

**OGDEN PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
2400 SOUTH UNION STREET
SPENCERPORT, NY
14559**

**SEXUAL MISCONDUCT POLICY AND
PROCEDURES**

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**Ogden Presbyterian Church
Spencerport, New York**

SEXUAL MISCONDUCT POLICY

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I. Introduction to Sexual Misconduct Policy and Procedure

We believe that all people were created by God. God values all human live equally. Therefore we must respect the worth and dignity of all human beings – women, men and children. We also believe in equal justice for all. Sexual misconduct is an abuse of power and trust and therefore is unjust.

The purposes of this Sexual misconduct Policy and Procedures are:

1. to attempt to break the conspiracy of silence surrounding sexual misconduct within our church community **should it be found to exist.**
2. to recognize that Ogden Presbyterian Church is responsible for the professional conduct of its staff and volunteers, and must act to prevent misconduct;
3. to propose procedures for Ogden Presbyterian Church and staff for making and responding to allegations of sexual misconduct; and
4. to identify areas in which healing and reconciliation can be supported within the church community following occurrence of sexual misconduct.

II. THE POLICY

A. **THE POLICY**

All people associated with Ogden Presbyterian Church (hereinafter known as OPC) are entitled to an environment free of sexual misconduct. **Sexual misconduct is unacceptable behavior.** Sexual misconduct of any type by any person associated with OPC is strictly prohibited. Each person associated with OPC is responsible for imposing limits and maintaining appropriate boundaries in all relationships. Allegations and charges of misconduct must be dealt with swiftly, fairly and with compassion for both the accused and the accuser/victim.

B. **DEFINITIONS**

Sexual Misconduct is the comprehensive term used in this policy to include sexual abuse and sexual harassment, as defined below.

1. **Sexual Abuse** of another person is **an** offense involving sexual conduct
In relation to:
 - a. Any person under the age of eighteen (18) years or anyone over the Age of eighteen (18) without the mental capacity to consent; or

- b. Any person when the conduct includes force, threat, coercion, intimidation, or misuse of office or position.
- 2. **Sexual Harassment** is any offense involving sexual conduct other than sexual abuse, and includes, but is not limited to:
 - a. Unwelcome sexual advances; requests for sexual favors; verbal abuse of a sexual nature; sexual jokes and innuendo; sexual commentary about an individual or an individual's body; leering, whistling or touching; insulting or obscene comments or gestures; and other verbal, physical or visual conduct of a sexual nature;
 - b. Inappropriate presentation, transmission or posting of written, graphic, pictorial, video or audio materials with sexual content; display in the workplace of sexually suggestive objects or pictures;
 - c. Discussion of a third party in sexual terms;
 - d. Suggesting that submission to or rejection of such conduct is either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment, or his/her continued status in OPC;
 - e. Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual being used as a basis for employment decisions affecting such individual; or,
 - f. Conduct of a sexual nature that has the purpose or effect of interfering with an individual's work performance by creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment.
- 3. Other definitions are found in Appendix A.

C. SCREENING PRACTICES

All volunteers listed in Appendix B are required, at the beginning of their service, to sign an **Appendix B ACCEPTANCE FORM FOR VOLUNTEERS** which certifies that they have read and understand this Policy and Procedures regarding sexual misconduct.

All volunteers listed on Appendix C are required, at the beginning of their service, to sign **Appendix C ACCEPTANCE AND RELEASE FORM FOR VOLUNTEERS WORKING WITH CHILDREN AND YOUTH** which certifies that they have read and understand the Policy and Procedures, and permits the release of information regarding civil or criminal convictions or church complaints of sexual misconduct.

All employees are required, at the beginning of their service, to sign **Appendix D ACCEPTANCE AND RELEASE FORM FOR EMPLOYEES** which certifies that they have read and understand the Policy and Procedures and permits the release of information regarding civil or criminal convictions of sexual misconduct.

A person who has a civil, criminal or church record of sexual misconduct or who has admitted prior sexual misconduct of any kind may be barred from attendance, membership, employment, or any volunteer position at OPC.

D. EDUCATION/PREVENTION

Prevention is always preferable to dealing with the crisis of an incident of sexual misconduct. Efforts shall be made to prevent sexual misconduct by educating staff and congregation about why this policy is needed, and its content, and by instituting guidelines for clergy, other staff and youth workers.

