

AGNUS DEI LUTHERAN CHURCH
10511 PEACOCK HILL AVE. NW
GIG HARBOR, WA 98332

PERSONNEL POLICIES

AND

STANDARDS OF PERSONAL CONDUCT

Original approval: May 1, 2014

Last Revision by Church Council: April 11, 2023

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.0	PURPOSE.....	5
2.0	PERSONNEL ADMINISTRATION	5
3.0	EMPLOYMENT POLICY	6
4.0	DEFINITIONS.....	6
5.0	EMPLOYMENT PROCEDURES	7
5.1	Rostered Staff	7
5.2	Professional and Program Staff	8
5.3	Support Staff.....	8
5.4	Committee Membership.....	8
6.0	COMPENSATION.....	8
6.1	Process.....	9
6.2	Cost of Living Increases (COLA).....	9
6.3	Overtime Compensation.....	9
6.4	Compensatory Time.....	9
6.5	Benefits.....	9
7.0	PERSONNEL RECORDS AND FILES	10
8.0	VACATION LEAVE	10
8.1	Rostered Staff	10
8.2	Professional, Program and Support Staff	10
8.3	Unused Vacation Carryover	11
8.4	Payment of Unused Vacation	11
9.0	ABSENCE FROM WORK.....	12
9.1	Sick Leave	12
9.2	Paid Family and Medical Leave	12
9.3	Family Leave	14
9.4	Bereavement Leave.....	14
9.5	Jury Duty	14
9.6	Military Leave	15

9.7	Leave of Absence.....	16
10.0	HOLIDAYS	16
11.0	TRAVEL POLICY	17
12.0	EMPLOYEE BENEFITS	17
12.1	Workers' Compensation.....	17
13.0	STAFF DEVELOPMENT.....	18
13.1	Continuing Education.....	18
13.2	Sabbatical Leave	18
14.0	SEPARATIONS.....	20
15.0	DISCRIMINATION AND HARASSMENT IN THE WORK PLACE	20
15.1	Policy on Discriminatory Behavior	20
15.2	Policy on Harassment.....	21
15.3	Reporting Harassment and Other Discriminatory Behavior	21
16.0	APPEALS	22
17.0	ESTABLISHMENT AND REVISION OF PERSONNEL GUIDELINES	22
18.0	ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF RECEIPT	22

APPENDICES

Appendix #1:	HIRING PROCEDURES AT AGNUS DEI LUTHERAN CHURCH.....	24
Appendix #2:	EMPLOYMENT RECORDS TRACKING	25
Appendix #3:	PROGRESSIVE DISCIPLINARY PROCESS	26
Appendix #4:	STANDARDS OF PERSONAL CONDUCT	27
1.0	VULNERABLE POPULATIONS ABUSE PREVENTION POLICY	27
2.0	CONFIDENTIALITY	33
3.0	COMMUNICATIONS AND ELECTRONIC MEDIA	33
4.0	PRIVACY.....	34
Appendix #5:	PARENTAL PERMISSION TO PHOTOGRAPH/VIDEOTAPE MY CHILD	36
Appendix #6:	VOLUNTEER APPLICATION/BACKGROUND CHECK RELEASE	37

PERSONNEL POLICIES

1.0 PURPOSE

These policies are established for the purpose of defining and assisting in the coordination of the personnel administration at Agnus Dei Lutheran Church (ADLC), to ensure proper stewardship, and to meet government rules for employment practices.

These policies are intended to help employees understand their working conditions and to encourage them to improve their competence in the performance of their responsibilities. Where discrepancies occur in the Letter of Call and the Personnel Policies during the first year of employment for a rostered staff member, the Letter of Call shall take precedence over the Personnel Policies. The Definition of Compensation, Benefits and Responsibilities of a Pastor document attached to the Letter of Call does not supersede changes in federal/state laws. In the event that State or Federal laws require different policies or practices, they will take precedence and ADLC documents will be amended to reflect those changes.

These policies should also serve as a means for helping all employees better understand not only their responsibilities, but also their privileges as employees of ADLC. ADLC reserves the right to modify or terminate any benefit or program set forth herein, if it is deemed by the Congregation Council to be in the best interest of ADLC to do so and it is not required under federal and/or state law. Any such changes will be communicated to each employee within 30 days of their approval.

2.0 PERSONNEL ADMINISTRATION

Section C12.04d of the ADLC constitution states that one of the duties of the Congregation Council is “to maintain supportive relationships with the pastor(s) and staff and help them annually to evaluate the fulfillment of their calling or employment.”

Furthermore, in Section C12.08 the constitution states that “the Congregation Council shall be responsible for the employment and supervision of the staff of the congregation.”

The Pastors, as servant leaders, shall be responsible for the management and support of the staff and for the oversight of the staff’s ministries in order to implement the mission, vision, and values of the congregation. These pastoral oversight responsibilities include building a sense of teamwork; holding regular staff meetings to coordinate the ministries of the church and to facilitate communication; and keeping the Congregation Council informed of all significant ministry and personnel issues.

The Pastor(s), the President of the Congregation Council or his/her designee, the Treasurer and at least three ad hoc members appointed by the Congregation Council and serving 3-year terms function as the Personnel Committee of the church. Efforts should be made to stagger the terms of the ad hoc members on the committee.

The Personnel Committee serves the Congregation Council in an advisory capacity on issues related to personnel administration. It recommends policy on human resource matters to the Congregation Council, who adopts or amends the recommended policies as it sees fit. Once policy is adopted, it is the role of the Personnel Committee to satisfy the council that the church is in compliance with established policy.

The Personnel Committee is also responsible for assuring that an annual review of the Pastor(s) is completed, and that the annual reviews of other staff are completed by the Pastor(s). All annual staff reviews shall be completed by the end of June. The Pastor(s) will conduct annual staff reviews and may request that a member of the Personnel Committee participate. The Personnel Committee Chair and the Council President will comprise the annual review team for the Pastor(s).

3.0 EMPLOYMENT POLICY

It is the intent of ADLC to hire the best-qualified person for each specific job regardless of race, sex, color, religion, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, or age.

All pastoral, professional and program staff members who assist in the presentation of Church doctrine either must be or be willing to become active members of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or church bodies in full communion with the ELCA. The employees so engaged must demonstrate evidence of a Christian faith in harmony with the practice and teachings of the ELCA.

Employment at ADLC is voluntary and not governed by any written or implied contracts. Both the employee and the church are free to terminate the employment relationship at any time. Only the Congregation Council or its designee has the authority to enter into any agreement of employment for any specified period of time.

All staff will be required to read, understand and comply with the policies contained in this Personnel Policies manual, and to acknowledge receipt of this manual in writing.

4.0 DEFINITIONS

Church or Agnus Dei Lutheran Church

Shall mean Agnus Dei Lutheran Church of Gig Harbor, WA (aka ADLC)

Constitution or Bylaws

Shall mean Constitution or Bylaws adopted and in force and effect for ADLC of Gig Harbor, WA

Rostered Staff

Ministers of Word and Sacrament and Ministers of Word and Service called to serve ADLC as described in the ADLC Constitution.

Program and Professional Staff

Members of the staff who are responsible for the planning and conducting of the programs of the church.

Support Staff

Those members of the staff not included in pastoral, professional, or program staff positions of the church.

