staff do not have outside contact with youths from the organization. However, if off-site contacts are unavoidable (such as during mentoring programs), The Church has determined that the following forms of outside contact are:

Appropriate Outside Contact

- Taking groups of youths on an outing
- Attending sporting activities with groups of youths
- Attending functions at a youth's home, with parent's present

Inappropriate Outside Contact

- Taking one youth on an outing without the parents' written permission.
- Visiting one youth in the youth's home, without a parent present.
- Entertaining one youth in the home of staff or volunteers.
- A lone youth spending the night with staff or volunteers.

In addition, when outside contact is unavoidable, ensure that the following steps are followed:

- Supervisors should identify for Clergy, employees, and volunteers what types of outside contact are appropriate and inappropriate.
- Ensure that staff or volunteers have the parents' permission to engage in outside contact with the youth.

B. Electronic Communication

Any private electronic communication between staff and youths, including the use of social networking websites like - Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, instant messaging, texting, etc. - is prohibited. All communication between staff and youths must be transparent.

Appropriate Electronic Communication

- Sending and replying to emails and text messages from youths ONLY when copying in a supervisor or the youth's parent.
- Communicating through "organization group pages" on Facebook or other approved public forums.
- "Private" profiles for Clergy, employees, and volunteers which youths cannot access.

Inappropriate Outside Contact

- Harsh, coercive, threatening, intimidating, shaming, derogatory, demeaning, or humiliating comments.
- Sexually oriented conversations.
- Private messages between Clergy, employees, and volunteers with youths.

Posting pictures of organization participants on social media sites, outside of organization pages.

Posting inappropriate comments on pictures.

“Friending” participants on social networking sites.

In addition, this information will be provided to your participant’s parents so that they know what is appropriate and inappropriate from your staff.

Use of personal electronic communication devices to contact (via voice, text, or pictures/video) organization members and/or program participants for personal and/ or inappropriate reasons shall be grounds for discipline up to and including termination of employment.

C. Gift Giving

Molesters routinely groom youths by giving gifts, thereby endearing themselves to the youth. They might instruct the youth to keep the gifts a secret, which then starts teaching the youth to keep secrets from parents. For this reason, Clergy, employees, and volunteers should only give gifts to groups of youths, and only under the following circumstances:

Administration must be made aware of and approve the gift.

Parents must be notified

Criminal Records Check Consent Form

To Perform Criminal History/Background Check
IN COMPLIANCE WITH THE FCRA (FAIR CREDIT REPORTING ACT)
CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION

PART A

To be completed by all applicants

Last Name	First Name	Middle Name or Initial	
Maiden or other name(s) used in any and all other records of birth or records of residence.			
Address			Apartment or #
City	County	State	Zip
** Date of Birth	Social Security Number	**Gender	**DL Number & State

****TO BE USED FOR CRIMINAL HISTORY CHECKS ONLY AND NOT A PART OF THE PERSONNEL FILE.**

I, _____, am an applicant for employment / volunteerism with _____ Church and have been advised that as a part of the application process, the congregation conducts a criminal history background check. I do hereby consent to the congregation's use of any information provided during the application process in performing the criminal history check. The congregation has informed me that I have the right to review and challenge any negative information that would adversely impact a decision to offer employment / volunteerism. In addition, I have been informed that I will have a reasonable opportunity to clear up any mistaken information reported within a reasonable time frame established within the sole discretion of the congregation. Under the fair Credit Reporting Act, I have been advised that upon request I will be provided the name, address and telephone number of the reporting agency as well as the nature, substance and source of all information. If named as an employee or volunteer of this congregation, I consent to the congregation repeating this criminal history background check on a periodic basis as a condition of my continuing employment / volunteerism.

The following are my responses to questions about my criminal history (if any).

1. ____YES____NO Have you ever been convicted or plead guilty before a court for any federal, state or municipal criminal offense? (excluding minor traffic misdemeanors). If yes, please provide details below.

State: _____ County: _____ Date of Offense: _____
 Details of conviction: _____

2. ____YES ____NO Have you ever-received deferred adjudication or similar disposition for any federal, state or municipal offense? If yes, please provide details below.

State: _____ County: _____ Date of Arrest: _____
 Details of pending charges: _____

3. ____YES ____NO Have you ever-received probation or community supervision for any federal, state or municipal offense? If yes, please provide details below.

State: _____ County: _____ Date of Arrest: _____
 Details of pending charges: _____

4. ____YES____NO Have you ever been convicted of any criminal offense in a country outside the jurisdiction of the United States? If yes, please provide details below.

State: _____ County: _____ Date of Arrest: _____
 Details of pending charges: _____

5. ____ YES ____ NO As of the date of this consent form, do you have any pending charges against you?

If yes, please provide details below.

State: _____ County: _____ Date of Arrest _____

Details of pending charges: _____

PART B

To be completed by applicants, if requested.

PLEASE LIST ALL COUNTIES AND STATES OF RESIDENCE SINCE HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION OR AGE 18.

