

St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church
Anti-Harassment Policy dated May 23, 2019

ANTI-HARASSMENT

St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church intends to provide an environment that is free from intimidation, hostility or other offenses which might interfere with furtherance of our mission and ministry. Those who serve in ministry or support positions, whether they are being paid for their services or are a volunteer, are expected to carry out their life and ministry in a Christ-like manner. This policy applies to all individuals who are members, volunteers, visitors, and employees of our church.

St. John's ELCA prohibits conduct, words, or actions which intimidate, insult, coerce or harass another member, volunteer, visitor, or employee. Harassment of any sort – verbal, nonverbal, or physical – is not appropriate, particularly harassment based on legally protected categories (such as race, color, sex, age, national origin, disability, etc.).

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Sexual harassment may include unwelcome or unsolicited sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other physical or verbal conduct of a sexual nature when: (1) submission to the conduct is made an explicit or implicit term or condition of employment or participation; (2) submission to or rejection of the conduct is used as the basis for a decision affecting the individual; or (3) the conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance, participation, or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment.

Examples of sexual harassment may include but are not limited to explicit sexual propositions, sexual innuendo, suggestive comments of a sexual nature, sexually-oriented kidding or teasing, practical jokes of a sexual nature, jokes about gender-specific traits, and obscene language or gestures; displays of obscene printed or visual material; and physical contact including unwelcome or unsolicited touching, including intentionally brushing against another's body.

HARASSMENT REPORTING & COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

All leaders and members can share the responsibility of keeping our church environment free of harassment. Any person who becomes aware of an incident of harassment, whether by being subjected to harassment, by witnessing an incident, or by being told of it, is encouraged to report it immediately to the Pastor and/or the President of the Congregation. When the Pastor or the President of the Congregation becomes aware of the existence of harassment, prompt and appropriate action will be taken.

We encourage you to communicate directly with the alleged harasser and to make it clear that the person's behavior is unacceptable, unwelcome, offensive, and/or inappropriate. It is nonetheless strongly recommended that you notify the Pastor or the President of the Congregation immediately of any incident of harassment, even if you are not sure the offending behavior is considered unlawful harassment.

When the Pastor or the President of the Congregation becomes aware of alleged harassment, the incident will be documented and investigated promptly and thoroughly by the church council officers. Reports and investigations are kept confidential to the extent possible consistent with resolving the matter and taking appropriate corrective action; absolute confidentiality cannot be guaranteed. The designated church council officer will recommend actions to resolve the situation for approval and implementation by the Pastor or the President of the Congregation.

Retaliation for reporting harassment or participating in an investigation will not be permitted.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION & RESOURCES

SEXUAL HARASSMENT REFERENCE INFORMATION

Sexual harassment can involve one or more incidents. More specific wording and examples of sexual harassment may include, but are not limited to, the following:

VERBAL: explicit sexual advances or propositions; repeated and/or unwanted social invitations or requests for physical intimacy; threats; sexual innuendo, suggestive comments of a sexual nature, or sexually oriented kidding or teasing; stories or jokes of a sexual nature or about gender-specific traits; obscene language; comments on another person's appearance, age, private life, etc.; insults based on a person's gender, including nicknames; condescending or paternalistic remarks of a sexual nature; sexually explicit messages (by phone, app, or email).

NON-VERBAL: sexually explicit or suggestive materials or sounds; suggestive or inappropriate whistling or leering; sexually suggestive, obscene, or crude gestures, photos, pictures, or other visual materials (may include calendars, post cards, magazines, etc.).

PHYSICAL: unwelcome or unsolicited touching, patting, pinching, stroking, kissing, hugging, fondling, or other inappropriate touching; intentionally brushing against another person's body; coerced sexual intercourse; sexual assault or other physical violence.