Personal Safety Policy Summary

Goals:

1. To make the church a safe place for children, youth, vulnerable adults, staff and volunteers.
2. To lower the church's legal risk by establishing a policy of reasonable care.
3. To protect **EVERYONE** from false accusations of abuse.
4. To implement policies and procedures that meet these goals while maintaining the integrity of current programs and needs.

Key Points:

This policy applies to all staff members and volunteers who may have contact with children or youth under 18 years of age or vulnerable adults.

A Personal Safety Committee is responsible for the creation, implementation and maintenance of the Personal Safety Policy. This Committee will be appointed by the Ministry Board chair and consists of one minister, one trustee, Christian Education chair or designate and one member-at-large.

Approximately 15 to 20 persons will be identified by the Administrative Council as "Activity Leaders". At least one of these persons will need to be present and in a leadership role for all Church activities involving children and youth. These persons will be required to pass a background check and receive training through the Illinois Department of Child and Family Services (DCFS) and/or the Insurance Board/Praesidium (our new insurance carrier effective January 1, 2018).

Activity Leaders may enlist the aid of "Assisting Volunteers". These persons will receive training from the Activity Leader in the key elements of the Personal Safety Policy and will always be under the direction of an Activity Leader. Background checks will not be required for these persons.

The two adult rule requires that workers with children or youth avoid situations where only one worker is alone with one child or youth. This includes transportation to or from Church or Church sponsored events. Other acceptable combinations are identified in the complete Policy.

Persons driving a vehicle (personal or church owned) for church business will be required to comply with the "Volunteer Driver and Vehicle Use Policy" contained within the Personal Safety Policy.

All adult volunteers and staff have a responsibility to protect youth and children under their care and are obligated to report abuse or suspected abuse to the Sr. Pastor (Mandated Reporter) and/or the Personal Safety Committee. These persons will make the appropriate decisions regarding further reporting to the Illinois DCFS or law enforcement as the situation warrants and as required by law.

Implementation:

This Policy will require Ministry Board and Congregational approval prior to implementation. Primary purpose for these approvals is to inform the congregation regarding the reasons for, and the contents of, the new Policy. With approval, the process of implementation will begin in January, 2018, when background checking and training services will become available from the new insurance carrier. Revisions will be made on an "as needed" basis and will only require Ministry Board approval.