

*Forest Lake United Methodist Church
Tuscaloosa, Alabama*

Employee Handbook

2008

EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK INTRODUCTION

The church staff is a team ministry serving Christ, His church and the community. The value of each individual team member must be recognized, nurtured and guided so that the effectiveness of the total team can be achieved. The responsibility for personnel lies with the Staff Parish Relations Committee that takes its authority from The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church. It is the policy of the church to provide one with a challenging, rewarding, and meaningful job opportunity with fair treatment and compensation including employee benefits.

This handbook is designed to serve as a source of information about the working environment of the church and its employee benefits. The policies stated in this handbook are subject to change at the sole and unrestricted discretion of Forest Lake UMC. FLUM also reserves the discretionary authority to interpret all provisions of this handbook and available fringe benefits. From time to time, you may be updated on information concerning changes in the policy. If you have any questions regarding any policies, please ask the Senior Pastor for assistance. **This handbook is not a contract, expressed or implied, guaranteeing employment for any specific duration. Although we hope that your employment relationship with us will be long term, either you or FLUM may terminate this relationship at any time, for any reason, with or without cause or notice. Please understand that no administrator, minister, or representation of FLUM has the authority to enter into any agreement with you for employment for any specified period or to make any promises or commitments contrary to the foregoing. Further, any employment agreement entered into by the Staff Parish Relations Committee shall not be enforceable unless it is in writing.**

The effectiveness of the Ministry of Forest Lake UMC depends to a large extent on the quality of work of its staff and the part each staff member plays in achieving and maintaining a positive team spirit. Important in this regard are compliance with church policy and friendly relationships with other staff members, church members, and visitors.

The Staff Parish Relations Committee serves as the personnel Committee and wants this church to be known as a friendly, caring and compassionate church both in its contact with the community and in its day-to-day internal operations. The committee also sees each staff member as an important part of the local ministry of the church. All staff members working together can build an effective team and support meaningful ministry in the name of Jesus Christ.

We are glad to have you with us!

I. CLASSIFICATION OF POSITIONS AT FOREST LAKE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Lay employees of FLUM are classified as follows:

A. SALARIED FULL-TIME

A salaried full time employee is one who is regularly scheduled to work 40 (forty) or more hours per week and is paid a salaried amount. Jobs in the category are as follows:

Administrative Assistant
Custodian
Financial Secretary

B. SALARIED PART-TIME

A salaried part-time employee is one who is regularly scheduled to work less than 40 (forty) hours per week and is paid a salaried amount. Jobs in this category are as follows:

Director of Children's Ministries	Pastoral Assistant
Director of Music	Youth Director
Organist	Youth Assistant
Recreation Director	Contemporary Music Leader

C. HOURLY FULL-TIME

An hourly full-time employee is one who is regularly scheduled to work 40 (forty) or more hours per week and is paid based on the number of hours worked during a work week. Jobs in this category are as follows:

D. HOURLY PART-TIME

An hourly part-time employee is one who is regularly scheduled to work less than 30 (thirty) hours per week and is paid based on the number of hours worked during a work week. Jobs in this category are:

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PERSONNEL POLICY
Forest Lake United Methodist Church
Policies and Procedures for LAY Employees

This personnel policy has been designed as a guide for lay employees of this church. It is a statement that must be approved by the Staff Parish Relations Committee and by the Administrative Council as a part of the over-all document.

CLASSIFICATION OF EMPLOYEE POSITIONS

Clergy are classified as "Connectional Employees" of the United Methodist Church. They are governed by the General Board and the Conference in which they are appointed.

Lay employees are divided into two classifications: regular and temporary. Regular employees are those who, at the time of hiring or by subsequent designation by the SPRC, are classified as "regular" by the SPRC. All other employees are considered "temporary". Once a position has been classified as "regular" that position classification cannot be removed during the incumbency of an employee, except with the express consent of that employee.

Regular Full-time Employees are further defined as those persons working 40 hours a week, year round.

Regular Part-time Employees are further defined as those persons working less than 40 hours a week, year round.

ELIGIBILITY FOR BENEFITS

Regular full-time and part-time employees will receive employee benefits as described in this policy. Temporary employees receive benefits as required by law.