Exempt Staff

Those employees who are not subject to the wage and hour requirements of the federal and Washington Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA). Generally, exempt personnel are full-time salaried employees employed in a bona fide executive, professional or administrative capacity. According to FLSA, administrative capacity applies to high level personnel who exercise independent judgment and discretion in carrying out their responsibilities. To be classified as exempt, the employee's salary must also exceed the annualized fulltime salary threshold set by the Washington Department of Labor and Industries. (In 2022, that salary level is \$52,743.60/year.)

Non-Exempt Staff

Those hourly and salaried employees who are subject to the wage/hour guidelines of the federal and Washington FLSA administered by the Washington Department of Labor and Industries. Such employees will be paid overtime pay (time and a half) for all hours worked in a week in excess of 40 hours.

Full-time Employees

Those employees who are employed to work 30 or more hours each week, per State law.

Part-time Employees

Those employees who are employed to work less than 30 hours per week.

5.0 EMPLOYMENT PROCEDURES

5.1 Rostered Staff

The calling of members of the rostered staff shall follow the procedure as set forth in the ADLC Constitution.

5.2 Professional and Program Staff

Appointment to the professional staff shall follow the procedures set forth by the Personnel Committee and the Congregation Council. See Appendix #1.

5.3 Support Staff

The hiring of support staff shall follow the procedures set forth by the Personnel Committee and the Congregation Council. See Appendix 1.

- Applicants may be interviewed, tested, and references checked by ADLC. Tests may include criminal background checks, credit checks and drug tests where appropriate to the position. Reasonable accommodations will be offered to job applicants when requested for the application and selection process.
- Each new employee will be informed of the training period, sick leave policy, salary range, job description, performance evaluation instrument, vacation policy, leave-of-absence policy, workers' compensation, and other relevant job information.
- Each employee will be informed of their right to reasonable accommodations that will allow the employee to perform essential job functions. When an employee makes it known they need an adjustment or change at work due to a medical condition, the employee's supervisor should consider this as a request for a reasonable accommodation.
- A training period of ninety days is established for all non-rostered staff. Prior to the end of this period, a formal evaluation will be coordinated by the Pastor and presented to the Personnel Committee for concurrence to ascertain continued employment.
- If additional time is needed for learning the job, the training period may be extended, or immediate termination may result if the employee is unable to perform the duties required by the position even with reasonable accommodation.

5.4 Committee Membership

A member of the ADLC staff shall not be an elected member of the Congregation Council. A staff member may be asked by the Pastor to be a staff liaison to a committee. Staff members shall not be officers of organizations of ADLC.

6.0 **COMPENSATION**

It is the intent of Agnus Dei to compensate its staff appropriately and fairly by recognizing the many demands on this congregation's staff as well as the realities and constraints of the congregation's budget. As a result, the compensation determination process is built upon a foundation of mutual trust between the staff and the congregation that is demonstrated in sharing concerns and expectations.

6.1 Process

The Personnel Committee will make recommendations to the Congregation Council each November regarding staff compensation and benefits. The committee will rely upon the Southwestern Washington Synod Compensation Guidelines in establishing minimum levels of fair compensation for rostered staff. The Synod's recommended incremental increases will also be a guide for other staff who demonstrate an overall effective achievement of their goals and responsibilities.

Upon approval of the compensation and benefits levels for the next calendar year by the Congregation (either as part of the annual Budget or in a separate motion), the Council President will inform each staff member in writing of their individual compensation and benefits changes for the upcoming calendar year.

6.2 Cost of Living Increases (COLA)

Cost of Living Adjustments (included in the Southwestern Washington Synod Compensation Guidelines) may be recommended to the Congregation Council each year by the Personnel Committee for all staff performing at a satisfactory or higher level.

6.3 Overtime Compensation

Overtime compensation will be paid to non-exempt employees who work over 40 hours in one week. The 40 hours shall include hours actually worked plus time off for holidays and emergency office closings occurring during the week. Sick leave, vacation time and any other paid or unpaid absences will not be included when calculating the 40 hours.

Overtime pay will be calculated at the rate of one and one-half times the regular rate for those hours worked over 40 hours per week. An employee's regular rate is his or her hourly rate. In the case of non-exempt employees paid on a salary basis, the employee's regular hourly rate is computed by dividing the annual salary by the scheduled annual hours.

The Pastor, or a designated member of the Congregation Council (in the pastor's absence) must authorize overtime in advance.

6.4 Compensatory Time

The Pastor may grant compensatory time to exempt employees.

Compensatory time off in lieu of overtime payments is not available to non-exempt employees because of restrictions in federal and State laws.

6.5 Benefits

ADLC will sponsor rostered clergy in the Gold+ Portico program of the ELCA which provides retirement, disability, survivor and medical-dental coverage. Sponsorship will

include medical-dental coverage for the individuals' spouse and children unless they have other employer-provided medical insurance coverage and the individual consents to waiving the medical-dental coverage for them under Portico.

ADLC will offer employee-only Gold+ Portico benefits to other non-rostered staff who are paid for at least 1,040 hours per year (the equivalent of 20 hours per week). ADLC will pay for the retirement, disability and survivor benefit cost, and pay a share of the health/dental benefit comparable to the percentage of fulltime¹ hours of the staff position (e.g. for a half-time position, ADLC will pay fifty (50) percent of the health insurance cost).

Non-rostered staff may choose in lieu of the Portico benefits package to have ADLC reimburse a share of documented costs for comparable benefits which the employee already has established, not to exceed the cost of the Portico Gold+ benefit package.

7.0 PERSONNEL RECORDS AND FILES

A personnel file shall be maintained for each employee. Documents to be placed in this file may include, but not necessarily be limited to the following listed in Appendix 2.

All personnel records will be maintained in a secure cabinet in the ADLC office, with only the Pastor and the chair of the Personnel Committee having access to the cabinet where they are kept secure. Each member of ADLC staff will be allowed to inspect their personal personnel records one time per year, in accordance with State law.

8.0 VACATION LEAVE

Vacations are provided for staff with the intention of making possible a change of environment and the refreshment of body and spirit. The vacation year starts on January 1 and concludes December 31. All requests for vacations must be presented to and approved by the Pastor or Congregation Council President. In the event of conflicts, consideration will be given to seniority.

8.1 Rostered Staff

The vacation rate for each rostered staff member shall be in accordance with Synod Guidelines and the Definition of Compensation and Benefits included with the rostered staff person's Letter of Call.

8.2 Professional, Program and Support Staff

Professional, program, and support staff who are employed 1,040 or more hours per year will earn vacation in accordance with the following schedule:

¹ "Fulltime" for purposes of this section of the policy is defined as positions that are budgeted at 1,872 to 2,080 hours per year (or an average of 36-40 hours per week).

Years of Service	Paid Time Accrual Rate*	Full-Time Equivalent
-Less than 1 full year	.020	5 working days
-1 through 4 full years	.0385	10 working days
-5 through 15 years	.0577	15 working days
-16 years or more	.077	20 working days

* Vacation hours earned for every hour paid

When an employee reaches the anniversary of his/her date of hire and has completed his/her fifth or fifteenth year of service, the following month the employee will earn vacation at the next higher level.

Vacation is not permitted during the initial 3 months of employment.