The church shall work for prevention of sexual misconduct by: educating the congregation regarding abuse of power in relationships; encouraging open discussions of sexual misconduct and domestic violence in our society; empowering victims to come forward without fear of retribution; educating the congregation regarding reactions to misconduct; and by advocating treatment programs for abusers to prevent continuing abuse of victims.

E. CONFIDENTIALITY, RETALIATION, FALSE ACCUSATION

Confidentiality will be maintained throughout any investigatory process to the extent consistent with adequate investigation and appropriate corrective action. There shall be no retaliation against any individual who reports sexual misconduct or participates in an investigation of such reports. A retaliation or complaint may result in liability even if the underlying harassment complaint fails.

False and malicious complaints of misconduct or retaliation as opposed to complaints which, even if erroneous, are made in good faith, may be the subject of appropriate disciplinary action.

F. COMPANION DOCUMENTS

This policy and its procedures are designed to be applied in conjunction with “Policy on Sexual Ethics” as amended Nov 27, 2001 by the Presbytery, the “Sexual Misconduct Policy and its Procedures” adopted by The General Assembly in 1993 and with the Rules of Discipline, *Book of Order* of the Presbyterian Church (USA).

G. STATUTE OF LIMITATIONS

The ability of OPC to respond promptly and justly to sexual misconduct is related in part to the opportunity to receive allegations and gather evidence soon after the occurrence. However, the Procedures regarding sexual misconduct recognize the special problems related to discovery and recognition of various forms of sexual misconduct. Child sexual abuse may not be recognized until the victim of abuse reaches adulthood. Recognition of abuse and willingness to come forward by an adult victim may also be delayed for many years (see *Book of Order* D10.0401.) Time limits will be determined by *The Book of Order* and by civil and criminal law.

H. USE OF THE POLICY FOR PERSONS WHO ARE NOT MEMBERS OF OGDEN PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.

Persons not under the jurisdiction of the Presbyterian Church (USA) may bring a complaint against members or clergy of OPC which will be subject to the applicable section of the OPC Sexual Misconduct Policy and Procedures and/or the Rules of Discipline of the *Book of Order* of the Presbyterian Church (USA) (D-10.0102b).

I. PROVISION FOR DISTRIBUTION AND ANNUAL REVIEW OF POLICY AND PROCEDURES

Session shall inform the congregation of the adoption of the Sexual Misconduct Policy and Procedures. Copies shall be given to all persons listed in Appendices B, and C, and to parents of all children and youth enrolled in programs of the church. New members will receive a copy as part of the packet of information given to them when they join OPC.

The Policy and Procedures shall be distributed to all staff. It shall be reviewed and discussed with all employees on an annual basis at a full staff meeting preceding session's annual review of the Policy and Procedures.

An attorney, who may or may not be a OPC member, will perform an annual review prior to those by staff and Session to assure that the policy and procedures continue to conform to New York State Law and current case law.

The Session shall then review the Policy and Procedures, make any necessary and/or desired changes, and approve them for a one year period. Additionally, if the Policy and Procedures are used at any time, the Personnel Committee will evaluate the procedures outlined herein, based on their experience, and make recommendations to the Session for any needed changes.

III. PROCEDURES FOR RECEIVING AND RESPONDING TO COMPLAINTS OF SEXUAL MISCONDUCT

A. PROCEDURE TO FILE A COMPLAINT AGAINST A MINISTER OF WORD AND SACRAMENT

The procedure to file a complaint of sexual misconduct against a clergy person who is a member of the Presbytery of Genesee Valley is covered under the “Policy on Sexual Ethics” revised 11-27-2001. Such a complaint may be filed with the Executive Presbyter, Stated Clerk of the Presbytery, or a member of the Presbytery’s Committee on Ministry, who shall then follow the guidelines of the “Policy On Automatic Administrative Leave In Cases of the accusation of Sexual Abuse of Another Person”.

