



SAFE CHURCH POLICY STATEMENT

Revised October 16, 2022

A COMMITMENT TO SANCTUARY

In recognition of the spiritual and public trust given to this community of faith, Island United Church is committed to being a true Sanctuary, both nurturing and protecting its members and visitors. Worship of God happens when there is openness, trust, intimacy, vulnerability, and a safe, supportive community. Abuse and harassment are, therefore, violations of the faith shared by this Congregation.

Accordingly, the Congregation shall maintain official policies and procedures, which are intended for the prevention of instances of abuse, appropriate intervention into alleged incidents of abusive behavior, and care for all involved. To correspond to changes in civil law and the community, these procedures shall be reviewed annually by the Safe Church Committee, which consists of at least three members appointed by the Church Council, and replaced as necessary, to include at least one male and one female.

To live out our Vision of Sanctuary we determine that:

- Children can grow in faith and know God only if they are physically and emotionally safe at church.
- Parents and caregivers need to feel assured of children's and vulnerable adults' safety in all church activities, and of the church's commitment to provide that safety, in order to focus on worship and their own spiritual growth.
- Church workers need to be equipped, protected, supported, and accountable as they lead and nurture children and vulnerable adults.

Our strategy is to:

- Scan periodically the Megan's Law website www.meganslaw.ca.gov and the National Sex Offender database website www.nsopw.gov for names of any employees, volunteers, friends, visitors, or other program participants and respond accordingly.
- Fingerprint and process all staff and volunteers through the State of California, Department of Justice, Live Scan system, and national FBI system.
- Properly select, screen, train, and supervise all who work with children and vulnerable adults.
- Encourage all participants in Island United Church's ministry and programs to contact church leaders (Minister, Church Council members, Sunday School Superintendent, Sunday School Teachers) if they are ever concerned about safety issues. Anyone that witnesses, experiences, or hears about situations involving abuse, harassment, or exploitation should immediately report to church leaders without hesitation or fear of reprisal.
- Provide adequate care for wellbeing of the victims, the accused, and the families involved.

Our volunteers and staff shall strive to treat your child or vulnerable adult with dignity and respect. Discipline shall be positive, respectful, and caring. All volunteers have been active members or friends of the church for no less than six months before being permitted to work with children or vulnerable adults. Copies of our Code of Conduct and Code of Safe Practices are available upon request.