SHORT TERM ABSENCES

It is the policy of this church to permit employees to be absent from work, with pay, on a short term basis under the following circumstances:

1. Definitions:
 - a. A short term absence is any absence continuing for two weeks or less. Absences longer than two weeks must be converted to a "leave of absence" if employment rights are to be maintained. (See Leave of Absence-bottom of page 3)
 - b. Immediate family includes the employee's spouse, brothers, sisters, parents and grand parents, children, stepchildren, in-laws including, parents and grand parents, sisters, brothers, sons or daughters, and all other members of the employee's household.
2. Authorized short-term absences will include any of the following:
 - a. Sickness or injury;
 - b. Death, funeral or estate settlement in the employee's immediate family;
 - c. Marriage of the employee or a member of his immediate family;

- d. Birth of a child to or adoption by the employee and/or the employee's spouse;
 - e. Personal business which cannot be deducted outside of normal working hours;
 - f. Jury Duty or testifying as a witness in a judicial proceeding; or,
 - g. Approved voluntary participation in community projects
3. Employees will be compensated for base pay during periods of authorized absence to the extent that they have accrued such days. No remuneration will be paid for absences covered by Workers Compensation.
 4. Regular Full-time Employees days of paid absence may be accrued as follows:
 - a. After six months through one year of service: 5 days leave
 - b. After one year of service: 10 days leave per year
 - c. Employees may accrue up to a maximum of: 30 days
 5. Regular Part-time Employees will receive the same short term days of paid absence as Regular Full-time Employees and have the same accrual based on the prorated percentage of the full-time equivalent (FTE) of a 40 hour work week.
 6. Employees should give the Senior Pastor as much advance notice of an absence as possible. The Senior Pastor shall approve all authorized accrued days of absence. Unless otherwise agreed upon by the Senior Pastor, the employee is responsible for consulting with the Senior Pastor to ensure that someone will perform the employee's job duties during his or her absence.
 7. Unused accrued authorized days of paid short term absence may be converted to cash at time of termination of employment according to the following schedule:

Less than 1 year:	0% of unused accrued days
After 1 year through 5 years:	25% of unused accrued days
6 years through 10 years:	50% of unused accrued days
11 years through 15 years:	75% of unused accrued days
16 years and up:	100% of unused accrued days
 8. If the employee dies, payment for unused accrued short term absence will be made in a lump sum to the estate.
 9. Authorized days off for short term absences will not be considered as working time for calculating weekly overtime compensation.

VACATIONS

Annual vacations with pay will be granted in accordance with the following guidelines. The established vacation year is the anniversary date of employment. Vacations are earned for work during the preceeding year and based on the employee's length of service and classification.

1. Regular Full-time Employees

After six months and through one year:	5 days
After one year and through ten years:	10 days
After ten years:	15 days

2. Regular Part-time employees will receive the same days of paid vacation time as regular full-time employees and have the same accrual based on prorated percentage of the full time equivalent (FTE) of a 40 hour work week.
3. Employees need to submit tentative vacation plans to the Senior Pastor each December for the following vacation year. The Senior Pastor reserves the right to designate when some or all vacations will be taken. All vacations will be granted on a first come, first served basis preferably with a four week minimum notice.
4. Unless otherwise agreed upon by the Senior Pastor, employees are responsible for consulting with the Senior Pastor to ensure that someone will perform the employee's job duties during his or her absence.
5. Vacation must be taken in the vacation year it is earned. Employees will not be paid for any unused vacation remaining at the end of their vacation year. However, where an employee is requested by the Church to cancel vacation plans and the vacation cannot be rescheduled before the end of the year, along with an additional vacation accrued for that following year.
6. If an employee dies, payment for unused accrued vacation will be made in a lump sum to his or her estate.

HOLIDAYS AND DAYS OFF

The following holidays and days off will be observed.

Holidays:

January 1
Memorial Day (National)
July 4
Labor Day
Thanksgiving
Christmas

Days Off:

The Friday after Thanksgiving
December 24
December 31

In cases where a holiday falls on a scheduled work day for an employee and she or he cannot have the day off, an alternate day will be authorized by the Senior Pastor.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Employees are eligible for Leave of Absence (LOA) after completing at least one year of employment. Under certain circumstances employees may be granted a Leave of Absence (LOA) for up to 6 months upon approval by the Senior Pastor and the Chairman of the SPRC.

An extended LOA for up to 6 months may be granted to the employee on recommendation of the Senior Pastor and approval by the SPRC.

When possible such requests for a LOA, or an extended LOA, should be submitted in writing to the Senior Pastor at least 30 days prior to the requested start of the LOA.

Any form of compensation or other employee benefits must be authorized by the SPRC upon recommendation of the Senior Pastor.

While the employee is on LOA, the status of that leave shall be reported by the employee to the Senior Pastor on a monthly basis.

If an employee fails to return to his or her former position, or a similar one, at the conclusion of an approved LOA, the employee will be terminated from employment.

