



Germantown Mennonite Church Child Protection Plan

Completed by the Germantown Mennonite Church Education Committee
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(With thanks to the Franconia Conference Child Protection Team on which this plan is largely based.)

Working together to build safe spaces for children in Christ's name.

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I. INTRODUCTION

“Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these” (Matthew 19:14). These well-known words of Jesus give us a picture of God's love for young people – inviting, welcoming, empowering, and safe. We see Jesus’ open arms outstretched toward the young ones the disciples were trying to turn away; a posture of blessing and care. In the previous chapter, Jesus even goes so far as to say, “whoever welcomes a little child like this in my name welcomes me” (Matthew 18:5), making this act of providing nurturing spaces for children an especially holy one. As in so many other ways, God incarnate in Jesus shows us how to be faithful followers of Christ through our relationships. We are called to invite children to be among us. We are called to bless them. In doing so, we welcome God into our lives.

For this welcome to be truly extended to children in the context of our congregations, our churches must be places of refuge and safety. Young people must feel free to come in their inexperience, immaturity, and vulnerability with the expectation that they will not be harmed. They must also have confidence that if they have been harmed, they will find healing.

At Germantown Mennonite Church, we believe that “to be effective in ministry we face the challenge of cultivating healthy patterns and relationships, and addressing directly unhealthy ways of relating among us. Our witness to Jesus and the ministry of reconciliation entrusted to us are directly related to the quality of our relationships and the ways we structure our life in the body of Christ. (John 13:34-35, Rom. 12:1-13, Col. 3:1-17).” Ensuring that our congregations are truly sanctuaries for our children is part of encouraging these healthy relational patterns. By working together toward safety for children in our churches, we share a common intention for their well-being. This shared priority widens our welcome of children, makes more certain that they will be blessed to be among us, and strengthens the spirit of God in our midst.

Jesus not only calls us to welcome children, but also calls us to “become like little children” (Matthew 18:3) ourselves, so we too can experience the reign of heaven that belongs to them. We are to come to God with vulnerability, curiosity and that spirit of openness that gives little ones their vibrancy, creativity, resilience, and joy. If we can take this attitude as we do the work of child protection, we may find healing for the hurts of our childhood, deeper connection with one another, and peace in knowing we have been faithful to the most vulnerable ones among us.

May the process of protecting the children in the care of your congregation or organization be marked with the hopeful spirit of young people as we travel together on this journey toward growth in caring, trust, and wholeness.

II. GENERAL CHILD PROTECTION

A. Child Protection Philosophy

Germantown Mennonite Church places a high priority on the safety of all children within its care. While recognizing that each area of a comprehensive child protection program is essential to the proper functioning of a high-quality youth program, special attention will be given to child abuse prevention and recovery.

Germantown Mennonite Church commits to a collaborative, strategic approach to child protection, which includes identifying and addressing the threats and opportunities the congregation faces. The views and participation of personnel at all levels of the congregation, including volunteers, will be welcomed as Germantown Mennonite Church identifies child protection priorities and implements strategies for modifying, retaining or financing risk.

This collaborative effort culminated in the creation of the following Child Protection Plan. The most recent version of the Plan was presented to the Church Council for its review on June 5, 2014. It was approved by Church Council on June 5, 2014.

B. General Safety Principles

1. Germantown Mennonite Church will at all times operate in compliance with local, state, and federal laws and regulations related to child protection.
2. Germantown Mennonite Church adheres this policy in matters related to the health, safety, and well-being of those impacted by its ministry.
3. All adults involved at Germantown Mennonite Church bear responsibility for the health, safety, and security of children and youth under the age of 18. This is a primary responsibility of the Church Council, Education Committee, pastor(s), volunteers, and program staff.
4. Child Protection activities are multi-faceted and include:
 - a) Thoughtful consideration of gifts when matching volunteers and staff with roles related to children.
 - b) Creation and implementation of policies, standards, guidelines, trainings and procedures to assist with planning.
 - c) Maintaining safe and secure facilities.
 - d) Establishing procedures to be followed in the event of an emergency.
 - e) Maintaining clear communications channels.
 - f) Maintaining insurance coverage as a financing mechanism for certain risks, while recognizing that insurance is not a substitute for vigilance in planning and implementing programs.

C. Child Protection Goals

Germantown Mennonite Church seeks to create and sustain a safe environment

that enables caring ministry and the creation of meaningful opportunities for individual and community involvement using the tools of non-profit Child Protection principles and strategies.

Germantown Mennonite Church further commits to ensuring an appropriate response to all incidents that threaten or violate the spiritual, physical, social, psychological, emotional, or sexual well-being of children in their scope of influence.

