

NEWTON HIGHLANDS CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
SAFE CHURCH POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

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X. APPENDICES1

I. Mission Statement

“Sanctuary” is more than a building. It is a peace-filled haven of safety and healing for all people.

Mission Statement: As a part of the Body of Christ, Newton Highlands Congregational Church is called to follow Jesus’ example of respect for the integrity and dignity of all persons. This is summed up in Jesus’ Great Commandment to love God with heart, soul, mind, and strength, and others as ourselves (Luke 10:27). To follow this commandment is to pursue love, safety, peace, and security for all who come with the reaches of our ministries.

The Safe Church Policies and Procedures of Newton Highlands Congregational Church require its members to provide sanctuary for persons of all ages who are entrusted to its care. They also protect those who have responsibilities as leaders and teachers.

II. Personnel Practices

Newton Highlands Congregational Church (NHCC) operates with a combination of paid staff and volunteers. NHCC seeks to determine the suitability of potential employees and volunteers by using the employment practices described below.

1. CORI check

In order to ensure that employees and volunteers are appropriate for their positions, a CORI check will be performed on candidates for the following roles:

1. Paid employees;
2. Ordained staff, whether paid or unpaid;
3. Youth Group leaders;
4. Chaperones for youth trips;

All CORI check results will be reviewed by the Moderator.

2. Disclosure Forms (See Appendix)

Disclosure forms will be required for people performing the following roles:

1. All those listed for CORI checks;
2. Chaperones for field trips and youth events;
3. Sunday School teachers;
4. Nursery supervisors
5. Regular helpers in classrooms, nursery, or youth groups
6. Drivers for field trips and youth events

Drivers must also be 25 years or older and have a safe driving record

7. Any volunteer who will be working with youth or children

III. Supervision of children and youth

1. Supervision policies

Newton Highlands Congregational Church is committed to creating a safe and healthy environment in which young people can learn about and experience God's love.

Volunteers working with children or youth shall have been members of the church for at least six months or friends of the church for one year before undertaking ministry with children or youth. Exceptions may be made to this guideline, but only if the volunteer is directly supervised by paid staff or experienced volunteers.

The volunteer application and disclosure form should be submitted before any volunteer works with children or youth.

A. Accessibility and Visibility

Unless there are concerns about noise, classroom doors should be open. If they are closed, they shall remain unlocked. Any door that will be closed should have a window into the room so teachers can see out and others can see into the classroom.

B. Contact

Volunteers are expected to offer young children warmth, safety and comfort, which may include lap sitting, hand holding or a gentle shoulder hug, but must always be with the child's comfort level in mind, and at the child's request. Volunteers should NEVER touch or view a child's genital regions unless changing their diaper, or kiss or touch them in a sexualized manner.

C. Parents or other adults acting as guardians

Parent communication is very important --- teachers should contact parents whenever they are concerned about a child's behavior or reports of incidents that are of a concern.

Supervision of children and youth is solely the parent's responsibility unless the child or youth is under the direct supervision of a Sunday School teacher, chapel leader, youth leader, nursery worker, or authorized volunteer while church programs are in session, i.e., a Sunday School class, Children's Chapel, youth group or special church event at which childcare is provided.

Parents need to know at all times where their children are, whom they are with, and what they are doing. Children and youth are not to play in unsupervised areas or to roam around the church. If your child is worshipping in the sanctuary and needs to leave the church service, they are under your responsibility. Please make sure they return in an appropriate timeframe and that you are aware of where they are and what they are doing.

D. Presence of adults -- Two-Adult Rule

At any time during activities involving children and youth, at least two adults meeting the requirements for staff or volunteers, discussed in section V, or a parent, shall be present, preferably one male and one female. If the minimum level of supervision cannot be achieved, the activity must be cancelled.

Both adults should stay until every young person is picked up by parents or caregivers. No adult will be alone in the Church, or at a church approved activity, with a child(ren) who is not his or her own or a relative. Two adults, not married to each other, must be present with a child or children under 18 years of age at all times. Should the supervisors be a married couple, then a third adult must be present. If a second (or third) adult cannot be located, the class or activity will be canceled, and the children will be returned to their parent(s) or guardian(s). It is permissible to have one adult per car with each car carrying a group of young people on a field trip, provided there are two or more young people in the car.

In the event that the children are divided between more than one location (for example, during Sunday school), at least one adult shall be present at all times in each location, and if a second adult cannot be in each location, at least one adult shall be designated to monitor all locations where only one adult is present.

