

### ***Faithful to maintain the unity and integrity of the body.***

In Ephesians 4:3 Paul tells believers to “make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.” It only takes one incident of abuse to bring tremendous trauma to the church. An accusation of one member toward another can result in deep conflict as members take sides. Such conflict can lead to other crippling results such as loss of confidence by members, the departure of members, and financial liability due to lawsuits. The church must steadfastly protect itself from such difficulty.

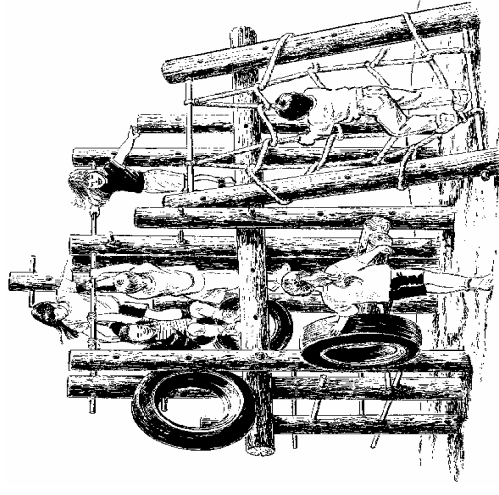
### ***Faithful to guard the honor of our Lord Jesus Christ.***

Jesus said in Matthew 5:16 : “Let your light shine in such a way that they may see your good works and glorify your Father who is in heaven.” As a church we must be resolute to uphold the glory of our God. Again a single incidence of child abuse can do much to harm the name of our Lord. The church must be known by the world to be a loving and safe place for all who enter its doors. Such a testimony brings great honor to the God who lives among us and empowers us to live in newness of life.

### ***Faithful to submit to governing authorities.***

The apostle Paul instructs believers in Romans 13 to “be in subjection to governing authorities” who are ordained by God as an “avenger who brings wrath upon the one who practices evil”. That means, as a church, we must support the efforts of local authorities as they seek to fulfill their God-given task of administering justice. This

support should never nullify the revealed will of God in any way, and does not preclude the church from dealing with issues of repentance, forgiveness and reconciliation which the church is specifically designed to handle.



## **How do we make our ministry SAFE for Children?**

Certainly part of our care as a church family is providing a SAFE environment for children, free from abuse of any sort. In light of this, the elders, pastors and members of the church are committed to providing ministry that promotes the safety and welfare of all children entrusted to their care. The following procedures have been adopted to ensure this. (Note: a fuller explanation of these procedures can be obtained by contacting us.)

### **Why a Child Protection Policy?**

In a day and age such as ours, sadly marked by occurrences of physical and sexual abuse of children even in the church, it is vitally important that a church have a child protection policy. Such a policy will aid the church in remaining “faithful” to the following callings:

***Faithful to our calling to care for the children.*** Psalm 82:3-4 tells us to “Defend the cause of the weak and fatherless, maintain the rights of the poor and oppressed. Rescue the weak and needy, deliver them from the hand of the wicked.” Children in many ways are weak and needy. Therefore, it is our duty as a church to protect them from any kind of physical or sexual abuse. The church must be a safe place for our children. To this calling we must remain true.

***Faithful to our calling to support our staff.***

Jesus warned his followers to be “as shrewd as snakes and as innocent as doves”. In light of the potential that one of our staff members could be suspected or falsely accused of inappropriate behavior toward a child, it is incumbent upon us to set up and maintain procedures that will protect them from such an occurrence, and will help them know how to conduct themselves wisely. This is a vital way the church can faithfully serve its staff.

**Screening:**

Screening efforts will include an application process, checking of references, performing of background checks, interviewing of potential staff, gaining elder approval, and requiring candidates to attend Way of Grace for at least six months. The level of screening required will be determined by the nature of the involvement the worker has with the children.

**Supervision:**

Supervision of staff will include enforcing a 2 worker rule (having 2 adults working with children whenever practicable), an open window policy (activities in the rooms always observable from the outside), and specific guidelines that outline appropriate staff behavior, and implementing check-in / check-out procedures when appropriate.

**Training:**

All staff will be required to receive training that will assist them in being able to identify major signs of abuse, know how to conduct themselves in potentially compromising situations (taking a child to the bathroom), know how to protect themselves from false accusations, and know how and when to report suspected incidents of abuse. Parents will also be provided with information that can be helpful as they carefully instruct their children about abuse.



A copy of the complete policy is available on request.



This policy is being shared with the church body to give parents peace of mind about entrusting their children to the care of the staff and volunteers supporting Way of Grace's ministries.



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Way of Grace Church  
Nursery & Children's Ministry

SAFE  
for children

Securing  
A  
Faithful  
Environment



Child Protection Policy

