

DIGNITY FOR ALL: Preventing Abuse at KCCRC

INTRODUCTION

Kanata Community Christian Reformed Church (KCCRC) strives to be a community where every person is treated with respect and embraced in love, regardless of age, race, sex, gender, or socio-economic status. As one expression of God's family on earth, we are committed to creating an environment that nurtures the dignity and safety of every person.

We acknowledge that sin still finds expression within our church. One expression of sin is the misuse of power and abuse of other people. The spiritual root of all forms of abuse is the irresponsible use of power, including the betrayal of trust within the body of Christ. We celebrate that Christ died to set us free from the bondage of sin. But, until Christ returns we need to take intentional, specific measures to guard against the sin of abuse.

The following Safe Church policy is one of those measures.

1. POLICY STATEMENT

KCCRC will strive to create a safe environment for worship, learning, and fellowship, with care for the participants, volunteers, and staff involved in programs and activities. We will do this through on-going implementation of the following prevention measures:

- Adoption and adherence to the Safe Church Policy within all church programs and activities.
- Screening of leaders as defined in the policy.
- Requiring program leaders to read the policy, endorse the Code of Conduct, and complete any necessary forms for screening.
- Regular training to raise awareness of abuse within the whole congregation, training leaders to use prevention tools, and training leaders to deal with any allegations of abuse.
- Implementation of specific policies designed for each program.
- Adoption of a protocol to be followed when there are allegations of abuse against any person or when evidence of abuse is recognized.

2. DEFINING ABUSE

KCCRC policy is based on the following definitions of abuse:

- **Abuse of Power:** any use of power to harm another person or use of power and influence for personal gain at the expense of another person. Abuse of power takes shape in a wide range of types of abuse, from bullying and harassment to emotional abuse, physical abuse, and sexual assault. In a church context, it includes the misuse of a position, authority, or influence to take advantage of, manipulate, or control another person.
- **Physical Abuse:** any non-accidental act that violates the dignity of the image of God in another person, inflicting dehumanizing pain or injury. Physically abusive behaviour also includes physical neglect, which means not doing what one is supposed to be doing to meet the physical needs of someone in his or her care.
- **Emotional Abuse:** any attempt to control another person's life through words, threats, fears, intimidation, and/or deprivation in ways that impair a person's God-given sense of self-worth.
- **Harassment:** engaging in a pattern of vexatious comment or conduct against another person

that is known or ought reasonably to be known to be unwelcome.

- **Sexual Abuse:** any sexual experience forced on one person by another, which may or may not involve physical contact between people. Sexual abuse also includes role-inappropriate sexual encounters even if there was consent at the time.
- **Sexual Harassment:** engaging in a pattern of vexatious comments or conduct toward another person because of sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression, where the course of comment or conduct is known or ought reasonably to be known to be unwelcome; or making a sexual solicitation or advance where the person making the solicitation or advance is in a position to confer, grant, or deny a benefit or advancement to the recipient and the person knows or ought reasonably to know that the solicitation or advance is unwelcome.
- **Spiritual Abuse:** misuse of Scripture, doctrine, ministry leadership position or church office to establish a pattern of control and domination of another person. In a church context, all forms of abuse may involve elements of spiritual abuse that do harm to the spiritual well-being and development of another person.
- **Inappropriate/Appropriate Touch:** While physical expressions of friendship and care are a valued part of ministry, physical touches that are sexual in nature, unwanted, or make the recipient feel uncomfortable are prohibited. Appropriate touches show respect for the dignity of the recipient and do not demean them in their own eyes or the eyes of others, while showing care and affection. Examples of appropriate touch include side hugs, gentle touches on shoulder or back, high-fives, holding hands during escort or prayer. Examples of inappropriate touch include full, frontal hugs; kisses; massages; touching bottoms, breasts, or genital areas; and touches that are known to be or reasonably expected to be unwanted by the recipient.

3. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- All people are image bearers of God, worthy of respect, and therefore will be treated in a manner that respects their dignity and does not demean them in their own eyes or in the eyes of others. Human sexuality is also a gift of God to be respected, valued and celebrated.
- Abuse of any person is not acceptable and will not be tolerated. We will strive to foster the development of healthy relationships and prevent abuse in our ministries. To the best of our ability, we will avoid situations that may give rise to abuse, unfounded allegations of abuse, or the appearance of impropriety.
- All participants in KCCRC activities are urged to be vigilant against abuse and will be held accountable for their words and actions.
- While parents have a primary responsibility for the care and nurture of their children, KCCRC and the larger community also share in the responsibility to protect and promote the well-being of all children.
- By the grace of God, healing is possible for victims of abuse. Healing is assisted through the ministry of the church and wise counselling, which should be offered as early as possible.
- By the grace of God, forgiveness and restoration to church fellowship is possible for repentant offenders and can be assisted through the ministry of the church and wise counselling. KCCRC recognizes that forgiveness cannot be forced, and, in some cases, appropriate long-term restrictions on the activities of offenders may be necessary.
- Authority vested in the leadership of KCCRC, both ordained and non-ordained, will be exercised with the highest of ethical standards. Leaders have a special responsibility to be alert to the power dynamics within ministry relationships and take preventive and corrective measures.
- When reports of suspected abuse occur, appropriate investigative and corrective actions will

begin without delay. All actions will support healing, repentance, and restoration of the abused and the abuser. For abusers, these actions may include disciplinary measures, up to and including denial of volunteer or paid positions and other privileges of church membership. After satisfactory resolution, suitability for return to a volunteer or paid position will be reviewed. Should an abuser leave the congregation prior to an adequate resolution of the issues involved, KCCRC will advise the receiving church of the outstanding issues, while maintaining appropriate discretion and confidentiality.

- Abuse is also a crime punishable under federal and provincial laws in Canada. The Bible teaches respect for the mandate of civil authorities to maintain justice; we pledge to co-operate with them in the implementation of laws prohibiting abuse. Allegations of abuse of a minor will be reported without delay to the Children's Aid Society and/or police, as required by provincial law. As a church, however, we will not leave the matter of abuse and its impacts to the law courts and social services alone, because abuse and healing also have a spiritual dimension. The church has its own calling, as Christ's ambassadors, to offer protection for children, warn against the abuse of authority, and provide a healing ministry for those whose lives have been affected by the sin of abuse.

4. GENERAL RISK REDUCTION STRATEGIES

The following policies apply to all activities to help prevent abuse:

- **Access:** All rooms used for meetings will have windows in or near the doors. Windows will not be covered or obstructed at any time.
- **Supervision:** Two or more adults should be present for all activities involving minors or vulnerable persons, though not necessarily in the same room. When only two adults are present for an activity, the activity should be done in a context that is visible to others.
- **Meetings:** Adults will meet one on one with minors or vulnerable persons only in public spaces or locations where they are clearly visible to others. Meetings for the purposes of pastoral care should occur in a public space or with the accompaniment of another pastoral worker or spouse [with exceptions discussed in 6.1(2) and 6.3(4)]. All leaders and volunteers are expected to exercise discretion and avoid situations that may lead to perceptions of impropriety.
- **Out-of-town Travel:** Any KCCRC leader who travels out of town on KCCRC business with one other person will inform a ministry supervisor or the chair of the appropriate governing body ahead of time.

5. DISCIPLINE IN CHURCH PROGRAMS

Any discipline is carried out in love, not anger. The goal of discipline is change in behaviour, never vengeance. The following guidelines apply for all children's and youth programs:

- Corporal punishment is not appropriate under any circumstances.
- Abusive verbal punishment (insults, yelling) is not permitted.
- Concerns about recurring behavioural issues will be reported to the program supervisor.
- When a young person misbehaves beyond the need for minor correction or persists in a pattern of misbehaviour, the parent or guardian will be informed and involved in remedial response.
- If young people misbehave, leaders should try to:
 - redirect them with another activity;

- help them focus on other acceptable behaviour;
- isolate them from others; time-outs should be age-appropriate.
- When misbehaviour is an ongoing problem, an aide should be provided for the classroom.
- Evidence of abusive behaviour will be reported, using the established protocol

