

CALVARY CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH

SAFE CHURCH POLICY

Approved in Council
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1. INTRODUCTION

Calvary Christian Reformed Church, as one expression of God's family, strives to be a community where every person is treated with respect and embraced in love, regardless of age, race, gender, or socio-economic status. 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 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, Calvary Church needs to take deliberate measures to guard against the sin of abuse. The following Safe Church Policy is one of those measures.

2. POLICY STATEMENT

Calvary Church will strive to create a safe environment for worship, learning and fellowship for all members and visitors of Calvary CRC and in particular for the youth, volunteers, and staff who participate in programs and activities through on-going implementation of the following preventive measures:

1. Adoption and adherence to the Safe Church Policy for all church programs and activities.
2. Ensure that the Policy is read and that applicable forms are completed. The forms will be retained in a secure location under the direction of the Safe Church Committee (SCC).
3. Implementation of specific policies designed for each program.
4. Adoption of a protocol to be followed when there are allegations of abuse against any person or when evidence of abuse is recognized.
5. Regular training in awareness of abuse and use of the protocol.

3. DEFINITIONS

Abuse: Calvary CRC accepts the definitions of abuse adopted by the Synod of the CRC in 1992:

- **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, and/or deprivation in such a way that it impairs a person's God-given sense of self-worth.
- **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 any role-inappropriate sexual encounter, even if consensual at the time.

Adult: A person who is eighteen years of age or older.

Calvary CRC, Calvary Church, the church, or the congregation refers to Calvary Christian Reformed Church of Ottawa, Canada.

Children/Youth: In general, these terms are used to refer to all children under the age of eighteen. Specific age designations for specific policies are identified in the relevant section for each program.

Council or Church Council: The body of elders and deacons of Calvary Church who serve as its highest governing body, with responsibility for supervising the life and doctrine of the congregation.

Leaders: Persons who give leadership in any of Calvary's ministries/programs, including but not limited to church school teachers, Youth group leaders and counsellors, leaders of short-term activities, and officebearers (elders and deacons).

Member: A person who has formally joined Calvary Church or who participates regularly in the worship and the community life of Calvary Church.

Ministries: Programs or activities accountable to the leadership of Calvary CRC.

Administrative Team: The supervisory body maintaining and administering records, policies and procedures regarding staff personnel, with responsibility for implementation of the Safe Church Policy in church programs.

Ministry Team: The supervisory body for all church programs.

Minor: A person who is considered not fully responsible/accountable by reason of age, as defined in the relevant statutes of the Province of Ontario.

Minister/Pastor: Anyone called and ordained to serve as ministry personnel at Calvary Church.

Nursery Attendant: A volunteer supervising infants and children in Calvary CRC's Nursery.

Police records check: A search by the police for records of criminal convictions, using a national database. Police Records Checks are one screening tool in abuse prevention policies.

Safe Church Team: A team of representatives of the Christian Reformed Churches within Classis Eastern Canada who are appointed by and report to Classis Eastern Canada with the mandate to a) provide information, training and resources to individual churches on matters relating to the recognition, prevention and understanding of abuse, b) to respond to allegations of abuse by ordained or un-ordained leaders within a congregation, c) provide advice to church councils on appropriate actions, and d) promote abuse prevention within the classis.

Vulnerable Person: A person who on account of age or mental or physical impairments or temporary distress has special needs for protection.

Youth programs: Any activity which is sponsored by the leadership of Calvary Church for the benefit/education of children and youth. Official church youth programs can be identified as those for which participation is requested or urged via the weekly bulletin, or any flyer printed with the knowledge or consent of members of the Ministry Team of Calvary.

4. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

1. All people are image bearers of God, worthy of respect, and therefore must be treated in a manner that respects 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.
2. 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.
3. All leaders at Calvary CRC are urged to be vigilant against abuse and will be held accountable for their words and actions. Those leaders who violate the standards of conduct expected of them (as outlined in Codes of Conduct, section 6) will be subject to disciplinary measures by the Calvary CRC Administrative Team (refer to items 4.8 and 10.2.7).
4. While parents have the primary responsibility for the care and nurture of their children, Calvary CRC and the larger community also share in the responsibility to protect and promote the well-being of all children.
5. By the grace of God, healing is possible for victims of abuse. Healing is assisted through the ministry of the church and wise professional counselling, which should be offered as early as possible. Financial assistance when needed is provided by the Classis Eastern Canada Safe Church Team counselling fund. Confidentiality is respected.
6. 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. In some cases, however, appropriate long-term restrictions may be necessary.
7. Authority vested in the leadership of Calvary Church, both ordained and non-ordained, must be exercised with the highest of ethical standards. Leaders have a special responsibility to take preventive and corrective measures.
8. 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, Calvary will advise the receiving church of the outstanding issues, while maintaining appropriate discretion and confidentiality.
9. 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. All 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.

5. POLICIES FOR ALL CHURCH PROGRAMS

This policy applies to all programs and activities held within Calvary Church facilities and/or sponsored by Calvary on a regular basis.

5.1 General Risk Reduction Strategies

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 involving only one or two participants, the activity should be done in a context that is visible to others. If this is not possible, someone should be notified of the situation.

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 6.2.3). All leaders and volunteers are expected to exercise discretion and avoid situations that may lead to perceptions of impropriety.

In the event that a teacher or counsellor finds they are unexpectedly alone with a group of minors, the scheduled class/event need not be cancelled. In order to proceed, the following actions ought to take place:

- a) the leader tailor the event to be a full group activity
- b) the activity ought to take place in a common area, i.e., in open view
- c) the minors ought to be told why a counsellor/teacher is not present (Unplanned absence)
- d) if there are other adults in the building, they ought to be notified of the change in circumstances.

Out-of-Town trip: Any leader of Calvary CRC who travels out of town on Calvary CRC business with one other person will inform his/her ministry head or the chair of the governing body ahead of time.

5.2 Discipline in Church Programs

All 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:

1. Corporal punishment is not appropriate under any circumstances.
2. Abusive verbal punishment (insults, yelling) is not permitted.

3. Concerns about recurring behavioural issues will be reported to the program supervisor.
4. 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.
5. If young persons misbehave, leaders should try to:
 - distract them with another activity;
 - help them focus on other acceptable behaviour;
 - isolate them from others; time-outs should be age-appropriate.
6. When misbehaviour is an ongoing problem, an aide should be provided for the classroom.
7. Evidence of abusive behaviour by the teacher or leader will be reported, using the established protocol (see section 10, Reporting of Abuse, page 11).

5.3 Screening

1. Any member of the congregation who has reason to think that any staff or volunteers of Calvary might not be acceptable for work with young or vulnerable persons should inform a member of SCC or an Administrative Team member.
2. A Police Records Check must be provided by paid staff, any leaders with child/youth programs and other persons in responsible positions in our church. If they are absent from our church for a period of six months or more and wish to continue as paid staff or volunteer leaders upon their return, they must reapply and provide a new Police Records Check.
3. All elders and deacons will provide a Police Records Check as soon as possible after ordination/installation. Nominees will be informed of this requirement when they are notified of their nomination.
4. All paid staff will submit a completed Police Records Check before they assume their responsibilities.
5. Anyone must be in regular attendance at our church for at least six months before they apply to volunteer with the child/youth programs in our church. They must complete the application form (Appendix I.1), including references, review the Safe Church Policy, and provide a police records check.
6. When large numbers of volunteers are needed for short-term or occasional activities, such as Vacation Bible School or nursery duty, those who will not have opportunity to meet alone with children will be exempt from the provisions of paragraph 5.3.5. Everyone will be provided with a copy of the Safe Church Policy and is expected to comply with it. In advance of the event, the leader will recommend to SCC which positions can be exempt; the decision of SCC will be final.