Employees who have been employed at least 3 months may, with the approval of their supervisor, “borrow” from vacation time not yet earned. The “borrowed” time may not exceed the number of hours the employee will earn during the remainder of the current calendar year. In the event, however, that an employee is ending his/her employment at ADLC and has not yet earned the vacation time already used, the pay associated with those unearned hours taken will be deducted from the employee’s final paycheck.

Vacation credit will not be earned after the thirtieth consecutive day (including holidays) of paid sick leave. Vacation credit will not be earned for any unpaid time off.

Staff employed as of January 1, 2014 are grandfathered under the terms of their employment until they qualify for additional vacation under these guidelines.

Part-time employees not meeting the threshold criteria for paid vacation should schedule any unpaid time off with the Pastor.

8.3 Unused Vacation Carryover

An employee may carry over unused vacation hours from one calendar year to the next year, not to exceed hours equivalent to that employee’s usual scheduled hours for one week. Unused vacation days exceeding the maximum carryover will be cancelled at the beginning of the next vacation year. In the event that an employee has been denied the opportunity to use hours that exceed that limit during the previous year due to assigned work responsibilities, the Personnel Committee may consider an exception to this policy.

8.4 Payment of Unused Vacation

At the time of separation from the church, an employee will be paid for his/her unused, accrued vacation. In the event that an employee has used more vacation hours than earned at the time of separation, final salary/wages will be reduced to reflect unearned time used.

9.0 ABSENCE FROM WORK

9.1 Sick Leave

All employees shall accrue sick leave each year at the rate of .046 hours for every hour paid up to the equivalent of four work weeks' hours of that employee, commencing on the first day of employment. This is equivalent to one day per month for employees working 40 hours per week. Unused sick leave hours not exceeding the equivalent of a staff person's usual work hours in a four-week period may carry over from one calendar year to the next.

An employee may use sick leave for any of the following:

- For a mental or physical illness, injury, or health condition or if the employee needs a medical diagnosis or preventive medical care.
- If a family member (see below) needs care for a mental or physical illness, injury, or health condition, or needs a medical diagnosis or preventive medical care.
- If the employee's workplace or the employee's child's school or place of care has been closed for any health-related reason by order of a public official.
- If the employee is absent from work for reasons that qualify for leave under the state's Domestic Violence Leave Act (DVLA).

At the time of separation from the church, an employee will not be paid for his/her unused, accrued sick leave. Absence due to illness of more than four days will require that the employee furnish a physician's statement to the Pastor, or to the Council President if it is the Pastor who is ill. Failure to provide such a statement will result in a deduction of the employee's salary equivalent to the number of days missed. (This requirement is waived if the employee has been approved for the Paid Family and Medical Leave program.) Pastoral illness of a duration of longer than two (2) months should be referred to the Board of Pensions.

In accordance with state law, each employee's monthly pay statement will include a notice that shows:

- the amount of paid sick leave the employee has accrued since the previous notice,
- the amount of paid sick leave used since the previous notice, and
- the employee's current, unused paid sick leave balances available for use.

9.2 Paid Family and Medical Leave

In accordance with Washington State law, Paid Family and Medical Leave (PFML) is available to employees for:

- Bonding after the birth or placement of a child;
- An employee's serious health condition;
- A serious health condition of a qualifying family member; or

- Certain military events

Qualifying family members include:

- Spouses and domestic partners
- Children (biological, adopted, foster, stepchild, legal guardian, de facto or loco parentis)
- Parents and legal guardians (or spouse's parents)
- Siblings
- Grandchildren
- Grandparents (or spouse's grandparents)
- Son-in-law or daughter-in-law
- Someone who has an expectation to rely on you for care – whether you live together or not.

The PFML program is a state-administered program managed by the Washington State Employment Security Department and available to all workers (with a few exceptions specified in state law). Mandatory premium deductions are required to be collected each month from each employee's pay. As of 2022, the deduction is equal to 0.439 percent of the staff person's pay.

In order to be eligible for the PFML program, an employee must have worked a total of at least 820 hours for any Washington employer during the previous 12 months.

When an employee is determined eligible, that employee will receive weekly payments from the State Employment Security Department that equal up to 90 percent of that employee's gross wages – up to a limit of \$1,327/week.

Within the employee's claim year, he/she can take:

- Up to 12 weeks of medical leave or family leave for a single event;
- Up to 16 weeks of combined medical and family leave, if the employee has more than one qualifying event in a single year; or
- Up to 18 weeks of combined medical and family leave for a female employee who experiences a condition in pregnancy that results in incapacity, like being put on bed rest or having a C-section.

Additional details about this State-funded program are available from the Washington Employment Security Department. The website for this program is:
<https://paidleave.wa.gov/individuals-and-families/>

During the time period that the employee is on leave under the PFML program, ADLC will continue to pay for any benefits the employee is eligible for as an employee of ADLC. In addition, ADLC will pay the employee on a monthly basis an amount up to 10 percent of the employee's usual monthly salary/wages that is not being covered under the PFML program.

Any eligible employee who takes family or parental leave shall be entitled, on return from such leave, to be restored by the employer to the position of employment held by the employee when the leave commenced or be restored to an equivalent position with equivalent employment benefits, pay, and other terms and conditions of employment.

9.3 Family Leave

In accordance with Washington statute (the Family Care Act), an ADLC employee may use any accrued leave to care for a qualifying family member with a serious health condition, a child with a health condition requiring supervision (including preventive health care), or a wife or daughter who is disabled because of pregnancy or childbirth.

Qualifying family members include:

- Child under 18 or adult child incapable of self-care;
- Parents
- Spouse
- Registered domestic partner;
- Parents in-law
- Grandparents

Employees may choose which accrued leave to use to provide this care, which may include sick leave, vacation leave, personal holiday(s), and other paid time off. Leave under the Family Care Act can be used in conjunction with leave under the Paid Family and Medical Leave Act outlined in Section 9.2 of these policies. Any employee who wishes to take leave to care for a family member should discuss the benefits with the employee's supervisor, who can assist in seeking guidance regarding the benefits under the various leave programs required under State law.

9.4 Bereavement Leave

In the event of a death in the immediate family, any employee may take up to three days' paid bereavement leave with the approval of the Pastor or Congregation Council. Time off without pay or vacation time may be used to attend the funeral of someone other than immediate family. An unpaid extension of funeral leave may be granted. Immediate family includes spouse, significant other, parents, children, grandparents and siblings as well as in-laws for parents, children, grandparents and siblings.

9.5 Jury Duty

Jury duty and court service are civil responsibilities, and it is the church's intent to encourage employees to participate in such activities. Therefore, the church will grant time off with pay for up to two weeks to employees who are called upon for jury duty, court service or are subpoenaed as witnesses during their normal hours of work.

Any payments made to employees by the courts can be retained by the employee and do not have to be turned in to the church. The employee should, however, endeavor to keep

up with his/her work during such service. The employee is expected to report to work when not on active jury duty.

Jury duty policies do not apply when employees are summoned to court because of an infraction of the law on their part or as a plaintiff or defendant in a civil matter.

9.6 Military Leave

In case of military emergency situations, an employee will be entitled to a maximum of 90 days leave, without pay, and reinstatement in compliance with federal leave laws.

Employees will receive time off to participate in active military service, not to exceed two weeks during the calendar year, without pay.