The following types of Leave of Absence will be considered:

1. Sickness or injury, including but not limited to disabilities caused by pregnancies, childbirth or other related medical conditions, and where such extended illness or disability continues beyond coverage as outlined in his policy. The Church may require certification, on a periodic basis, of an employee's continuing illness or disability by the employee's physician and/or physician selected by the Church.
2. Female employees not disabled by pregnancy or childbirth and male employees may be granted a child care leave of absence for the purpose of caring for newborn or seriously ill children. Employees who adopt a child may be granted a child care leave of absence for the purpose of receiving the child into the home and assisting the child in adjustment after placement.
3. Employees will be granted a LOA in cases in which the SPRC determines a LOA is necessary and beneficial both for the employee and the church.

MEDICAL INSURANCE

All regularly scheduled full-time employees shall be provided with medical insurance. The employee is responsible for paying medical costs for other members of his/her family should they desire coverage.

CONTINUING EDUCATION

Full-time and Part-time program personnel may be encouraged to participate in continuing education programs and money will be put into their education line item to the extent it is available.

MILEAGE

Employees will be reimbursed mileage for use of their personal car on church business. Reimbursement will be at the rate allowed by the IRS. Any employee receiving mileage reimbursement must keep proper records on church approved forms and submit those records monthly for approval by the Senior Pastor.

403-(b.) PENSION PLAN

(Tax Deferred Annuities and other qualifying investments)

Employees are encouraged to participate in 403-(b.) pension planning. This Church will provide employees with the opportunity to choose whatever qualifying investment

they wish. The church will also provide a payroll deduction and whatever necessary resolutions may be required by the plan to implement the process.

TERMINATIONS

Employees covered by this policy may be terminated from employment for misconduct, financial or programmatic reasons or by voluntary resignation. The decision to terminate an employee will be made by the SPRC on the recommendation of the Senior Pastor. When an individual leaves employment that person will receive payment for unused, accrued vacation and short term absences in accordance with the terms of this policy. Any decision to provide additional severance pay in cases involving financial and/or programmatic terminations shall be made by the SPRC on recommendation of the Senior Pastor.

APPEALS

Every effort should be made to resolve difference of interpretation of this policy and its application between the employee and supervisor. If the differences cannot be resolved, either party in the disagreement may seek the help of the church committee most directly related to the area of employment to assist in resolving the dispute.

If the disagreement cannot be resolved satisfactorily by the related church committee, an appeal to the SPRC may be made by either party. Such an appeal must be in writing and must be made within 15 days after exhausting all other procedures in an attempt to arrive at a solution. Appeals must be addressed to the Chairperson of the SPRC. The SPRC will consider the dispute within 7 days after the Chairperson receives written notice. The decision of the SPRC is final.

Programmatic and administrative differences should be resolved between the individual and his or her supervisor. If unresolved, such differences may be directed to the Senior Pastor whose decision is final.

HARDSHIP OR UNUSUAL CIRCUMSTANCES

Upon request by the employee or recommendation by the Senior Pastor, the SPRC may waive any provision of this personnel policy in cases of extreme hardship or unusual circumstances.

COMPLIANCE WITH LAW

Forest Lake United Methodist Church shall comply with all state and federal laws governing hiring, compensation, termination and other employee benefits.

REVISIONS TO THIS POLICY

This policy shall be reviewed at least every five years by the SPRC. Revisions to the policy cannot take effect until approved by the Administrative Council following the recommendation of the SPRC.

This policy has been agreed upon by the SPRC on (date here) _____
SPRC Chairman's Signature _____
Approved by Administrative Council _____ Date _____
Administrative Council Chairman's Signature _____ Date _____

HIRING, EVALUATION AND COMPENSATION

A. PROBATIONARY PERIOD

All new employees and all current employees transferred or promoted to a new job are to be considered in a probationary period for at least six months. Such employees will be given regular status upon the successful completion of the probationary period. The probationary period ends when the supervisor has completed a performance assessment for the employee.

B. EVALUATION OF STAFF

All full-time hourly and full-time salaried staff shall be evaluated on an annual basis by the immediate supervisor. Staff shall be provided copies of the evaluation form prior to the evaluation.

C. SALARY ADMINISTRATION

Salaries and wages for various positions in the church are set by the SPRC after careful and continuing review of comparable church salaries in both the local and regional areas, as well as comparable business salaries in the local area. A balance between the cost of living and specific job responsibilities of all full-time employee is sought through an annual review of factors such as cost of living, superior performance, and possibly promotion to higher levels of responsibility. Superior job performance, increase in responsibilities, and longer periods of service are factors that account for differences in salaries of employees in similar positions. Any proposed salary increases must be approved by the SPRC and/or the Senior Pastor. All salary increases should be effective on the anniversary date of employment.

Part-time positions both salaried and hourly are not reviewed annually for salary increases. Periodically these positions will be re-evaluated. Any proposed increases for part-time employees will be considered only after a full review of the responsibilities of that position. Any increases must be approved by SPRC.

Payroll runs on a bimonthly schedule. Checks are not given in advance. An employee may receive an advance in salary if its normal date of issue would fall within his/her vacation time.