Youth (sixth grade and above) may volunteer for limited CE volunteer opportunities, at the discretion of the paid staff. Youth, with help from parents, must fill out the application form. Youth shall always be directly supervised by adults when working with children and shall not be left alone with children. Classroom and nursery helpers must be five years older than the oldest participant in the class, group, or activity.

The following ratios of adults to children are recommended:

In church during the day: 2 adults per group

Off-site during the day: 1 adult per 6 youth or children, minimum of two adults.

Overnight: 1 adult per 6 youth of same gender, minimum of two adults; Girls and boys are to be counted as separate groups with these rules applied to each group.

2. Infant and Toddler Care

1. Children who are toilet trained are expected to toilet themselves. (See the appropriate sections for Diapering and Toileting under part V, Safe and Healthy Environment)
2. The church will seek to provide infant care for all non-Sunday morning events as a service to parents of young children. This service is dependent upon the response of the church and will be undertaken only when it can be done safely and following all church childcare guidelines.
3. Infant and toddler care will only be undertaken by those 16 and older; those below the age of 18 must be supervised by an adult caregiver at all times.

4. Two caregivers should be in all infant and toddler childcare situations at all times, both for safety and good care.

3. Discipline

POLICY:

Staff, members, volunteers, children and visitors have the responsibility to conduct themselves with respect for individuals, their rights, and their property and church property during all church-sponsored events. Adults working with children or youth are expected to help maintain order in a manner consistent with the teaching of Christian responsibility, respect, and cooperation.

Parents, staff, and volunteers working with children will monitor behavior of children. Limit setting will be directed toward maximizing growth and development of children and, for protecting the group and individuals within it. Positive reinforcement and modeling will be the major tools for appropriate disciplining.

Physical punishment, shame, sarcasm, shouting, ridicule, or harassment--- sexual or otherwise-- are NEVER appropriate responses to children's behavior. Teachers who are having difficulty managing a child's behavior should immediately consult with the Church School Manager for assistance.

Staff/volunteers working with children will not:

- Use corporal punishment, including spanking
- Subject children to cruel or severe punishment, shaming/ humiliation or verbal abuse
- Deny any child food as a form of punishment
- Punish a child for soiling, wetting or not using the toilet.

Staff/volunteers are committed to supporting parents/guardians in working on behavior issues and working out a mutual plan for time spent in church or church sponsored events.

PROCEDURE:

1. Staff and volunteers working with children will follow policy for discipline.
2. Members/parents shall be informed of the policy for discipline.
3. Staff and volunteers will teach children NHCC rules of behavior, emphasizing respect for others. They will make sure that all children understand what is acceptable behavior and what is not acceptable behavior.
4. If unacceptable behavior cannot be controlled in a child, and in the opinion of the staff/volunteers, it is harmful to other children or adults, the parent/guardian will be notified immediately and asked to remove the child from the area.

5. If staff/volunteers working with children discipline a child for a repetitive or potentially dangerous behavior, this will be communicated to the parent/guardian at pick-up time.

4. Youth trip policy and procedures

Field Trip & Youth Event Guidelines

- A. One month advance notice: the CE Committee should receive a proposal for all field trips and all evening or overnight functions at the church (with the exception of regular youth group meetings) at least one month in advance.
- B. CE Approval: All field trips or events should receive the approval of the CE Committee before the activity can take place and before fundraising for the activity begins.
- C. Approval of Chaperones: All chaperones for youth activities will be approved by CE.
- D. Parental Consent: Parents or guardians should be fully informed about programs, activities, leaders, chaperones, dates and times, cost, method of transportation, and purpose of the scheduled trip or activity. The appropriate signed parent/guardian permission slip should be completed and returned before any child or youth can participate in the event.
- E. Vehicle rules:
 - a. Drivers for field trips must be 25 years or older and have a copy of their driver's license and registration on file.
 - b. Anyone who has had their license revoked or suspended within the past five years will be ineligible to drive for youth activities.
 - c. If it was revoked or suspended more than five years ago, the CE Committee will make a decision as to suitability. All occupants of a vehicle will use a seat belt.

Youth Covenants, Parent/Guardian Permission Slip, Medical Release Forms

- A. Form must be given to youth or parents/guardians to be completed and returned to the Associate Pastor or the Youth group leader for youth group participation.
- B. Completed form will be kept on file in the Associate Pastor's office.
- C. Each time a field trip or overnight event occurs, the original form must be taken with an adult leader while a copy remains in the Associate Pastor's office.