D. Responsibility for Child Protection Policy

1. Church Council and the Child Protection Advisory Board
 - a) Approves child protection goals, adopts annual operating objectives with child protection included.
 - b) Adopts the annual budget with child protection in mind.
 - c) Reviews Education Committee reports to determine compliance with the child protection plan.
 - d) Adopts and establishes policies and standards.
 - e) Reviews the congregation's insurance program periodically.
 - f) Reviews the congregation's child protection plan periodically.
2. Legal Counsel for the congregation
 - a) Serves as advisor to the Church Council in legal matters, making referrals to specialists on an as-needed basis.
 - b) Advises Church Council on contracts, agreements, forms, etc.
3. Pastor
 - a) Keeps the Church Council apprised of emerging concerns and opportunities to improve child protection in the congregation.
4. Germantown Mennonite Church Child Protection Advisory Board.
 - a) Implements yearly trainings related to child protection strategies for staff, volunteers, parents and children at Germantown Mennonite Church.
 - b) Assists church council team in reviewing its child protection policies.
 - c) Champions congregation-wide effort to protect children of Germantown Mennonite Church and engage leadership, parents, and other members/attendees of Germantown Mennonite Church in child protection activities.
 - d) Convenes periodically to review the congregation's/organization's emerging problem situations and corresponding child protection strategies.
 - e) Evaluates the insurance program in collaboration with Church Council, other governing board or other entity.
 - f) Serves as Response Team in the event of any "unusual incident" or report of suspected child abuse.
 - g) See page 22 or a detailed description of the responsibilities of the Germantown Mennonite Child Protection Advisory Board.

5. Insurance Program for Germantown Mennonite Church
Liability package from Franconia Insurance currently covers:
Sexual misconduct and auto liability.

III. SAFETY POLICIES

A. Facilities

In collaboration with its insurance company, Germantown Mennonite Church will

1. Inspect its entire facility at least annually to ensure that it is safe for children and youth to occupy. A Safety Audit Checklist can be found in the Additional Information supplement of the Child Protection plan.
2. Display signage in the building outlining the basic policies in this document and letting the congregation know who they should contact with concerns.
3. Display reminders of bathroom policies in all bathrooms.

B. Information Management

1. Access to Confidential Information

- a) Germantown Mennonite Church has files on children/youth, families, staff, and volunteers that contain confidential information. Therefore it is essential to limit access to certain records to only those whose positions require access. Confidential information in paper form will be stored in locked file cabinets in the church office. All should use good judgment and common sense in protecting confidential information.
- b) The office administrator, Pastor, Education Chair and Child Protection Advisory Board are the only representatives of the congregation who will have access to the confidential files.

2. Internet Guidelines

- a) The WIFI will have a filter on it that blocks pornography and other inappropriate materials.

C. Human Resources and Child Protection

Germantown Mennonite Church integrates Child Protection into its staff and volunteer recruitment, screening and selection process by:

1. Communicating to prospective volunteers the congregation's requirements and expectations.
2. Designing position descriptions that support the identification of appropriate screening tools based on the risks associated with a particular position. Germantown Mennonite Church uses job descriptions for both paid and volunteer positions in the congregation. These documents are developed by the Child Protection Leadership Team and updated on an as needed basis. See page 20 of this manual for job descriptions.
3. Employing a screening process appropriate to the position.

D. Screening Employees and Volunteers

Screening is to be used with all applicants, including clergy, for full-time, part-time, compensated or volunteer work within the congregation. Screening must be completed according to the guidelines below prior to working with children or youth.

1. The "Six Month" Rule for congregants only: Volunteers will be permitted to work with youth or children only after they have been regular attendees of the church for 6 months. (as pastoral staff have a more intensive screening regimen this guideline is waived for them.)
2. Applicant Age Requirement: Approved volunteers who work with children or youth must be 18 years of age or older. Young leaders (age 14-18) may be approved to work as assistants to adult leaders, but not as leaders in charge of any group of children/youth or individual child/youth. All leaders must be at least five years older than the children/youth for whom they have responsibility.
3. A Live Interview
A live interview will be completed prior to assignment by a designated person (pastor, or Education Committee chair). Guidelines for this interview can be found in the forms supplement of the Child Protection Plan.
4. Reference Checks
All applicants will be required to provide information for two references, which will be checked. The references should be unrelated to the applicant, and be able to speak to the applicant's ability to work with children and youth. A written record of the contact will be kept on file in the church office. Appropriate forms can be found in the forms supplement of the Child Protection Plan.
5. Orientation and Training
 - a) The Child Protection Advisory Board at Germantown Mennonite Church is responsible for designing and conducting an appropriate orientation session for new staff and volunteers. The orientation of a new staff person or volunteer must take place within the first month of employment or volunteer service. A typical orientation will include review of the congregation's/organization's or program's expectations of someone serving as a staff person or volunteer and a review of the Child Protection policy.
 - b) All workers will also attend an annual training session led by the Germantown Mennonite Child Protection Advisory Board on the congregation's Child Protection policy.
6. Conditions of Acceptance for – and Grounds for Removal from – Positions Working with Children and Youth
Employees or Volunteers who match the following criteria will be disqualified for work with children and youth at Germantown Mennonite Church. These are also grounds for removal from a position working with

children and youth:

