Our Vision

At St. James, we are All in for Christ! We will all work to bring new disciples to Christ through worship, mission and small groups. All that we have. All that we do. All the time.

Our Mission

A vibrant, growing church changing lives and reshaping futures for Jesus Christ.
We welcome you to the staff of St. James United Methodist Church!

St. James strives to be a friendly, caring, compassionate, and Christ-centered church, both in its contact with the community and in its daily internal operations. As you enter into employment at St. James, you join a dedicated ministry team, serving Christ, His Church and the community.

We believe the key to effective ministry is outstanding, supportive, and skilled people, who work well together in pursuit of the church’s mission. Every staff member plays a vital part in the overall success of our ministry team. With a high work quality and a positive team spirit, our meaningful ministry reaches far beyond your particular job, area of accountability, and focused responsibilities.

Our ministry team is committed to supporting you in your work to help further develop your professional skills and meet the needs and goals in every aspect of the church’s life. One of our objectives is to provide a work environment that is conducive to both personal and professional growth. We trust you will give your best efforts and find your service as a St. James employee to be challenging, rewarding, and meaningful.

We wish you great fulfillment and joy in your work as you share your talents, skills, abilities, and professional training with your co-workers and the members of our church.

Sincerely,

Staff-Parish Relations Committee
Senior Pastor
Senior Staff
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INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT

This Employee Policy Handbook is designed to acquaint you with St. James United Methodist Church (the Church) and provide you with policies and procedures affecting your employment. It also describes many of your responsibilities as an employee and includes information about working conditions, compensation, and benefit programs.

You should read, understand, and comply with all provisions in this handbook. Violation may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

Employment with the Church is at will. The employment relationship may be terminated at any time, with or without cause, at the discretion of either St. James United Methodist Church or the employee. The policies and procedures outlined in this Employee Policy Handbook are not intended to constitute any legally binding contractual obligation, expressed or implied. They have been developed with great care and are designed to ensure fair and consistent treatment of all employees.

As ministry considerations change and needs arise, the Staff-Parish Relations Committee anticipates there will be modifications to the information, policies, and procedures contained in this handbook. The Church reserves the right to revise, supplement, or rescind any policies or portion of this Employee Policy Handbook at any time, as it deems appropriate. Employees will be notified of changes to the Handbook as they occur to the extent practical under the circumstances. Lack of notice does not mean the policy or procedure may not be or is not effectively changed.

The governing responsibility for personnel matters lies with the Staff-Parish Relations Committee (SPRC), which receives its authority from The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church.

The policies contained in this handbook supersede all previous written and unwritten policies and procedures of the Church. Questions concerning clarification should be directed to your supervisor or the Church Administrator.
SPECIALIZED POLICIES, PROCEDURES, AND GUIDELINES

As a governing body, the SPRC has the responsibility to develop, adopt and oversee the personnel policies affecting all employees of the Church. There may be specialized policies, procedures, and guidelines – in addition to those contained in this handbook – adopted in order to meet specific needs of various programs and ministries, such as the Tuition Based Ministries. Matters not covered by this Employee Policy Handbook may be addressed through administrative guidelines when appropriate, upon the approval of the Senior Pastor, Executive Pastor, or Church Administrator.
DEFINITIONS AND EMPLOYEE CLASSIFICATIONS

**Administrative Guidelines:** Administrative guidelines and procedures are created by staff and approved by authorized supervisors within the parameters of Church Policy, in order to facilitate the ministry of St. James and provide for effective management and administration. Unlike guidelines, policy is created by the governing bodies of the Church, such as the Staff-Parish Relations Committee (SPRC).

**Associate Ministers:** When more than one pastor is appointed or employed at a local church, Associate Ministers are assigned to specific areas of ministry and are designated as Minister or Pastor of those defined areas in addition to duties as assigned by the Senior Pastor and/or Senior Staff member.

**Church Administrator:** A member of the Senior Staff, the Church Administrator provides oversight and leadership in the areas of finance operations, business administration, human resources, facilities maintenance, and risk management.

**Church Council:** In order to provide oversight and leadership throughout the year, the Church Council serves as our Church Conference’s executive governing body, monitoring ministry progress and voting on strategic matters. The Council’s primary duties include setting strategic direction for the church, overseeing the church’s governance and administration, and ensuring that our ministries are accomplishing the church’s purpose, vision and plans. This committee is assigned its authority from The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church.

**Church Lay Worker or Lay Employee:** A lay (not ordained or licensed) person employed either full or part time in a local church.

**Clergy:** Clergy includes all persons appointed by the Bishop and Cabinet for service in our church, and are indicated by the titles “Minister” and “Reverend.” This includes Ordained Elders, Local Pastors and Deacons. Clergy may be appointed to serve as “Pastors;” others may serve exclusively as “Directors” of various ministries. Elders and Local Pastors are not considered by law to be employees of St. James United Methodist Church.

**Deacons:** Deacons are ordained by the Bishop for “Word, Service, Justice and Compassion” and have clergy membership in the Annual Conference. Deacons are specialists who are hired by individual local churches to work in specific areas of ministry, serving under appointment by the Bishop.

**Executive Pastor:** One Associate Minister on staff may serve in an administrative and supervisory capacity, charged with the day-to-day responsibilities regarding personnel and program issues. The Executive Pastor also executes pastoral and program responsibilities as needed or assigned by the Senior Pastor. The Executive Pastor serves as a member of the Senior Staff and makes executive decisions relating to the church in the absence of the Senior Pastor.
**Exempt and Non-Exempt Status:** All staff members are designated either as exempt or non-exempt employees, as defined by the federal Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA). The job description will state whether the position is classified as exempt or non-exempt. This designation determines some of the elements of your employment.

**Full-time Employee:** Employed for an average of 32 hours or more per week for an indefinite period of time. Employees with this classification are entitled to certain benefits as outlined in this handbook.

**Intern:** Temporary employment assignment is limited in duration, and hours can fluctuate. Employees in this category generally have no benefits except those mandated by law.

**Local Pastors:** Local Pastors are persons who have been certified by the District Committee on Ordained Ministry as having completed all the prescribed educational and Disciplinary requirements for service. They may serve in a full-time, part-time or student capacity. They are appointed by the Bishop to serve in local churches. Requirements for continuation as a local pastor include educational progress and evaluative oversight by the District and local church.

**Maintenance Staff:** These persons are employed either full or part time to handle the maintenance and custodial needs of the church. The Maintenance/Custodial Staff is managed and supervised under the direction of the Church Administrator.

**Ordained Elders:** An Ordained Elder is a person who is ordained by the Bishop for “Word, Sacrament and Order” and has membership in the annual conference. Elders serve under the appointment of the Bishop.

**Part-time Employee:** Scheduled for less than 32 hours per week on an average basis. Employees in this category are entitled to some benefits as outlined in this handbook on a pro-rated basis, proportionate to actual hours scheduled and worked.

**Program Staff:** Program staff members are employed either full or part time in specific areas of ministry (for example, Youth, Children, Singles) as indicated by their job description. Program staff members are normally considered “exempt” employees.

**Senior Pastor:** When more than one pastor is appointed or employed at a local church, one is always designated as Senior Pastor, and charged with the ultimate leadership responsibilities. In the absence of the Senior Pastor, the Executive Pastor makes executive decisions relating to the church.