IV. Handling of Complaints of Sexual Exploitation, Harassment, Assault or Child Abuse

1. Statement of Policy and Definitions

Newton Highlands Congregational Church is committed to creating and maintaining a worship and work community in which members, friends, staff, and volunteers can worship and work together in an atmosphere free of all forms of discrimination,

harassment, exploitation, or intimidation. Specifically, all persons associated with Newton Highlands Congregational Church should be aware that the church is strongly opposed to sexual exploitation and harassment and that such behavior is prohibited by church policy. It is the intention and responsibility of the church to take whatever action may be needed to prevent and correct behavior which is contrary to this policy and, if necessary, to discipline those persons who violate this policy.

A. Ministerial Conduct

All persons engaged in the ministry of Newton Highlands Congregational Church (including elected or appointed leaders, employees, volunteers, and authorized ministers) are responsible for knowing the possible impact of their words and actions in ministering to the emotional, mental, and spiritual needs of persons who come to them for help or over whom they have any kind of authority. Sexual harassment, sexual exploitation or non-sexual abuse of parishioner(s) or other individual(s) by anyone engaged in the ministry of Newton Highlands Congregational Church is unethical and unprofessional behavior and will not be tolerated within this congregation.

Because ministers (including elected or appointed leaders, employees, volunteers, and authorized ministers) often deal with individuals who are emotionally and psychologically fragile or otherwise personally vulnerable, it is imperative that those engaged in the ministry of this church maintain their own psychological, emotional, and spiritual health and that they have adequate preparation and education for helping those individuals they seek to serve in ministry. Newton Highlands Congregational Church will encourage its leaders, authorized ministers, employees, and volunteers to nurture safety within ministerial relationships by being attentive to self-care, education, and the importance of referring those in need to supportive and helpful resources. It is also expected that those engaged in providing ministry will complete and submit a disclosure document in a form substantially similar to that of the one accompanying this policy.

B. Definitions

Minister: a person engaged by the church to carry out its ministry. Minister includes elected or appointed leaders of the church, employees, and volunteers, as well as authorized ministers.

Authorized minister: a person who holds ordained ministerial standing or has been commissioned or licensed by an association of the United Church of Christ.

Ministerial relationship: the relationship between one who carries out the ministry of the church and the one being served by that ministry.

Sexual exploitation: sexual activity or contact (not limited to sexual intercourse) in which a minister engaged in the work of the church takes advantage of the vulnerability of a participant by causing or allowing the participant to engage in sexual behavior with the minister.

Sexual harassment: repeated or coercive sexual advances toward another person contrary to his or her wishes. It includes behavior directed at another person's sexuality or sexual orientation with the intent of intimidating, humiliating, or embarrassing the other person, or subjecting the person to public discrimination. Unwelcome sexual advances, assault/abuse or requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitute sexual harassment when:

Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition or circumstance of instruction, employment, or participation in any church activity;

Submission to, or rejection of, such conduct by an individual is used as a basis for evaluation in making personnel or church-related decisions affecting an individual; or

Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's performance or participation in church activities or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work or church environment.

Prohibited sexual harassment includes unsolicited and unwelcome contact that has sexual overtones, particularly:

Written contact, such as sexually suggestive or obscene letters, notes, or invitations;

Verbal contact, such as sexually suggestive or obscene comments, threats, slurs, epithets, jokes about gender-specific traits or sexual orientation, sexual propositions;

Physical contact, such as intentional touching, pinching, brushing against another's body, impeding or blocking movement, assault, coercing sexual intercourse; and

Visual contact, such as leering or staring at another's body, gesturing, displaying sexually suggestive objects or pictures, cartoons, posters, or magazines.

Sexual harassment also includes continuing to express sexual interest after being informed directly that the interest is unwelcome and using sexual behavior to control, influence, or affect the career, salary, work, learning, or worship environment of another. It is impermissible to suggest, threaten, or imply that failure to accept a request for a date or sexual intimacy will affect a person's job prospects, church leadership, or comfortable participation in the life of the church. For example, it is forbidden either to imply or actually withhold support for an appointment, promotion, or change of assignment, to suggest that a poor performance report will be given because a person has declined a personal proposition; or to hint that benefits, such as promotions, favorable performance evaluations, favorable assigned duties or shifts, recommendations or reclassifications, will be forthcoming in exchange for sexual favors.