- a) Failure to complete the screening/application process.
- b) Failure to accurately report criminal/child abuse history.
- c) History of violence or any sexually exploitative behavior, including but not limited to a history of sexual abuse of children/youth.
- d) Conviction for any crime in which children/ youth were involved.
- e) Termination from a paid or volunteer position caused by any form of misconduct with a child/youth, including but not limited to inappropriate discipline or affection.
- f) Drug or alcohol abuse.
- g) Poor driving record (if the position requires transportation of children/youth).

E. Supervision of Volunteers

Germantown Mennonite Church has established clear lines of authority and supervision for the volunteers serving the congregation. These are outlined in the job description for each position see page 20 of this policy manual. Volunteer performance is monitored on an ongoing basis and evaluated in a meeting with the Education Chair.

F. Volunteer Dismissal

1. Volunteers serving Germantown Mennonite Church may be dismissed at any time when a pastor, director, or ministry coordinator supervising the volunteer determines that:
 - a) The volunteer is indifferent with regard to the congregation's essential rules and requirements.
 - b) The volunteer cannot adequately perform the job to which they have been committed.
 - c) The volunteer's continued service presents an unacceptable danger to the congregation or its personnel or clients.
2. At the time of dismissal departing volunteers will have the reason why their continued service is no longer required explained to them.
3. All volunteer dismissals will be reviewed by the pastor(s) and Church Council in advance of taking action.
4. A call will be placed to Childline at 800-932-0313 if there is a reason to suspect that any inappropriate treatment of children may recur in the future.

G. Transportation

1. Authorized Vehicle Use Policy

Providing transportation services to young people is a mission-critical function. However, the congregation recognizes its responsibility to provide safe and efficient transportation. The following rules apply to all drivers and vehicles:

- a) Only people approved and authorized by Germantown Mennonite Church are permitted to drive either an congregation-owned vehicle or any other vehicle on the congregation's behalf. All approved drivers must provide proof of their possession of:
 - (1) a valid driver's license,
 - (2) clean driving record, and
 - (3) personal automobile insurance.
 - (4) working mobile phone

H. Child Abuse Prevention Overview

Germantown Mennonite Church recognizes that child abuse is a serious problem. It is often committed by a person who is a caretaker of a child or in a position of trust and authority. Child abuse is not accidental and can be physical, sexual, mental, emotional, or spiritual. Detailed definitions of child physical, emotional, and sexual abuse can be found in the Additional Information supplement of the Child Protection Plan.

While abuse in any form can be devastating to a child, of particular concern to Germantown Mennonite Church is child sexual abuse, which affects one in four girls and one in six boys in the United States (according to 2012 statistics). Because of the high levels of access and trust that are provided to workers in faith community settings such as Germantown Mennonite Church special care must be taken to prevent and address child sexual abuse. The following policies are intended to ensure that Germantown Mennonite Church serves young people in the safest environment possible by encouraging adults to take responsibility for their individual roles in child protection.

1. Guidelines for Child Abuse Prevention

a) Use a Team Approach – The Two-Adult Rule

- (1) Two approved adult workers will be present during any church activity involving minors. Preferably these adults would not be related to each other. Approved young leaders (under age 18) may assist in classrooms with adult supervision, but may not substitute for the leadership of an adult and will never be left alone with a child or group of children.
- (2) Children over 5 will also use a “buddy system” when traveling throughout the building for activities such as using the restroom or locating a parent.

b) Provide Adequate Personnel

Programs that involve children and youth will always include adequate supervisory personnel. Supervision will be maintained before and after the event until all children are in the custody of their parents or legal guardians, or the adult they came to church

with.

(1) The following ratios will be observed:

(a) Under 3 years of age: Two adults (preferably of different genders), plus additional adults to match these ratios:

(i) 0 to 1 years: 1 adult to 5 children

(ii) 1 to 3 years: 1 adult to 6 children

(b) 3 years and over: Up to 20 children/youth, 2 adults (of different genders) plus 1 additional adult for every 1 to 10 additional children/youth.

(i) Example:

- 20 children = 2 adults of different genders (at least)
- 21-30 children = 2 adults of different genders plus 1 extra adult
- 31-40 children = 2 adults of different genders plus 2 extra adults
- and so on.