**Senior Staff:** The Senior Pastor may designate a Senior Staff team composed of the Senior Pastor’s direct reports to coordinate decision making at a strategic level. This executive leadership team ensures that the flow of decision making remains effective. In the Employee Policy Handbook, certain responsibilities for management have been delegated from the Senior Pastor to this executive leadership team.
Staff-Parish Relations Committee (SPRC): Members of the SPRC are elected by the Church/Charge Conference of the church. The committee consults with the Senior Pastor and Senior Staff regarding to personnel policy decisions and issues, including hiring and firing, and the performance evaluation process. The SPRC also works to enhance and simplify communication within the church by serving as liaison between the congregation and the pastors and staff, and interpreting the nature and function of the church’s ministry. This committee is assigned its authority from The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church.

Supervisors: For the purpose of organization and management, staff members serve within a designated ministry area of the church (for example, Support Staff, Pastoral Care, Children, Youth). Each ministry area is overseen by a Supervisor, who serves as a support and resource person for those within his or her area. This Supervisor is responsible for conducting interim and annual reviews for the ministry area’s personnel, based on personal, professional, and church goals and objectives.

Support Staff: Employed either full or part time to perform a specific task or fill a specific need in support of the programs and ministries of the church. The Support Staff is managed and supervised under the direction of the Church Administrator.

Temporary Employee: Employed for a limited period of time to perform a specific task or fill a specific need, as scheduled by the church; a temporary employee may be either full or part time. Employees in this category generally have no benefits except those mandated by law.

Trustees: Members of the Board of Trustees are elected by the Church/Charge Conference of the church. This governing board is charged with the care and maintenance of church property and holds title to the church’s property, buildings and equipment. Areas of responsibility include establishing policies and practices regarding maintenance and equipment, church property, safe sanctuary, disaster planning, land acquisition and construction planning, and both property and liability insurance. This committee is assigned its authority from The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church.

Tuition Based Ministries (for example, Learning Center and Kids LIFE): Including the directors, these employees serve in extension ministries of St. James. All these staff members are covered by the provisions of this Employee Policy Handbook with exceptions made to further the unique ministry needs and staffing of Tuition Based Ministries. The SPRC and Church Administrator must give approval to the personnel policy statements of each Tuition Based Ministry. The payroll and benefits expense for all staff members of Tuition Based Ministries shall be the responsibility of the respective ministries. Selection of members of the Administrative Committees of Tuition Based Ministries shall be upon nomination of the church nominating committee and election by the Church/Charge Conference.
GENERAL INFORMATION

EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES

All employees of St. James United Methodist Church (including Tuition Based and extension ministries) are “employees at will” according to Arkansas state law. None of the personnel procedures or policies shall be interpreted or exercised to change this status.

It is the intent of the SPRC and the Church to afford equal and fair employment opportunity to all qualified persons, in the context of a religious ministry and in accordance with the Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church. As a religious organization, the Church may under the United States Constitution and applicable state and federal laws, discriminate on the basis of religion, religious beliefs, and religious practices. However, the Church will not discriminate in the hiring, continued employment, and other personnel actions on the basis of protected characteristics.

The Senior Pastor, or designee, may accept applications for all positions. Under the oversight of the SPRC, the Senior Pastor, or designee, shall hire and terminate all employees. Employment decisions relating to staff of Tuition Based Ministries are delegated to the director of these ministries and appropriate supervisors. All new employees are hired for a probationary period of at least 90 days. At the end of this probationary period, the Senior Pastor, or designee, may approve the employee as permanent staff. The SPRC may provide input to the Senior Pastor and/or Senior Staff in the job performance of all staff members, and shall serve as the final appellate authority for any employee grievances.

Criminal History/Background Checks may be run on all qualified persons considered for employment and on all staff members not under appointment. Credit checks may be required on persons who are determined by the SPRC and Senior Pastor to have jobs indicating a heightened level of responsibility and exposure (for example, monetary responsibilities, the use of financial discretion, or security risks). Child and adult maltreatment checks and drug tests may also be run in accordance with state and federal law. Applicants and staff members shall be given an opportunity to challenge records they consider to be inaccurate that are revealed through the process.

Staff members are expected to be good role models who provide a positive image of our local church and the United Methodist Church in the community as a whole. Religious beliefs and practices, personal conduct, and the Christian lifestyle of all staff members will be considered in the hiring and continued employment of persons for the Church.
OFFICE HOURS AND WORK SCHEDULES

The Church office is open from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Thursday, and 8:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. on Friday. For holidays or other uncommon circumstances (for example, inclement weather, construction, or an emergency), the Church may be closed or the office hours changed. The Senior Pastor, or designee, shall assess and determine modifications to the regular schedule.

Regular work hours are expected of all employees. The work schedules for employees vary throughout our organization. Employee supervisors will advise staff of their individual work schedules. Staffing needs and operational demands may necessitate variations in starting and ending times, as well as variations in the total hours for which employees may be scheduled each day and week. Support Staff work hours will be determined by the Church Administrator. Since Program Staff members’ work days may vary depending on the ministry assigned, each Program Staff member is to announce and adhere to scheduled office hours, with the schedule approved by the supervisor and the Senior Pastor.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

It is the church’s policy to be open during normal church office hours and to minimize closures due to inclement weather. The weather will be determined as inclement by the Senior Pastor, or designee, if he or she feels conditions would seriously hamper employees coming to work or returning home from work. If the church is officially closed for inclement weather, employees will be paid for scheduled hours.

Prior to working hours: Unless otherwise notified, staff members are expected to report to work on time. When inclement conditions are determined, staff members are expected to arrive at work as soon as safely possible. If the church office remains open, staff members may take vacation leave or leave without pay for any additional time absent from work beyond what was allowed for inclement weather.

During working hours: If weather conditions seem to become hazardous during working hours and yet the church office remains open, staff members may request permission from their supervisor or the Senior Pastor to leave early. If the staff member receives permission to leave early during time the church office is open, the staff member may do so by using vacation leave or leave without pay.

Tuition Based Ministries: Tuition Based Ministries shall follow the inclement weather closing policy recommended by their Administrative Committees. If a Tuition Based Ministry is closed or closes early due to inclement weather, employees shall be paid for scheduled work time, unless the employee is on sick leave, vacation, or absence for other reasons.
HOLIDAYS

The church office will be closed for the holidays noted below, and all full-time employees shall receive equivalent time off for the authorized holidays. When the holiday falls on a Saturday, it will typically be observed the preceding Friday. When a holiday falls on a Sunday or other special day in the church calendar, it will typically be observed on the succeeding Monday. The Church recognizes ten (10) official holidays:

- New Year's Day (January 1)
- Martin Luther King Day (3rd Monday in January)
- The Monday following Easter
- Memorial Day (last Monday in May)
- Independence Day (July 4)
- Labor Day (first Monday in September)
- Thanksgiving (fourth Thursday in November)
- The Friday after Thanksgiving
- Christmas (December 25)
- The day after Christmas (December 26)

In some instances, the actual dates authorized for individual departments may be modified, depending on ministry needs and operational demands.

When a holiday falls on a full-time employee’s regular day off, a substitute paid day off shall be given by his or her supervisor at the earliest appropriate working day, with the approval of the employee’s supervisor.

Exempt employees, who must work on a holiday or if the holiday falls on a normal day off, will receive another day off in place of the holiday. Non-exempt full-time employees who work on a holiday will receive holiday pay. Part-time employees are not entitled to holiday pay. Paid time off for holidays will not be counted as hours worked for any purpose.