I. DISCIPLINARY AND TERMINATION PROCEDURES

The church recognizes its responsibility to give clear and consistent direction to its employees to provide a basis for understanding and conforming to appropriate job-related behavior and work performance. To do so, the church recognizes the need to provide fair and consistent disciplinary measures to be applied when employees fail to observe or ignore or disregard such direction and to assure that appropriate due process procedures are available to employees disciplined.

A. DISCIPLINE

1. Disciplinary Actions

Disciplinary Actions which may be administered are listed below. However, this order is not mandatory. Any of these disciplinary actions may be administered depending on the nature and severity of the incident or problem.

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|--------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------|
| <i>a. Conference</i> | <i>c. Written Reprimand</i> | <i>e. Termination</i> |
| <i>b. Oral Reprimand</i> | <i>d. Suspension</i> | |

All disciplinary actions must be made a matter of written record. To the degree practical and appropriate, the employee will be informed of the disciplinary action in a face-to-face meeting. The Senior Pastor or SPRC will document conferences and maintain reports of them in files for use in the performance evaluation or in administering further discipline in the event that of repeated infractions. All other disciplinary action must be documented and filed in the employees personnel file. Written documentation shall provide a clear statement of the offense, what must be done to remedy it, the disciplinary action to be taken, and if termination is not administered, what to expect if the infraction recurs.

2. *Grounds for Disciplinary Actions*

The following list indicates grounds for disciplinary action up to and including termination. This list is illustrative only and is not meant to be all-inclusive. The church reserves the right to change, add or subtract from this list at its discretion.

- a.** Fraud in securing position/falsifying credentials
- b.** Incompetency
- c.** Inefficiency
- d.** Insubordination
- e.** Theft
- f.** Dishonesty
- g.** Drunkenness or use of narcotics/illegal drugs on duty
- h.** Absence without notification or leave
- i.** Conviction of a felony or misdemeanor or behavior involving moral turpitude which adversely reflects on the church or affects the employee's suitability for continued employment.
- j.** Discourteous treatment of the public or members of the church
- k.** Misuse or abuse of church property
- l.** Illegal discrimination, including sexual harassment
- m.** Habits or conduct which risk the safety or health of persons in the work environment

3. *Informal and Formal Discipline*

- a.** Informal Discipline- Corrective counseling, oral warnings, and conferencing are informal means of dealing with performance deficiencies or misconduct which may be used at the Senior Minister's or the SPRC's option prior to or in addition to formal disciplinary measures.
- b.** Formal Discipline- The employer may formally discipline employees for unacceptable performance or behavior using such means but not limited to written reprimands, suspension with or without pay, disciplinary reassignments or demotions, and termination. The employee shall receive a written notice of any formal disciplinary action and a copy of such notice shall be placed in the employee's personnel file. Such notices should include the reason for the discipline; the type of disciplinary action taken, including dates and duration where applicable; the involvement or correction expected; and the consequences of failure to make required improvement. Where notices cannot be issued in person, they should be delivered by certified mail.

B. TERMINATION BY EMPLOYEE CATEGORY

1. Probationary and Part-Time Salaried Non-Probationary Employees

Employees who have not completed the six month probationary period in a full-time position may be terminated at any time during the probationary period without cause and without prejudice. Employees who are terminated during their probationary period need not be given reasons for their termination and are not entitled to severance pay.

2. Full-Time Hourly and Salaried Non-Probationary Employees

Full-time employees who have completed the six month probationary period may be terminated for cause if they fail to perform job duties in a satisfactory manner or if their behavior otherwise interferes with the efficient operation of the church. Discharge should not be an initial disciplinary action except in serious cases of unsatisfactory performance or unacceptable behavior. Full-time employees who are terminated for cause shall be given written notice of their termination which specifies the date the termination is effective and the reasons for the discharge.

C. DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES AND TERMINATION

1. Conference:

The Senior Minister and/or SPRC may use a conference at his/her/its discretion to advise an employee of improper performance or conduct and the actions the employee must take to correct the situation. The conference must be documented with a copy of documentation placed in the minister or SPRC Committee file and a copy given to the employee.

2. Written Reprimand:

With the approval of the SPRC, the Senior Minister may issue a written reprimand to discipline an employee for serious or repetitive improper performance or conduct. The reprimand shall contain a clear statement of the offense, what must be done to remedy it, the disciplinary action to be taken, and if termination is not administered, what to expect if the infraction recurs. Following the Senior Minister's signature, the employee shall be requested to read, date and sign the following statement affixed to the reprimand:

"My signature below indicates that I have read and fully understand the contents of this letter, although I may not necessarily agree with those contents."

 date

 signature

If the employee refuses to sign the reprimand, the Senior Minister shall obtain the signature of a witness (a designee of SPRC who witnesses the issuance and delivery of the reprimand) who shall read and sign the following statement which shall be affixed to the reprimand:

"I have witnessed that the recipient of this letter does not wish to sign acknowledging receipt of this letter."

 date

 signature

An original and at least one copy shall be made of the written reprimand. The original shall be placed in the employees personnel file in the church office, one copy shall be given to the employee, and one copy shall be placed in the Senior Minister or SPRC file.

