DIRECTIONS FOR SIGNING THE

Harassment and Non-Discrimination Policy

and the

Good Shepherd Program

Click “enable editing” yellow line above.

Please read the following policy. Please sign and date on the last page of this policy.

When completed go to “file” – top left-hand corner, scroll to either “send” or “share”. Send as an attachment or “word document”. Then the email that you use should pop up with the policy already attached. Send to Wayside at [wpc@wayside-erie.org](mailto:wpc@wayside-erie.org) If you are having trouble you can call Marci at 814-833-7653 and she will walk you through it over the phone.

Thank you for participating.

Harassment and Non-Discrimination Policy and the Good Shepherd Program

of Wayside Presbyterian Church 1208 Asbury Road, Erie, Pennsylvania

The relationships at Wayside Presbyterian Church are based upon fundamental Christian principles. Our support of equal opportunity includes the recognition that sexual harassment or discrimination on account of race, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, national origin, ancestry, age, disability or other illegal basis will not be tolerated. Employees, members and visitors have the right to be free of racial or ethnic slurs, unwelcome sexual advances, and any other verbal or physical conduct that constitutes sexual harassment or prohibited discrimination.

Sexual harassment in any form is prohibited. Sexual harassment can consist of such things as unwelcome, unsolicited or non-reciprocal sexual-advances; requests for sexual favors; sexual innuendoes; sexually oriented jokes, cartoons, pictures, language, gestures, or touching; and coerced sexual relations. Wayside will not tolerate this type of conduct in any form. As part of this policy, Wayside also has instituted the Good Shepherd program that consists of the Children and Youth Safety Program.

Wayside does not permit or condone any form of sexual harassment or prohibited discrimination or any other conduct that has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with a member’s or visitor’s right to worship. Wayside does not permit or condone any form of sexual harassment or prohibited discrimination or any other conduct that has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an employee’s work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment.

It is the intent of Wayside to provide employees, members and visitors with an environment free from any verbal, physical, visual, or electronic forms of sexual harassment or other prohibited discrimination. All employees, members and visitors are expected to be sensitive to the rights and feelings of others.

Employees and members are required to take every reasonable action to prevent anyone from engaging in any form of sexual harassment or prohibited discrimination, whether against an employee, member or visitor. Employees and members must immediately report any incident of alleged sexual harassment or discrimination to the Pastor, Associate Pastor, the current chair of the Personnel Committee, or a current member of Session. The reporting process is described below. We encourage the reporting party to speak to someone with whom they feel comfortable.

Complaints will be thoroughly investigated. Engaging in prohibited behavior may also result in personal legal liability of the offender. At the reporting party's request,

anonymity will be maintained insofar as it does not unreasonably impede an investigation and resolution of the complaint. Wayside will not tolerate intimidation and/or retaliation against the reporting party for filing a complaint or participating in an investigation of sexual harassment or discrimination. Complaints of such conduct will be handled in the same manner as a complaint of sexual harassment or discrimination.