Since Tuition Based Ministries operate on an academic schedule, holidays for these programs will be set by the directors of these ministries, in coordination with each other, school calendars, and the Director of Faith Development.

STAFF SUPERVISION

The SPRC shall coordinate with the Senior Pastor and approve a plan detailing supervision and staff roles. Please refer to current Organizational Chart.
EXPECTATIONS AND EVALUATION

JOB DESCRIPTIONS

There will be written job descriptions for each church position. Job responsibilities will be determined by the employee’s Supervisor and approved by the Executive Pastor prior to submission to the SPRC. The Supervisor and the employee will utilize the contents of the job description when evaluating job performance. The job description will state FLSA status, the reporting relationship, physical requirements, and the full-time or part-time status of the position. The following key components are included in each Job Description:

- **Essential Functions**: The essential functions of a position are the central tasks that must be completed by the employee in the day to day execution of the job. Essential functions are the duties inherent to the position. They describe what the employee is required to do to meet basic task oriented expectations.

- **Core Competencies**: Core competencies describe the Church’s expectations about the basic character attributes, skills and abilities of the person who is doing the job. Competencies describe how you should conduct yourself as you execute your responsibilities.

GOALS AND PERFORMANCE EVALUATIONS

Employees and supervisors are strongly encouraged to discuss your job performance and professional goals on an informal, on-going basis throughout the year.

Goals address the growing edge of a position. They should provide staff members with direction about how to focus their energy, encouraging the staff members to grow their area of ministry in defined and targeted ways. Goals should change from year to year to reflect the evolving strategic priorities of the congregation.

Formal performance evaluations are conducted on an annual basis to provide both the staff member and supervisor the opportunity to discuss the employee’s personal attributes, and performance against annual goals. This process assists in encouraging and recognizing strengths, identifying and improving weaknesses, and discussing approaches for meeting goals. Additional assessments may also be scheduled when a need arises.

Each employee’s performance normally will be reviewed and evaluated consistent with our ongoing annual evaluation schedule.

The Church may award pay adjustments in an effort to recognize employee performance. The decision to award such an adjustment is generally based on numerous factors, including the information documented during the formal performance evaluation process.
COMPENSATION

SALARY DETERMINATION

The key objectives of St. James’ compensation practices are to ensure internal equity and external competitiveness. Internal equity means that each employee’s pay rate is compared to others at similar levels of responsibility and performance within the church. External competitiveness means that each employee’s pay rate is compared to jobs at other churches of similar size and circumstance.

The SPRC shall review annually, prior to the development of the upcoming year’s budget, the compensation of all staff. The SPRC will report to the Finance Committee and Church Council the maximum compensation available for staff positions for the next fiscal year. Clergy salaries will be recommended by the SPRC to the Church/Charge Conference in the manner required by the Arkansas Conference of the United Methodist Church.

Paydays are the fifteenth and the last day of the month unless those days fall on a Saturday, Sunday, or holiday. In such cases, paychecks will be distributed on the last working day prior to the 15th or last day of the month.

Wages of staff members in Tuition Based Ministries will be established by the director of the Tuition Based Ministry after consultation with, and approval of, the Director of Faith Development, within guidelines approved by the SPRC and the Executive Pastor. The Executive Pastor will consult with the Director of Faith Development and the respective director in the implementation of the compensation plans.

COMPENSATION CHANGES

Following annual performance evaluations, the Senior Pastor and Senior Staff will assign annual compensation changes for lay church staff, for implementation on April 1. Changes in compensation for clergy normally happen at the beginning of a new year. Compensation changes will be based on information from the employee’s formal evaluation, available funds from church and other resources, and other relevant information from church life.

Tuition Based Ministry staff compensation changes may be made by the director of the Tuition Based Ministry within the guidelines and timeline approved by the SPRC and the Executive Pastor. The Executive Pastor will consult with the Director of Faith Development and the respective director in the implementation of the compensation guidelines. Compensation changes for Tuition Based Ministry director positions will be set by the SPRC upon recommendation from Tuition Based Ministry Administrative Committees and appropriate supervisors, as part of the church annual performance evaluation process.
OVERTIME COMPENSATION FOR NON-EXEMPT EMPLOYEES

When operating requirements or other needs cannot be met during regular working hours, non-exempt employees may be given the opportunity for overtime work assignments. All overtime work must be approved in advance. Overtime assignments will be distributed as equitably as practical to all employees qualified to perform the required work.

Overtime compensation is paid to all non-exempt employees consistent with federal and state wage and hour laws. Overtime pay is based on actual hours worked. Paid time off for holidays, sick leave, vacation leave, civil leave, mission leave, or any other leave of absence is not considered hours worked for purposes of overtime. Non-exempt employees will be paid overtime at the rate of 1 and ½ times their regular rate.

Overtime is costly and should be kept at a minimum. Therefore, non-exempt employees must not work more than 40 hours in any workweek unless their supervisor or their Tuition Based Ministry director approves the work in advance.

PAYROLL DEDUCTIONS

Typical payroll deductions may be divided into two categories – deductions required by law and deductions authorized in writing by the employee for the employee’s benefit.

The laws require certain deductions from employee compensation. Among these are applicable federal and state income taxes, Medicare and Social Security taxes up to a specified limit, garnishments, and child support payments.

St. James seeks to offer employees various programs and benefits beyond those required by law. If eligible to participate, you may voluntarily authorize deductions in writing from your paycheck to cover the cost of your participation in these programs. Eligible programs include, but are not limited to, the payments for individual elections such as insurance premiums, Section 125 (cafeteria plan), supplementary insurance premiums, and pension contributions.

If you have questions about any deductions from your paycheck, please ask the Church Administrator.
LEAVE AND ABSENCES

VACATION LEAVE

Vacation is a time of rest and renewal, and is provided as a benefit to both employees and the Church. Vacation time is tabulated based on the January-December calendar year, with provisions made for those joining the staff mid-year.

Employees must request vacation time, giving adequate notice for full consideration by their supervisor. The Senior Staff member assigned to oversee the employee’s ministry area shall approve vacation schedule requests. Requests of each staff member and the recommendation of their supervisor will be considered, so that the work of the Church will not be hindered and the need to employ temporary staffing may be minimized. Completed vacation leave request forms must be submitted to the finance office for recordkeeping.

Vacation time may be divided. It is highly recommended however, when an employee has two or more weeks of vacation time available, that one period be at least one week in length.

If an employee’s vacation time is not used by the end of the calendar year, the employee may carry over up to one workweek of vacation time. A maximum of one workweek of vacation time may be banked at any time, with the exception of vacation time accrued the first year, which cannot carry over.

Because Tuition Based Ministries operate on an academic year, and have staffing coverage requirements materially different than our other ministries, the Tuition Based Ministries shall have administrative guidelines that detail the approval process and meet the needs of the respective ministries.

Full-time Lay Employees:
Vacations are earned as follows:
- For those taking full-time positions mid-year, vacation is accrued at the rate of ½ workday per pay period for a maximum of two (2) workweeks that cannot be carried over into the next calendar year.
- Two (2) workweeks, beginning in January of the first full calendar year.
- Three (3) workweeks beginning in January of the first full calendar year after five years of service.
- Four (4) workweeks beginning in January of the first full calendar year after ten years of service.