(2) On all overnight events, a minimum of two screened workers will be in attendance, with at least 1 adult per room in sleeping arrangements. One-adult/one-child sleeping arrangements are prohibited, including sharing a bed in a room with other people.

c) Minimize One-Child/One Adult Situations

(1) All interactions between children/youth and adults must be visible to others, preferably with more than one adult and more than one child present. If private conversation is required, it may occur out of earshot of others, but not out of sight. Activities will be observable and able to be interrupted at all times.

(2) All classrooms and other areas used by minors must have a window in the door or the door must be left open during use if this does not pose a safety risk. Open doors must be gated for classrooms of children under 5.

d) Guidelines for interactions between adults and children:

(1) Use appropriate hugs and touches that are reassuring or comforting, not uncomfortable or hurtful.

(2) Avoid total body-to-body hugs, touching in private areas or kissing on the lips.

(3) Use warm, caring verbal comments.

(4) Do not use demeaning or blaming comments, verbal put-downs, hurtful discipline or corporal punishment.

- (5) Use constructive, age-appropriate discipline suited to the behavior and the child.
- (6) Do not withhold food as a form of discipline.
- (7) Be aware of and sensitive to what makes a child feel uncomfortable.
- (8) Respect a child/youth's refusal of affection.

e) Obtain Parental Permission

Children and youth must have written parental permission for involvement in church sponsored programs or activities. See the forms supplement of the Child Protection Plan for annual and trip-specific permission forms. Church workers will obtain the consent of the child's parent or guardian by phone if an emergency situation necessitates that an adult will be alone with that child.

f) Use a Church Nursery Identification Procedure

Nursery personnel will clearly identify the child and the child's parent or legal guardian. Children will only be released to a properly identified and pre-authorized adult. See the forms supplement of the Child Protection Plan for a copy of the Nursery Sign In/Out Sheet.

IV. RESPONDING TO UNUSUAL INCIDENTS

All incidents in which a child/youth's safety is compromised or violated (i.e. accidents, injuries, altercations, etc.) will be considered an "unusual incident," requiring the completion of the Unusual Incident Form (found in the form supplement of the Child Protection Plan). The Unusual Incident Form must be completed and turned in to the pastor/elder/ministry leader of Germantown Mennonite Church by an involved adult, an adult witness to the incident, or any adult to whom the incident was reported within 24 hours of the occurrence of the incident. The the pastor/elder/ministry leader of Germantown Mennonite Church will share any Unusual Incident Report submitted to him/her with the Child Protection Advisory Board of Germantown Mennonite Church.

Special instructions for certain scenarios are listed below:

A. Vehicle Accident Procedures

Persons authorized to drive for Germantown Mennonite Church will follow this procedure if they are involved in an accident while driving any vehicle for the congregation:

1. Tend to any medical needs. Call the police or ask a bystander to contact the police.
2. Do not discuss the accident or admit fault to any other driver involved or bystander.
3. Fill out the Unusual Incident Form with special attention to Vehicle Accident Information.
4. Notify parents of children involved.

B. Reporting Child Abuse

1. Know the Facts about Child Abuse
 - a) Using the introductory material on child abuse and childhood stress in the the Additional Information supplement of the Child Protection Plan to assess the condition and situation of the child whom you suspect may be experiencing child abuse.
 - b) Learn more by reading some of the recommended materials in the the forms supplement of the Child Protection Plan, or by attending trainings on the subject. Germantown Mennonite Church, and other local child-serving agencies may also offer relevant trainings for members of Germantown Mennonite Church and the wider community.
2. Discuss Suspicious Behavior Immediately
 - a) All those involved in the ministries of Germantown Mennonite Church should be alert to inappropriate behavior by adults and older children/youth and signs of abuse.
 - b) Any inappropriate conduct or relationship between a church/organization staff person or volunteer, or any family or

community member and a child/youth should be reported immediately to the Child Protection Advisory Board and the Pastor of the congregation.

- c) Any suspicious behavior will be immediately investigated per the instructions below.

3. Reporting Obligations

- a) Employed workers and volunteers with children and youth are considered mandatory reporters of suspected child abuse or neglect. Title 23 Pa. CSA. §6311
- b) All workers should report this information to Childline and to Germantown Mennonite leaders in a discrete and confidential way. Reporting reflects care and concern, not disloyalty or recrimination.
- c) A mandated reporter must personally make the report. A member of the Child Protection Policy Committee may assist you in making the report (for example, sit with you for support if you are uncomfortable in the process) as long as they do not interfere in any way with the making of the report. Afterward, you should inform a member of the Committee (or whoever is designated at your place of employment) about the report.
- d) Reporting procedures for all those involved in the ministries of Germantown Mennonite Church are outlined below. The individual reporting the conduct is protected from legal and civil liability if the report is made in good faith.