The accuser may, however, choose initially to go through the Personnel Committee of OPC. In that case, the following procedure should be followed:

1. An alleged victim, or someone acting on her/his behalf, brings an Allegation, written or verbal, of sexual misconduct to a member of the Personnel Committee or to the pastor. If written, the allegation should come in the form of a simple signed statement of the complaint. If verbal, the person making the complaint should be strongly encouraged to put the allegation in writing.
2. Within 24 hours, a member of the Personnel Committee will contact a member of Presbytery’s Committee on Ministry, Stated Clerk or Executive Presbyter of the Presbytery of Genesee Valley and OPC’s Insurance Carrier.
3. The Committee on Ministry will take action as described in the Presbytery’s procedure referenced in Section VI of the policy.
4. If the alleged victim is a child or youth, the appropriate authorities, legal counsel, and Presbytery officials will be notified (See Appendix E).
5. A member of OPC Personnel Committee shall be designated to maintain Contact with the Committee on Ministry regarding the case.

B. PROCEDURE TO FILE A COMPLAINT AGAINST A MEMBER OF OGDEN PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

1. When an alleged victim, or someone acting on her/his behalf, brings a **written** allegation of sexual misconduct to a member of the Personnel Committee, a member of Session or a pastor, the person receiving the written allegation shall immediately refer the statement to the clerk of Session, who will then notify OPC’s Insurance Carrier.

2. The clerk of session shall follow the procedures outlined in **CHAPTER X Disciplinary Cases** of *The Book Of order*, in particular D-10.0103 and D-10.0201, which mandates the appointment of an Investigating Committee by the Session and immediate referral of the statement by the clerk to the Investigating Committee.
3. The Session, as the governing body of Jurisdiction, shall follow the procedures outlined in **Chapter X Disciplinary Cases** of *The Book of Order*.
4. If a **verbal allegation** is made, the procedures outlined in this Policy and procedures, section d “Procedure to Respond to Allegations of Sexual Misconduct Based on Rumor or hearsay” shall be followed.
5. If the alleged victim is a child or youth, the appropriate authorities, legal counsel, and presbytery officials will be notified (See Appendix E).

C. PROCEDURE TO FILE A COMPLAINT AGAINST AN EMPLOYEE OF OGDEN PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

1. When an alleged victim, or someone acting on her/his behalf, brings an allegation of sexual misconduct against an employee, the allegation shall be reported to the Clerk of Session, who will immediately convey such information to the pastor, the chair of the Personnel Committee and OPC’s Insurance Carrier.
2. A lawyer shall be consulted immediately to determine whether the alleged behavior constitutes sexual misconduct under civil or criminal law, and the legal options.
3. Within 5 calendar days the Clerk of Session(if not named as the accused), the pastor, and the chair of the Personnel Committee (hereafter called the Supervising Group) meet to determine further action, based primarily on legal advice..
4. During the period of investigation, the Supervising Group may consider suspension with pay for the accused.

5. The Supervising Group may consider discipline, negotiation, mediation, or other options available under civil law. They may determine the final disposition of the case, except for job termination, or may refer it to the Personnel Committee. All decisions and/or referrals should be made in a timely fashion and no later than fifteen (15) days from the date the initial allegation was received. The accuser/victim and the accused shall be notified of the decision in writing, by certified mail.
6. At the conclusion of its work, the Supervising Group shall submit a written report to the Personnel Committee:
 - a. If the allegation against the employee is found to be without merit, the Supervising Group shall report only that an accusation was made, found to be without merit, and a report has been placed in the employee's file.
 - b. All other reports shall include:
 - (1) Names of the parties involved.
 - (2) Allegations made by the accuser
 - (3) Response made by the accused (if any)
 - (4) Findings and conclusions
 - (5) Action taken by Supervising Group or action recommended to the Personnel Committee
7. If the Supervising Group refers the matter to the Personnel Committee for a decision, the Personnel Committee shall, within ten (10)days:
 - a. Gather any additional information necessary to make a decision.
 - b. Determine the appropriate remedy, if any. It may refer the matter to the session for a final decision, if appropriate, after full consideration of the recommended action of the Supervising group.
 - c. inform the accuser/victim and the accused of the decision, in writing, by certified mail.
8. If the final decision is made by the Personnel Committee, it shall complete a written report, make a summary report to Session regarding the action taken, and file the report in the employee's personnel file. The report shall include:
 - a. Names of parties involved.
 - b. Allegations made by accuser
 - c. Response made by accused (if any)
 - d. Findings and conclusions
 - e. Action taken by Personnel Committee