# REPORTING PROCEDURE FOR INCIDENTS

1. Any person who feels that the Harassment and Discrimination Policy of Wayside Presbyterian Church has been transgressed may report their concern to:
   1. The chair of the Personnel Committee of WPC;
   2. One of the pastors of WPC; or
   3. An Elder currently serving on the session of WPC. (The names and phone numbers of these church officers and staff members will be posted on a bulletin board at the church for easy access).
2. A written statement shall be required from the individual reporting an alleged incident and any witnesses. The statement must include all information related to the alleged incident (the date of alleged incident, time of alleged incident, witnesses (if any) and any other facts surrounding the alleged incident) and must be signed and dated.
3. If the individual is unwilling or unable to provide a written statement, the Pastor or Elder shall provide a written statement of the conversation and sign and date the document. If the individual or a witness does not give a written signed statement, the verbal complaint will not be ignored, but the refusal to provide a written statement may be a factor in the outcome of the investigation.
4. Any staff member accused of inappropriate behavior may be suspended from work with pay, with no presumption of guilt or innocence, during the time of the investigation. Any church member or guest of Wayside Presbyterian Church accused of inappropriate behavior may be asked to refrain from attending the church for any function during the pendency of the investigation. Any teacher or youth leader accused of inappropriate behavior may be asked not to participate in their respective ministry during the pendency of the investigation.
5. Any Elder or Pastor to whom a report has been given will inform the Pastors, Chair of the Personnel Committee and the Clerk of Session of the allegation.
6. The Chair of the Personnel Committee will call for an investigation and convene a meeting of the committee conducting the investigation. Ordinarily this committee will consist of the Chair of the Personnel Committee and the Pastors. If, in the judgment of the Chair of the Personnel Committee and the Pastors, the age and/or gender composition of the investigating committee is such that the integrity of the investigation could be compromised or questioned, the Chair may invite other members of Session to serve on the committee. If one of the presumptive committee members is an individual against whom the complaint is addressed, or a material witness, then that individual shall not serve on the investigating committee. Wayside reserves the right to have the investigation conducted by legal counsel or other third party(ies).
7. Investigations are to be completed as quickly as possible, ordinarily in two to three days. Efforts should be made not to exceed ten days.
8. All evidence including documents, calendars, notes, letters, gifts, e-mails, and pictures are to be gathered and retained. No evidence is to be discarded or deleted.
9. The investigating committee will come to a decision as to whether or not there is sufficient cause to inform the appropriate Presbytery committee of the need for their investigation or that there is no basis for an investigation. A report will be written summarizing the statements and evidence collected and the findings will be reported first to the Session of WPC and then to the parties involved.
10. Records of all investigations will be kept by the church for **three (3)** years.

# GOOD SHEPHERD PROGRAM WAYSIDE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

**CHILDREN AND YOUTH SAFETY POLICY**

**PURPOSE:** At Wayside Presbyterian Church, we believe that Christ has called us to reach out to children and youth with God’s love. We consider this ministry a high calling and a sacred trust. Therefore, we are committed to doing everything within our power to protect these young people from the possibility of abuse or neglect. It is our hope and prayer that in the midst of a troubled world, Wayside can be a place where children and youth are safe.

# GOALS:

1. To protect the children and youth entrusted to our care from people who seek to harm them.
2. To minimize the risk of child abuse at Wayside.
3. To protect our volunteers and our church staff from the possibility of false accusations and litigation.
4. To respond appropriately to abuse-related concerns, including proper reporting of suspected cases of child abuse or neglect.
5. To educate our congregation about the subject of child abuse and neglect.

# SCREENING REQUIREMENTS:

1. Wayside employees and volunteers who desire to work with children and youth must complete the screening process required by state law (Act 153) as outlined in the attached Wayside Presbyterian Church Employee/Volunteer Screening Requirements.
2. Lead teachers will normally be members of Wayside or will be individuals who have demonstrated that Wayside is their church of choice by regular attendance at worship. Volunteers shall have served as a helper for 6 months OR have been involved in the life of Wayside for one year.
3. Any person who is currently under investigation for, or has been convicted of (a) criminal sexual conduct, (b) neglect of a child, or (c) physical abuse of another

person will not be permitted to serve as a paid or volunteer worker with the children or youth at Wayside.

1. Wayside will pay for/reimburse the church volunteers/employee background screening service.
   * According to an act of the Session of Wayside on April 13, 2005 the following procedures will be instituted concerning the PA Child Abuse History Clearance Form and the church’s record keeping.
2. The requirements of Act 153 must be followed for all employees and volunteers who work with children and youth.
3. Records will be kept for three years after the individual has stopped working with youth.
4. Records will be kept locked.
5. Returned forms will be reviewed by the Pastors and the Chair of the Personnel Committee.
6. If anything is reported, it will be reviewed by the Pastors and the Personnel Committee, and a determination will be made if further action is needed.

# EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS:

Prior to working or volunteering with the children or youth at Wayside, each applicant must complete the Good Shepherd Program training and agree to abide by it in writing. Training shall include Children/Youth Supervision Procedures.