6. SCREENING

- Appointments to leadership positions of programs involving minors and vulnerable persons will be made by or on behalf of church council, with the concurrence of the Safe Church Committee (see section 9 of this policy).
- Any member of the congregation who has reason to think that any staff or volunteers might not be acceptable for work with young or vulnerable persons should inform a member of the Safe Church Committee, the pastoral team or a Ministry Board member.
- The following persons (18 years of age and older) will supply a current police records check (Level 3—Vulnerable Sector Check) (not more than 6 months old):
 - Paid staff
 - Members of Church Council
 - Pastoral Care Workers
 - Nursery attendants
 - Anyone who will visit with or engage in unsupervised activities with youth or vulnerable persons on behalf of KCCRC.
 - Anyone in a position that the Safe Church Committee may determine should be required to provide a police records check
- All costs for police records checks will be paid by KCCRC.
- All volunteers who have been attending KCCRC for less than two years may also be requested to consent to a reference check with their previous church/organization.
- Before assuming their responsibilities, all paid staff and volunteers will review the Safe Church Policy and sign the pledge form (Appendix) attesting that they have applied for or have supplied a police records check (Level 3—Vulnerable Sector Check).
- Written reports of police and reference checks will be placed in a confidential file in a secure location in the church, to be consulted only by members of the Safe Church Committee, the Chair of the Ministry Board and the Clerk of the church. Anyone may request to see the content of his or her own file.
- When large numbers of volunteers are needed for short-term activities, such as Vacation Bible School, those who will not have opportunity to meet alone with children will be exempt from the requirement to get a police check. Everyone will be provided with a copy of the Safe Church Policy and expected to comply with it. In advance of the event, the leader will recommend to the Safe Church Committee which positions can be exempt; the decision of the Safe Church Committee will be final.
- If a police records check reveals past criminal activity or negative police contact which have no bearing on possible relationships with children and vulnerable adults, the Safe Church Committee may approve that person for activities with children/youth or adults. When a police record check reveals past activity or negative police contact which has a bearing on his/her position, the person may not take on the responsibilities of the role until a satisfactory review has been completed and implementation of appropriate restrictions have been put in place.
- If any member of the congregation is restrained by court order from being alone with a child, the Safe Church Committee and Ministry Board will be responsible to take steps that comply with such orders, within the scope of KCCRC activities.

7. TRANSPORTATION OF MINORS

NOTE: Arrangements to transport minors between home and church by someone other than the parent or guardian will be considered a private arrangement, not a church arrangement subject to this policy.

- Persons who chauffeur minors for church activities will be familiar with and concur with this policy. An activity leader may deny someone permission to serve as chauffeur for any particular activity and the leader's decision will be final.
- Transportation for church activities will be arranged in advance as much as possible. There will not be fewer than three persons at a time in the vehicle, except upon the specific request of a parent or guardian at the beginning or end of a route.

8. TRAINING

- All members of KCCRC will be asked to become familiar with this policy and to suggest improvements.
- All leaders of child/youth programs will:
 - Be required to complete the training offered on preventative measures and recognition of the signs of abuse;
 - Review the Safe Church Policy on a regular basis;
 - Be expected to use appropriate educational materials in their programs to inform children how to protect themselves and get help when needed.
- Anyone appointed to provide pastoral care on behalf of KCCRC will:
 - Be required to complete training offered on prevention measures and recognizing signs of abuse;
 - Review the Safe Church Policy on a regular basis.

9. CODES OF CONDUCT

9A. Code of Conduct for Pastoral Staff

- Pastoral leaders are called by God and the congregation to serve as spiritual leaders and advisors, in accordance with their ordination. Members of the congregation — in particular those who seek counsel — look upon pastors as spiritual advisors, mentors, and role models, to be trusted by both children and adults. Abuse of that trust can have a devastating effect on the lives of individuals and on the life and ministry of the congregation
- To help ensure that trust is maintained, all hired ministry staff, ordained office-bearers, and volunteer ministry leaders will be required to endorse and agree to comply with the Code of Conduct adopted by the Synod of the Christian Reformed Church. (Appendix A)
- Review of the Code of Conduct and its implementation will be part of the annual review process for all hired ministerial staff.