9. If the personnel Committee refers the matter to the Session for a final decision it shall, within ten (10) days noted in #7 (i.e. within 25 days from the date the initial allegation was received), submit a written report to Session which will contain information in 8a-d and shall include recommendations for Session action.
10. Session shall resolve the matter in a timely fashion and no later than 35 days from the date the initial allegation was received.
11. A copy of all final reports, whether made by the Supervising Group, Personnel Committee or Session, shall be placed in the employee's personnel folder.
12. In any discussions with the involved parties it should be made clear that any statements made by the parties may be used in any church or judicial proceeding to the extent permitted by church or civil law.
13. The accuser/victim and the accused shall be informed of the action taken, in writing, by certified mail.
14. Either the accuser/victim or the accused shall have the right to appeal any decision or action taken by the Supervising Group or the Personnel Committee by writing to the Clerk of Session within thirty (30) days of receipt of the decision by certified mail, requesting that the decision be reviewed and reconsidered by Session. The decision of the Session shall be final.
15. If the employee is a member of OPC or a member of another Presbyterian Church (USA) any church judicial proceedings arising from the allegations shall follow the procedures outlined in D.10.000ff of the *Book of Order*.
16. If the alleged victim is a child or youth, the appropriate authorities, and legal counsel will be notified.

C. PROCEDURE TO FILE A COMPLAINT AGAINST A PERSON (CONGREGANT) WHO IS NOT A MEMBER OF OPC.

1. Upon receipt of a report of sexual misconduct, or when an alleged victim, or someone acting on her/his behalf, brings an allegation of sexual misconduct against a person (congregant) who is not a member of OPC, the information shall be conveyed immediately to the pastor and to OPC's Insurance Carrier.

2. The pastor will bring the matter to the attention of the Session who will determine the course of action to be taken.
3. If the alleged victim is a child or youth, the appropriate authorities and Legal counsel will be notified. (See Appendix E,)

D. PROCEDURE TO RESPOND TO ALLEGATIONS OF SEXUAL MISCONDUCT BASED ON RUMOR OR HEARSAY

Rumors and hearsay of sexual misconduct within a faith community, whether by pastors, staff or members can create disorder, confusion, distrust, insecurity, lack of confidence, and damage to reputations. It is important that inquiries be made into rumors in order to find the truth of the matter, if at all possible, so that those who are victims may be helped, those who have perpetrated injury to others can be disciplined and those whose reputations have been injured may be exonerated.

1. Upon receipt of a report of sexual misconduct, including a report from an informant(s) based on rumor or hearsay, the Personnel Committee or a sub-committee appointed by the chair shall:
 - a. **Communicate to the informant(s) the following information:**
 - 1-Copies of presbytery’s “Policy on Sexual Misconduct”: OPC Sexual Misconduct Policy; The Rules of Discipline, *Book of Order*, D-10.000(ff)
 - 2-Options available to the involved parties in regard to legal resources, counseling, negotiation, mediation and procedures for bringing an allegation under church discipline.
 - 3-Names, titles, telephone numbers of Presbytery agents, i.e. chairperson of Committee on Ministry, Stated Clerk, Executive Presbyter.
 - 4-Names, telephone numbers of the pastor, clerk of Session and chair of the Personnel Committee of OPC.
 - b. **Make a preliminary evaluation to determine:**
 - 1-The willingness of the informant(s) to present a report of the behavior to the Personnel Committee or designated sub-committee.

- 2-The reliability of the informant(s).
- 3-The nature of the behavior that is reported to be sexual misconduct. This preliminary evaluation may include conversations with witnesses.
- 4-The identity of parties involved in or significantly affected by this event.
- 5-Possible violations that may be subject to action by the church or by civil authorities.

c. **Prepare a written report which shall include:**

- 1-The status of actions to date in regard to the informational and preliminary evaluation functions listed above.
 - 2-Basic options available to the involved parties.
 - 3-A recommended course of action(s), including any Actions that may be required by civil or church law (*Book of Order*).
2. This written report shall be given to the informant and shall become part of The Personnel Committee files.
 3. The recommended course of action (c,(3) shall be approved by a majority of the Personnel Committee and implemented by the Personnel Committee, or brought, if needed, to Session for approval and implementation.
 4. In any discussions with the parties involved, it should be made clear that any statements by a party may be used in any church or judicial proceeding to the extent permitted by church or civil law.