4. How to Report Suspected Abuse – In the event of suspected child abuse, the following steps will generally be taken:

- a) Initial Actions and Reports of Any Concerned Adult
If a child verbally reports abuse to an adult or if an adult observes/suspects suspicious behavior between another adult or older youth and a child:
 - (1) Secure the child's safety: If the child is in imminent danger, seems fearful to return home after a disclosure of abuse, or needs immediate medical attention, call 911.
 - (2) Report the information immediately:
 - (a) Call the person within the congregation designated to make all calls to Childline, to inform him/her orally of your concern. They will document your concern in writing by completing form CY-47.
 - (b) Call the pastor, to inform him/her orally of your concern, unless the person accused is the pastor/director, in which case you should refer to the Germantown Mennonite Church Ministerial Sexual Misconduct Policy and Procedure for more

instructions.

- (c) Call the Germantown Mennonite Child Protection Advisory Board to inform the Team of your concern.
 - (d) If the alleged offender is a minister, follow the process outlined in the Germantown Mennonite Church Ministerial Sexual Misconduct Policy and Procedure, in addition to the reporting procedure outlined here.
- (3) Generally do not discuss the incident with anyone else, unless requested by the pastor or other authorities.
- (4) Tips to remember while acting on suspicions or report of abuse:
- (a) Stay calm and listen carefully to the child.
 - (b) Take the child's word seriously and keep any physical evidence.
 - (c) Do not ask leading questions or probe for more details. It is appropriate to say, "Tell me more," or ask other open-ended questions.
 - (d) Give emotional support, reminding the child that they are not at fault and that they were courageous and right to tell you about the problem.
 - (e) Express your own sincere emotions. Tell the child how sad you feel that this has happened. Tell him/her how sad God feels when a child is hurt.
 - (f) Assure the child that you will do everything you can to make the abuse stop. Explain that in order to help, you must tell some other people.
 - (g) Inform parents / legal guardians if they are not the alleged abuser.

b) Designated Childline Contact Person's Actions and Reports (a member of the Child Protection Advisory Board)

- (1) Be available at all times to receive a call from a concerned adult regarding the safety of a child in the care of Germantown Mennonite Church.
- (2) When a call from a concerned adult has been received, call Childline: 1-800-932-0313.
- (3) Complete form CY-47 found in the the forms supplement of the Child Protection Plan in collaboration with the concerned adult and submit a copy of this form to:
 - (a) the County Children and Youth agency according to Childline's instructions
 - (b) the pastor/director (unless they are the person accused).

- (c) the Germantown Mennonite Child Protection Advisory Board.
- (d) The Education Committee Chair.
- (e) the Vision Team.

c) Pastor Actions and Reports

- (1) Maintain complete confidentiality with regard to all conversations with the child and the accused adult that can be construed as confidential communications. This includes maintaining confidentiality when completing the written documentation outlined below.
- (2) Report suspected child abuse as required by law. Clergy are mandated reporters in Pennsylvania, so it is their duty to ensure that child abuse is reported. Follow-up with the designated Childline contact person to be sure they made a report, then contact Childline to be sure your legal requirement to report is fulfilled, and to avoid any possible penalties for failure to report.
- (3) Document every conversation and contact on the Pastoral Report Form see page 42 of this manual. Place documentation directly in a locked file accessible only to you.
 - (a) If the alleged offender is not a parent/guardian, notify the child's parents/guardians. If the alleged offender is a parent/guardian, seek advice from Childline and the Germantown Mennonite Church Child Protection Advisory Board before contacting the home.
 - (b) If appropriate, outline the response procedure to the child and parents/guardians.
 - (c) Speak directly with the child and anyone involved in reporting the incident for the purpose of assuring them that the child's safety is the main concern of Germantown Mennonite Church and its leadership.
- (4) Seek ongoing support for your work with the family:
 - (a) Cooperate with the County Children and Youth agency in any actions and/or pastoral care.
 - (b) Consult with an attorney and Franconia Insurance Company.
 - (c) Report all findings and actions to the Germantown Mennonite Child Protection Advisory Board.
- (5) Continue to give pastoral care to all involved, as appropriate.
- (6) Tips to remember while acting on suspicions or report of abuse:

- (a) Encourage the family to keep all documents and evidence.
- (b) Work to ensure the safety of the child, in consultation with Children and Youth or the police, if they are involved.
- (c) Assist the child and family with obtaining access to appropriate medical and counseling services.
- (d) When in contact with the alleged offender, follow these guidelines:
 - (i) Listen, be caring, and sensitive.
 - (ii) Observe for behaviors such as denial, blaming, minimization, justification, jealousy, hostility and quick remorse.
 - (iii) Ask questions such as who, where and when.
 - (iv) If the alleged offender is not a parent of the child who reported abuse, provide no information about the child and their family, details of the reporting process (i.e. who reported) and who is responding to the child and their family.
 - (v) Inform him/her that a team of people will be responding to their needs and the issues related to the allegations.

d) Guidelines for Actions and Responsibilities of the Child Protection Advisory Board of Germantown Mennonite Church:

(1) If the alleged offender is a participant in the youth ministry of Germantown Mennonite Church, remove him/her temporarily from their duties and any environment that gives him/her access to children/youth during the investigation.

(a) Communicate with the Germantown Mennonite Church Child Protection Advisory Board

- (i) Call members of the Germantown Mennonite Church Child Protection Advisory Board within 24 hours to inform them of the incident.

(b) Manage Public Communications

- (i) Designate a spokesperson to be responsible for handling all communications with others in the congregation not directly involved with the suspected abuse situation and the media. No one else should speak on behalf of the congregation.

- (ii) In consultation with legal counsel (as needed) and the Care Teams, provide necessary information to the congregation. Give updates as needed to minimize the spread of rumors. Keep dated copies of these statements on file in the church office.

(c) Organize Care Teams

- (i) Name a Care Team to minister to the child and their family, in consultation with the child's family. Also offer a Care Team to minister to the accused and their family (assuming they are a member of the congregation.) See Care Team Guidelines below.
- (ii) Receive recommendations from the Care Teams, make decisions about any disciplinary actions or accountability plans, and monitor their implementation.

(d) Attend to congregational healing process

- (i) Make available to the congregation trained people who can help bring healing and assist congregational members in addressing needs.
- (ii) Evaluate the process of dealing with incidents of suspected child abuse, revising policy as necessary.

e) Care Team Ministry

Each team will have three people, who have had previous training on child abuse and response procedures, and whose involvement does not create a conflict of interest. Someone from the Germantown Mennonite Child Protection Advisory Board will serve as leader for each team.

(1) Guidelines for the Care Team for the child and their parents (or guardians):

- (a) Meet with the child and their family, assess further needs and explain the procedure to be followed.
- (b) Offer support and care to the child and their family.
- (c) Provide a list of qualified counselors/therapists and assist with securing financial help, transportation or other assistance, as needed, to access these professionals.
- (d) In the case of multiple victims, provide an opportunity for these individuals to meet together, if

they choose, for mutual support.

- (e) Maintain confidentiality until the Care Teams and Germantown Mennonite Child Protection Advisory Board agree on further disclosure to the congregation or others involved in the situation.
- (f) Complete the Child and Family Care Team Form (found in the the forms supplement of the Child Protection Plan) for each meeting, to document actions and decisions taken.
- (g) Report to the Germantown Mennonite Child Protection Advisory Board and recommend appropriate actions and follow-up.
- (h) Work with Germantown Mennonite Child Protection Advisory Board and other involved Germantown Mennonite leadership in implementing these recommendations.

(2) Guidelines for the Care Team for the alleged offender and their family:

- (a) Meet with the alleged offender and their family, assess further needs and explain the procedure to be followed.
- (b) Offer support and care to the accused and their family.
- (c) Provide a list of qualified counselors/therapists and assist with securing financial help, transportation or other assistance, as needed, to access those professionals.
- (d) Maintain confidentiality until the Care Teams and Germantown Mennonite Child Protection Advisory Board agree on further disclosure to the congregation or others involved in the situation.
- (e) Complete alleged Offender Care Team Form for each meeting, to document actions and decisions taken. This form can be found in the form supplement of the Child Protection Plan.
- (f) Report to the Germantown Mennonite Child Protection Advisory Board and recommend appropriate actions and follow-up.
- (g) Work with Germantown Mennonite Child Protection Advisory Board and other involved Germantown Mennonite leadership in implementing these recommendations.