9.7 Leave of Absence

Special leaves of absence may be granted to employees under the following situations:

Leave without pay may be granted to an employee who has exhausted all accrued vacation for personal reasons, after due consideration has been given to the work requirements of the church. Leave without pay may be granted for a period of up to three months. The Pastor and Congregation Council must approve requests for leaves without pay.

The church will hold an employee's position open for the leave period. If the employee is not able to return to work at the conclusion of the leave period, the employee's position may not be held open. The church will, however, make every effort to find a suitable position, although it may not necessarily be at the same salary as previously held by the employee. If the employee fails to return to work within three working days after expiration of their leave without pay or fails to notify the church regarding their status, the employee will be separated from employment.

Sick leave and vacation accruals and other benefits stop immediately upon the effective date of leave without pay. While on approved leave without pay, the employee may assume responsibility for payment of premiums to maintain continued medical and dental coverage.

10.0 HOLIDAYS

Holidays will be considered working days in any determinations involving leaves of absence, overtime pay, or the accrual of vacation or sick leave.

Agnus Dei Lutheran Church recognizes the following days as paid holidays for all employees who are scheduled to work at least 1040 hours per year:

New Year's Day	Thanksgiving Day
Martin Luther King Jr. Day	Day after Thanksgiving
Memorial Day	Christmas Day
Independence Day	Floating Holidays (2)
Labor Day	

Employees who are scheduled to work at least 1040 hours, but less than 2080 hours, per year will earn holiday pay based on the number of hours the employee is scheduled to work per year divided by 260. In the event that a holiday does not land on a scheduled work day, the holiday may be observed on a day to be agreed upon by the employee and the Pastor. As a general rule, the "in lieu of" leave day should be taken within the same week as the holiday occurred. In the case of the Pastor having a substitute day to observe, he/she will consult with the Council President to determine the day.

Each employee may select his/her two floating holiday dates with approval of the Pastor. The Pastor will consult with the Council President to establish the dates of his/her two floating holidays.

Generally, if a holiday falls on a Saturday, the holiday will be observed on the previous Friday. If a holiday falls on a Sunday, the holiday will normally be observed on the following Monday.

If the Pastor or Congregation Council President determines that an employee's services are essential on one of the designated holidays, then that employee will be entitled to receive another day off with pay.

11.0 TRAVEL POLICY

Staff members shall be reimbursed for actual and necessary expenses related to professional meetings when the Pastor has granted prior approval for attendance. Requests should include an estimate of expenses, dates of meeting, and amount of time the employee will be away from work. Reimbursement for approved travel expenses will be made upon submission of receipts to the church and approval by the Pastor upon the employee's return.

12.0 EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

It is the goal of ADLC, within the area of supplemental benefits (indirect compensation), to reinforce governmental mandated programs in order to produce a reasonable level of protection for the employee and dependents during the earning years and during retirement.

12.1 Workers' Compensation

As required by state law, ADLC provides Workers' Compensation Insurance coverage for all employees, with a percentage of the monthly premium collected from each employee's wages as established each year by the State Department of Labor and Industries. All accidents must be reported to the Pastor immediately, no matter how slight they appear. All necessary information must be provided so that a proper injury report can be filed. The employee should get necessary treatment as soon as possible. Employees may see their own doctor.

Accrual of sick leave and vacation is suspended while an employee is on Workers' Compensation leave. Employees shall not receive Workers' Compensation benefits and any other leave benefits concurrently.

13.0 STAFF DEVELOPMENT

13.1 Continuing Education

It is the policy of ADLC to encourage its employees to foster their professional growth and development to enable them to remain current with innovations and developments in their particular fields of endeavor. Rostered staff will each have Continuing Education funds included in their annual compensation package, and may accrue unused funds and hours for up to two additional years beyond the initial year allocated.

Employees desiring to attend schools, seminars, clinics, conventions, and classes for their continuing education shall submit their request to their supervisor prior to September in advance of the calendar year of desired participation. The estimated cost of the requested continuing education must be included in the request. Non-rostered staff may request funding for specific classes and training, with appropriate justification for the value of the training to their job responsibilities.

Applications for any continuing education shall contain the following information:

1. Name of institution to be attended
2. Purpose in attending
3. Time away from work, including travel time
4. Financial assistance requested and if contained in current year's budget
5. A brief explanation explaining how the employee and ADLC will benefit from the employee's selected continuing education program.

13.2 Sabbatical Leave

The ADLC Sabbatical Policy is intended to provide a system and structure for extended study and time for renewal for rostered staff. This leave is separate from any other annual leave that the staff member is eligible to accrue and use. (During the sabbatical leave, the staff member will not accrue vacation or sick leave, but will begin accruing such leave as soon as the sabbatical ends and the employee returns to work.)

A Sabbatical is designed to better equip pastors and other rostered staff to serve Agnus Dei's mission and ministry. Sabbatical time shall be used for study and learning, renewal and reflection, as well as wellness issues.

A written sabbatical plan should be drafted by the ADLC employee and presented to the Personnel Committee. Following consultation with and endorsement from the Personnel Committee, the sabbatical plan shall be submitted to the Executive Committee of the Congregation Council and finally the Congregation Council for approval. Following approval by the Congregation Council, the rostered employee is also expected to file a "mutual covenant" with the Southwestern Washington (SWWA) Synod of the ELCA.

Per guidance from the SWWA Synod, planning for a sabbatical should be initiated by the rostered staff member at least one year in advance of the proposed start of the sabbatical. The sabbatical proposal should include the proposed goals and activities for the

sabbatical, as well as addressing responsibilities that will need to be managed during the staff person's absence and recommendations for how those responsibilities should be addressed. The sabbatical candidate will be expected to work closely with the Congregation Council to assure that all arrangements for coverage are in place prior to the beginning of the sabbatical.

Elements of the Sabbatical Plan

A. Eligibility – Ministers of Word and Sacrament

A sabbatical leave of up to three months may be granted to rostered Pastors in their fifth year of continuous years of service at ADLC and in every fifth year after that. If two or more rostered staff apply for a sabbatical in the same year, priority may be given to the rostered staff person with the longer service at Agnus Dei.

B. Eligibility – Ministers of Word and Service

A sabbatical leave of up to two months may be granted to deacons in their seventh year of continuous years of service at ADLC and in every seventh year after that. If two or more employees apply for a sabbatical in the same year, priority will generally be given to the employee with the longer service at ADLC.

C. Sabbatical Plan

A written sabbatical plan will be prepared by the staff member who is taking a sabbatical and presented to the Personnel Committee for review and the Congregation Council for approval. The written plan will include:

1) Goals and Objectives

Goals and objectives for the sabbatical, plus the potential benefits to the individual and congregation, which have been discussed with the Personnel Committee and the staff member's supervisor.

2) Duration of the Sabbatical

The length of sabbatical leave needs to be discussed and stated in the plan, including beginning and ending dates.

3) Compensation and Replacement

During the sabbatical, the congregation will provide full salary and benefits to the individual. Travel, housing and education costs in excess of the staff member's accrued continuing education funds will not be reimbursed, except in a situation in which a specified amount has been approved in advance by the Congregation Council.

The Congregation Council and the pastor or deacon taking a sabbatical leave will jointly make arrangements to provide necessary staffing in his/her absence.

D. Requirement for one year of additional service

A sabbatical leave is intended to benefit both the congregation and the individual. Therefore, upon return, at least one year of additional service is expected following a sabbatical. If these expectations are not met, sabbatical compensation will be considered a loan to be repaid by the recipient upon leaving the congregation.