B. BRINGING CLOSURE

1. Procedure to follow if the complaint is found to be not valid.
 - a. The investigation will cease.
 - b. Every effort will be made to exonerate the accused.
 - c. A record of the process and its contents will be provided for the accused and may be included in a church file other than a personnel file or in the personnel file if the accused wishes.
 - d. A public statement of exoneration will be made if the accused chooses.
 - e. The investigating bodies shall respond with care and concern to the accuser(s) and to the congregation.

2. Procedure to Follow if a Complaint is found to be Valid:
Session will take steps to:
 - a. Protect and restore victims;
 - b. Restore the integrity and credibility of the Church's ministry (Congregation, Session, staff, and office of the Minister of Word and Sacrament);
 - c. Appropriately discipline the offender, considering the nature, severity and frequency of the misconduct and take other appropriate steps to prevent the sexual misconduct from continuing or recurring.
 - d. Provide a formal and structured group process for disclosing sensitive factual information to the congregation. The decision-making process by the session to disclose to a congregation should involve a representative(s) from Presbytery's Committee on ministry. The process of designing a congregational disclosure should also involve a representative(s) from the Committee on Ministry. In these deliberations, it is highly preferable to utilize a resource person(s) who is trained and experienced in the critical incident stress debriefing model.

**APPENDIX A
ADDITIONAL DEFINITIONS**

- A. **Accused** is the term used to represent the person(s) against whom a claim is made of sexual misconduct.
- B. **Accuser** is the term used to represent the person claiming knowledge of misconduct by a person covered by this policy. The accuser may or may not be the victim of alleged sexual misconduct. A person such as a family member, friend, or colleague of the victim may be the accuser whose information initiates an inquiry.
- C. **Children and Youth** of OPC are in the age range of birth until 18th birthday.
- D. **Congregant** is a person who, though not a formal member, participates in the life, programs and/or worships of OPC. This may be, for example, one who attends worship services, sings in the choir, has received pastoral care or counseling, attends adult education programs, etc.
- E. **Employee** is a person who is hired or called to work for OPC for salary or wages.
- F. **Mandated Reporter** is a person who is required by law to report suspected incidents of child abuse, including child sexual abuse, that comes to her/his attention. The Book of Order now makes ministers, elders, deacons and certified Christian Education Directors all mandatory reporters – see G-6.02044b; G-6.0304b; and G-14.0732. In addition “All employees and volunteers of the Church are to consider themselves mandated reporters, whether or not designated by New York State Law. Reports of suspected child abuse shall be made immediately by telephone (NYS Abuse and Maltreatment Register 1-(800)-342-3720) and in writing within 48 hours after such oral report using form DSS-2221-A.
- G. **Member** means active, inactive, and affiliate members of OPC.
- H. **Victim** is the term used to identify the person(s) alleged to have been injured by sexual misconduct as defined on page----- of this policy.
- I. **Volunteer** refers to those who provide services for OPC and received no remuneration or monetary benefits. Volunteers include, but not limited to persons elected or appointed to serve on Session, boards, committees, and other groups under the jurisdiction of the Session.

APPENDIX B
ACCEPTANCE FORM FOR VOLUNTEERS

I hereby acknowledge that, on (date) _____, I received a copy of the Sexual Misconduct Policy and Procedures of Ogden Presbyterian Church; that I have read the policy; that I understand its meaning; and that I agree to conduct myself in accordance with the policy. I also certify by the signature below that no civil, criminal, ecclesiastical complaint has ever been sustained or is pending against me for sexual misconduct, and that I have never resigned or been terminated from a position for reasons related to sexual misconduct.

Signature _____

Date _____

This form shall be signed by all members of Session, Deacons, Trustees, Committee members, the Choir and such other persons the Session shall require.

This form shall be maintained, in strict confidentiality, in a file by the pastor or a person so designated by the Session.

