

# SAINT PHILIP LUTHERAN CHURCH, RALEIGH, NC

## CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE RESPONSE POLICY

**MARCH 25, 2003**

Saint Philip Lutheran Church is committed to preventing child sexual abuse in the following ways:

**First, the Congregation will not tolerate child sexual abuse by any of its employees, or its lay leaders, volunteers or others involved in various child programs.**

Second, the Congregation will make that position clear in its operating policies and procedures and in its procedures and communications within all groups and organizations involving children.

The Congregation Council has designated the following five persons to handle any allegations of child sexual abuse that occur: (1) Pastor, (2) Associate Pastor, (3) Coordinator of Christian Education and Youth Activities, (4) Council President, and (5) Congregation Attorney. If the allegation involves any of these persons, they are immediately removed from this group pending resolution of the allegation. The names, addresses and telephone numbers of the current "designees" are included at the end of this policy statement. The Congregation Council has designated the Congregation Attorney as the sole spokesperson for the designees to the media and to the Congregation on all matters related to an allegation of child sexual abuse. However it shall be the policy of the Congregation to refrain from comment to the media in order to protect the privacy of those involved. The Congregation Attorney will advise all appropriate persons in writing of legally mandated reporting requirements involving suspected child abuse.

Anyone who suspects that child sexual abuse has taken place should report that knowledge to one or more of the "designees". A contact may be made by mail, telephone or in person. The complainant need not identify herself or himself when she or he makes the first contact. The complainant may anonymously ask questions about how the Congregation would respond to a particular complaint of child abuse. However, the "designees" and the Congregation can do little about a report of child sexual abuse until the complainant identifies herself or himself and the accused person involved in the child sexual abuse. If the complainant is not a parent of the child involved in the complaint, the parents of that child will be notified immediately by one of the Pastors.

The "designee" contacted by the complainant will (1) assure the complainant that the Congregation does not tolerate child sexual abuse and takes seriously all reports of such abuse; (2) explain the Congregation's process for responding to reports of child sexual abuse and offer to provide a copy of this statement of policy; (3) answer the complainant's questions about the Congregation's policies and procedures; (4) express care and concern for the involved child and the complainant; and (5) when the complainant is anonymous, encourage the complainant to identify herself or himself and the child involved in the abuse allegation.

Once the complaint is known by the Congregation “designees”, including the nature of the abuse and the names of the complainant and the accused, the designees, acting on advice of the Congregation attorney, will notify law enforcement authorities as required, and the Congregation’s insurer. If the individual accused is an employee of the Church, that person shall be placed on paid leave pending investigation of the matter. If the individual is a volunteer, that person shall be asked to refrain from participation in congregation activities involving children pending investigation of the matter. The accused will immediately be removed from all activities involving contact with children until such time as the matter has been resolved. In no case, will a person who has been found to have committed child sexual abuse be permitted to be or remain an employee of the Congregation, or to be involved with children’s activities. If based on the outcome of any investigation by State authorities, the allegations are found to be true in a court of law and the accused is an employee, that person shall be terminated immediately. If an accused who similarly is found to be guilty is a volunteer and a member of the congregation, disciplinary procedures as outlined by Chapter 15 of the St. Philip Constitution; which includes censure, suspension or exclusion from membership in the Congregation shall begin.

One of the Pastors will discuss with the parents of the child alleged to have been sexually abused their and/or their child’s needs for pastoral care or professional counseling. If they request, the Pastor will help to put the parents in touch with such care or counseling. Under no circumstances will any employee of the congregation function as the parent or child’s counselor.

#### NAMES, ADDRESSES AND PHONE NUMBERS OF CURRENT DESIGNEES

Pastor David and Associate Pastor Diane Amidon  
6908 Three Bridges Circle  
Raleigh, NC 27613  
(919-846-2992)

Mandy Houghton (Director of Youth and Christian Education Ministries)  
3101 Janice Road  
Raleigh, NC 27614  
(919-846-2992)

Jim Bell (Council President)  
10121 Riverbank Drive  
Raleigh, NC 27614  
(919-851-1980)

Douglas Thoren (Congregation Attorney)  
7917 Farmingwood Lane  
Raleigh, NC 27615  
(919-870-5709)