

MOUNT JEFFERSON PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Policies

Policy of Fund Raising

God provides the resources needed for congregational ministry and the operation of the local church's mission. These "resources" are the people of the church - who they are, what they have, and what they can imagine and do. Adequate giving to operate the church and fund its mission is the joyful responsibility of the members.

"Giving has always been a mark of Christian commitment and discipleship. The ways in which a believer uses God's gifts of material goods, personal abilities, and time, should reflect a faithful response to God's self-giving in Jesus Christ and Christ's call to minister to and share with others in the world. Tithing is a primary expression of the Christian discipline of stewardship. (Book of Order W-5.5004)

Those who follow the discipline of Christian stewardship will find themselves called to lives of simplicity, generosity, honesty, hospitality, compassion, receptivity, and concern for the earth and God's creatures." (Book of Order W-5.005)

"The session is responsible for the mission and government of the particular church; therefore has the responsibility and power to challenge the people of God with the privilege of responsible Christian stewardship of money and time and talents, developing effective ways for encouraging and gathering the offerings of the people and assuring that all offerings are distributed to the objects toward which they were contributed; and to establish the annual budget, determine the distribution of the church's benevolences, and order offerings for Christian purposes, providing full information to the congregation of its decisions in such matters" (Book of Order G-10.0102h/i)

The general stewardship program of the church is directed toward the congregation, and is based entirely on the concept of faithful giving.

Some aspects of church ministry are beyond the scope of the general, regular operation of the church. These may include such things as:

- **Special mission outreach projects** (e.g. special offerings)
- **Capital campaigns** for particular projects considered vital to the current and future ministry of the church (e.g. property additions, building projects, etc.)
- **Specific ministry areas** (e.g. children's ministry needs, youth events)

A group who wishes to hold a fundraising project will only be authorized to proceed when the session has determined that the need exists and conforms to the doctrine and mission of Mount Jefferson Presbyterian Church.

A group will be limited to two (2) fund raising projects per year, unless additional projects are approved by the session. In keeping with the call for Christian stewardship and when applicable, a fund raising activity shall be consistent with a specific stewardship activities as described by the Book of Order (e.g. tithe of proceeds to mission, a service project, a church-wide program).

The session will give special consideration to any request from a church youth group, realizing these groups do not ordinarily have the same financial resources as adult organizations.

While difficult to apply specific guidelines for acceptable fund raising projects, the following principles will be closely followed:

1. Under no circumstances will the church conduct fund raising events to balance its operating budget.
2. No money shall be raised which will place the church in unfair competition with those whose livelihood depends upon the sale of such products or services.
3. When possible, fund raising should be in the form of services rendered rather than through the sale of merchandise. No project should intentionally cause church members to feel uncomfortable if they choose not to support it.
4. All requests must be submitted in writing to the Finance and Administration Committee at least one (1) month prior date of the event. Each request shall include the proposed calendar date(s) of the activity, a specific reason for the activity, the method by which the funds will be raised, a means of funds accountability after the completion of the activity, and the stewardship process/call to which it applies. After review, the Finance and Administration Committee will make a recommendation to the Session for approval or denial of the request.
6. Following any approved fund raising event, the group will supply the Finance and Administration Committee with a complete accounting of the collected funds and their disbursement.

It is the intent of this policy that we remain faithful to the biblical concepts of stewardship and that we assure that fund raising activities within Mount Jefferson Presbyterian Church conform to the overall mission of the church.

Memorial Donation Policy

When giving gifts to the church in memory of a loved one, please give thought as to how you would like that gift used. While every effort is made to honor the memory of your loved one as well as the wishes of the donor, unless specified at the time of donation, unrestricted gifts will be placed in the General Fund to be used as needed.

Children, Youth, Volunteers and Staff Protection Policy

OVERVIEW

Mount Jefferson Presbyterian Church is committed to maintaining a safe environment for everyone involved in its program ministry.

In response to an environment of growing public concern over the safety and welfare of young people, Mount Jefferson Presbyterian Church, like many other churches and institutions across the country, established an abuse prevention policy in 2009.

With this policy, Mount Jefferson Presbyterian Church affirms the right of children, youth and vulnerable adults to be protected from sexual/physical, mental/emotional abuse and neglect and the right of volunteers and staff to be protected from false allegations of abuse and neglect. We believe that parents and workers prefer a church with an established, caring prevention program to a church with no policy in this area of vital concern.

Since the first court case against a church in 1984, sexual abuse has become a major payout expense for church insurance companies. Because churches historically and by nature have been known as safe places, abuse in church situations has been shown to be especially devastating.

In December of 1993, the National Child Protection Act established levels of reasonable care which will be legally required of all institutions caring for children and youth. The law encourages states to require that all child care providers be qualified by references, employment history and, if necessary, criminal reference checks.

The Session of Mount Jefferson Presbyterian church has concluded that, in today's environment, a well-balanced, proactive prevention policy is a necessity for any institution entrusted with the care of children or vulnerable adults. The policy applies to all those who work with these individuals through Mount Jefferson Presbyterian Church programs both on and off campus, including staff, volunteers, church members, visitors and guests.

Mount Jefferson Presbyterian Church's **Children, Youth, Volunteers and Staff Protection Policy** includes the following: A Statement of Intent, Guidelines for Workers, Procedures For Reporting And Responding To Allegations, Application to Work With Children and Youth, Personal References sheet, Workers Pledge/Release and Acknowledgment of Receipt and Understanding.