2. Procedures for Handling Complaints of Sexual Exploitation, Harassment, Assault or Child Abuse by Employees and Volunteer Leaders

- A. A response team with no fewer than two members, one male and one female, both of whom shall be members of the administrative council of the Newton Highlands Congregational Church, will be established by the administrative council of the church each year at its first meeting, in preparation for the possibility of hearing complaints under its adopted statement of policy. The response team will familiarize itself with the terms of this policy as well as the established procedures of the Church for dealing with complaint(s) of alleged sexual exploitation, harassment, assault or child abuse (hereinafter called “sexual abuse”) against any employee(s) or volunteer(s) in leadership position(s) in the Church.
- B. Several options may be taken in addressing incidents of alleged sexual exploitation or harassment:
1. Subject to Chapter 119, Section 51 of Massachusetts General Laws, the complainant can attempt to resolve the matter directly with the individual(s) accused of sexual abuse.
 2. The complainant can report the incident(s) to a pastor of the church, in an effort to resolve the matter.
 3. If an informal resolution of the complaint(s) does not seem wise, appropriate, desirable, possible, or does not succeed, the complainant(s) may request that the response team institute formal proceedings which shall include the following steps:
 - a. The response team shall gather statements or other information from the individuals involved in the alleged exploitation(s) or harassment(s), and from others who may have pertinent information, and present such information to the supervisor and supervisory body (i.e., Diaconate, Pastor, Moderator, Christian education committee, etc.) of the accused individual(s).
 - b. The supervisory board shall make determinations and take actions appropriate to resolve the matter. These may include:
 - i. Finding that sexual exploitation or harassment has occurred and that the appropriate body of the church is called upon to take action accordingly. Such action may include one or more of the following:
 - Formal reprimand with defined expectations for changed behavior, including possible public notification;
 - Recommending or requiring a program of growth that may include education and/or counseling;
 - Probation, with the terms of the probation clearly defined;

- Dismissal from employment or volunteer leadership position, and, in extreme cases, affiliation with, or membership in, the church.
 - As required either by law or by terms of the Church's insurance policy, or if it seems desirable to the administrative council to notify the Church's insurer, the authorities as required by Chapter 119, Section 51 of Massachusetts General Laws and/or a lawyer representing the Church.
- ii. Finding that no sexual exploitation or harassment occurred.
- c. If the accused employee or volunteer is an authorized minister (i.e., holds ordained ministerial standing or has been commissioned or licensed by an association of the United Church of Christ) the response team shall inform the appropriate body of the wider United Church of Christ (i.e., conference minister, association committee on the ministry) of the allegation. The Newton Highland Congregational Church will cooperate fully in any procedures of the United Church of Christ related to the person's ministerial authorization while retaining the right and responsibility to employ or designate leadership within [name of church] as it determines best.
- d. If allegations of possible child abuse are included in the complaint(s), the response team shall notify appropriate secular authorities in accordance with Chapter 119, Section 51 of Massachusetts General Laws, and the Church shall cooperate fully in any investigation. This policy shall continue to be followed to determine the continuance of the individual(s) in leadership positions in the Church.
- C. A written summary of the supervisory board's proceedings in such cases will be maintained in confidential files.
- D. In determining whether alleged conduct constitutes sexual harassment or exploitation, consideration shall be given to the record of the alleged incident(s) as a whole and to the totality of the circumstances, including the context in which the alleged incident(s) occurred.
- E. Any person bringing a sexual harassment or exploitation complaint or assisting in investigating such a complaint will not be adversely affected in terms and conditions of employment, church membership or affiliation, or otherwise discriminated against or discharged.
- F. If the complainant(s) or accused person(s) is not satisfied with the disposition of the matter by the supervisory body, he or she has the right to appeal to the moderator of the Church, who shall refer the matter to the administrative council for resolution. If the complainant or accused persons are not satisfied with the decision of the administrative council, he or she shall have the right to appeal to the Massachusetts Conference of the UCC.

V. Safe and Healthy Environment

1. Health related policies and procedures

A. Food Handling

POLICY:

i) Facilities

The kitchen will be cleaned and maintained according to Public Health Codes, including:

- Only items related to food storage, preparation, serving, and clean up are to be stored in the kitchen. The kitchen is not to be used for other storage.
- Dishes, cups, cutlery, and other food-associated items should only be used with food. If it is necessary to use such an item for non-food purposes, please dispose of the dish/utensil afterward and do not return it to the kitchen.
- Items intended for food storage, preparation, serving, and/or clean up should be in good working condition. Please inform the Buildings and Grounds committee if equipment is malfunctioning. Please dispose of smaller items (e.g., cutlery, dishes) that are not in good working and inform the church office.

ii) Food/Beverages

- Only unopened food packages should be stored in the church kitchen. If it is necessary to leave opened food packages, the container should be tightly sealed and labeled with the date the container was first opened.
- All foods/beverages placed in the refrigerator or freezer are to be labeled with the date they were put in and the intended user (e.g., W&SL, Weekday Nursery). Unlabelled items will be disposed of on a periodic basis.

iii) Clean up

- Prior to handling dishes, hands must be washed.
- All food counters should be cleaned and disinfected. This should be completed prior to setting any clean dishes on the counters.
- Only a new, disposable cleaning cloth should be used to wash dishes. Please dispose of used cloths when clean up is complete.
- Only fresh dish towels should be used to dry dishes. Fresh cloths are in the drawer labeled “dish cloths”. Please leave used towels on the drying rack when clean up is complete.