E. Report

A written, personal report will be submitted to the Congregation Council within ninety days after completion of the sabbatical. The report will include, among other items, information on:

- 1) the value of the sabbatical for personal and professional growth; and
- 2) the potential impact on the staff member's service to the congregation.

14.0 SEPARATIONS

The term "separation" shall mean and refer to the termination of the employment relationship between ADLC and an employee. Categories of separation are as follows:

- A. Voluntary Termination: This is initiated by the employee to voluntarily separate or retire from employment with the church. Rostered staff shall give 60 days' notice in writing. Professional and program staff shall give 30 days' written notice. Support staff shall give two weeks written notice.
- B. Involuntary Termination: This is initiated by the church to involuntarily separate the employee in cases of discharge for just cause based upon inadequate job performance or violation of church policy or restructuring of the work force. In the event that involuntary termination is caused by the restructuring of the work force, the employee(s) will be paid a minimum of one month's compensation as severance pay.
- C. Retirement: The retirement policy of the church will follow the guidelines of the ELCA.

Employees who are separated shall be entitled to compensation for earned and unused vacation. No payment will be made for unused sick leave.

15.0 DISCRIMINATION AND HARASSMENT IN THE WORK PLACE

15.1 Policy on Discriminatory Behavior

It is the policy of Agnus Dei Lutheran Church to maintain a work environment free of all forms of discriminatory behavior, including all forms of harassment directed toward individuals with disabilities, or the race, ethnic origin, gender, age or sexual orientation of an individual. Therefore, the use of disparaging terms, derogatory remarks, and

displays of insensitive treatment, directly or indirectly related to individuals with disabilities or the race, ethnic origin, gender, age of an individual or sexual orientation, will not be tolerated.

This policy pertains to every aspect of an individual's work relationship with the church, including recruitment, selection, compensation, benefits, training and development, continuing education, social and recreational programs, promotion, transfer, demotion, relocation, corrective action, termination, and all other terms and conditions of employment.

When any employee commits acts of discrimination, it seriously dilutes our efforts in the area of mission response.

15.2 Policy on Harassment

It is also the policy of this church to provide a workplace free of any form of harassment or intimidation by co-workers, supervisors, or non-employee work contacts.

- A. Harassment of another employee or applicant on the basis of sex is a violation of church policy. Sexual harassment is specifically defined to include, but is not limited to, conduct that involves unwelcomed or unsolicited sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, annoying behavior that is sexually motivated, or other undesired verbal, visual, or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Sexual harassment occurs if:
- Such conduct has the purpose or the effect of unreasonably interfering with the recipient's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment.
 - Submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as the basis for employment or other personnel decisions affecting the recipient of the behavior.
 - Submission to such conduct is an explicit or implicit term or condition of employment.
- B. Harassment of another employee or applicant for employment because of race, religion, sex, age, sexual orientation or any other characteristic protected by law is a violation of church policy.
- C. Harassment that creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment or which interferes with an employee's performance is a violation of church policy.

15.3 Reporting Harassment and Other Discriminatory Behavior

An employee who believes there has been a violation of this Harassment Policy has the right and responsibility to report the perceived violation as soon as possible, either to the Pastor or the Congregation Council President. Any complaint received by an employee must be reported to the Congregation Council President and the Pastor. If the matter cannot be resolved between the parties involved, the Congregation Council President and the Pastor will investigate all allegations promptly, objectively, and confidentially. A

complainant has the right to invite a colleague to be present at proceedings regarding the complaint.

The church will take no adverse action against an employee who, in good faith, complains of harassment and will, to the extent possible, protect such employee against reprisal from other employees. Disciplinary action, including dismissal, when appropriate, will be taken where it is determined that harassment did occur, or where a supervisor has failed to report violations of this policy or employee complaints of harassment to the Congregation Council President and the Pastor.

This church recognizes that the question of whether a particular action or course of conduct constitutes harassment requires a factual determination. This church recognizes also that false accusations of harassment can cause serious harm to innocent persons. Therefore, a thorough investigation will be conducted in each case. Malicious accusations will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action.

16.0 APPEALS

Any employee who feels offended as a result of their employment with the church may reduce their grievance to writing and deliver it to the Pastor. The Pastor shall schedule a conference with the offended party and other necessary parties to resolve the conflict. If the action or decision made is not satisfactory to either the Pastor or the offended party, the matter may be appealed to the Congregation Council for final disposition.

17.0 ESTABLISHMENT AND REVISION OF PERSONNEL GUIDELINES

These guidelines shall become effective immediately after adoption by a majority vote of the Congregation Council.

The Personnel Guidelines shall be reviewed annually by the Personnel Committee.

The Personnel Committee shall first approve Personnel Guidelines changes before submitting them for final approval by the Congregation Council.

18.0 ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF RECEIPT

Employment at Agnus Dei Lutheran Church is voluntary and not governed by any written or implied contractual arrangements. Both the employee and church are free to terminate the employment relationship at any time. No representative of the church, other than the Congregation Council, has the authority to enter into any agreement of employment for any specified period of time.

I have received a copy of Agnus Dei Lutheran Church's Personnel Policies and Standards of Conduct. I understand that it is my responsibility to read and understand this manual

and comply with the policies of the church. I have read and understand Section 15,
Discrimination and Harassment in the Work Place.

Signature

Name (please print)

Date

Appendix #1

HIRING PROCEDURES AT AGNUS DEI LUTHERAN CHURCH

1. Pastor and staff determine a staff/position need based on assessment/review of current operations. Pastor and staff recommending the new position, develops a position description which includes the minimum requirements of: position title, accountability to whom, primary objective of position, areas of responsibility, hours required for position, salary/wage range.
2. The development of such a position description must be reviewed and approved by the Personnel Committee and forwarded to the Council. The Pastor or designated staff person must present the position need to the Congregation Council.
3. The Congregation Council must then approve this position. New staff positions require the approval of the congregation. Council members must understand that said approval begins the hiring process that will include advertisements, interviews, and reference checks.
4. The Pastor and staff person recommending the new position must consult with the Personnel Committee and post the position in local newspapers, metro newspapers, and/or applicable publications or resources.
5. The Pastor and staff person recommending the new position conduct interviews. Personnel Committee involvement in the interview process is encouraged. References should be obtained and contacted if reasonable and possible.
6. The offer is made to the candidate by the Pastor or staff member recommending the position and after approval of the Congregation Council. The Personnel Committee will be notified of the offer and acceptance.
7. A job offer is contingent upon the results of the background check and approval of the Congregation Council. A background check will be conducted by the Personnel Committee. A candidate who is a minor will be requested to provide three non-family references.
8. The Administrative Assistant is responsible for the completion of all employment and tax forms required by law.

The new employee will be accountable to the Pastor and, if applicable, the previously identified staff member and should receive regular feedback from such individuals. Formal reviews will be conducted by the employee's supervisor after the initial 90 days of employment, after six months of employment and then on an annual basis in accordance with these personnel policies.

Appendix #2

**Agnus Dei Lutheran Church
EMPLOYMENT RECORDS TRACKING**

Employee: _____

Date of hire: _____

Position: _____

Use this page to track personnel information entered into the employee’s file. Please print the date whenever adding information to the employee file. Once information is added to the file it should be part of the employee’s permanent record - please do not remove it. The most current copy of any document will be used.