CITY/TOWN

COUNTY

STATE

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT ALL INFORMATION PROVIDED IN THIS CONSENT FORM IS TRUE, CORRECT, AND COMPLETE. IF ANY INFORMATION PROVES TO BE INCORRECT OR INCOMPLETE, I UNDERSTAND THAT GROUNDS FOR CANCELING OF ANY AND ALL OFFERS OF EMPLOYMENT/VOLUNTEERISM WILL EXIST AND MAY BE USED AT THE DISCRETION OF THE CONGREGATION.

Signed this _____ day of _____, 20____

APPLICANT (PRINT NAME)

APPLICANT'S SIGNATURE

VOLUNTEER APPLICATION/ DISCLOSURE FORM

**First Congregational Church
United Church of Christ
Branford, CT 06405**

Employment/Authorized Volunteer Application and Disclosure Form

Date: _____

Volunteer Position Requested: _____

Name: _____

Last First Middle

Address: _____
 Street City State Zip

Phone Number: _____ Cell/Beeper: _____

Email: _____ Social Security #: _____

Are you a U.S. citizen? Yes_____No_____ (optional for volunteer)

Bilingual? Yes No Second language:

Briefly state your reason for volunteering:

Education (optional):

Number of years attended: Elementary_____High School_____Graduation year_____

College (name), Degree, Graduation year_____

Other (name), Degree, Graduation year_____

My previous experience in the past five years (paid or volunteer) related to the ministry I am seeking to fill includes: (Attach additional page(s) as necessary.)

1. _____
AGENCY NAME

ADDRESS CITY STATE ZIP CODE

CONTACT PERSON PHONE

2. _____
AGENCY NAME

ADDRESS CITY STATE ZIP CODE

CONTACT PERSON

3. _____
AGENCY NAME

ADDRESS CITY STATE ZIP CODE

CONTACT PERSON

Personal References:

Name Address Telephone Number

Name Address Telephone Number

Name Address Telephone Number

Name of church where I am currently a friend or member _____.

☐ I have been a member of this church since _____.

☐ I have been a friend of this church since _____.

I have never been found guilty, or pled guilty or no contest, to a criminal charge.

☐ True ☐ Not true

If not true, give a short explanation of the lawsuit. (Please indicate the date, nature, and place of the incident leading to the lawsuit; where the lawsuit was filed; and the precise disposition of the lawsuit.)

No civil lawsuit alleging actual or attempted sexual discrimination, harassment, exploitation, or misconduct; physical abuse; child abuse; or financial misconduct has ever resulted in a judgment being entered against me, been settled out of court, or been dismissed because the statute of limitations has expired.

☐ True ☐ Not true

If not true, give a short explanation of the charge. (Please indicate the date, nature, and place of the incident leading to the charge; where the charge was filed; and the precise disposition of the charge.)

I have never terminated my employment, professional credentials, or service in a volunteer position or had my employment, professional credentials, or authorization to hold a volunteer position terminated for reasons relating to allegations of actual or attempted sexual discrimination, harassment, exploitation, or misconduct; physical abuse; child abuse; or financial misconduct.

☐ True ☐ Not true

If not true, give a short explanation. (Please indicate the date of termination; name, address, and telephone number of employer or volunteer supervisor; and nature of the incident(s) leading to your termination.)

Do you have a valid driver's license? ☐ Yes ☐ No

State where driver's license issued _____

Driver's license number _____

With respect to my driving record, I have not had my license suspended or revoked within the last five years due to reckless driving or driving while intoxicated and/or under the influence of a controlled substance.

☐ True ☐ Not true

Is there any fact or circumstance involving you or your background that would call into question your being entrusted with the responsibilities of the position for which you are applying?

☐

Yes ☐ No

If yes, please provide a brief explanation.

The covenants between persons seeking employment or sanctioned volunteer positions in the Church require honesty, integrity, and truthfulness for the health of the Church. To that end, I attest that the information set forth in this application is true and complete. I understand that any misrepresentation or omission may be grounds for rejection of consideration for, or termination of, the position I am seeking to fill. I acknowledge that it is my duty in a timely fashion to amend the responses and information I have provided if I come to know that the response or information was incorrect when given or, though accurate when given, the response or information is no longer accurate. Beginning such relationships with an open exchange of relevant information builds the foundation for a continuing and healthy covenant between employees or volunteers and the Church they seek to serve. To that end, I authorize **First Congregational Church, United Church of Christ, Branford, CT**, and/or its agents to make inquiries regarding all statements I have set forth above. I also authorize all entities, persons, former employers, supervisors, courts, law enforcement, and other public agencies to respond to inquiries concerning me, to supply verification of the statements I have made, and to comment on and state opinions regarding my background and character. To encourage such persons and entities to speak openly and responsibly, I hereby release them from all liability arising from their responses, comments, and statements made in good faith and without malice.

First Congregational Church, United Church of Christ, Branford, CT's hiring and authorized volunteer recruitment process involves the distribution of information regarding applicants with those persons in a position to recruit, secure, and supervise the position I am seeking to fill. To that end, I authorize **First Congregational Church, United Church of Christ, Branford, CT** and its agents to circulate, distribute, and otherwise share information gathered in connection with this application to such persons for these stated purposes. I understand that **First Congregational Church, United Church of Christ, Branford, CT** will share with me information it has gathered about me, if I request it to do so.

(SIGNATURE)

(PARENT'S OR GUARDIAN'S SIGNATURE FOR APPLICANTS UNDER 18)

DATE