

A Union Evangelical Lutheran Church Youth in Crisis Policy

Purpose: The following policy is to be used by all persons engaged in youth ministry. Its purpose is to guide all ministers in the proper handling of youth who are experiencing difficulties in their lives or are causing difficulties in the church setting. This policy is to be used in concert with the Sexual Exploitation, Ministerial Conduct, and Youth Protection Policy.

Definitions:

Minister: all persons engaged by the church to carry out its ministry. This includes elected or appointed leaders of the church, employees and volunteers, as well as ordained ministers and other rostered leaders.

Rostered Leader: a person who holds official standing in the ELCA.

Youth: any minor 18 or younger

Youth Protection Policy: Union Evangelical Lutheran Church is committed to creating a safe and healthy environment for young people to learn about and experience God's love. In order to ensure this, we require all people applying or requesting to work with minors are members for at least six months, or friends (non-members) of Union Evangelical Lutheran Church for one year. It is the policy of the church to provide adequate supervision for all youth activities. We also expect all persons (including but not limited to elected or appointed leaders, employees, volunteers and ordained ministers or other rostered leaders) who work with minors to complete and submit a screening authorization form for criminal background check.

Policy A: Youth Experiencing Difficulties at Home

Union Evangelical Lutheran Church recognizes the stress the youth of today encounter. It is expected that anyone who ministers to our youth will maintain confidentiality. However, if it becomes apparent that any youth is at risk of being harmed physically or emotionally, steps must be taken to safeguard that youth. If any person other than the rostered leader has been made aware of a dangerous situation, they shall report the situation to the rostered leader. The rostered leader shall then refer the youth to proper resource and offer continued support.

Policy B: Youth Causing Difficulties in the Church Setting

Union Evangelical Lutheran Church recognizes that not all youth are model citizens. There may be times when a child's behavior disrupts an entire class or endangers another person or persons. If a situation of this type arises in the Sunday School setting the teacher should calmly remove the child from the classroom setting and take the child to the Sunday School Coordinator. The Sunday School Coordinator may choose to report the problem to the child's parent, or simply handle the situation the first time. Any repeat problems should be reported to the parent. If necessary, the parent may be called to

remove the child from the setting. The rostered leader should be made aware of the situation immediately or in a timely manner if not available.

If a situation arises outside of the Sunday School setting the group leader should be made aware. The leader may then handle the situation to the best of his/her ability during the event. If necessary, the parent should be called and apprised of the situation. The child may be sent home from the event if the situation requires such action. The rostered leader should be made aware of the situation immediately or in a timely manner if not available.

Adopted by Staff Support 4-2010