The employees may respond in writing to the written reprimand within two working days stating why he/she believes the reprimand unfair or improperly administered. The Senior Minister or SPRC shall consider the information contained in the response and take any action deemed appropriate. The Senior Minister or SPRC shall not be required to take action nor reply to the employee's response. Any written response by either party shall be attached to the written reprimand and copies distributed as indicated.

3. Suspension:

With the approval of the SPRC, an employee may be suspended for up to five days for severe or repeated offenses. Suspension may be with or without pay with sufficient notification as determined by Fair Labor Standards Act. The Senior Minister or SPRC or SPRC designee shall meet with the employee to administer the suspension. In the meeting, the reason for suspension, the length of suspension, beginning and ending dates, with pay or without pay, and further disciplinary actions which may result if the suspension fails to correct the infraction shall be explained.

Suspension shall be documented. The original document shall be placed in the personnel file, a copy shall be given to the employee and an additional copy shall be placed in the Senior Minister or SPRC files.

The employee may respond in writing to the suspension within two working days stating why he/she believes the suspension unfair or improperly administered. The Senior Minister or SPRC shall consider the information contained in the response and take any action deemed appropriate. The Senior Minister or SPRC shall not be required to take action nor to reply to the employee's response. Any written response by either party shall be placed in the employee's file.

4. Reassignment of Responsibilities

An employee may be reassigned to duties other than those included in his/her regular position or may be relieved of some or all of the duties of that position. Such reassignment may result in demotion and reduction in salary depending on the nature and severity of the problem or infraction in question. Reassignment may be a separate disciplinary action or may be used in conjunction with other disciplinary actions.

The Senior Minister or SPRC or designee shall meet with the employee to inform him/her of the intent to reassign. In the meeting the reason for reassignment, whether reassignment is a separate action or is being administered along with other actions, when reassignment is effective, whether it is permanent or temporary, whether there shall be a demotion or reduction in salary, and whether further discipline may result if the reassignment fails to correct the infraction shall be explained.

Reassignment shall be documented as indicated above.

The employee may respond in writing to the reassignment within two working days stating why he/she believes the reassignment unfair. The Senior Minister or SPRC shall consider all information contained in the response and take any action deemed appropriate. The Senior Minister or SPRC Committee shall not be required to take action nor to reply to the employee's response. Any written response by either shall be placed in the employee's personnel file.

5. Termination

Termination may be the last step in a process of progressive discipline designed to correct job-related problems or, for severe or extreme infractions, may occur without prior discipline.

The Senior Minister and SPRC or SPRC designee shall meet with the employee to inform him/her of the intent to terminate employment. The reason for the proposed termination and the date of termination shall be provided. If the employee is not available to receive the information in person, it shall be mailed by registered mail to the last known address.

An employee shall be given severance or notification pay (one week per year worked but not to exceed four weeks; plus any remaining vacation) no later than two days after notification of intent to terminate. Any expenses owed to the church and/or the employee will be settled prior to issuance of the severance pay.

The circumstances of the proposed termination shall be fully documented. The original shall be filed with the employee's personnel file in the Senior Ministers office and a copy shall be given to the employee.

The employee may respond in writing to the termination within two working days stating why he/she believes the termination unfair or improperly administered. The Senior Minister or SPRC Committee shall consider the information contained in the response and take any action deemed appropriate. The Senior Minister or SPRC Committee shall not be required to take action nor to reply to the employee's response. Any written response by either party shall be placed in the employee's personnel file.

II. REDUCTION IN FORCE

When the church or the SPRC budget dictates, reorganization or elimination of staff positions may be made at any time by SPRC in consultation with the Senior Pastor. Employees who are affected will be provided written notice at the earliest possible time. An employee shall be given two weeks official notification and two weeks severance pay plus any remaining vacation. Any expenses owed to the church and/or the employee will be settled prior to issuance of the final pay check.

III. PENSION PLAN

The church participates in a retirement plan for all full-time employees and ministers. Full-time employees who have completed one year of service are eligible to participate in the pension plan. The plan is managed and administered by the General Board of Pensions of the United Methodist Church. The employee must contribute 2% of wages each month, and the church will contribute 4%. Withdrawal of funds invested in the plan will be in accordance with rules established by the General Board which may be amended from time to time.