7. A copy or the original reports of Police records checks and reference checks will be placed in a permanent, confidential file in a locked cabinet in the church, to be consulted only by members of SCC, the Chair of the Administrative Team and the Clerk of the church. These documents will be kept on file for at least fifty years as a record of due diligence. Any paid or volunteer staff member may request to see the content of his or her file.
8. If a Police Records Check reveals past criminal activity which has no bearing on possible relationships with children and vulnerable adults, SCC may approve that person for activities with children/youth or adults.
9. If any member of the congregation is restrained by court order from being alone with a child, SCC and the Administrative Team will be responsible to take steps that comply with such orders.

5.4 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.

1. Persons who chauffeur minors for church activities must 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. Activity leaders must have written permission from parents for these outings.
2. 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 by arrangement/agreement with the parent or guardian at the beginning or end of a route.
3. Counsellors or designated volunteers transporting a youth must have parental permission to do so, via a signed consent form. The numbers of passengers in any vehicle will not exceed the number of seat belts in a vehicle.

5.5 Training and Information

1. All members of Calvary Church will be asked to become familiar with this policy and to suggest improvements.
2. All leaders of child/youth programs must:
 - receive training on preventative measures and recognition of the signs of abuse;
 - annually review Calvary's policy and procedures pertaining to abuse;
 - avail themselves of resources to help them meet their responsibilities.
3. Leaders of child/youth programs will be encouraged to make use of appropriate educational materials in their programs in order to inform minors and vulnerable persons on how to protect themselves and get help when needed.

5.6 Taking and On-line Posting of Pictures and Videos

With today's technologies, the on-line posting of an individual's image on social media and other websites can lead to concerns about the individual's privacy and security. Controlling what pictures/videos are taken is difficult as many people have cell phones or other portable devices that can take pictures anywhere. To address this issue the following guidelines have been adopted:

Guidelines for Taking and Posting Pictures/Videos

Technology now allows for easy taking and posting of pictures on the internet. To seek a balance between allowing its use to foster a friendly environment and promote the community and safeguarding the privacy of individuals the following guidelines have been adopted:

1. The following restrictions apply to the internet posting of pictures and videos taken during programs and activities of Calvary CRC:

- Images where a person under 16 years of age is easily identified will not be posted without the written permission of a parent or guardian. This permission may be obtained on an annual basis via consent forms for program enrollment.

- No GPS, specific address information, last names or other identifying information will be included in posted caption(s) or images or in the properties of the posted file.

- Pastors and Ministry leaders will not, via social media, "tag" individuals in postings and will, to the extent possible, block tagging by others. (*"Tagging" is connecting a person's social media profile, such as Facebook, to a posted image.*)

- Requests to remove a posted image or modify the posted image to obscure an individual's identity will be honoured.

2. Taking pictures or videos in the nursery or Church School classes is not allowed except by persons authorized by the SCC.

3. Pictures and videos taken at large group events are considered safe to post, provided that opportunity is provided for individuals to indicate they do not wish to have their own or their child's image posted. Notification of this opportunity may be included in event announcements, an announcement at the event and/or periodic publication of these guidelines.

4. Reasonable steps will be taken to honour requests by individuals who do not wish to have their own or their child's image posted. It is expected that these same individuals will try to stay out of camera view when they notice a picture being taken.

NOTE: Calvary CRC, its Council, staff and members cannot guarantee that these guidelines will always be followed and will not assume any liability for individuals who fail to respect them.

6. CODES OF CONDUCT

6.1 Code of Conduct for Pastoral Staff

Pastoral staff is called by God and the congregation to serve Calvary CRC 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 trust is maintained, pastoral staff will abide by the following guidelines:

1. Boundaries

Pastors, together with their governing body (elders and deacons), will develop and review boundaries for pastoral care and counselling relationships, including such matters as:

- counselling expertise
- time to be spent with counselees
- referrals to appropriate outside agencies

Individual cases will be reviewed with the team designated to supervise a pastor's work.