5. Response to Investigation

When the investigation by law enforcement (and Germantown Mennonite Church Child Protection Advisory Board, if applicable) is complete, the following steps will be taken:

- a) If the allegations are unfounded by Children and Youth and law enforcement agencies (and Germantown Mennonite Church Child Protection Advisory Board, if applicable), and the information discovered is not a cause for reasonable concern, the Germantown Mennonite Child Protectione Advisory Board, in collaboration with the Care Teams and other involved Germantown Mennonite leadership, will:
 - (1) Share information about actions taken, as needed, with the child, their family and the congregation.
 - (2) Reinstate the accused to any position from which they have been removed due to the allegation.
- b) If the allegations are unfounded by the Children and Youth and law enforcement agencies (and Germantown Mennonite Church Child Protection Advisory Board, if applicable), but the information discovered remains a cause of reasonable concern, the Germantown Mennonite Child Protection Advisory Board, in collaboration with the Care Teams and other involved Germantown Mennonite leadership, will:
 - (1) Develop an accountability plan for continued church involvement.
 - (2) Require education and/or counseling to correct unhealthy behavior patterns.
 - (3) Remove the offender from environments where children and youth are involved for a stated period of time. Reinstatement to any kind of ministry with children and youth will be dependent upon open and frequent communication between the Germantown Mennonite Child Protection Advisory Board and any treatment providers working with the offender.
 - (4) Share information about actions taken, as needed, with the child, their family and the congregation.
- c) If the allegations are determined to be founded by Children and Youth and law enforcement agencies (and Germantown Mennonite Church Ministerial Leadership Committee, if applicable), the Germantown Mennonite Child Protection Advisory Board, in collaboration with the Care Teams and other involved Germantown Mennonite leadership will:
 - (1) Support all recommendations and requirements of those involved in the treatment and supervision of the offender.
 - (2) Support those seeking to provide for the needs of the child in medical care, counseling, etc.

- (3) Permanently remove the offender from any environment where children and youth are involved.
- (4) Require the offender to obtain specialized counseling.
- (5) Protect others from harm and protect the integrity of the church's ministry.
- (6) Monitor the progress and accountability of the offender through a Circle of Support and Accountability. (For more information on setting up a Circle of Support and Accountability in your congregation, please contact the Germantown Mennonite Church Child Protection Advisory Board.)

V. JOB DESCRIPTIONS FOR POSITIONS WORKING WITH CHILDREN AND YOUTH

A. Employed Staff

B. Volunteer Positions

1. Sunday School Teacher

a) Purpose of a Sunday school teacher

- (1) to teach the youth of the congregation our stories of Christian faith and discipleship
- (2) build relationships with the children of the congregation.

b) Areas of responsibility

- (1) build a trusting relationship with youth
- (2) prepared for teaching the e Sunday school youth with the appropriate materials and supports.
- (3) prepared to give an receive council with the education Committee chair pastor(s), parents and child protection committee.
- (4) find an appropriate replacement if unable to be at church on Sunday.
- (5) active participant at Germantown Mennonite Church.
- (6) Complete Children and youth Volunteer Application and Pennsylvania Criminal and Child Abuse Clearances according to Germantown Mennonite Church's child protection policy.
- (7) attend trainings organized by the Education Committee and the Child protection Advisory Board.

c) Qualifications

- (1) commitment to following in the way of Jesus
- (2) desire to walk with the youth of Germantown Mennonite supporting them on their spiritual journey and in the life transitions.
- (3) active participant at Germantown Mennonite Church.
- (4) Complete Children and youth Volunteer Application and Pennsylvania Criminal and Child Abuse Clearances

according to Germantown Mennonite Church's child protection policy.

2. Youth leader

a) Purpose of a Youth Leader

- (1) engage the youth of the congregation in time together in a safe, caring space.
- (2) build relationships with the children of the congregation.

b) Areas of responsibility

- (1) build a trusting relationship with youth
- (2) prepared to give an receive council with the education Committee chair pastor(s), parents and child protection committee.
- (3) prepare regular activities for the youth.
- (4) active participant at Germantown Mennonite Church.
- (5) Complete Children and youth Volunteer Application and Pennsylvania Criminal and Child Abuse Clearances according to Germantown Mennonite Church's child protection policy.
- (6) attend trainings organized by the Education Committee and the Child protection Advisory Board.

c) Qualifications

- (1) commitment to following in the way of Jesus
- (2) desire to walk with the youth of Germantown Mennonite supporting them on their spiritual journey and in the life transitions.
- (3) active participant at Germantown Mennonite Church.
- (4) Complete Children and youth Volunteer Application and Pennsylvania Criminal and Child Abuse Clearances according to Germantown Mennonite Church's child protection policy.