9B. Code of Conduct for Non-pastoral Staff

Support staff persons are called to serve God by helping KCCRC function effectively as a family of God.

- **Meetings:** One on one meetings with visitors/members will be held in easily visible areas
- **Reporting:** Any behaviour that makes improper or questionable use of church facilities will be reported to the appropriate supervisor.

9C. Code of Conduct for Elders, Deacons, and Other Pastoral Care Workers

The following guidelines amplify general provisions in the CRCNA Code of Conduct:

- **Boundaries:** Elders, deacons and other pastoral care workers shall be cautious with touch. Limit the display of physical affection to a brief hug or a pat on the back or forearm, ensuring that any such contact is welcome and solely intended to benefit the counselee or parishioner.
- **Confidentiality:** Information shared with elders, deacons, and other pastoral care workers will be held in confidence, except when the safety of someone is at risk. If needed for protection, information will be given to appropriate persons only and the person giving the information will be advised that it cannot be maintained confidential for safety reasons.
- **Meetings with Children/Youth:** Elders and deacons are encouraged to develop supportive relationships with young people and be available for spiritual advice; young people are encouraged to seek spiritual advice from any member of the pastoral care team. Meetings will be held in public places. If a one-on-one relationship leads to repeated visits, both parties will mutually decide on a third person to be informed for the purposes of support and mutual accountability.
- **Visits:** or meetings with persons at home when no one else is present will normally not be conducted. However, when such visits are necessary or desired, they will be reported before the visit to a co-worker, an elder or deacon and at the next meeting to the chair of the governing body (elders and deacons). The pastoral care provider will establish an accountability relationship with the governing body (elders and deacons) and report on the number of visits and the general nature of them.

9D. Code of Conduct for Youth Program Leaders

The following pledge serves as a code of conduct for youth leaders and mentors:

- My first priority is prayerfully to seek the welfare of the children/youth and promote their healthy development spiritually, physically, socially, emotionally and educationally.
- The activities for which I am responsible will be done to help children/youth grow in faith, as followers of Christ, and develop loving, caring, and responsible ways of living.
- I will keep parents informed about the program I am teaching and what time it begins and ends.
- I will not knowingly do anything that will damage a child or youth's trust, and I will try to protect the child/youth from all forms of abuse while he or she is in my care.
- I will work with the children/youth to set agreed guidelines for acceptable behaviour within the group, and expect them to act on the basis of agreed guidelines. If a child consistently breaks the guidelines, I will seek help from other youth leaders and parents to assist me in responding to the child.

- I will try to offer comfort and help to a child/youth who is distressed and will encourage the child to find appropriate help for his/her needs.
- I will ensure that, when I need to meet with a child/youth alone, the discussion will be in an open area such that others can at all times see me with the child. Furthermore, I will inform my activity supervisor and/or the parent(s) or guardian of such meetings.
- I will endeavour to avoid focussing on one child repeatedly for praise or special attention.

10. ON-LINE SAFETY: Policy for electronic communications and social media

Electronic communications and social media are used as tools to enhance ministry and fellowship within KCCRC, with care to prevent misuse and potential harm. KCCRC respects the right of all persons, including younger members, to privacy, to access information, and to communicate and reach out to others, as part of their development, including their spiritual development. At the same time, KCCRC will use measures to protect both participants and ministry leaders from potential harms, such as on-line bullying, violations of privacy, inappropriate sharing of information or photos, and exposure to exploitative materials or misleading or inaccurate information.