2. Meetings and Visits

All visits or meetings with single persons at home when no one else is present shall only be conducted when necessary. Such visits shall be included in the pastoral contact log.

3. Pastoral Contact Log

Pastors will maintain a confidential pastoral contact log, noting all persons with whom they meet in the course of their pastoral duties. This log will be available for review, on a confidential basis, by the governing body (elders and deacons). At year end the log will be filed in a sealed envelope, under lock in the archives, to maintain confidentiality. The pastor and a member of the Administrative Team or SCC must sign the seal of the sealed envelope.

4. Confidentiality

Information given in confidence must be respected and counselees assured of confidentiality. However, when personal safety, life, or the well-being of a minor is at risk, some information cannot morally or legally be held in confidence, and counselees will be informed of that.

6.2 Code of Conduct for Elders, Deacons, and Other Pastoral Care Workers

1. **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.
2. **Meetings with Young People:** 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.

3. **Visits or meetings with single persons at home** when no one else is present shall normally not be conducted. However, when such visits are necessary or desired, they shall be reported before the visit to a co-worker, an elder or deacon and at the next meeting of the governing body (elders and deacons) or the pastoral care team. The pastoral care provider will establish an accountability relationship with the Ministry Team and report on the number of visits and the general nature of them.
4. **Reporting.** All visits shall be reported at the next meeting of the governing body (elders and deacons) or the head of the pastoral care team (pastoral care workers).

6.3 Code of Conduct for Youth Program Leaders

The pledge in Appendix I.2 serves as a code of conduct for youth leaders.

7. POLICIES FOR SPECIFIC PROGRAMS

7.1 Childcare/Nursery

1. Nursery attendants will be required to read the nursery protection procedures. These procedures, as well as the list of nursery caregivers, will be posted in the nursery.
2. Nursery Attendants
 - The nursery will always be staffed by at least two caregivers, who are not members of the same family, and 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.
 - Adults who are scheduled for nursery service must have another approved adult to replace them, should they be unable to serve. Youth aged 9-17 are welcome to volunteer for the nursery. Youth may not bring friends into the nursery.
3. Registry
 - Parents will be asked to sign in when they bring a child and provide each child with his or her name tag. They will also alert the attendants to any condition that may cause problems. They must inform the attendant if someone other than family is picking up their child.
4. Specific Procedures
 - Any medical problem that arises 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, except for the lavatory.

7.2 Church School Program

1. The teacher will normally be positioned so that he or she can be seen easily through the windows.
2. A teacher plus an assistant, minimum age of 11, will be in charge of each class for ages three, four, and five. Consideration will be given to gender and age in the appointment of teaching teams. Only one member of a family may serve as a teacher or assistant in the same class.
3. Children should not leave during class time except for illness, bathroom privileges, or other compelling reasons.
4. 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 assist the child with the cubicle door left ajar.

7.3 GEMS and Cadets

1. Boys and girls should not arrive more than ten minutes before the start of their meetings and will be met by their parents/drivers immediately at the end of the program. Parents/guardians are asked not to leave a child when the doors are locked and no counsellor is present. No counsellor shall retain a child for a one-on-one meeting for more than ten minutes after the end of the program.
2. Counsellors should provide adequate supervision of groups. Each Cadets and GEMS function should be supervised by at least two persons, an adult leader and another volunteer at least four years older than the oldest members of the group they are assisting. *See 5.1 Meetings regarding procedures in the event that a teacher or counsellor finds him or herself unexpectedly alone with a group of minors.*
3. GEMS and Cadets leaders will identify abusive behaviours among participants in their program and implement strategies to discourage these behaviours.
4. If a child needs significant medical attention the parent and/or legal guardian should be notified immediately.
5. Any Cadets or GEMS activities away from the church facility, out of town, or overnight should be conducted in general compliance with the policies in Section 5.1 *General Risk Reduction Strategies*.
6. When children are billeted in private homes out of town, or we arrange billeting here for out of town children/youth, no fewer than two children per billet will be the rule.
7. Appropriate displays of affection between counsellors and their respective club members are often part of conveying support and encouragement to one another. Such displays of affection should be limited to actions like a brief hug, an arm around the shoulder, and open-handed pat on the back, or a handclasp, and they should not take place in private. A counsellor's or counselee's right to refuse any of these will be respected.