PROCEDURE:

1. Prior to handling food, hands must be washed.

2. Any surface where food will be prepared, handled or consumed will be washed/wiped with a disinfectant and paper towels or disposable disinfectant/germ killing wipes prior to food being introduced to the area, and after it is removed.
3. Food should never be placed directly on a table or other surface.
4. Food will be placed on/in pans, bowls, plates, dishes or disposable napkins.
5. Prior to eating, children under the supervision of church staff or volunteers will be directed to wash their hands. Assistance with hand washing will be provided when needed.
6. Food containing nuts, nut products or known allergens will be clearly marked and stored in a designated area of the kitchen. Handling of this food will only be done with gloved hands. Gloves will be removed and properly disposed of in the trash prior to handling other food items.
7. When bringing food to church, members, visitors, staff will be reminded that all food containing nuts, nut products or known allergens need to be labeled as such.
8. Foods containing nuts, nuts products and known allergens will be marked with a color-coded sign/label at coffee hour and all other church functions.
9. If a child in the Nursery, Children's Chapel, Church School or Youth Group has a known food allergy, and is under the supervision of church staff or volunteers, no foods containing known allergens will be allowed in the room with that child.

B. Allergens, Medical Conditions, and Special Needs

POLICY:

NHCC will make every effort to maintain a latex free environment. Allergies, food and environmental, will be addressed on an individual basis. NHCC will actively seek information regarding allergens, medical conditions, and special needs for all children who are cared for in the Nursery, Children's Chapel, Church School and Youth Groups. Foods containing nuts or nut products, and known allergens will be labeled. This will include food consumed at any church sponsored event.

PROCEDURE:

1. All disposable gloves used at NHCC will be latex and powder free.
2. Information regarding allergens, medical conditions and special needs will be collected via the following methods:
 - Childcare Information Sheet (Used in the Nursery Area)
 - Church School Registration Form (Used for Church School and Children's Chapel)

3. Information regarding allergies, medical condition and/or special needs will be shared only with staff and volunteers who have direct contact with children.
4. Staff and volunteers will ensure that proper care will be taken when supervising food consumption, exposure to environment and/or activities, according to the individual child's needs.
5. If a child consumes or is exposed to a known allergen, displays symptoms associated with a known medical condition and/or has any unusual behaviors, this information will be promptly share with the parent/guardian.
6. Confidentiality of information will be maintained at all times by staff and volunteers.
7. Food containing nut products and known allergens will be marked with a color-coded sign/label.

C. Illness

POLICY:

NHCC is committed to providing a healthful environment for all ages. In support of that, we encourage people to follow the [Newton Public School Guidelines](#) to determine when to stay home form church or church sponsored events:

- A fever over 100 degrees during the past 24 hours;
- A cold in the active stages;
- A sore throat and/or swollen neck glands;
- An undiagnosed rash or skin eruptions;
- Vomiting or diarrhea within the past 24 hours;
- Head lice that haven't been treated

If staff or volunteers supervising children observe, or suspect that a child is ill or may be in the early stages of illness, they will keep that child a safe distance from other children and notify the parent/guardian immediately.

Medications can only be given to a child by the child's parent/guardian.

PROCEDURE:

1. Train all staff and volunteers working with children on Newton Public School Guidelines for illnesses.
2. Educate members on policy and guidelines for staying home from church or church sponsored events.
3. Teach children that it is important for them to let staff or volunteers know when they are not feeling well.

4. Ensure that there is a safe area, away from other children, where a sick child can stay until picked up by parent/guardian.
5. Educate members/parents about medication policy.

D. First Aid

POLICY:

At least three First Aid Kits will be kept in the church at all times. Staff, members, and teachers/ volunteers will be educated on their location and contents.

Use of the First Aid Kits is intended for minor injuries only. Disposable waterproof non-latex gloves will be worn by anyone administering first aid. Avoid direct contact with wounds and body fluids.