**APPENDIX C
ACCEPTANCE AND RELEASE FORM FOR VOLUNTEERS WORKING WITH
CHILDREN AND YOUTH**

I hereby acknowledge that, on (date) _____, I received a copy of the Sexual Misconduct Policy and Procedures of Ogden Presbyterian Church,; that I have read the policy; that I understand its meaning; and that I agree to conduct myself in accordance with the policy. I also certify by the signature below that no civil, criminal, ecclesiastical complaint has ever been sustained or is pending against me for sexual misconduct; and that I have never resigned or been terminated from a position for reasons related to sexual misconduct . I understand that Ogden Presbyterian Church will utilize all means available to protect the children and youth who participate in its programs. Ogden Presbyterian Church will also protect the confidentiality of all volunteers. I hereby authorize an outside agency to conduct a background check to inquire concerning any criminal records of judicial proceedings involving me as a defendant in matters of sexual misconduct or abuse. I understand that this information may be used to verify the appropriateness of my volunteer activity at Ogden Presbyterian Church.

Date of Birth: _____

Addresses (past 10 years): _____

Social Security Number: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

This form shall be signed by all persons working with children and youth, including, but not limited to, church school teachers, youth advisors, volunteers for children's or youth events/retreats, children's choir(s), those supervising child care, Christian Education Committee members, persons working in Vacation Bible School, and any other persons as the Session shall require.

A file of signed forms shall be maintained, in strict confidentiality, in a file by the pastor or a person designated by the Session.

**APPENDIX D
ACCEPTANCE AND RELEASE FORM FOR EMPLOYEES**

_____ I hereby acknowledge that, on (date) _____, I received a copy of the Sexual Misconduct Policy and procedures of Ogden Presbyterian Church; that I have read the policy; that I understand its meaning; and that I agree to conduct myself in accordance with the policy.

_____ I also certify by the signature below that no civil, criminal, nor ecclesiastical complaint has ever been sustained or is pending against me for sexual misconduct; and that I have never resigned or been terminated from a position for reasons related to sexual misconduct.

_____ I am unable to make the above certification. I offer instead, the following description of the complaint, termination or the outcome of the situation with explanatory comment (if any additional space is needed use the other side of this page.)

The information I have provided is accurate to the best of my knowledge and may be verified by the employing entity. I hereby authorize the Pastor or person(s) designated by the Session of Ogden Presbyterian Church to make any and all contact necessary to verify my prior employment history, and to inquire concerning any criminal records or any judicial proceedings involving me as a defendant. By means of this release I also authorize any previous employer, any law enforcement agencies, any judicial authorities to release any and all requested information pertaining to sexual misconduct by me to the Pastor or person(s) designated by the Session of Ogden Presbyterian Church.

APPENDIX D (continued)
ACCEPTANCE AND RELEASE FORM FOR EMPLOYEES

I have read this release and understand fully that the information obtained may be used to deny me employment or any other type of position from the employing entity. I also agree that I will hold harmless the employing entity or judicial authority from any and all claims, liabilities, and causes of action for legitimate release or use of any information.

Signature

Date

Social Security Number

Witness

APPENDIX E
WHEN THE ALLEGED VICTIM IS A CHILD OR YOUTH

The care and safety of children and youth participating in the life and worship of Ogden Presbyterian Church is our first priority. Any sexual contact of any kind between an adult and a child or youth is unacceptable behavior and will not be tolerated (see especially definitions of sexual abuse and sexual harassment in this policy). Procedures responding to allegations of child sexual abuse/harassment will include, but are not limited to:

1. All allegations will be taken seriously
2. Parent(s) of the child or youth will be notified immediately if they are not the ones bringing the allegations on behalf of the child or youth.
3. Appropriate authorities and professionals will be contacted immediately, i.e. Child Protective Services, OPC attorney, Presbytery officials.
4. In order to ensure the safety of the victim the accused may be temporarily relieved of his/her duties until the investigation is completed.
5. All information and/or actions taken in regard to allegations brought shall be documented and kept secure on file in the church office.

APPENDIX F
JUSTICE-MAKING FOR THE ACCUSER/VICTIM
IF THE COMPLAINT IS FOUND TO BE VALID

Justice-making for the accuser/victim suggests attention to the following:

1. ***Truthfulness***
 Breaking the silence surrounding the reality of abuse.
2. ***Acknowledgment of the truth told***
 Hearing, naming, and condemning the wrong done.
3. ***Compassion***
 Suffering with the victim
4. ***Protection of the vulnerable***
 Protecting the victim(s) and other from further harm.
5. ***Calling to account***
 Confrontation of the offending party/parties and implementation of the
 Appropriate procedures as outlines in this policy.
6. ***Vindication***
 Setting the victim(s) free from suffering caused by pastoral, staff or
 Volunteer abuse.

