

RESOLUTION
SAFE SANCTUARY POLICY

SUBMITTED BY: Safe Sanctuary Team: Darryl Barrow, Robin Blair, Sarah Bouwens, Steve Deckard, Greg Forrester, Jack Keating, Glenda Schuessler, Nelson Stafford

WHEREAS Jesus' call to all who believe stated in part that "whoever welcomes (a) child. . .welcomes me" (Matthew 18:6) thus acknowledging the importance of children, youth and all members of our congregations in God's Kingdom; and

WHEREAS the physical and emotional safety, as well as the spiritual growth of all God's children is a priority of the North Central New York Annual Conference; and WHEREAS the North Central New York Annual Conference is committed to the holistic well being of each child, youth, and adult entrusted to said Conference through its organization and individual congregations; and

WHEREAS these congregations, districts and agencies in ministry are often entrusted with children, youth and adults by their families; and

WHEREAS the resolution "Reducing the Risk of Child Sexual Abuse in the Church" was adopted in 1996 and reaffirmed in 2000 and 2004 by the General Conference of The United Methodist Church, thus becoming the impetus for all Annual Conferences and congregations to implement abuse prevention policies; and

WHEREAS the General Board of Discipleship has identified Safe Sanctuaries, for both children and youth, as an official resource of The United Methodist Church equipping churches to develop a child and youth abuse prevention policy;

THEREFORE be it resolved that the North Central New York Annual Conference adopt the following as its Safe Sanctuary Policy:

Every pastoral charge, each district and any agency of the North Central New York Annual Conference that relates to children, youth and vulnerable adults in its programming or oversight shall create a Safe Sanctuary Policy with accompanying implementation procedures by Charge Conference 2008. Toward that end, conference-wide and district training sessions will be offered and coordinated by the Conference Safe Sanctuary team beginning in the fall of 2007. A copy of the local churches policy shall be on file in the charge's District Office; copies of Conference agencies and groups policies shall be on file at the Conference Office. Administrative bodies of the local charges shall be responsible for implementing, monitoring and reviewing the policy and accompanying procedures.

In conclusion, in all of our ministries with children, youth and vulnerable adults, this Conference is committed to demonstrating the love of Jesus Christ so that each will be ". . . surrounded by steadfast love, . . . established in the faith, and confirmed and strengthened in the way that leads to life eternal" (Baptismal Covenant II, United Methodist Hymnal, page 44). This Safe Sanctuary Policy demonstrates our commitment to the physical safety and spiritual growth of all members of our congregations.

Adopted at Annual Conference 6/2/2007