Part-time Lay Employees scheduled and working at least 20 hours per week:
Vacations are earned on a pro-rated basis as follows:
- For those taking part-time positions (scheduled and working at least 20 hours per week) mid-year, vacation is accrued at the rate of ½ workday per pay period for a maximum of two (2) workweeks that cannot be carried over into the next calendar year.
- Two (2) workweeks, beginning in January of the first full calendar year.
• Three (3) workweeks beginning in January of the first full calendar year after five years of service.
• Four (4) workweeks beginning in January of the first full calendar year after ten years of service.

Clergy (Provisional or Full Connection Elders or Deacons, and Local Pastors):
A Vacation Policy for Appointed Personnel has been adopted by the Arkansas Annual Conference. Each clergy person under appointment by the Bishop of the Arkansas Conference shall be entitled to receive the following minimum vacation time during the course of the Annual Conference year (July 1 - June 30).
• Those having served full time in the United Methodist Church from the time first appointed to five years: two weeks vacation (2 Sundays)
• Those having served full time in the United Methodist Church from six years to ten years: three weeks vacation (3 Sundays)
• Those having served full time in the United Methodist Church for eleven or more years: four weeks vacation (4 Sundays)

Clergy vacation time shall be based on the number of years of service under ministry appointment in the United Methodist Church and not on the number of years of service in a given appointment. These minimum requirements reflect the Arkansas Conference Vacation Policy, as adopted by the Annual Conference in June 2010.

SICK LEAVE

Sick leave is provided as a means to furnish employees increased economic security at a time of unexpected, prolonged or serious illness. Sick leave is not to be considered as a benefit earned, as with vacation time. Sick leave may not be taken for other reasons than those indicated below.

Sick leave benefits will begin to accrue for eligible employees who have completed three months continuous service. Full-time staff members earn sick leave at the rate of one workday per month. Part-time staff members who work a minimum of 20 hours per week earn 4 hours of sick leave benefit each month. Part-time staff members who work a minimum of 30 hours per week earn 6 hours of sick leave benefit each month. Part-time staff members who work less than 20 hours per week are provided no sick leave benefit.

Unused sick leave may be carried over, up to a maximum of 36 days, into the next calendar year for situations of extended illness. Unused sick leave is not reimbursable. Disposition of cases of illness lasting over 36 days will be at the discretion of the SPRC, upon recommendation of the Church Administrator.

Employees who become ill while on duty must report at once to their respective supervisor. Otherwise, illness should be reported to the supervisor as early as possible prior to the beginning of that day's work.

Staff members will obtain the standard leave request form and submit it to their supervisor immediately upon return to work after illness or medical appointment. Sick leave is granted
for the staff member’s actual illness or medical appointment, or medically necessary care of a staff member’s immediate family who lives in the central Arkansas area or their medical appointment. The staff member’s immediate family shall be limited to the following: parents, in-laws, spouse, siblings, children, grandparents, grandchildren. A person living in the household of the staff member or spouse as a sole dependent of either will also be included.

The Church Administrator, or designee, will maintain a record of all employees’ sick leave. Misuse of sick leave privileges may be cause for dismissal. Sick leave may only be used for scheduled work hours.

Upon termination of employment, the staff member loses any claim to accumulated sick leave.

**CONTINUING EDUCATION AND STUDY**

Time for job-related continuing education and study may be given to program and pastoral staff, upon approval of the staff member’s supervisor and the Senior Pastor or Senior Staff member. Support staff may also be given time for job-related continuing education and study, upon approval of the employee’s supervisor and the Church Administrator. Such time may be with pay. A written request with sufficient notice (at least three weeks) is to be provided to the supervisor. Continuing Education and Study Leave shall not exceed two weeks annually. Such leave may be granted by the Senior Pastor or Senior Staff member on a schedule deemed appropriate and acceptable to the staff member and his or her supervisor, whether by the hour, day, week or in one continuing period, including any combination of such times.

Education may take place on the premises, as in study time, or away from the church, as in workshops, seminars and school classes.

The amount available to staff members shall be defined in each year’s budget and may be dispensed only upon approval of the Senior Pastor or Senior Staff member, in coordination with the Church Administrator.

Continuing Education and Study Time is in addition to, not in the place of, vacation.

Assistance with the expenses of staff members of Tuition Based Ministries for job-related continuing education and study shall be paid by these ministries. The disbursement of funds for continuation education shall be based on administrative guidelines.
ST. JAMES MISSION TRIP PARTICIPATION

Mission Trips are excellent opportunities to build relationships and create a healthy atmosphere for ministry. Missional service provides an opportunity to serve those who are in need, to deepen in faith, and to set an example in service. St. James encourages qualified program and support staff to participate in St. James sponsored mission trips, even if their job responsibilities do not include mission trip duties. Therefore, each qualified staff member is permitted to take up to one workweek of paid Mission Leave per calendar year - above and beyond the vacation schedule - in order to participate in local, domestic or international mission service. Mission Leave is to be used exclusively to participate in a St. James sponsored Mission Trip for serving the needs of the poor and suffering while bearing witness to the Christian faith. Mission leave is subject to approval of the staff member’s supervisor and a member of the Senior Staff. A written request with sufficient notice (at least three weeks) is to be provided.

SPECIAL ABSENCES

A “Special Absence” may be described as one for any of the reasons listed below. Arrangement for this leave must be made in advance with the respective supervisor.

Death in the immediate family:

Absence for death in the immediate family shall not exceed four days with pay. The staff member’s immediate family shall be limited to the following: parents, in-laws, spouse, siblings, children, grandparents, grandchildren. A person living in the household of the staff member or spouse as a sole dependent of either will also be included. Additional time off for such situations may be authorized by a Senior Staff member as leave without pay or vacation time.

Civil Leave:

Employees are encouraged to cooperate in citizen responsibilities. When in obedience to a subpoena or direction by proper authority, an employee appears as a witness for the Federal Government, the State of Arkansas, or attends any court in connection with official duties, or serves on a jury in any State or Federal Court, civil leave shall be granted. Appearances in court under subpoenas and/or out of civic responsibility (such as eyewitness) will normally be considered excused time with pay. Official participation in a United Methodist denominational judicial or fair process hearing will normally be considered excused time with pay. Time for appearance in court for personal business will be the individual employee’s responsibility. Normally, vacation days will be used for this purpose.

Any employee who is summoned to serve on a jury will be excused from work while serving on the jury. When summoned, the employee should notify his or her supervisor immediately, and the employee will be expected to work during normal working hours except for the time the employee’s presence is required in court.
The Church encourages all employees to fulfill their civic responsibilities by participating in elections. Generally, you should be able to find time to vote either before or after your regular workday. If you are unable to vote in an election during your non-working hours, the Church will grant you up to two hours of paid time off to vote. You must request time off to vote at least two working days before the Election Day. Advance notice is required so the necessary time off can be scheduled at the beginning or end of the work shift, whichever provides the least disruption to the normal work schedule.

Non-Medical Leave of Absence:

To be eligible for a leave of absence, the employee must have been employed by St. James UMC for at least 12 months and must have worked a minimum of 1250 hours during the 12 months immediately before the leave begins. Medical Leaves are considered in a different section of this handbook.

Under normal circumstances, the request for leaves of absence must be made thirty days in advance of the leave date. An emergency leave request will be processed as soon as possible.

Leave of absence requests (both approved and disapproved) will be acknowledged by direct contact with the Executive Pastor and Church Administrator. If disapproved, the reasons for denial will be explained in writing.

