

St. Paul's United Methodist Church Child Protection Guidelines

Response Procedures

1. The official spokesperson for St. Paul's United Methodist Church will be the Pastor, or in the absence of the Pastor, the chairperson of the Board of Trustees. All inquiries or requests for information from the media, attorneys or any other parties shall be referred to the official spokesperson. No person other than the official spokesperson is to release any information regarding any alleged incident of child abuse without the express approval of the official spokesperson.
2. The official spokesperson will immediately report any alleged incident of child abuse to the appropriate local Child Protection Services agency of Rush County, our insurance carrier, the Conference Chancellor and the District Superintendent.
3. The care and safety of the victim is our first priority. We will not confront the accused without the approval of the Child Protection Service or law enforcement authorities.
4. We will not prejudge any person accused, but we will take any allegation of child abuse seriously and will reach out in Christian love and support to the victim and the victim's family, extending whatever pastoral care resources are needed. We will fully cooperate with any authorities investigating an allegation of child abuse.
5. We will treat the accused with dignity and respect. If the accused is a church worker, that person will be temporarily relieved of his or her duties until the investigation is finished and the person has been cleared by the authorities. If the accused is a paid employee of our church, his or her income will be maintained until the allegations are cleared by the authorities or until criminal charges are filed.
6. All communication by the official spokesperson to the media, congregation and public will protect the privacy and confidentiality of all involved.
7. All efforts in responding to the alleged incident of child abuse will be documented by the Pastor, or in the absence of the Pastor, by the chairperson of the Board of Trustees, and maintained in a secure and confidential file.