First Aid Kits are part of Emergency Safety Kits and are located in the following places

- The Narthex
- The closet at the entrance to the Parlor
- In the passageway between the classrooms

First Aid Kits will be clearly marked.

For anything more severe than a minor injury, refer to the Emergency Procedure Plan.

PROCEDURE:

1. Put on disposable non-latex gloves prior to providing first aid.
2. If a laceration, wash area with soap and water, or wipe with antiseptic prior to bandaging. Use disposable gauze or paper towel and discard in lined trash container with lid and foot pedal.
3. Clean any body fluids (ex: blood, vomit, feces) from surfaces with disinfectant and paper towels. Dispose of paper towels in a lined trash container with a lid and foot pedal.
4. Place any soiled items (clothing, toys) in a plastic zip lock bag and label with individuals name.
5. Remove disposable gloves (wrist to fingertips – turning inside out) and discard in lined trash container with lid and foot pedal,
6. Wash hands after removing gloves.
7. If first aid is provided to a minor, notify parent/guardian.

E. Disposable Gloves

POLICY:

Disposable gloves should be used to provide a protective barrier against germs. All disposable gloves must be waterproof and latex free. Gloves must be changed and disposed of properly after contact with each individual. Gloves must never be used as a substitute for hand washing. Gloves must be worn when handling food with nuts or nut products, changing diapers, when in contact with blood or blood-containing fluids and when cleaning surfaces that have been contaminated with blood or large amounts of other body fluids such as vomit or feces.

A supply of disposable non-latex gloves will be kept in:

- Kitchen
- Diaper Changing Station
- First Aide Boxes
- Nursery

PROCEDURE:

1. Always put disposable gloves on prior to:
 - Handling food with nuts or nut products
 - Diaper Changes
 - Contact with blood or blood-containing fluids
 - Cleaning surfaces contaminated with larger amounts of blood or other body fluids (ex: vomit, feces)
2. Dispose of soiled items prior to removing gloves.
3. When removing gloves, pull down from wrist toward fingertips, turning the glove inside out. (This will minimize contact of contaminants with hands)
4. Dispose of gloves in trash container (lined and with cover and foot pedal)
5. Wash hands immediately after gloves are removed.

F. Hand Washing

POLICY:

NHCC recognizes that hand washing is the first line of defense against infectious disease. Hands should always be washed prior to eating or handling food. Hands should also be washed after using the toilet, changing a diaper, handling or cleaning body fluids (blood mucus, vomit), wiping noses, mouths or sores, and playing outside. Hands must also be washed after all disposable glove use.

- Hand washing instructions will be posted in all bathrooms above the sink.
- Only liquid soap will be used for hand washing.

- Only disposable paper towels will be used for drying hands.
- Proper trash containers (lined, with lids and foot pedal)) will be kept in bathrooms for trash/paper towel disposal.
- Church staff will ensure that bathrooms have required supplies at all times.

G. Diapering

POLICY:

Diapers will only be changed at a diaper changing station. The diaper changing station will only be used for diaper changes. The diaper changing station will be set up away from food preparation or consumption areas. Diaper changes will utilize supplies provided by the parent/guardian. If supplies have not been provided, supplies from the diaper change station will be used. Supplies from another child will never be used. Instructions on diapering and disposal of soiled items will be posted next to the diaper changing station.

A child will never be left alone at the diaper changing station.

Disposable gloves will always be worn during a diaper change. A non-absorbent disposable cover will be placed under the child on the changing pad. All supplies must be properly disposed of. Hands of the child and adult will be washed immediately after the diaper change.

The parent/guardian of a child will be notified of a diaper change when the child is picked up.

PROCEDURE:

1. Check children's diapers at least hourly and whenever the child appears uncomfortable.
2. Wet or soiled diapers should be changed as soon as possible.
3. Take child to the Diaper Changing Station.
4. Follow posted "How To Change A Diaper" instructions.
5. Always keep a hand on the child.
6. While diapering, use time to engage in friendly and relaxed communication with the child.
7. Keep all lotions, wipes, cleaning items, and supplies out of reach of children.
8. Record diaper change on attendance log. Report any concerns such as unusual color, odor, frequency, consistency, or rash to parent/guardian.
9. Notify parents of the diaper change and any concerns when they pick up the child
10. Diaper Changing Station will stocked with the following supplies:
 - Disposable nonabsorbent cover

- Non-latex, disposable gloves
- Gallon size zip-lock plastic bags
- Disposable, fragrance free/dye free diaper wipes
- Assorted sizes of disposable diapers

11. Christian Education Committee will ensure that the Diaper Changing Station has necessary supplies at all times.

H. Toileting

POLICY:

No child will be punished, verbally abused, or humiliated for soiling, wetting, or not using the toilet. Children will never be forced to sit on the potty or toilet. Parent/Guardian recommendations of helpful tips will be used when assisting younger children with toileting.