IV. WORKER'S COMPENSATION INSURANCE

All employees of the Church are covered by Workmen's Compensation Insurance. Job-related accidents, injuries and illnesses should be reported immediately to the Senior Pastor so that the proper medical attention might be obtained promptly.

V. SEXUAL HARASSMENT AND MISCONDUCT

All employees have the right to work in an environment free of discrimination, including sexual harassment. Any employee who has a complaint is encouraged to report the complaint to his/her immediate supervisor (or in the case that the immediate supervisor is the harasser, then directly to the Senior Minister or the chairperson of SPRC). Employees who wish to lodge an informal or file a formal complaint have the right to report the complaint to a person of the same gender. Individuals may consider this when choosing to report to the supervisor, Senior Minister or the chairperson of SPRC Committee. All complaints will be investigated and handled as discreetly as possible. Any employee who violates this policy will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action. Procedures for Resolution of Sexual Harassment Complaints are available in each supervisor's office, the Senior Minister's office and on file with SPRC. Copies are available to any employee.

**SEXUAL HARASSMENT AND MISCONDUCT POLICY
NORTH ALABAMA CONFERENCE
THE UNTIED METHODIST CHURCH**

Sexual harassment and/or misconduct are not acceptable behaviors in the North Alabama Conference. Ethically and legally the Annual Conference is responsible to ensure that mechanisms are in place to protect both the accuser and the accused regarding such matters.

The following policies are intended to provide guidance to all laity, clergy, diaconal ministers, employees, and volunteers of the Conference, District, or local churches, and it is hoped that the adoption of these statements will be a deterrent to inappropriate behavior. These guidelines are intended to provide an additional informal process for resolution of disputes within the North Alabama Conference. They are not intended to supplant or substitute for the formal complaint process and its attendant fair process protections. They are intended to assist persons to reach a just resolution and reconciliation prior to chargeable offense nor can it be used as grounds for an appeal of the formal complaint, review, investigations and trial process.

A. THEOLOGICAL BASIS

We believe and proclaim that all persons are created by God. God values human life, intended all men, women, and children to have worth and dignity in all relationships with God and others. We are called to use our bodies, including our sexuality, in a responsible way.

Sexual harassment and/or misconduct are violations of an individual's integrity. In the Genesis stories and in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus, we affirm that we are created in the image and likeness of God. To harass and abuse another person sexually is to deny that value. This is a sin against God and other persons.

Sexual harassment and/or misconduct are violations of the integrity of the Body of Christ. Scripture specifically states that we are one connected in Body in Christ created equally. The entire Body is rendered less than God's intended potential wholeness when one part of the Body is injured physically, emotionally or spiritually.

We believe in justice for all persons. Sexual harassment and/or misconduct reflect a lack of respect, and the unjust use of status and power. Such behavior is dehumanizing and violates the teachings of the Church. We believe the ultimate goal of any response to sexual harassment and/or misconduct should be justice, reconciliation and a return to wholeness for all involved.

B. DEFINITIONS

Minister is used in this policy to include all ordained, licensed and consecrated persons serving in the North Alabama Annual Conference, including those ministers serving beyond the local church, those who are on leaves, those who are have honorably located, and those who are retired.

Sexual harassment is any attempt to coerce a person into a sexual relationship, to subject a person to unwanted sexual attention, or to punish a refusal to comply. Harassment may involve a wide range of behaviors, from verbal innuendo and subtle suggestions to overt demands and physical abuse. Sexual harassment must be understood as an exploitation of a power relationship rather than as an exclusively sexual issue.

Sexual harassment also exists when the work environment is charged with sexist bias. Sexual harassment may include the belittling or discrediting of people through humor, remarks or other activities which create an intimidating, hostile or offensive climate. This environment is also viewed as sexual conduct.

Sexual Misconduct occurs when a church professional engages in sexual contact or sexualized behavior with a congregant, client, employee, student, staff member, etc. (adult, teenager or child) within the professional relationship. Sexual misconduct includes sexual harassment and any form of criminal sexual conduct.

Sexual misconduct can be a physical sexual invasion of the body and/or by force a psychological assault, statutory rape, sexual intercourse with a child, promoting prostitution, pornography with children, indecent assault and aggravated sexual assault.

C. STANDARDS FOR MINISTERIAL CONDUCT

Ministers related to Annual Conference are always accountable for the ways they respond to persons who ask their ministerial assistance and whom they have authority.

Ministers often relate to persons who are fragile and vulnerable and, therefore, ministers must exercise special care:

- That they are psychologically, emotionally and spiritually healthy. That there have been proper and adequate preparation and education as well as adequate continuing education for providing appropriate help for those under their care.
- That they seek counsel, advice and supervision.