# CHILDREN/YOUTH SUPERVISION PROCEDURES:

1. All who participate with children and youth at Wayside must observe a “two volunteer/staff” rule. This requires that two adults (at least one, and preferable both, at least 18 years old) be present during any Church activity, including transportation. Volunteers who, without their parents present, are assisting with children/youth shall be at least 12 years of age. During the Sunday School hour, the CE Greeter may fulfill the second adult requirement when only one teacher is present in a given class. The room must have a window or the door must be left open for the CE Greeter to observe the class at any time. The CE Greeter does not have to be in the room at all times when there is not a second adult teacher.
2. Children and youth shall not be dismissed from any church activity until the activity ends.
3. “Secret” groups or activities are not permitted.
4. Children and youth will be photographed/videotaped only while fully clothed and in situations which are in good taste and not embarrassing to the participants.
5. On overnight activities, and during travel and off site events, there must be two leaders, and if male and female children or youth are involved, there must be at least one leader of each gender. Separate changing areas must be designated for males and females and designated as off limits to members of the opposite sex. When leaders share sleeping accommodations with children or youth, each sleeping area must have a minimum of one leader and two children or youth. Care should be taken to ensure the privacy of children and youth.
6. Nursery and Preschool Room workers shall adhere to a sign in/sign out procedure for release of children to the proper adult.
7. CE Greeters will be present in the education wing of the church building during Sunday School time.
8. If a child below fourth grade needs to leave the class/activity, an adult volunteer shall accompany the child. If the child needs to use the rest room, the adult volunteer shall wait at the rest room door for the child. The child shall be encouraged to complete all aspects of toileting alone, with assistance given only when absolutely necessary.
9. If a child in fourth grade or above needs to leave the class/activity, teachers or CE Greeter shall monitor the length of time away from the classroom and investigate if it seems excessive.

J All volunteers shall be instructed to introduce themselves to individuals who are wandering or loitering around areas where children/youth are present. Suspicious behavior shall be reported immediately to church leadership.

1. Children shall not be permitted to roam unsupervised in the church building. Parents shall be requested to drop off and pick up on time.
2. Classroom management and discipline shall make it clear that if the child’s behavior is unacceptable, the child is still loved and lovable. Children will be told what the teacher expects. Striking a child or physically forcing them is not to be used to make them behave. Children are best handled in a quiet and gentle manner. Screaming, harsh language, or “put-downs” are not to be used. Withholding food or drink should not be used as a form of discipline.
3. A child shall never be forced to participate in an activity in which he or she does not feel comfortable. Allow the child to sit on the sidelines and watch in full view of the leaders.
4. Proper displays of affection are an important means of demonstrating our love and concern for children. Touching should be in response to the need of the child and not the need of the adult. Touching should be with the child’s permission – resistance from the child should be respected. Touching should avoid breasts, buttocks, and groin. Touching should be open and not secretive. Touching or other physical contact should be governed by the age and developmental stage of the child. Refrain from tickling, and never touch a child under his/her clothing.
5. All church activities or outings, outside of the normal church calendar, shall be approved by a member of the Pastoral Staff.
6. Activities will be designed to allow for the protection and well-being of each participant. All equipment used must be safe.

S. Church activities shall be conducted in rooms with clear view inside. Doors without clear windows will be blocked open when in use.

# ABUSE REPORTING

1. Church employees and volunteers working with children and youth are "Mandated Reporters" under the Pennsylvania Child Protective Services Law. Any person, volunteer or paid, must immediately report any abuse or suspicion of abuse to either Pastoral Staff, the Session, or the Personnel Committee.
2. The following should be reported: (see link below for more information):
   * Inappropriate conduct or relationship between a worker and child/ youth
   * Inappropriate conduct or relationship between children and youth
   * Witnessing the abuse of a child by someone
   * Disclosure by a child that he/she has been abused or neglected
   * Suspicion that a child has been abused or neglected
3. All allegations should be taken seriously. The person in contact with the alleged victim should exhibit sincere concern and also self-control.
4. Do not speak with the media. The Church Session will appoint a spokesperson.
5. Training: Wayside employees and volunteers are not required by law to take Mandated Reporters Training. However, it is highly recommended that all employees and volunteers review the online resources found at <http://keepkidssafe.pa.gov/cs/groups/webcontent/documents/document/> c\_137646.pdf.

# REPORTING REQUIREMENTS:

All Wayside Presbyterian Church employees and volunteers who work with children and youth must immediately report any inappropriate behavior or suspicion of abuse or neglect to a pastor, the chair of the Personnel Committee, or a current member of the Session. Procedures required by the Child Protective Services Law will be followed.

# I have read, understand, and agree to abide by the GOOD SHEPHERD PROGRAM in order to protect the children of Wayside Presbyterian Church.

Name Date

# Revised 09/2017