Children under the age of six will be accompanied to the bathroom. Church staff or volunteers will remain outside the stall or door (if single bathroom) and offer assistance if needed. Children will be encouraged to do as much as they can by themselves.

PROCEDURE:

1. Parent/Guardian of younger children will be asked about their child's level of toilet training, word preferences, and cues that will help the child with the process. They will also be asked about any special needs or concerns regarding toileting.
2. Children under the age of six will be accompanied to the bathroom.
3. Staff /volunteers will put on disposable gloves prior to assisting a child with toileting.
4. Children will be encouraged to use the toilet, wipe and redress by themselves. They will be told that they can ask for help any time that they need it.
5. Any soiled clothing will be placed in a plastic zip lock bag. The bag will be labeled with the child's name.
6. Children will wash their hands with soap prior to leaving the bathroom. Staff / volunteers will ensure that younger children use proper hand washing techniques.
7. Staff and volunteers will remove (from wrist to fingertips – turning inside out), and dispose of gloves, and wash hands prior to leaving the bathroom.
8. Parent/Guardian will be notified of any concerns, problems or unusual occurrences with their child's toileting.

2. Building access and use

People who will be accessing and using the church outside of church-sponsored activities shall complete the key receipt form (if appropriate) and the building use form included in the appendix.

3. Confidential records

Definition of confidential record or file:

All personnel records: performance evaluations, employment records, call agreements and contracts, correspondence.

All records of pledges and giving.

What other records are considered vital:

1. Legal records. Deeds, wills, constitution and bylaws, charters, contracts and warranties, etc.
2. Administrative records. Membership lists, pastoral records (births, baptisms, marriages, deaths), building drawings and blueprints, minutes of meetings, etc.
3. Financial records. Mortgages, loans, capital campaign records, insurance policies, records that show obligations of others to the church, etc.
4. Historical records. Artifacts, photographs, audio- and videotapes, artwork, etc., including contemporary records.

Purpose:

1. To preserve and reestablish the church's legal identity in case of a catastrophe.
2. To reaffirm the rights and obligations of those connected to the church.
3. To maintain stable accounting practices and procedures that affect the church.
4. To preserve the heritage of the church.

Access to confidential records:

The designated core committee responsible for the staff person and the senior pastor have access to confidential personnel records.

The Treasurer and the senior pastor have access to the records of pledging and giving.

Storing of confidential and vital files and records

Confidential records and vital records are stored in the church vault.

The Clerk of Newton Highlands Congregational Church assures that vital information is recorded and stored in the vault.

4. Incident reporting

POLICY:

Any incident which compromises or may compromise safety, either personal or equipment/building/grounds must be documented on an Incident Report Form. Designated individuals and committees will follow-up on each incident in order to restore/improve safe conditions at NHCC.

PROCEDURE:

There are two types of Incident Report Forms:

- Personal - See Attachment IR-1
- (Accident/Injury)
- Building/Grounds - See Attachment IR-2

(Equipment, Buildings, Exterior Space)

Incident Report Forms and instructions on their use will be located on a designated shelf in the office supply area on the second floor. (?) They will also be available on line at www.nhcc.org.

1. A separate Incident Report Form must be filled out for each incident or person involved.
2. The reporter will submit a signed copy of the form to the designated individual(s) within 24 hours.
 - Personal: Chair, Church Council
 - Building/Grounds: Chair, Buildings and Grounds Committee
3. The Reporter will retain a copy of the Incident Report Form.
4. The Responding Individual will document follow-up actions and report to designated church leadership.
 - Personal: Church Council
 - Building/Grounds: Buildings and Grounds Committee
5. Dependent on type, a copy of the completed Incident Report Form, including follow-up actions taken, will be kept in:
 - Personal: Church Vault
 - Building/Grounds: Church Office

VI. Emergency Procedures

1. Safety supplies

- At least 3 Emergency Safety Kits will be prepared for use during Emergency Procedures. The Safety Kits will be located in at least 3 places: **The Narthex, the**

closet at the entrance to the Parlor, and in the passageway between the classrooms.