To achieve these goals, the following guidance will be followed:

- Leaders of youth ministries and youth mentors are encouraged to include on-line safety as a discussion topic and develop good practices together within any youth groups.
- Keep use of electronic communication between leaders and participants limited in terms of time of connection, frequency, brevity, and specific purpose. As much as possible, ministry leaders should send group e-mails and texts, especially for children and adolescents. If a ministry leader needs to send one-on-one communications or respond to personal communications coming from an adolescent, they must keep a log of such interactions and review it on a monthly basis with one other church leader. Volunteer leaders should consult with a supervisor or another ministry leader about any on-line activity related to KCCRC that raises questions about its appropriateness.
- Do not reveal or ask for personal information through electronic communication. Never reveal personal information about someone else without their explicit permission and only if you know it will not be used for any harmful purposes. If electronic means of communication are used for information and permissions for field trips, gatherings, etc., ensure it is a secure transmission between individuals and secure computer systems in KCCRC. Refrain from publishing the specific dates, times, and locations of gatherings and field trips involving young people to public sites or forms of transmission that would be accessible by those not entitled to that information or where unknown persons might access the information.
- Do not send pictures of yourself, others, or a group over an electronic network or post them to a social media site without the prior informed permission of the persons involved, and, in the case of children under 12, the permission of their parents/guardians.
- Users of KCCRC computers and on-line systems will not knowingly access, upload, download, store, display, distribute or publish any information that:
 - Threatens, intimidates, demeans, discriminates, or suggests violence, hatred, or sexual exploitation of another person.
 - uses abusive or inappropriate language
 - is illegal or advocates illegal activity
 - contains personal information, photos, or signatures of another person without their explicit consent.

- contains material that belongs to others, without copyright permission or giving appropriate credit for content produced by others

11. POLICIES FOR SPECIFIC PROGRAMS

11A. Childcare/Nursery

- Nursery attendants will have completed police checks on file, sign the Safe Church Policy, and annually review safe church policies relating to the Nursery Program.
- Parents may use the nursery at any time to care for their children. When children are left with persons other than parents, there will be at least two approved caregivers, one of whom is an adult. No person will be left alone in charge of the children unless another has gone to get a parent.
- Nursery helpers will be a minimum 11 years old.
- Parents will advise nursery attendants of any medical issues their child may have. Any medical problem that arises in the nursery will be reported to the parent/guardian immediately.
- Diapers will be changed in view of others.
- Nursery attendants will not take a child from the nursery area to an area that is not visible from the main nursery room.

11.B. Church School Program

- A teacher plus an assistant, minimum age of 11, will be in charge of each class. Consideration will be given to gender and age in the appointment of teaching teams.
- Children in Grade 2 and younger will only be released to a member of their immediate family, unless the parent/guardian has informed the teacher that someone else is authorized to pick up the child. Children in Grade 3 and older may be released to find their way to their parents/family unless the parents inform the teacher of other arrangements.
- Children should not leave the classroom except for illness, bathroom privileges, or other compelling reasons.
- Children under the age of five will be accompanied to the lavatory. For children who do not require assistance in the toilet, the attendant will remain in the lavatory. For children who require assistance, the attendant will take the child to the washroom located in the nursery.

12. ACCOUNTABILITY

Final responsibility for adherence to this policy rests with the Council of KCCRC, which will appoint a Safe Church Committee for the purpose of monitoring implementation in all church activities. Procedures will be adopted, and revised from time to time, for the various activities/functions within the church. These steps will include, but are not necessarily limited to, the following:

- All paid staff and volunteer leaders will be accountable to the head/co-ordinator of the program/ministry with which they are involved.
- All paid and volunteer leaders and nursery caregivers will sign the Safe Church Pledge to indicate agreement with the Safe Church Policy before assuming their duties. A new pledge will normally be signed with a revision of the policy, at the discretion of the Safe Church Committee.
- Parents of children will be asked to familiarize themselves with the rules governing a particular activity when their child is enrolled in an activity or program.

- The policy document and revisions approved by the Council will be dated and kept in a permanent file.

13. SAFE CHURCH COMMITTEE

The Council of KCCRC will appoint a Safe Church Committee. The Committee will consist of a minimum of two persons (preferably four persons), with a preference for a combination of female and male members. Individual roles and responsibilities, including chairperson, will be assigned during the first committee meeting of the Church year.