When the church celebrates the baptism of a child, we make a promise to that child from the whole community of God. We believe that taking appropriate steps to provide a safe church environment is one way in which our church is able to fulfill our baptismal promise.

At Mount Jefferson Presbyterian Church, we take seriously our theological, moral and legal responsibility to provide a safe environment for children, youth and vulnerable adults as well as to support those who work with them, as we seek to proclaim our faith and follow in the ministry of Jesus Christ in our world.

STATEMENT OF INTENT

The Session, staff and members of Mount Jefferson Presbyterian Church are committed to maintaining a safe environment in which children, youth, and vulnerable adults are protected from sexual/physical, mental/emotional abuse and neglect. Our goals are to protect everyone involved in church programs, to educate workers and care-givers concerning abuse issues, and to protect staff and volunteers, as well as the church as a whole, from false allegations of abuse and neglect.

Implementation includes:

- Selection of staff, teachers, care-givers and others involved in activities with children and youth;
- Orientation and training of these individuals;
- Supervision of these individuals;
- Reporting of incidents of sexual/physical or mental/emotional abuse or neglect;
- Responding to incidents or allegations of abuse or neglect;
- Monitoring the policy and procedures to insure compliance.

We recognize that children and vulnerable adults are entrusted to the care of adults in church programs and activities, both on and off the campus, and also in programs operated by others on church property. This general policy is applicable to all persons whether compensated staff, volunteers, church members, visitors or guests.

GUIDELINES FOR WORKERS

These guidelines apply to all individuals who work with children, youth, or vulnerable adults, including staff, volunteers, church members and guests. The session is responsible for making certain that proper supervision is in place for programs and activities.

1. Persons who have been members of Mount Jefferson Presbyterian Church for at least six (6) months are eligible to apply to work as volunteers with children, youth and vulnerable adults. Non-members who have been regularly involved in and committed to the church for a period of one year are also eligible to apply to work as volunteers with children, youth and vulnerable adults. Exceptions may be permitted only upon recommendation from the Pastor and with the approval of the Session.
2. Volunteers who have infrequent direct contact or contact only in group settings are required to verify reading or attending policy-training sessions. These individuals are subject to reference checks, especially regarding their children/youth work history.
3. All staff and volunteers with long-term, ongoing, direct contact with children or vulnerable adults, one-on-one, are subject to the above requirements plus a personal interview with the pastor and a criminal-records check.
4. Adult survivors of child sexual or physical abuse need the love and acceptance of the church. Individuals who have such a history should discuss their desire to work with children or youth with the pastor prior to engaging in any volunteer service.
5. Adults who have been convicted of child/youth or other abuse will not be accepted to work in any church-sponsored activity for children, youth or vulnerable adults.
6. Except as set forth in Section 7, two adults (over age 18) will be present during children/youth activities. Exceptions are permitted for those meeting requirements in Section 3 above, with the approval of the parent.
7. Two adults need not be present for regular church school or worship service extended care if classroom doors are left open (doors with windows may be closed) and if hall monitors are provided for periodic observation (i.e. Sunday School Superintendent, elder, etc).
8. Workers or monitors who observe questionable or inappropriate behavior affecting children/youth or vulnerable adults must report it as soon as possible to the pastor. The pastor will notify the clerk of session, youth director, or the chairperson of the Christian Education Committee.
9. Adults are encouraged to be sensitive to the potential for abuse and to an appearance of abuse. They should not hesitate to caution others if they observe activities which are, or might appear to be, inappropriate.

10. Procedures should be followed before and after events until all children, youth or vulnerable adults are in the custody of parents or guardians.
11. Special attention will be given to supervision during overnight and off-campus activities.
12. Organizations that are not under the direct governing control of the church, but which are allowed to use church facilities, must produce evidence to the Building and Grounds Committee that they have in place satisfactory guidelines/policies and procedures for prevention and abuse.

PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING AND RESPONDING TO ALLEGATIONS

The following procedures will be carried out in the event of an incident or allegation of abuse.

1. Incident/allegations will be reported to the Ashe County Department of Social Services within 24 hours by the pastor, clerk of session, chairperson of the Christian Education Committee or the individual who reports the incident/allegation. The person reporting the incident will document in writing all known facts and circumstances. Anonymous reporting should be made in the presence of a third party.
2. The pastor, clerk of session, chairperson of the Christian Education Committee will document all steps taken in the course of handling the reported incident.
3. The church will be supportive of individuals who in good faith make reports of actual or reasonably suspected cases of abuse. All reports will be taken seriously but not judged prematurely.
4. In-depth investigation will be carried out by the civil authorities rather than church personnel.
5. The parents/guardians of the suspected victim will be notified immediately.
6. The safety and security of the child, youth or vulnerable adult must be safeguarded before the person accused of abuse is confronted.
7. The clerk of session or designee will make an appropriate report to the liability insurer for the church.
8. Any person accused must be treated with dignity and support. That person will be immediately relieved of further responsibilities until the investigation is completed and allegations are cleared or substantiated.
9. Subject to advice of the church's counsel, the pastor, clerk of session, or designee will be the sole spokesperson for the church insofar as media inquiries are concerned.
10. Confidentiality of all persons involved will be safeguarded.