3. Mentor

a) Purpose of a mentor

- (1) to encourage support and nurture the youth in their faith journey and maturation.
- (2) Expected to be no more than one to two hours a month.

b) Areas of responsibility

- (1) regularly pray for youth
- (2) build a trusting relationship
- (3) respect confidentiality
- (4) offer encouragement and counsel to youth in matters of faith and life
- (5) be in contact with your youth at least once a month through phone calls, emails, or cards
- (6) be aware of the youth's activities
- (7) attend youth/mentor functions planned by the education

- committee
- (8) attend Child protection training and function within guidelines of the child protection policy
- c) Qualifications
 - (1) commitment to following in the way of Jesus
 - (2) desire to walk with the youth of Germantown Mennonite supporting them on their spiritual journey and in the life transitions.
 - (3) active participant at Germantown Mennonite Church.
 - (4) Complete Children and youth Volunteer Application and Pennsylvania Criminal and Child Abuse Clearances according to Germantown Mennonite Church's child protection policy.
- 4. Nursery Volunteer
 - a) Purpose
 - (1) Provide a safe nurturing environment for the children of our congregation.
 - (2) Assist the nursery staff in caring for the children's needs.
 - b) Responsibilities
 - (1) Assist the nursery staff in providing a safe, nurturing environment for the children in their care.
 - (2) Supervise children while the nursery staff provides for the bathroom needs of the children in the bathroom next to the nursery. The nursery staff will keep the door of the bathroom open.
 - (3) Assist the Nursery staff in the sign in and sign out procedures for the nursery.
 - (4) adhere to the "two adult rule" at all times.
 - c) Qualifications
 - (1) regular attender of the congregation.
 - (2) willingness to serve on the nursery rotation.

C. Child Protection Advisory Board of Germantown Mennonite

The Child Protection Advisory Board of Germantown Mennonite Church will serve as the primary planning, resourcing, support, and oversight group for the work of child protection and child abuse recovery at Germantown Mennonite Church.

The Education Committee, Church Council and Vision Team will work in collaboration with the Child Protection Advisory Board of Germantown Mennonite Church as necessary. One important goal of this collaborative work will be to create structures for the Child Protection Initiative that build it into the ongoing mission and work of the congregation as it relates to direct services to children. The Education Committee will implement all Germantown Mennonite

Church's child protection policies and procedures, relying on the Child Protection Advisory Board of Germantown Mennonite Church for trainings, and assistance in responding to incidents that compromise or violate the safety of children or youth at Germantown Mennonite Church.

1. Members of the Germantown Mennonite Church Child Protection Advisory Board commit to:
 - a) Becoming well-versed in the language, issues, policies and procedures of child protection and child abuse recovery.
 - b) Initial meetings 1-2 times monthly for training, planning, and team-building. (Frequency of regular meetings will likely lessen as the team and the Child Protection Initiative becomes established).
 - c) Processing written applications and conducting interviews for potential candidates for work in children's and youth ministry at Germantown Mennonite Church.
 - d) Representing the Child Protection Advisory Board of Germantown Mennonite Church as necessary to the congregation and meetings of congregational leadership.
 - e) Monitoring all activities at Germantown Mennonite Church involving children to ensure policy compliance.
 - f) Serving as the Response Team for incidents of safety violation at Germantown Mennonite Church. The responsibilities of a Response Team include, but are not limited to:
 - (1) Establishing a plan for receiving incident reports from members and regular attendees at Germantown Mennonite Church.
 - (2) Reporting incidents according to the outlined response plan.
 - (3) Communicating openly and frequently with other Child Protection Advisory Board members and collaborating with law enforcement, child advocacy professionals, and Germantown Mennonite Leadership as appropriate to address any incident requiring ongoing follow-up.
 - (4) Supporting involved parties in a safety violation (lay leaders, parents, children, etc., including anyone suspected of maltreatment or negligence of children) throughout any disciplinary or legal process that follows the report.
 - (5) Maintaining strict confidentiality for the involved child(ren) and person(s) suspected of maltreatment or negligence toward the child(ren). This does not imply keeping confidentiality from law enforcement when a report to Childline is merited, nor does it prohibit seeking the assistance of other qualified professionals as necessary.
 - (6) Handling communications with congregation, the community, and the media as determined necessary through planning with the leadership of Germantown Mennonite

Church, law enforcement and child advocacy professionals.

2. Members of the Child Protection Advisory Board may also wish to:
 - a) Plan trainings and implement them.
 - b) Lead discussions on human sexuality.
3. Traits of a first-rate team member:
 - a) Respected in the congregation and community
 - b) Team player
 - c) Good listener
 - d) Compassionate/empathetic
 - e) Courageous and calm in crises
 - f) Perseveres through challenging situations and resistance
 - g) Demonstrates self-care in times of stress
 - h) Has clear criminal and child abuse background checks within the past year
4. The following qualifications of team members are preferred:
 - a) Professional experience dealing with children's issues
 - b) Teachers, daycare providers, after school program staff, social workers, youth ministers, pediatricians, and others with work experience serving children.
 - c) Anyone who has experience creating/implementing child protection plans in a congregation or other child-serving organization.
 - d) Personal experience as a survivor of child abuse or concerned friend or family member of an abuse survivor. Adequate progress in recovery and social support should be demonstrated to ensure continued personal safety and healing.