Military leaves of absence will be granted consistent with current law and circumstances. Please see the Church Administrator for more information.
FAMILY MEDICAL LEAVE ACT (FMLA)

The Family Medical Leave Act protects eligible employees who need to take time off from their jobs due to their own serious health condition, birth/adoption of a child, serious health condition of certain family members, a qualifying need, or military service. Employee must be someone who has been employed at least 12 months and who has worked at least 1250 hours during the past 12 months.

Contact the Church Administrator to arrange FMLA leave. FMLA leave must be requested in writing and approved in advance, unless unavoidable circumstances prevent such process. Circumstances relating to the leave of absence must be agreed in writing and must include agreements concerning insurance coverage, pension and other benefits during the leave.

Leaves of absence must first use any accrued leave time. Once available sick and vacation leave is exhausted, the balance of the leave will be unpaid.

During the leaves of absence, sick leave time continues to accrue while using paid leave. However, benefit accruals are suspended while on unpaid leave of absence. These benefits will resume upon return to active employment.

Leaves of absence may not be provided or the employee may not be reinstated from leave if:

1) the employee advises the church that he or she will not return to work, in which case the employment relationship is deemed terminated and the employee’s entitlement to reinstatement ceases;
2) the employee fraudulently obtains leave, in which case the church will not restore the employee’s job; or
3) the employee accepts other employment while on leave, in which case the employee will not be entitled to any benefits, if any allowed during the leave period, and their employment may be terminated.

Upon returning from a leave of absence, the employee must be aware of the following:

- The Church Administrator must be notified at least ten days before the proposed return date. Failure to do this could result in a delay in the employee’s return.
- Staff members returning from medical leave must have a statement from their attending physician allowing them to return to work and specifying any restrictions.
- If an employee returns to work within the time period established for the leave, reasonable effort will be made to return the employee to the same job he or she left. However, due to conditions in the church or staff, employees may not be given their same job when they return, but in that situation will be given an equivalent position in the church staff.
- An equivalent position would involve as much as possible the same or substantially similar duties, responsibilities and compensation as the employee’s previous position. It would also entail substantially equivalent skills, effort, responsibility and authority.
BENEFITS

INSURANCE

Individual medical, dental and life insurance coverage is offered to all eligible employees. Opportunities to enroll or decline are upon hire or change to eligible status, during open enrollment, or at time of a qualifying event. Insurance for Ordained Clergy will conform to recommendations of the Arkansas Conference of the United Methodist Church. Insurance coverage for all full-time appointed clergy (elders, deacons, and local pastors) shall be the same. Insurance costs for staff members of Tuition Based Ministries will be paid by these ministries.

If a lay employee elects to not enroll in the insurance program because of other existing coverage (such as under a spouse’s policy), no other benefit or monetary remuneration will be provided to the employee. Coverage is available for a lay employee’s spouse and children at the employee’s expense. Arrangements for family member coverage must be made with the Church Administrator.

WORKERS COMPENSATION

All employees are covered under Workers Compensation Insurance and should report all related accidents, illnesses, or injuries immediately to their supervisor and the Church Administrator, who in turn will notify the Executive Pastor. A first report of injury must be filed with the Church Administrator.

RETIREMENT PLAN FOR LAY EMPLOYEES

St. James offers a 403(b) plan to allow eligible employees to defer a portion of their compensation on a pre-tax basis for their retirement. The United Methodist Personal Investment Plan (UMPIP) is administered by the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits of the United Methodist Church. Employees who meet eligibility requirements may enroll and elect to contribute to the plan upon date of hire or date of eligibility.

The Church will make plan sponsor contributions, currently 4% of compensation, for each participating employee, if the employee has completed twelve (12) months of continuous service, was regularly scheduled to work at least 1,040 hours during that year, and contributes a minimum of 2% of compensation. Annual withholding contribution limits are established by the Internal Revenue Service; contributions over the allowable amount may be taxable. Plan sponsor contributions become vested to the employee immediately.
FEDERAL INSURANCE CONTRIBUTIONS ACT (FICA)

All employees in all categories are covered by FICA, under applicable federal labor laws and regulations. Clergy are considered self-employed for FICA purposes, responsible for both employee and employer portion of FICA taxes.

BENEFITS SUMMARY

Following is an overview of benefits offered. Restrictions often apply.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Benefits</th>
<th>Full-time Employees</th>
<th>Part-time Employees</th>
<th>Temporary Employees</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Holidays</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vacation Leave</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Pro-rated*</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sick Leave</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Pro-rated*</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leave of Absence</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Negotiated</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FMLA Leave</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Pro-rated*</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Absences</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
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<tr>
<td>Continuing Education</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. James Mission Trip</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes*</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workers Compensation</td>
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<td>Social Security and Medicare</td>
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<td>Wage &amp; Hour Laws</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Health &amp; Life Insurance</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dental Insurance</td>
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<td>Flexible Spending Accounts</td>
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<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retirement Plan</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes*</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*employed for 20 hours/week or more

Changes in benefit elections during the plan year may be made at the allowable times, including new hire, change of status, qualifying event, and open enrollment. Please contact the Church Administrator if you have any questions.
OPERATIONAL RULES

CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION

The protection of confidential information provided to the Church and its staff is vital to the interests and mission of St. James United Methodist Church. The Church’s confidential information includes, but is not limited to:

- Financial and giving information.
- Personal information concerning those who have sought the advice and counsel of the Church, its pastors, and its staff.
- Medical and other personal information of employees.
- Personnel File information, such as employment performance, counseling, disciplinary, and/or termination information. Personnel files are the property of the Church.
- The St. James database is for internal church use only and may not be shared, sold, or distributed for private, political, or outside group use. Exceptions may be made, under certain conditions, for United Methodist related agencies, as directed by the Senior Pastor.

Employees who improperly use or disclose confidential information may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. If you have any question about whether certain information is confidential, you should consult with a member of the Senior Staff.

APPEARANCE

In carrying on the work of the church, our employees will come into contact with our congregation and church visitors. Staff members’ dress, grooming, and personal cleanliness contribute to the morale of all employees and impact the professional image the Church presents to the community. As their work will be under the constant appraisal of those people they come in contact with as they perform their duties, it is necessary for employees to present a favorable, clean and neat appearance.

You are also expected to dress according to the requirements of your position as designated in your department and as approved by your supervisor. Particular ministry and support areas, such Tuition Based Ministries or Maintenance Staff, may require uniforms.

The Church expects that you have sufficient pride in your work and association with the Church to exercise mature discretion regarding your appearance and demeanor at all times. When in doubt, you should choose the more conservative option.

Please consult with your Supervisor or the Church Administrator if you have any questions regarding appropriate attire, personal appearance, or grooming.
OUTSIDE EMPLOYMENT

St. James UMC does not wish to interfere with employees’ personal affairs or control their time away from the church. However, with the understanding that other employment may interfere with the accomplishment of church responsibilities, and in order to ensure St. James remains each staff member’s first priority with regard to employment, full-time employees shall have no job outside the church, without written approval of a member of the Senior Staff. All employees are judged by the same performance standards and subject to the Church’s scheduling demands, regardless of any outside work requirements.

Part-time employees may hold outside jobs, with the express understanding that such a job should not interfere with the schedule and conditions of employment at the church.