All ministers have responsibility for developing healthy and ethical relationships with other persons. Married ministers have covenanted to nurture and maintain a faithful marital relationship. The covenant also reminds single ministers that dating relationships must maintain full attention to sexual conduct as understood by Christian teaching.

All those within the covenant of the church are encouraged to discern when particular collegial support, therapy or other assistance should be sought for ministers with regard to relationships.

Sexual misconduct breaks sacred trust inherited in ordination. Any sexual misconduct shall be seen as an offense by the clergyperson who then bears the responsibility of his or her behavior. Clergy sexual misconduct is not only a problem with the morality of an individual; it is also a social issue that harms the church even as it harms individuals.

Sexual misconduct is exploitive, abusive and a violation of ethics.

- It is a violation of role. The ministerial presupposes certain role expectations. Sexual contact is never a part of the ministerial role.
- It is a misuse of authority and power. The role of minister carries with it authority and power, and the attendant responsibility to use this power to benefit the people who call upon the minister for service. Even if it is the congregant who initially sexualized the relationship, it is still the minister's responsibility to maintain the professional boundaries of the ministerial relationship.
- It is taking advantage of vulnerability. The congregant, client or student is vulnerable to the minister in many ways. He or she is predisposed to want to believe the minister will act in all ways that contribute to his or her well being.
- It is absent of meaningful consent. Meaningful consent assumes that both parties have equal power in the relationship. In a ministerial relationship the power is imbalanced on the side of the minister. Therefore the minister is responsible for keeping the relationship free of sex or sexual innuendo since the difference in role makes meaningful consent problematic.

D. CONFIDENTIALITY AND RESPONSIBILITY FOR REPORTING SEXUAL MISCONDUCT AND HARASSMENT

Because the Church is a place for healing and justice, it must recognize, prevent and stop sexual misconduct and harassment. As a part of the covenant Community of faith, all ministers and laity bear sacred responsibility to address sexual misconduct and harassment as they become aware of such behavior. Lay persons and ministers alike bear responsibility for confronting one another with knowledge of sexual misconduct and harassment.

When the covenant of ministry has been broken by instances of sexual misconduct or harassment, there is pain and disruption in the community. In those moments ministers are called to bring about healing, reconciliation and restoration of all parties. This may include encouragement and support of an aggrieved person, care for one committing the offense, and initiation of complaint procedures (paragraph 358, 1996 Book of Discipline). Every complaint must be taken seriously.

If any provisions of this policy are in conflict with the current Book of Discipline, the Discipline shall prevail. Such conflict shall not be grounds for invalidating this policy.

VI. MISCELLANEOUS

A. CONFIDENTIALITY

Because of the nature of the work that is done in the church, there will be confidential information handled by staff members. It is expected that staff members will keep such information confidential.

B. REGULAR HOURS

The regular daily office hours are from 8:30am until 5:00pm, Monday through Friday including a 60-minute break. Staggered work schedules may be necessary in certain operational areas but secretarial personnel should maintain regular work hours unless otherwise authorized.

C. OVERTIME AND COMPENSATORY TIME

"The church exists to serve the congregation, and it will sometimes be necessary employees work beyond the normal scheduled work week."

The church staff are encouraged to complete work within the prescribed work week which is agreed upon at initial employment. On occasion, conditions may exist which require a supervisor in discussion with a nonexempt employee to adjust the work schedule of that employee, causing the employee to work a greater number of hours for one or more workdays and a lesser than normal number of work hours for one or more other workdays. If a condition exists where an employee must work over the prescribed hours during the work week, then prior **written approval** must be given to the employee and the employee must accept either (1) compensatory time at one-and one-half times the rate of actual overtime hours worked for the work week or (2) overtime pay at one-and one-half times his/her normal hourly rate for each hour of overtime work performed for the work week. Compensatory time shall be used within a "reasonable time" and shall not be used if such would create disruption in operations of the church. Only "non-exempt" employees- those who hold jobs which are non-supervisory and non-professional in nature- are eligible for compensatory time and over-time pay. All other employees are "exempt" and ineligible.

D. PERSONNEL RECORDS

The senior pastor will maintain a separate personnel folder on each employee. Employment history, training records and performance appraisals will be filed in the folder. Because of the confidential nature of this material, only the Senior Pastor, the applicable employee and his/her supervisor will have access to the personnel record folder.

E. WEEKDAY KIDS PARTICIPATION

All employees are entitled to enroll one child in the Weekday Kids program at no cost and a second child at half price for those hours that an employee is at work at FLUM, contingent upon availability.

F. SCHEDULE OF REIMBURSEMENT

Substitute secretarial and custodial staff will be paid minimum wage. Other substitutes, such as organist, are paid as directed by the program staff person in charge with prior approval of the Senior Pastor.