Records to be kept:	YEARS				
Application for Employment					
Reference/background check					
Acknowledgement of Receipt of Policies					
I-9, Employment Eligibility Verification					
W-4					
Job description					
Salary Information					
Vacation days earned and used (use separate sheet for each year)					
Evaluations: Mid-year Annual					
Discipline records					
Benefits information					
Reasonable accommodations requested/provided					

Appendix #3

PROGRESSIVE DISCIPLINARY PROCESS

Step One: Oral Warning

The supervisor will confront the employee about a problem in a face- to-face meeting. The supervisor will directly and clearly communicate the problem and possible consequences. Specifically, the employee should be told:

1. Why the performance is inadequate;
2. What level of performance is expected;
3. A deadline for improved performance; and
4. The consequences of failure to improve performance.

The supervisor will document the conversation in writing as proof that the disciplinary system was followed.

Step Two: Written Warning

If the oral warning does not work and performance does not improve, the supervisor should proceed to Step Two, the written warning. In some cases the gravity of the employee's conduct may warrant skipping the oral warning and begin with the written warning.

The written warning should communicate to the employee the same four points that were outlined in the oral warning. A written warning should be signed by the employee. Additionally, a witness should be present when the warning is delivered. If the employee refuses to sign the warning, the witness can sign a statement that the warning was given to the employee.

Step Three: Probation (Second Written Warning)

Probation is the last step in the progressive discipline process before termination. Meetings in which employees are put on probation should include a witness. Employees should sign documentation about the meeting. In the meeting and in the documentation, the church should make it clear that the next step is termination if there is no improvement.

Step Four: Termination

Terminations should be handled confidentially. A witness should be present. The employee should be reminded of the previous steps in the process. Finally, it should be explained to the employee that because enough progress has not been noted, the employment relationship is terminated.

Appendix #4

STANDARDS OF PERSONAL CONDUCT

1.0 VULNERABLE POPULATIONS ABUSE PREVENTION POLICY

Definition of ‘vulnerable population’:

- children & youth (any person under the age of 18)
- vulnerable adults - defined by WA state’s ‘Vulnerable Adult Protection Act’ as people who:
 - are 60 or older who are functionally, mentally, or physically unable to care for themselves OR
 - have a court-appointed guardian OR
 - have a developmental disability OR
 - live in nursing homes, adult family homes, boarding homes or any other facility OR
 - get services from home health, hospice or home care agencies OR
 - get services from an individual care provider or a personal aid

1.1 Policy

To help ensure the integrity of its ministry and to reflect its commitment to vulnerable populations, Agnus Dei Lutheran Church shall establish and carry out a program of Vulnerable Populations Abuse Awareness. The following program guidelines and procedures are set forth for the benefit of adult staff, parents, teachers and volunteers as well as the vulnerable populations themselves. Adherence to the guidelines and procedures can help prevent unfounded allegations of abuse and makes clear the procedures to follow should allegations be made. Persons who have been previously convicted of physical or sexual vulnerable populations abuse will not be considered for call or employment at Agnus Dei Lutheran Church.

1.2 Introduction

The dramatic rise of physical and sexual abuse among vulnerable populations in our society makes it imperative that Agnus Dei Lutheran Church address the issues of this trend and commit itself to a program of vulnerable populations abuse prevention. We do this in order to care for, support and protect the vulnerable populations and adults working with them at Agnus Dei Lutheran Church, as we seek to share God’s love in Jesus Christ to all who enter our doors.

ABUSE is described in the Vulnerable Adult Protection Act as: the willful action or inaction that inflicts injury, unreasonable confinement, intimidation, or punishment on a vulnerable adult. In instances of abuse of a vulnerable adult who is unable to express or demonstrate physical harm, pain, or mental anguish, the abuse is presumed to cause

physical harm, pain, or mental anguish. Abuse includes sexual abuse, mental abuse, physical abuse, and personal exploitation of a vulnerable adult, and improper use of restraint against a vulnerable adult which have the following meanings: sexual abuse, physical abuse, mental abuse, personal exploitation, or improper use of restraint. (More specific definitions of these types of abuse can be found in the state of Washington's Vulnerable Adult Protection Act - available online.)

CHILD ABUSE is defined in RCW 26.44.020: "Child abuse or neglect shall mean the injury, sexual abuse, or negligent treatment or maltreatment of a child by any person under circumstances which indicate that the child's health, welfare and safety is harmed thereby."

SEXUAL ABUSE is described in DSHS booklet 22-163(X): "There is a wide range of sexual offenses defined in the Washington State criminal code involving children that constitute sexual abuse such as: indecent liberties, communication with a minor for immoral purposes, sexual exploitation of a minor, child molestation, sexual misconduct with a minor, rape of a child and rape."

1.3 Guidelines

A. Dual Supervision

Whenever possible there will be two (2) adult leaders (or an adult and a teen) present at all times during all youth activities: classes, recreational events, childcare situations, small groups, overnight activities, etc. whether on the church campus or off-site.

Dual supervision will hold true for home visits (adults and adults) EXCEPT for pastors and faith community nurses. This is because of these individuals' training and accreditation. However, these individuals are not required to visit individually and certainly may invite other adults along on visits if they deem it necessary.

B. Background Information

- Church volunteers working in a direct, ongoing, and/or unsupervised way with vulnerable persons must complete a WSP background check and staff/volunteer application form (see document below). Background checks may be re-done every four to six years. Background checks will be paid for by ADLC
- Reports from background check will go directly to the head of staff.
- If any information comes back on background checks, the head of staff, one member of the Personnel Committee, and the Church council president will decide what steps to take next.
- Individuals can receive a copy of the results of their background check upon request.

- C. Confidentiality. When one-on-one counseling is desired or deemed necessary in the context of confidentiality, reasonable steps should be taken to promote the comfort and security of all participants.
- D. Security. For reasons of safety and security, children in the first grade or younger will only be released to a parent or recognized family member. Children shall wait under adult supervision in a common area until picked up by a parent or recognized family member.
- E. Reporting. If an adult or teenage volunteer, teacher or staff member is observed behaving in an inappropriate manner with a vulnerable person (e.g. kissing, fondling, engaging in other socially unacceptable touching, verbal or emotional abuse) it must be immediately reported to one of the pastors or preschool director in private. The pastor or preschool director will then institute appropriate actions in accordance with the established procedure (Section 1.4(C)).
- F. Abuse within vulnerable populations. Abuse may also involve inappropriate behaviors between members of the vulnerable populations (e.g. child to child, vulnerable adult to child, child to vulnerable adult, vulnerable adult to vulnerable adult, etc.). If signs of abuse are observed, the situation should be immediately reported in private to one of the pastors or the preschool director.

Being alert for signs of abuse is not the sole duty of those who carry out the congregation's ministry for vulnerable populations. It is the duty of all congregation members to report suspected abuse.