Outside employment may present a conflict of interest and is not allowed when the outside employment relationship could have an adverse impact on the Church. Any outside employment may not conflict with the beliefs, values, mission, vision, and ministry of St. James United Methodist Church.

SMOKING, DRUGS AND ALCOHOL

Smoking by employees is not permitted on church property. Employees shall report to work with no residual effect of smoking, drugs and/or alcohol. Any conviction or verification of the use of illegal drugs may result in immediate suspension or termination.

An employee with a drug or alcohol problem that has not resulted in (and is not in immediate danger of) disciplinary action may request approval to take unpaid time off to participate in a rehabilitation or treatment program. Leave may be granted if the employee agrees to abstain from the use of the problem substance; the employee abides by all policies relating to conduct in the workplace; and granting the leave will not cause the Church hardship or inconvenience. Return to work issues and eligibility will be coordinated through the Church Administrator.

Employees with questions, comments, concerns, or suggestions regarding this policy or issues related to drug or alcohol use and the workplace should raise their issues with a Senior Staff member without fear of reprisal.
COMPUTER, NETWORK, AND INTERNET ACCESS

St. James United Methodist Church provides employees access to computers, computer networks, software, information, the Internet, and other internal and external electronic communication systems such as e-mail, websites, social media and blogs, as well as telephones, voice mail systems, and fax machines. Collectively, these systems, services, and Church-owned or hosted information are referred to as “St. James Technology.” By accepting your passwords, setting your preferences, and/or using the devices, you in effect take on the responsibility to follow these policies.

In your use of the “St. James Technology,” you shall follow the following guidelines:

1. You must not disclose your password(s) or other access code(s) to others, nor permit others to use your account(s). You must not use accounts you are not authorized to use.
2. The Church may suspend your access at any time for any reason or no reason.
3. You are to use “St. James Technology” for Church purposes and limit your use for non-Church purposes.
4. You are to use “St. James Technology” in a manner that is both legal and consistent with the Church’s purpose, vision, values, covenants, and policies.
5. You must take care to protect the Church’s confidential and proprietary information.
6. Your activities and data on “St. James Technology” may be monitored by the Systems Administrator or Church management. You should not have an expectation of privacy when using “St. James Technology.”
7. The St. James database is for internal church use only and may not be shared, sold, or distributed for private, political, or outside group use. Exceptions may be made, under certain conditions, for United Methodist related agencies, as directed by the Senior Pastor.
8. E-mail data that no longer has a business purpose should be eliminated from the church’s electronic data storage system. E-mail should not serve as the repository for business records. If the content of an e-mail qualifies as a retainable business record, it should be reproduced in a manner consistent with standard record-keeping methods.
9. When accessing the Internet, visits should only be made to non-offensive sites. If by accident, you enter an offensive site, please notify the Systems Administrator.
10. Unacceptable personal use of St. James email includes but is not limited to transmission of threatening or explicit pornographic material, gambling, chain letters, and personal unauthorized solicitations.
11. Any software loaded on your workstation must be freeware or fully licensed by St. James and must be installed for Church purposes.

If you or anyone using an account assigned to you violates these guidelines, you may be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the Church’s established disciplinary procedures up to and including employment termination. A violation of these guidelines may also be a violation of the law and subject you to investigation and criminal or civil prosecution.
SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

If a staff member chooses to participate in personal blogging or other social media such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram and Flickr, you should be clear that you are not speaking as an official voice for the Church unless authorized to do so (in which case you should use the Church’s official websites, blogs or social media outlets, not personal platforms).

Staff may use personal social media accounts to engage in conversation and to further promote ministry events, but personal accounts should not be considered the main source for ministry news, promotion, and evaluation.

The following should govern your personal social media activities:

**Appropriate Content:** Staff should keep in mind that any personal accounts used to engage in church conversation should respect the values of the United Methodist Church. St. James reserves the right to monitor employee use of public social media accounts regardless of location—employees can be held accountable for personally published material whether it was created at work on a church computer or with a personal electronic device on personal or work time. Personally published material must also comply with church policies on anti-harassment, ethics, etc., in the Employee Policy Handbook—this extends to all forms of public communication (including social media) both inside and outside the workplace.

**Transparency:** You may refer to the Church and your involvement as a staff person, but because many readers will associate your opinions with those of the Church, always make it clear that you are speaking for yourself and not on behalf of the Church. To ensure transparency, the Church recommends (but does not require) including a disclaimer to that effect. Example: The posts on this site are reflective of my own personal opinions. They have not been approved by St. James United Methodist Church nor do they necessarily represent the views and opinions of St. James United Methodist Church.

**Respectful Disagreement:** You may disagree with St. James UMC and its leaders, provided your tone is respectful and you do not resort to personal attacks. You may comment on other churches, but you must do so respectfully without ridiculing, defaming or libeling them in any way. Published material should not conflict with the mission of the Church.

**Feedback and Response:** You may encounter both positive and negative feedback regarding the Church in social media. Any comments or postings regarding the Church or its staff that you deem important or deserving of a response should be forwarded to a Senior Staff member and/or Senior Pastor. Likewise, any media representatives who contact you seeking comments from a Church representative should be forwarded to the Senior Pastor, or designee. This policy will ensure that accurate and consistent information will be given for those matters that are appropriate for public knowledge.

**Confidential Information and Relationships:** Care should be taken to protect the Church’s confidential and proprietary information. All information posted to a personal account should be considered public. Regardless of privacy settings, it is possible that information may be shared by others in a more public setting. Take care not to purposefully or inadvertently disclose or publish without prior authorization any confidential or proprietary information.
CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Church employees have an obligation to conduct church business within guidelines that prohibit actual or potential conflicts of interest. Even the appearance of a conflict of interest may harm our ministries.

An actual or potential conflict of interest occurs when a staff member is in a position to influence a decision that may result in the staff member’s own personal gain or personal gain for a relative, as a result of church business. For the purposes of this policy, a relative is any person who is related by blood or marriage, or whose relationship with the staff member is similar to that of persons who are related to you by blood or marriage.

No "presumption of guilt" is created by the mere existence of some relationship with outside firms. If you have any influence on transactions involving purchases, contracts, or leases, etc., it is imperative that you disclose the relationship in writing to a Senior Staff member as soon as possible, so safeguards may be established to protect all parties.

Personal gain may not only result when a staff member or relative has a significant ownership interest in a firm with which the Church does business, but also when a staff member or relative could receive any kickback, bribe, substantial gift, or special consideration as a result of any transaction or business dealings involving the Church.

This policy establishes only the basic framework for evaluating, considering, and avoiding actual or potential conflicts of interest. The purpose of this policy is to provide general direction so you may seek further clarification on issues related to the subject of acceptable standards of operation. You should consult the Executive Pastor or Church Administrator with questions about actual or potential conflicts of interest.

SOLICITATION

In an effort to assure a productive and harmonious work environment, persons not employed by or who are not members of St. James United Methodist Church may not solicit, distribute, or post literature without following the communication standards listed in our Church Policy Manual.

The Church recognizes that employees may have interests in events and organizations outside the workplace. Employees may not solicit, distribute, or post literature concerning these activities during working time without prior permission from their supervisor. Working time does not include lunch periods, work breaks or any other periods when employees are not on duty.