The mandate of the Committee is:

- To review the Safe Church Policy and procedures and recommend any changes to council to ensure that the policy continues to address changing circumstances within church programs and activities.
- To review obligations outlined in KCCRC's insurance policy to ensure consistency with the Safe Church policy and implementation in church activities.
- To monitor implementation of the policy in all programs and activities that takes place under the auspices of KCCRC. This will include periodic audits, for which the committee will appoint KCCRC members not on the committee, receive an audit report on implementation, and take any necessary remedial actions.
- To review all appointments for ministry leadership positions, paid and volunteer. The committee's objection to an appointment will be binding, but may, in special circumstances, be appealed to the full council.
- To maintain the records of signed pledges, reference checks, police records checks, and nursery registries required under this policy. These documents will be kept on file for at least fifty years as a record of due diligence. These records will be stored in a locked cabinet in the Archives Room.
- To organize training sessions or provide training resources for leaders and volunteers.
- To monitor and keep a record of participation in training for abuse prevention.
- To report to council at least once each year on implementation of the policy, the work of the committee, and any suggestions to improve safety for everyone.

Persons assigned to the Safe Church Committee will be provided with such training as is necessary to enable them to perform their tasks with wisdom and effectiveness.

14. REPORTING OF ABUSE

14.A. General Policies

- Evidence or suspicion of abuse by anyone engaged in KCCRC activities will be reported and handled with care. The purpose of reporting is to stop the abuse, to provide assistance for the victim, to hold the perpetrator accountable, and to begin the process of correction and redemption.
- Confidentiality will be respected. The name of a victim will not be made public without her or

his consent. An alleged abuser will be assumed to be innocent until a conviction is registered or an admission is recorded.

- Evidence or disclosure of abuse of a person who is a minor will be reported to civil authorities, in keeping with the provisions of provincial law. Abuse of a person who is not/no longer a minor will be reported to outside authorities only with the consent of the victim, even if the abuse occurred while the person was a minor. In situations where the victim is a vulnerable person, it may be necessary to notify civil authorities.
- All suspicion or disclosure of abuse will be brought to the attention of the Safe Church Committee.
- KCCRC recognizes and respects the right of a victim to pursue legal remedies through civil courts, independent of any action taken within the processes established by the CRC. Spiritual support, pastoral help, and other forms of appropriate engagement by the church will be provided, whether or not legal action is taken in a particular case.

14.B. Protocol for Reporting Abuse

- Anyone who has evidence or disclosure of abuse should inform a member of the Safe Church Committee.
- Do **not** alert the accused person that an allegation has been made. Doing so could result in further harm to the victim, cause the accused person to destroy evidence, or cause the accused person unnecessary anxiety if the accusation, after investigation, is found to be neither serious nor probable.
- Do **not** communicate further at this point. The smaller the circle the better as confidentiality is key at every stage.
- For the purposes of accuracy, the person reporting is asked to write down as soon as possible what was observed or heard and submit it to the Safe Church Committee in confidence.
- The Safe Church Committee will, in consultation with the victim, as appropriate, determine what course of action will be taken, including:
 - referral to the appropriate pastoral team member as a matter requiring pastoral counselling;
 - identification of an advocate/support person, with agreement of the victim, to assist the victim throughout any process and provide personal support as needed.
 - recommendation that the Council Executive request that the Safe Church Team of Classis establish an advisory panel to engage in fact-finding and provide advice to the Council Executive;
 - notification of civil authorities, when required under the provisions of provincial law.
- The Safe Church Committee operates in an advisory capacity to the designated authorities in the church. Any pastoral and/or disciplinary action will be taken by the
 - designated authorities, operating under the established rules of order of the CRC.
- If the situation involves a minor, the incident will be reported to the appropriate civil authorities, under the provision of provincial law. If pastoral staff is available and not implicated, they will call the appropriate authorities. Failing that, if a member of the Safe Church Committee is available, they will call the appropriate authorities. If neither is available, the person with evidence or disclosure should report, as required by the law. If there is a question about the need to report, advice can be obtained by calling the Children's Aid Society.
- If the situation involves a vulnerable adult who may be subject to provincial trusteeship, the Safe Church Committee will determine the need to notify civil authorities.
- If the situation involves a church leader, matters such as notification, temporary suspension from office, and disciplinary measures will be handled in accordance with the process adopted

by the Synod of the CRCNA. Depending on the circumstances and severity of the incident, suspension from a position, with pay for paid staff, may be temporary to allow time for further investigation, and will be done without prejudice as to the final determination. Suspension may include limitations or conditions on contact with children or other church members, pending the conclusion of a more formal hearing process. Disciplinary measures will be in accordance with the established policies of the Synod of the CRCNA.