APPENDIX G
GUIDELINES FOR TRAINING AND EDUCATION
ON THE PREVENTION OF SEXUAL MISCONDUCT

A. Guidelines for Training and Education on the Prevention of Sexual Misconduct

1. Employees shall participate in workshops/discussions on sexual misconduct prevention. The Pastor, in consultation with the Personnel Committee and Christian Education Committee chairperson shall be responsible for providing opportunities for training and education in sexual misconduct prevention for the staff.
2. The Discipleship Committee shall have responsibility for developing programs to educate the congregation about sexual misconduct in the church and society.
3. The Christian Education Committee, the pastor, and Sunday School Superintendent(s) shall be responsible for providing age-appropriate sexual misconduct prevention education to the children and youth of the church, helping them to understand and recognize inappropriate behavior by adults or peers and to whom they should report such behavior.
4. The Christian Education Committee, the pastor and Sunday School Superintendent(s) shall be responsible for providing opportunities for training and education in sexual misconduct prevention for all persons who work directly with children and youth.
5. Such programs for the staff and congregation shall be repeated at regular Intervals, as determined by Session at its annual review and evaluation of this Policy and Procedures.

B. Guidelines for interpersonal Activities by Clergy and Staff

1. **Counseling**
Clergy and staff members are expected to provide pastoral care to parishioners. Pastoral care normally takes place around a life issue – job loss, normal grieving, adjusting to change in life circumstances, spiritual life, etc. This type of counseling should be completed in six weeks. This is not therapeutic/mental health counseling.

The Clergy at OPC are not expected to provide therapeutic counseling to parishioners or others. When a person seeks a conference on an issue that may involve mental health problems, the clergy is expected to make referrals to the appropriate mental health professionals. Intake/referral conferences of this type should be completed within two sessions. The only exception to this rule would be a clergy person who is certified by the American Association of Pastoral Counselors or similar accredited organization and is in an ongoing supervisory relationship

2. **Conferences**

- a. One-on-one conferences should be no longer than one (1) hour in duration.
- b. All personal conferences should be scheduled and held during regular church office hours.
- c. Staff members are responsible for imposing limits and maintaining appropriate boundaries in all relationships.
- d. Any problem or suspected issue resulting from a personal conference should be reported immediately to another staff, without violating confidentiality.
- e. Ordinarily staff should not drive parishioners home from church meetings.
- f. Staff should not be in the Church building alone with any person.

3. **Home Visitation**

- a. Home visits on new parishioners/unknown persons should be no longer than forty-five (45) minutes in duration.
- b. Frequent visits to any one home for whatever reason should be acknowledged to other staff members.
- c. Any uncomfortable situation or suspected problem with a home visit should be discussed with other members of the staff.

C. Guidelines for Deacons

Any uncomfortable situation or suspected problem during a home visit or field trip/outing should be discussed with the Pastor.

D. Guidelines for person working with Children and youth

People working with serve an organizational and supervisory role in creating fellowship groups for OPC young people. Together the youth and adults share their ideas and companionship in a variety of activities. It is recognized that the adults are not expected to provide counseling to youth.

1. All church sponsored activities involving children and/or youth must be supervised by adults. It is recommended that a minimum of two (2) adults should be present at all activities for youth or children.
2. Adults should avoid being alone with one youth in a private setting.
3. Adults are responsible for imposing limits and maintaining appropriate boundaries in interpersonal relationships with youth.
4. Any problem or suspected issue regarding youth or children should be reported to clergy or a staff member immediately.
5. Youth in need of counseling should be referred to appropriate mental health providers.
6. Adults shall avoid driving youth or children individually.
7. Parents shall be made aware of these guidelines.
8. Youth shall have the permission of their parent(s) before Participating in any special event.
9. Youth and children shall be released only to their parents or Designee(s).
10. To prevent inappropriate behavior between minors, two minors shall not be left unsupervised.