Staff Members should take care not to misuse church relationships, the church name, and the church database if soliciting for non-St. James or non-United Methodist related events and organizations.
DISCIPLINARY POLICIES

DISCIPLINE PROCEDURES

The supervisory discipline process allows for appropriate and consistent ways to address unsatisfactory performance or behavior in the workplace. The primary purpose of any disciplinary action is to improve performance, correct a problem, prevent recurrence of a problem, and prepare the employee for satisfactory performance and/or behavior in the future.

The supervisory discipline system generally includes four steps:
1. verbal warning,
2. written warning(s),
3. probation,
4. termination of employment

Steps may be varied or bypassed all together as supervisors deem appropriate at the time, with or without notice, in supervisors’ full and complete discretion.

A Consultation Form may be used in the resolution of the following issues:
- Written warning of a performance improvement issue,
- Written warning to share a grievance,
- Consultation on employment issues between an employee and the employee’s supervisor, or
- Other issues of concern to an employee or his or her supervisor.

Blank Consultation Forms are available from the Church Administrator and are stored on the church computer server. Information recorded in the form should be concise and specific, with time and date references. Completed Consultation forms should be submitted to the Church Administrator, for placement in the employee’s personnel file.
PROBLEM RESOLUTION
OF MATTERS NOT INVOLVING SEXUAL MISCONDUCT OR CHILD ENDANGERMENT

St. James is committed to providing the best possible working conditions for our employees. Part of this commitment is our encouragement of an open atmosphere where problems, complaints, suggestions, and questions receive a timely response.

The Church strives to ensure fair and honest treatment of all employees. All staff members are expected to treat others with mutual respect and are encouraged to offer positive and constructive criticism to one another. If a problem or issue arises between staff members, the first course of action should be open and honest communication between the two staff members. If that fails, a supervisory resolution may be required.

If a staff member disagrees with established rules of conduct, policies, guidelines, or practices, he or she may express concern through the problem resolution procedure. Employees will not be penalized, formally or informally, for voicing a complaint, concern, suggestion, or question in a reasonable, professional manner within an appropriate setting. St. James expects staff members to attempt to resolve problems in the workplace in the most informal manner possible.

Generally, staff members should:

- Present your problem to your supervisor.
- If your supervisor is unavailable or you believe it would be inappropriate to contact your supervisor, you may present your problem to a member of the Senior Staff.
- If your supervisor is a member of the Senior Staff, and is unavailable or you believe it would be inappropriate to contact your supervisor, you may present your problem to another member of the Senior Staff or the Senior Pastor.
- Your supervisor or the Senior Staff member will respond to your problem after interviewing appropriate persons, reviewing documents associated with the issue, and consulting appropriate persons.

If your problem is not addressed or remedied to your satisfaction, you may talk with the Senior Pastor.
SEXUAL AND OTHER HARASSMENT / SEXUAL ETHICS POLICY

Harassment, including sexual harassment, is disrespectful, degrading, and would detract from our mission and ministries. St. James strongly disapproves of and will not tolerate harassment of our employees.

St. James United Methodist Church affirms the policies and procedures of the United Methodist Church stating that sexual abuse within the ministerial relationship and sexual harassment within the church is incompatible with biblical teachings of hospitality, justice and healing. Sexual Harassment is described as, “any unwanted sexual comment, advance or demand, either verbal or physical that is reasonably perceived by the recipient as demeaning, intimidating, or coercive.” Sexual harassment must be understood as an exploitation of a power relationship rather than as exclusively a sexual issue. Sexual harassment includes, but is not limited to, the creation of a hostile or abusive working environment resulting from discrimination on the basis of gender. St. James United Methodist Church has a zero tolerance policy for sexual harassment.

Employees are expected to maintain a productive work environment, free from sexual harassment in the form of unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature that creates a hostile or offensive environment.

Supervisors have the responsibility of maintaining a productive work environment for employees, free from any form of harassment and in particular, sexual harassment. No supervisor can create an environment that is sexually offensive or hostile for employees. Nor can supervisors or managers threaten or insinuate either explicitly or implicitly that an employee’s refusal or willingness to submit to sexual conduct will affect the employee’s job.

Sexual abuse within the ministerial relationship occurs when a person within a ministerial role of leadership (pastor, educator, counselor, youth leader or other position of authority) engages in sexual contact or sexualized behavior with a member of the congregation, a client, employee, student, staff member, co-worker or volunteer. Sexual abuse within the ministerial relationship involves a betrayal of sacred trust, a violation of ministerial role and exploitation of those who are vulnerable.

Misconduct of a sexual nature within the life of the church interferes with our moral mission. St. James United Methodist Church stands in opposition to the sin of misconduct of a sexual nature in the church and in society at large. St. James United Methodist Church commits itself to fair and expedient investigation of any charge of sexual misconduct within the church, and resolves to take immediate appropriate action in compliance with The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church. Further, St. James United Methodist Church bears affirmative responsibility to create an environment of hospitality for all persons, male or female, which is free of misconduct of a sexual nature and encourages respect, equality and kinship in Christ.

Annually at a Church/Charge Conference presided over by the District Superintendent or designated Presiding Elder, the church membership approves a Policy Statement On Misconduct Of A Sexual Nature.
Some cases of sexual harassment can be resolved informally between the parties. In all other instances, misconduct of a sexual nature should be reported to the Senior Pastor. If the conduct involves a clergy person, it should be reported to the Chairperson of the SPRC and the District Superintendent, or in their absence, the presiding Bishop.

Procedure for harassment / sexual misconduct resolution:

If you experience what you consider inappropriate behavior from a church volunteer or a member of the church staff, you may choose to inform the person of the inappropriateness of the behavior and demand that the behavior cease. If you choose not to confront the person alone, or if the behavior persists, ask someone to accompany you to confront the accused. Make every attempt at reconciliation. If you do not wish to confront the person, if the behavior persists, or the behavior places you or someone else in a position of danger, report the incident to your Supervisor, the Church Administrator, or the Senior Pastor.

Keep a written record of your experiences including dates, times, places, witnesses and circumstances. Keep any written material you may have received from the person. Then present a written complaint to the Church Administrator and Senior Pastor that includes:

1) Name of the accuser,
2) Name of the accused,
3) Nature of the alleged violations,
4) Dates of the occurrences,
5) Names of any witnesses to the occurrences,
6) Place of the occurrences,
7) The resolution you seek, and
8) Your signature and the date the complaint is filed

In every instance of a child’s or youth’s report of experiencing inappropriate behavior, the adult who receives the report shall immediately forward the complaint to the Church Administrator and Senior Pastor. According to Arkansas law, any person receiving a report from a child under the age of 18 indicating sexual abuse of that child is also required to report the abuse to the proper authorities. Instances involving adults shall be reported to the Church Administrator and Senior Pastor.

The Senior Pastor, or designee, will conduct an examination of the complaint with the tact and discretion appropriate to the circumstances. Action will be taken as quickly as possible, but adequate time must be provided for obtaining all the facts relating to the harassment charge. Confidentiality will be maintained as much as possible. Complete confidentiality may not be guaranteed, due to the nature of the grievance. The accuser must provide adequate documentation. No person shall be penalized or subject to retaliation for filing a complaint of sexual harassment in good faith or cooperating in the investigation of such a complaint. While St. James United Methodist Church is committed to prohibiting sexual harassment and encourages employees to report such actions promptly, malicious false accusations will not be tolerated and appropriate action will be taken, up to and including termination.