Appendix A: CRC Code of Conduct for Ministry Leaders

More background on the Code of Conduct for Ministry Leaders, including the Preamble, is available on the [CRCNA website](#).

Code of Conduct

As a ministry leader, I will, to the best of my ability, commit to the following:

Relationships

1. I will speak and act, in all my personal and professional relations, in ways that follow the pattern of Christ, who used his power to serve (1 Pet. 5; Mark 10; Phil. 2; 2 Tim. 4:2).
2. I will respect, love, and treat with integrity and truthfulness people of every position, status, race, ethnicity, gender, age, or ability.
3. I will maintain appropriate emotional, physical, and sexual boundaries in all relationships.
4. I will keep all my relationships free from inappropriate, unwanted physical contact, emotional or sexual intimacy, sexual comments, gestures, or jokes.

Safety

1. I will actively promote a welcoming and respectful environment where all persons are treated with dignity and value, and where any form of abuse, bullying, or harassment is neither tolerated nor allowed to take place.
2. I will report known or suspected cases of physical, sexual, or emotional abuse or neglect of minors or vulnerable adults to the proper authorities.
3. I will support those who disclose physical, sexual, or emotional abuse in a way that empowers the person who has been victimized to seek out justice and healing.

Pastoral Leadership

1. I will promote truthfulness, transparency, and honesty in all of my work.
2. I will use my power, authority, and position to build up the community of believers and seek first the kingdom of God.
3. I will work within my trained competence, especially in counseling situations, and I will refer individuals to other professionals as appropriate.
4. I will preach, teach, admonish, or discipline in ways that are biblical and Christlike, promoting the shalom and flourishing of those to whom I am ministering (2 Tim. 3:16).
5. I will refrain in my pastoral care and counseling from using references to Scripture or God to manipulate, coerce, or threaten another person.
6. I will disclose any perceived or actual conflict of interest.

Confidentiality

1. I will maintain and uphold confidentiality appropriately, which means I will hold in confidence whatever information is not mine to share.
2. I will not use information shared with me in confidence in order to elevate my position or to depreciate that of others.

Finances

1. I will ensure that funds for which I am responsible or which are under my control are used for their intended ministry purposes.
2. In all financial matters, including the acceptance of gifts, I will act with scrupulous honesty, transparency, and appropriate accountability.
3. I will appropriately use and encourage accepted accounting practices and regular reviews and/or audits of ministry funds.

In the event that I misuse my power, either intentionally or unintentionally, in my dealings with others, in word or deed—if I fail “to act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly” (Mic. 6:8) as outlined in the Scriptures and our confessions—I will acknowledge the harm that has been caused and the trust that has been broken, and I will actively seek restoration with justice, compassion, truth, and grace. I will humbly submit to the insight and accountability of the body that implements this Code of Conduct to ensure that I use any power entrusted to me fully in service to Christ.

In the beautiful hope of Christ’s transforming work, in all I do, I will seek to use my position, power, and authority prudently and humbly to support and encourage all the members of his body in my care

Appendix B: Safe Church Pledge

(to be completed by signer; PLEASE print full name clearly)

I, _____, have read and understood the Safe Church Policy of Kanata Community Christian Reformed Church.

I agree with the general provisions and specific requirements that relate to my position and I will adhere to them.

If my role requires a Vulnerable Sector police record check, *(please check one)*:

- I have applied for a police records check and will forward it to the Safe Church Committee as soon as I receive it.
- My police record check is attached.
- My police records check is already on record with the Safe Church committee.

I acknowledge that it is my responsibility to help ensure that all KCCRC activities provide a wholesome, safe environment for all participants, and should I become aware of any activity that appears to be inappropriate, I will bring it to the attention of my program leader or the Safe Church Committee immediately.

I have been a member or regular attendee of Kanata Community Christian Reformed Church for _____ years.

Date of birth (if under 18): _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____