- The Emergency Safety Kits will include:
 - First Aid Kit
 - Parish Directory with phone numbers
 - (2) Flashlights with batteries
 - Information about what to do next, i.e. info about extreme emergencies
 - Where members will be directed to safe havens, i.e. the Hyde gym etc.
- A **First Aid Kit** will be kept in the Deacons Closet in the Narthex and in the Classrooms downstairs. In addition, there will be 3 emergency kits as mentioned above. The first aid kits will be checked every year and kept up to date. All teachers, church employees, and Deacons will familiarize themselves with the location and contents of the First Aid kit.
- **Fire Extinguishers** will be kept on every level of the church, and should be checked every year. CE Committee will coordinate with the Weekday preschool regarding placement and maintenance of fire extinguishers.
- **The WSL and CE committees** will be responsible for an annual check of safety equipment and procedures every year.

2. Fire/Emergency Safety Plan

- A Central gathering spot is designated outside. We suggest the church signpost and bushes on the lawn directly in the front of the church sanctuary.
- Emergency exit procedures signs are posted in all rooms of the church. All signs will direct people to the designated gathering spot outside.
- Once gathered outside, all families should seek other family members and remain together. If someone is missing, it should be reported to the designated Deacon.
- Responsibilities during the Emergency Procedure will be assigned to Deacons that are present. Responsibilities will include:
 - **Attendance Taker** (if a family member or church member is missing, people will go to this person.) Could be more than one person??
 - **Emergency Coordinator** Person responsible for decimating instructions from professional emergency personnel
 - **Handicap Assistant:** Person(s) responsible for seeing to it that all church members present who need assistance to exit from the church receive the assistance.
 - **Designated Deacons** will pick up Emergency Safety Kits as they exit the building.

3. Fire Drill Procedure

- Fire Drills will be held once a year. In alternating years, a fire drill will be during a service and during the Adult Ed/Children’s Educational Hour. It may be determined that the children should practice more frequently
- Emergency Procedures will be outlined as part of a **Parent Handbook**, which will be distributed at the beginning of each “school year.” All parents will be required to read the procedures and then sign a form indicating that they have familiarized themselves with the procedures listed. This must be done before their children are allowed to attend church school, children’s church and childcare.
- During an emergency Childcare workers will exit through the stairs at the rear of the childcare room, and will meet with parents at the designated area. It must be determined well in advance if the 2 childcare workers need more “hands” to help exit the church. The ratio should be 2 adults: 2 infants, 4 – 6 toddlers at most

VII. Accounting

The accounting policies and procedures of the church shall be conducted according to the following list of memoranda. The memoranda are in the “acctg. Procedures” folder of the Business Manager’s computer and should be reviewed and updated annually.

Cycle	Number	Procedure	Created	Last update
Revenue	1.01	Pledges	9/16/02	10/15/06
	1.02	Cash	9/16/02	10/15/06
	1.03	Collection & Deposits	3/12/01	10/15/06
Expense	2.01	Credit Cards	10/31/04	10/15/06
	2.02	Check Authorization	10/30/04	10/15/06
	2.03	D8 Deacons Fund	10/13/00	10/15/06
	2.04	Expense reimbursement form	9/20/02	10/15/06
	2.05	Medical Expense Reimbursement	12/01/02	10/15/06
	2.06	Special Funds	12/08/02	10/15/06
	2.07	Check Account Reconciliation	12/09/02	10/15/06
	2.08	1099 Reporting	2/4/02	10/15/06
Employees	3.01	Job descriptions	4/1/03	10/15/06
	3.02	Hiring: W-4, setup	4/1/03	10/15/06
	3.03	Check Writing	4/1/03	10/15/06
	3.04	Payroll deposits (monthly) & Reporting (quarterly)	4/1/03	10/15/06
	3.05	W-2 Reporting	2/4/02	10/15/06
Endowment	4.01	Cash forecast	10/31/04	10/15/06
	4.02	Annual reporting	10/31/04	10/15/06
	4.03	Credit Line	10/31/04	10/15/06
Reporting	5.01	Accounting Overview	1/2/02	10/15/06
	5.02	Balance Sheet	3/11/00	10/15/06

	5.03	Monthly Reports	3/4/00	10/15/06
	5.04	Annual Audit	12/9/02	10/15/06
	5.05	Annual Treasurer's Report	10/30/04	10/15/06
Budget	6.01	Budget cycle	10/30/04	10/15/06
	6.02	Salary review	10/31/04	10/15/06

VIII. Training

One Adult Ed session each year shall be directed towards Safe Church training and distribution of a Parent Handbook. The Parent Handbook will include the Safe Church policies.

IX. Safe Church review

This policy, including both content and adherence, shall be reviewed every three years. The Church Council shall approve this policy and the report of the review committee.