Signs of abuse may include the following:

- Presence of bruises, broken bones, lacerations, puncture marks, swollen areas, missing hair, or marks that could have been made by bites or cigarettes;
- Frequent or continual signs of minor or severe injuries;
- Presence of numerous injuries in various stages of healing, making it obvious they could not have occurred at any one time;
- Bizarre or impossible explanations of injuries offered by the vulnerable person; inadequate or conflicting explanations of the history of the vulnerable person's injury given by the parent/guardian;
- Evidence of delayed or inappropriate treatment for a vulnerable person's injuries;
- Cringing or fear of adults/caregivers;
- Indiscriminate affection with adults or other children;
- Self-hurting (head banging, self-biting, etc.)
- Reluctance to return home or to act in a manner inappropriate for the age of the vulnerable person;
- Alcohol or other chemical abuse;
- Eating disorders; Physical trauma to the genital area, especially in young children or reports of such abuse from other sources;
- Sexual knowledge beyond the vulnerable person's developmental stage;

- Excessive masturbation;
- Abnormal nausea or vomiting
- Aversion to a particular adult/caregiver;
- Fear of pregnancy;
- Over seductive or attention-getting behavior;
- Self-mutilation;
- Prostitution

In addition to being alert for signs of physical or sexual abuse, vigilance should also be maintained against verbal and emotional abuse to vulnerable populations. Verbal and/or emotional abuse may include obscene or sexually suggestive language, excessive or inappropriate criticism, sarcasm, shaming or other language that demeans, threatens or degrades a vulnerable person's emotional well-being.

- G. Training and Education for Volunteers. At the discretion of the Head of Staff and Personnel Committee, key volunteers will be required to complete training to be able to recognize signs of abuse and create a safe environment for vulnerable populations. Training will be paid for by the congregation. Training will be encouraged for all volunteers, and open to all congregation members.

1.4 Procedures

- A. Staff/Volunteer Screening/Selection: Any volunteer, adult or teen, who works in a direct, ongoing, and/or unsupervised way with Preschool, Sunday School, nursery, Confirmation, youth groups, youth mission trip, home visitation, etc.; who chaperones a one-time event that involves additional risk such as an overnight activity; or who works as a child care provider for church activities will be expected to abide by the following procedures:
1. Each potential staff member will be given a copy of the 'Vulnerable Populations Abuse Prevention Policy'.
 2. Each potential volunteer/staff member will complete a 'Volunteer Application/Background Check Release'. The Personnel Committee will determine which background check company/companies will be used.
 3. Upon request, potential staff/volunteers may have a personal interview with a member of the rostered staff or preschool director.
 4. Each person who applies to volunteer/work with vulnerable populations may be asked to serve a probationary period for an agreed upon period of time and work in conjunction with another church member.
- B. The ministry of the church may often be best served in the context of confidential, one-on-one counseling and discussion. Participants in such sessions, focusing on the ministry sought and offered, should take such reasonable precautions as are appropriate to insure the comfort and safety of the participants, consistent with the spirit and intent of this policy, the guidelines and procedures.

- C. Reporting and Responding to Allegations of Abuse. By state law (RCW 26.44.030) medical practitioners, pastors, nurses, professional school personnel, teachers, child care facility personnel or any adult who resides with a vulnerable person suspected to have been abused, are among those required to report suspected abuse of a vulnerable person. Anyone who has reasonable cause to suspect that abuse has happened may report that abuse. Reports made in good faith are confidential and the reporter is immune from liability.
1. If a parent, child or other person accuses an Agnus Dei Lutheran Church volunteer, pastor or paid staff person of abusing a vulnerable person, or if any volunteer should witness or suspect an act of child physical or sexual abuse, the preschool director or pastor should be notified promptly. All reports will be held confidential.
 2. The pastor and the reporter of alleged abuse will meet to determine if there is a basis for concern. If there is a basis for concern, an “Incident Report” will be completed and the following will be contacted:
 - a. By the pastor and/or the preschool director:
 - (1) The parent(s) or guardian(s) of the vulnerable person;
 - (2) Washington State Child Protective Services (1-800-562-5624)
 - (3) The Director of the Little Lambs Preschool or the Preschool Board Chair (if the report involves a teacher or child of the Preschool)
 - (4) The congregational president or the president-elect
 - b. By the pastor:
 - (1) The church’s insurance carrier;
 - (2) Legal counsel;
 - (3) The Southwestern Washington Synod Bishop’s office.
 3. Information that is important to include in a report of suspected abuse includes the following:
 - a. The name, address and age of the vulnerable person;
 - b. The name and address of the vulnerable person’s parents, guardians or other person having legal custody of the vulnerable person.
 - c. The identity of the perpetrator(s);
 - d. The nature and extent of the injury, neglect or sexual abuse;
 - e. Any evidence of previous incidents of abuse or neglect including their nature and extent;
 - f. Any other information that might be helpful in establishing the cause of the vulnerable person’s injury, neglect, etc.
 4. Only the Senior Pastor or the President of the congregation or their delegate will issue statements to the media regarding an allegation of abuse.
 5. All reports, conversations and steps taken regarding an allegation of abuse will be documented and handled forthrightly with due respect for confidentiality and privacy for both the victim and the accused.

D. Policy Administration

1. A copy of Washington State DSHS pamphlet #22-163(X), Protecting the Abused and Neglected Child, and a copy of Washington State DSHS pamphlet #22-810, Partners in Protection: A Guide for Reporting Vulnerable Adult Abuse, will be kept on file in the church office.
2. There will be yearly training held for all staff members in regard to Washington State's mandated reporting requirements, how to identify signs of abuse (sexual, physical and/or emotional) and how to properly report alleged abuse.

E. What happens when an accused or convicted sex offender wishes to join or participate at ADLC?

The leadership of Agnus Dei realizes that there is a difference between a convicted and an accused sex offender. However, because our first priority must be safety and protection of the most vulnerable among us, the below procedure will be followed for both accused and convicted sex offenders, with the understanding that all involved in decision making in this area will be aware of and responsive to the specific situation.

- The core response of the congregation to a convicted or accused sex offender is a Limited Access Agreement (LAA). This agreement invites the person with a history of sex offenses to participate in certain aspects of congregational life, setting clear boundaries including what the individual will not do. The message to the sex offender should be that they are both welcome to participate in adult worship, adult social, and adult educational activities and that they must covenant with the congregation to avoid all contact with children.
- The LAA will be coordinated by and enforced by the same group that is contacted if something is flagged by the background checks (Pastors/Head of Staff, Church President, one member of the Personnel Committee). They will use the resources of the ELCA or other resources suggested by the ELCA to complete and follow through with the LAA. [Responding to Sex Offender in a congregation.pdf](#) (elca.org)
- The LAA will specify participation in adult worship services, coffee hour, committee meetings, adult education, all-adult social events, and well-supervised intergenerational events as acceptable.
- It asks the person to avoid all contact with children on congregation property or congregation-sponsored events. (This includes not talking with children, volunteering or chaperoning children's events, including children's religious education classes, talks with children during worship, and children's activities during intergenerational events.)
- It generally requires the person to remain in the presence of an adult who knows their situation at all times when children are present, including in some cases, asking the person to suggest a group of people to act as companions at church events where children may be present.
- It denies the person access to keys to the building and asks them to avoid being in the building unsupervised when activities involving children are in session, such as nursery school or youth group.

- The LAA can be modified based on the feedback of the committee and the individual circumstances of the offender.
- It may include one of two introductory paragraphs: one for a person who has been accused of a sexual offense, the other for someone who has been convicted.