7.4 Clubs for Youth

1. Youth group leaders will provide supervision for all functions. At least two leaders will be present; if a couple are leading, a third adult should be present.

2. Any activities away from the church facility, out of town, or overnight, will be conducted in general compliance with established policies found in Section 5.1 *General Risk Reduction Strategies*.
3. When youth are billeted in private homes out of town, or we arrange billeting here for out of town youth, no fewer than two youth per billet will be the rule.
4. Appropriate displays of affection between youth leaders and youth group members are often part of conveying support and encouragement to one another. Such displays of affection should be limited to actions like a brief hug, an arm around the shoulder, and open-handed pat on the back, or a handclasp, and they should not take place in private. A youth leader's or youth group member's right to refuse any of these will be respected.
5. Gifts, phone calls, or letters directed to a youth group member by a youth group leader or vice versa should only be ministry-related.

8. ACCOUNTABILITY

Final responsibility for adherence to this policy rests with the Council of Calvary CRC, which, through its Administrative Team, will appoint a Safe Church Committee (SCC) 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:

1. All paid and volunteer leaders will be accountable to the head/coordinator of the program/ministry with which they are involved.
2. All leaders of child/youth programs will sign the Safe Church Pledge (Appendix I.3) to indicate agreement with the abuse policy. To ensure that all remain familiar with the Safe Church Policy, the pledge must be signed every 3 years or sooner at the discretion of Safe Church Committee.
3. 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.
4. The policy document and revisions approved by the Administrative Team will be dated and kept in a permanent file.

9. SAFE CHURCH COMMITTEE (SCC) MANDATE

Purpose

The purpose of the SAFE CHURCH COMMITTEE (SCC) of Calvary Church is:

1. To provide leadership in the creation of a safe environment for worship, learning and fellowship for all members and visitors of Calvary CRC.
2. To provide education resources and training for the recognition and prevention of abuse for youth leaders, volunteers, and staff who participate in church-related programs and activities and assist in the on-going implementation of preventive measures.
3. To put into motion a protocol when there is evidence or suspicion of abuse by a person in a leadership position

Responsibility

The responsibility of the committee is:

1. To review the Safe Church Policy and procedures and recommend to the Administrative Team such changes as will be of benefit to the Calvary family.
2. To monitor implementation of the policy in all programs and activities that takes place under the auspices of Calvary Church.
3. To develop forms and procedures to facilitate consistent terminology and record keeping.
4. To maintain the records of signatures, reference checks, and police checks required under this policy. These records will be stored in a locked cabinet in the church.
5. To recommend training resources.
6. To monitor and keep a record of participation in Safe Church training.

Membership

1. SCC will consist of a minimum of four persons, including both genders, who will serve for a maximum of six consecutive years. One of the members will be appointed as Chair. The Pastor is a member in an advisory capacity. In addition, the Administrative Team will assign one of its members as a representative to the team.

Functioning

1. SCC meets as needed, at least once each year, and also communicates by e-mail. Decisions are made by consensus. Minutes of meetings are recorded.
2. SCC reports at least once each year to the Administrative Team on the work of the committee and measures taken for the safety of the church family.
3. Persons assigned to SCC will be provided with such training as is necessary to enable them to perform their tasks with wisdom and effectiveness.