The Senior Pastor will make a decision as to the validity of the charges and will determine the degree of discipline for the harasser and/or accuser. If any staff member is found, after an
appropriate investigation, to have engaged in harassment / sexual misconduct, prompt remedial action, up to and including termination, will be taken to stop the harassment or misconduct and to prevent its recurrence. If conflicts remain unresolved regarding staff personnel, the SPRC Chair and Senior Pastor shall convene a meeting with the accused, the person bringing the accusation, and each supporting person and will attempt to come to an agreeable resolution of the issues. The SPRC will be the final appellate authority on all harassment charges.

Procedures for dealing with harassment/sexual ethics issues shall be in accordance with and amenable to The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church, the policies of the Arkansas Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church, and the St. James Safe Sanctuary Policy.

SAFE SANCTUARY YOUTH AND CHILDREN PROTECTION POLICY

St. James maintains a current Safe Sanctuary Policy approved by the Board of Trustees and the Church Council. This Safe Sanctuary Policy applies to all employees, for the protection of children, youth, and volunteers at church sponsored events. All employees shall be provided a current Safe Sanctuary Policy and receive Safe Sanctuary training as part of new employee orientation.

While it is our intent that this policy shall apply to all church sponsored and calendared programs of the church, the Church recognizes that the Tuition Based Ministries must also comply with the licensing requirements of the Arkansas Department of Human Services (ADHS). Therefore, whenever the licensing requirements of ADHS and the Safe Sanctuary Policy shall be in conflict, the licensing requirements of ADHS shall prevail.

In no event shall the procedure for reporting incidents alter the obligation of any mandated reporter of child abuse or child neglect to avoid or delay reporting suspected child abuse or neglect as required by law.
TERMINATION

With regard to the "employment at will" policy of the church, the following items apply:

1. Staff members are not authorized to say or do anything that is inconsistent with this "at will" policy.
2. Nothing contained in this manual, or in any other documents provided by St. James UMC shall form any basis for an employment contract that will change or otherwise amend the "at will" policy.
3. Nothing contained in this manual, or in any other documents provided by St. James UMC shall constitute any guarantee to continued employment.

Although notice is not required for termination of employment, a full-time employee wishing to terminate employment is requested to give notice in writing to the Senior Pastor at least 30 days prior to termination, exclusive of vacation time. Part-time employees are requested to give two weeks' notice, exclusive of vacation time, in writing to the supervisor. Staff members of Tuition Based Ministries will provide notice to the director of the ministry. Failure to give this notice may result in loss of accumulated vacation time.

INVOLUNTARY TERMINATION

An employee deemed to be doing unsatisfactory work shall be informed of such by the employee’s supervisor during his or her performance evaluation or through the supervisory discipline procedure. Because employment is at will, the Senior Pastor may, in his or her discretion, terminate the employment at that time or at any time thereafter. If, however, the decision is made not to immediately terminate the employee and to evaluate the employee’s improvement for an additional period, it is understood that the Senior Pastor retains the right to terminate the employee if the required improvement is not made within the additional period.

Termination for cause is not required since each employee is an at-will employee. The SPRC shall serve as the final appellate authority for grievances concerning terminations.

Certain serious types of conduct (theft, criminal charges, insubordination, and any other conduct which the Senior Pastor reasonably determines to be incompatible with the ministry of the church) may result in immediate termination of the employee by the Senior Pastor regardless of any other provision herein. In the absence of the Senior Pastor, the Executive Pastor or Chairperson of SPRC may terminate the employee, or authorize the employee’s supervisor to terminate the employee. If the Senior Pastor, Executive Pastor or Chairperson of SPRC cannot be reached immediately, the employee’s supervisor may immediately suspend the employee until action is taken by the Senior Pastor.

A Tuition Based Ministry employee deemed to be doing unsatisfactory work shall be informed of such by the program director during his or her performance evaluation or through the supervisory discipline procedure. Because employment is at will, the Director, in coordination with the supervisor of Tuition Based Ministries and the Executive Pastor, may terminate
employment. If, however, the decision is made not to immediately terminate the employee and to evaluate the employee's improvement for an additional period, it is understood that the Director, in coordination with the supervisor of Tuition Based Ministries and the Executive Pastor, retains the right to terminate the employee if the required improvement is not made within the additional period.

**TERMINATION PAY**

Termination pay shall include pay for any unused vacation time due, except in the case of voluntary termination (resignation) without proper notice, and involuntary termination. Accumulated sick leave is not included in any form of termination pay.

**EXIT INTERVIEW**

It is recommended that any employee terminated for any reason may have an interview with his or her supervisor, the purpose of which shall be to discuss performance and to outline all remaining aspects of the employee's job in detail in order to make possible the transition of that position to the next employee. This interview and its contents shall be documented in the employee’s personnel file.

**FEDERAL AND STATE UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE**

As a church, St. James United Methodist Church is exempt from paying federal and state unemployment taxes. Therefore, all Church employees, including Tuition Based Ministries employees, are ineligible to draw unemployment benefits from these programs should their employment be terminated.
Employee Policy Handbook

St. James United Methodist Church
321 Pleasant Valley Drive
Little Rock, AR  72212
501.217.6700

Approved by Staff-Parish Relations Committee
November 25, 2013  Ann Rowell, Chair

Approved by Church Council
December 15, 2013  Don Riggin, Chair
RECEIPT OF EMPLOYEE POLICY HANDBOOK

I understand that the Employee Policy Handbook for St. James United Methodist Church of Little Rock, Arkansas ("the Church") describes important information about the Church and my employment relationship with the Church. I understand that the Church Administrator is responsible generally for interpreting the policies in the Handbook. I understand that I should consult with the Church Administrator or my supervisor whenever I have any questions, comments, concerns, or suggestions about information in the Handbook. I also understand that I should consult with the Church Administrator or my supervisor about any issues not addressed in the Handbook.

I UNDERSTAND THAT I HAVE ENTERED INTO MY EMPLOYMENT RELATIONSHIP WITH THE CHURCH VOLUNTARILY. I ACKNOWLEDGE THAT THERE IS NO GUARANTEED, SPECIFIED LENGTH OF EMPLOYMENT. I UNDERSTAND THAT EITHER THE CHURCH OR I MAY END THE EMPLOYMENT RELATIONSHIP "AT-WILL" – WITH OR WITHOUT REASON, AT ANY TIME, AND WITH OR WITHOUT NOTICE.

I recognize that the information, policies, and benefits described in this Handbook are necessarily subject to change. I acknowledge that revisions to the Handbook may occur at any time, with or without reason, and with or without notice. Lack of notice does not mean the policy or procedure may not be or is not effectively changed.

I acknowledge that this Handbook is not a contract of employment or a legal document. I recognize that this Handbook does not create any obligation on the part of the Church to have any reason to end the employment relationship, to handle matters in a certain manner, or to provide certain benefits or programs to me.

Finally, I acknowledge that I have access to the Employee Policy Handbook. Although certain sections were highlighted with me during my orientation, I understand that it is my responsibility to read and comply with all of the policies contained in this Handbook and any revisions or amendments made to it.

By signing this receipt, I acknowledge that I have read and I understand the policies contained in the Handbook, and I am fully aware of my obligations at all times to comply with the responsibilities set forth in the Handbook.

________________________________________ Date_____________________
*Sign your name here

________________________________________
Print your name here

________________________________________ Date_____________________
Witnessed by: Authorized Signature

*Signed original will be placed in the employee’s Personnel File.