F. Practices for Children/Youth Events and Trips

- For overnight trips:
 - Hotel Rooms: Adult and Youth DO NOT share hotel rooms
 - Bed sharing: Adults should NEVER share a bed with a youth/child [exceptions may be made for parents/children of the same gender, if approved by head of staff]
 - Camp/Cabins: Follow expectations of the camp organization
- Adult/Child Ratio for activities (day trips, overnights, etc.)
 - Elementary – 1 adult for every 6 youth
 - Middle & High School – 1 adult for every 8 youth
 - When both genders of children/youth are present, there should be at least one adult of that gender as well

2.0 CONFIDENTIALITY

Staff and volunteers must comply with all legally imposed confidentiality statutes. No information concerning ADLC members or employees may be relayed to anyone outside appropriate staff without prior authorization from the individual. All employees and volunteers who have access to privileged information must take care to maintain strictest confidentiality. Whenever in doubt as to whether or not confidentiality should be maintained, staff and volunteers are to consult with the Pastor.

3.0 COMMUNICATIONS AND ELECTRONIC MEDIA

All computer and phone systems are the property of ADLC and are provided to enable users to carry out their duties of employment and volunteerism. All email messages are and shall remain the exclusive property of ADLC. To ensure that its systems are dedicated to ministry purposes and are secure, ADLC maintains the right to monitor all computer systems and their use. Those using ADLC systems should not have any expectation of privacy in their use or in anything that is created or maintained on them.

3.1 Social Media Policy

“Social media are a collection of online platforms and tools that people use to share content, profiles, opinions, insights, experiences, perspectives, and media itself, facilitating conversations and interactions online between groups of people.”

–Doreen Moran, Digital and Social Marketing

A. “Friending/Following”

Friending/following youth is a powerful ministry tool when used appropriately. When adults “friend/follow” people under age 18 they should also request to “friend/follow” their parents. Involving parents in this decision is important. An example of this request:

I would like to request to be your child’s friend on Facebook and/or Twitter. I prefer “friending” both youth and their parents as part of my practice to promote transparency and appropriate adult–youth relationships. I encourage you to monitor all of your child’s social media practice. I am happy to support you in navigating social media with your youth.

This practice promotes the safety of children and youth while providing good accountability with the adults who work with youth.

B. Posts

Social media, by its very definition, is a public forum. There is no privacy in social media, even with the use of security settings. Think before you post. Would you say this in a room filled with congregation members? With youth?

Be aware of unintended consequences and interpretation of posts.

C. Groups or Pages

Consider communities that gather on Facebook in the same way you would a community gathered in a room or a home. Youth Pages or Groups should be monitored at all times by adults who have been cleared through a background check and participated in abuse prevention education offered by ADLC (see Section 1.3 (B) & (G)).

4.0 PRIVACY

Agnus Dei Lutheran Churches uses various methods to communicate with members and the larger community in ways that help us follow Christ’s instruction to “make disciples.” Members’ names and/or contact information may be published within those communication efforts. In some cases, photos of ADLC members and events also may be published.

While those efforts are important to how we share the gospel, respecting members’ privacy and keeping their information secure are equally important. This policy was created to describe ADLC’s current policies and practices with regard to members’ personal data. The term “personal data” refers to personally identifiable information about a member, such as name, birth date, e-mail address or mailing address, and any other information that identifies a member personally.

ADLC uses the personal information members provide for the purposes for which it was originally collected—for example, to respond to e-mail or note, or to provide communications/information via printed material, email, or through the church’s website.

The information may be used to contact members or others about organizations, programs, services, and other things of possible interest to members, or to ask for member support.

Although ADLC collects some data about children younger than 18, that information is closely guarded. Neither names nor contact information for children younger than 18 appear in ADLC communication vehicles.

For members 17 or younger:

Release forms will be collected from each family with members age 17 or younger. ADLC will honor the wishes of each family. (See document below.)

For members 18 or older:

- Name and contact information may appear in the church newsletter, the official publication of ADLC.
- Photos may appear in the newsletter, on the church’s Facebook page or on the church’s website. The caption with the photo will not identify members by name.
- Name may appear as a contact in the ADLC online church calendar, in postings on the church’s website, or in e-mail communication. Address and contact information will not appear in any of these electronic venues.
- Name, contact information and/or photo may appear on bulletin boards inside the church or in the announcement section of weekly worship service bulletins.

ADLC will comply with any copyright or other legal requirements that may apply to the use of photos and contact information.

ADLC will not share personal information with third parties.

Members who do not consent to ADLC’s use of personal data as described in this privacy policy may contact the church office to opt-out.

From time to time, ADLC improves and adds new functionality and features to its website, e-mail network, and other communication services and programs. Because of these ongoing changes, changes in the law and the changing nature of technology, ADLC data practices will change from time to time. If and when our data practices change, the changes will be posted on the church’s website.

Appendix #5

**Agnus Dei Lutheran Church
PARENTAL PERMISSION TO PHOTOGRAPH
AND/OR VIDEOTAPE MY CHILD**

As a part of the worship and other activities of Agnus Dei Lutheran Church, I understand photos/videos are taken of members, including children, and may be used for the following purposes: (please initial)

_____ used in printed promotional materials for ADLC

_____ included on the ADLC website (no names will be posted)

_____ posted on the ADLC Facebook or other social media page (no names will be posted)

_____ posted in various places within the building (bulletin boards, etc.)

I understand that the photos and videos are for church purposes only. If photos are to be used in any other way, I will be given a photo/video release form to approve and sign.

Signature: _____
Parent or Legal Guardian

Date: _____

Please sign here if you do NOT give your permission for photographs to be taken of your child.

Signature: _____
Parent or Legal Guardian

Date: _____

Appendix #6

Agnus Dei Lutheran Church

VOLUNTEER APPLICATION/BACKGROUND CHECK RELEASE

Name _____

Address/Phone (if not on file with the church): _____

I understand the Vulnerable Populations Abuse Prevention Policy and agree to be bound by it.
___ yes ___ no initial here: _____

I, the undersigned, give my authorization to Agnus Dei Lutheran Church to contact appropriate government agencies as deemed necessary in order to verify my suitability as a church volunteer. I am willing to submit to the ADLC social security check, and background checks on myself from Secure Search or a business that offers a similar service as chosen by the Personnel Committee.

The information contained in this application (and information entered while in the background check process) is correct to the best of my knowledge. In consideration of the receipt and evaluation of this application by ADLC, I hereby release any individual, church, youth organization, charity, employer, reference, or any other person or organization, including record custodians, both collectively and individually, from any and all liability for damages of whatever kind or nature that may at any time result to me, my heirs, or family, because of compliance or any attempts to comply, with this authorization.

I agree to be bound by the Vulnerable Populations Abuse Prevention Policy in the performance of my services on behalf of ADLC. If I violate these guidelines, I understand that my volunteer status may be terminated. By signing this application, I state that all of the information given (and will give when completing the background check) about myself is true.

I further state that I HAVE CAREFULLY READ THE FOREGOING RELEASE AND KNOW THE CONTENTS THEREOF, AND I SIGN THIS RELEASE AS MY OWN ACT. This is a legally binding agreement which I have read and understand.

Applicant's Name (printed)

Applicant's Signature

Date: _____

After you turn in this form, the church office will submit your name to the background check company. This will result in an email being sent to you with instructions about completing the information/release needed for the background check to take place. This avoids the need for you to submit sensitive information (such as your social security number) to the church. Please list your current email address: _____