10. REPORTING OF ABUSE

10.1 General Policies

1. Evidence or suspicion of abuse by anyone in a leadership position or of a minor must be reported, but must be handled with care. The purpose of reporting is to stop the abuse, to provide assistance for the victim, and to hold perpetrators accountable and begin the process of correction and redemption.
2. Confidentiality will be respected. We will not assume an alleged abuser is guilty before conviction or admission.
3. Evidence or disclosure of abuse of a person who is a minor must 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.
4. All suspicion or disclosure of abuse as described above must be brought to the attention of SCC or the chair of the Administrative Team.
5. Calvary CRC 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

10.2 Protocol for Reporting Abuse

1. Anyone who has evidence or disclosure of abuse should inform a member of SCC or the chair of the Administrative Team.
2. 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 SCC in confidence.
3. SCC 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;
 - recommendation that the Administrative Team request that the Safe Church Team of Classis establish a review panel, to engage in fact-finding and provide advice to the church consistory;
 - notification of civil authorities, if required under the provisions of provincial law.
4. SCC 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.
5. 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 SCC 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.

6. If the situation involves a vulnerable adult who may be subject to provincial trusteeship, SCC will determine the need to notify civil authorities.
7. 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 CRC. 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 CRC, including, when appropriate, a permanent ban on holding pastoral office in the CRC.

Revisions:

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APPENDIX I

TITLE: SAFE CHURCH POLICY FORMS

APPENDIX I.1 APPLICATION FORM FOR CHILD/YOUTH PROGRAM LEADERS

I would like to serve in the following church ministry:

- _____ Cadets
- _____ GEMS
- _____ Church School
- _____ Youth Group

Name: _____
 Address: _____
 Date of birth (d/m/y): ____/____/____
 Phone No: ____-____-_____

Reference 1 ((Non-relative)
 Name: _____ Relationship: _____
 How long have you known this person? _____
 Phone No: ____-____-_____

Reference 2 ((Non-relative)
 Name: _____ Relationship: _____
 How long have you known this person? _____
 Phone No: ____-____-_____

I authorize the listed references to give you any information (including opinions) they have regarding my character and fitness for youth work. I waive any right I may have to inspect any information provided about me by any person identified in this application. I have read the **Safe Church Policy**.

I promise, with the help of God, to adhere to these guidelines.

Applicant's signature:

Date (d/m/y)
 ____/____/____

APPENDIX I.2 CODE OF CONDUCT FOR CHILD/YOUTH PROGRAM LEADERS

Believing that God is calling me to serve children or youth in this congregation,

1. My first priority is prayerfully to seek the welfare of the children/youth and promote their healthy development spiritually, physically, socially, and educationally.
2. I will try to understand and respect the child's/youth's cultural background.
3. The activities for which I am responsible will be done to help children/youth grow in faith, become disciples of Christ, and develop loving, caring, and responsible ways of living.
4. I will keep parents informed about the program I am teaching and what time it begins and ends.
5. I will not knowingly do anything that will damage a child's/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.
6. If I suspect that a child/youth may be hurt by the abusive actions or attitudes of another person, I will report that suspicion to a responsible person so that it can be investigated properly.
7. I will answer a child's/youth's questions openly and honestly.
8. 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.
9. 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.
10. 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.
11. I will endeavour to avoid focussing on one child repeatedly for praise or special attention.
12. I will pray for each child/youth regularly and let them know that I care about them.

Signature

Date

Volunteer/Staff position

Supervisor

APPENDIX I.3 SAFE CHURCH POLICY

Section 1 *(to be completed by signer; PLEASE print full name clearly)*

I, _____, have read and understand the Safe Church Policy (2014) of Calvary Christian Reformed Church.

I agree to the regulations and mandates of the Safe Church Policy and will adhere to them.

I acknowledge that it is my responsibility to help ensure that Calvary’s ministries provide a wholesome, safe environment for all participants, and should I become aware of any activities that appear 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 (attendee) of Calvary Christian Reformed Church for _____years.

I have received training in abuse prevention: Yes _____ No _____

- I attended a Safe Church workshop: When (year): _____ Where: _____
- I have read educational resources on abuse prevention: When (year): _____
Provided by: _____
- Other (specify) _____ When (year): _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Section 2 *(to be completed by a SCC member)*

Additional Documents Required				
Document	Yes	No	Requested	Received
Police Records Check				
Reference Checks				