VII. SUBSTANCE ABUSE

I. POLICY

FLUM seeks to foster the development of Christian character, spiritual growth and a sense of personal responsibility in its employees. To fulfill this purpose and to protect and promote the health and welfare of this church, its staff membership and others we serve, FLUM is committed to maintaining a drug-free facility. It is

the policy of FLUM that the use of illicit drugs or alcohol by staff members, or visitors in connection with or affecting any church related activity, is strictly prohibited. The use of illegal drugs and abuse of other controlled substances while on or off duty is inconsistent with law-abiding behavior and the ministry of FLUM and is a threat to the safety of others. This policy is intended to create and maintain a safe and working environment free of drugs and alcohol abuse, to protect FLUM property, equipment and operations and to provide for the welfare of its staff and membership.

Notice of policy:

FLUM shall provide written notice (each employee is provided a copy) of its drug and alcohol testing policy to all current and future job applicants.

II. STANDARDS OF CONDUCT

A. The use, consumption or possession of alcoholic beverages and the unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensation, possession or use of illicit drugs by any staff member, volunteer or other individual on our premises, or off premises in connection with or affecting any church related activity is strictly prohibited.

Drug abuse in the workplace creates a dangerous environment for the employee engaged in the drug abuse and endangers the health, safety and welfare of all employees and other persons in the workplace.

B. Any staff member violating this policy will be subject to disciplinary procedures, up to and including termination, and may be required to participate in a drug and/or alcohol abuse, assistance or rehabilitation program approved for such purposes by federal, state or local health, law enforcement or other appropriate agency.

C. FLUM does not differentiate between drug users and drug pushers or dealers. Any staff that gives or transfers drugs to another person or sells or manufactures drugs on premises or off premises in connection with or affecting any church related activity is subject to disciplinary action, which may include termination.

D. In addition to subjecting staff members to its internal disciplinary procedures, FLUM may refer those individuals who violate federal, state or local illicit drug and alcohol laws to the appropriate federal, state or local law enforcement agencies for prosecution.

III. DEFINITIONS

A. ILLEGAL DRUGS

1. Chemical substances not legally obtainable by the general public (except under Special Circumstances) such as heroin, cocaine, marijuana (THC), Phencyclidine (PCP), etc, or;

2. Prescription drugs with narcotic, opiate, hallucinogenic, or mind-altering properties, for which the individual user has no legal prescription such as sleeping pills, diet pills, tranquilizers, sedatives, analgesics, etc.
3. Any controlled substance listed in 21 U.S.C., Section 812 and other federal regulations, and controlled substance listed in Schedules I-V in Alabama Code Section 20-2-22 through Section 20-3-32, and any "illegal drugs" which are not prescribed by a licensed physician.

B. LEGAL DRUGS

Prescription drugs and over-the-counter drugs which have been legally obtained.

C. CHURCH RELATED ACTIVITY

Includes but is not limited to any worship, social, administrative, work-related or other activity which takes place on the premises of FLUM, or which takes place off the premises and is sponsored by FLUM.

IV. PROHIBITED ACTIVITY

Employee will be subject to disciplinary action which may include termination for the following actions:

1. Use or possession of alcohol while on duty;
2. On duty use (except for the proper use of prescribed drugs), manufacture, distribution, dispensation, possession, sale or purchase of any controlled drug or abuse of any other drug;
3. Confirmed positive test for alcohol or unauthorized drugs.
4. Failure to report to the appropriate supervisor at FLUM no later than the beginning of the next working day after any arrest for violation of any criminal drug statute or arrest for DUI;
5. Conviction for violation of any criminal drug statute, which occurs in the workplace, during work hours or while representing FLUM.
6. Failure or refusal to sign consent form (See Enclosed) for drug testing.
7. Refusal to consent to or cooperate with a drug test; or
8. Attempt to alter, falsify or interfere with a drug test.

Employees will be drug and alcohol tested if a supervisor has a reasonable suspicion that a violation of any aspect of the FLUM Policy has occurred. "Reasonable Suspicion" is based on observation of behavior or performance, and means an expressed belief based on specific facts and reasonable inference drawn from those facts that an employee has consumed or used or is under the influence of drugs or alcohol. Also, all FLUM employees will be tested for drugs following an "on the job" accident resulting in personal injury or property damage.

V. TESTING: GENERAL STANDARDS

APPLICANTS:

Applicants for employment with FLUM may be asked to undergo a drug and alcohol test upon an offer of employment and prior to their final appointment this includes full-time job classifications, part-time, temporary or seasonal employees hired by FLUM.

EMPLOYEES:

An employee may be required to undergo drug and alcohol testing if there is reasonable suspicion that the employee has consumed or used illegal drugs or alcohol during work hours or is under the influence of drugs or alcohol during work hours. Circumstances which constitute a basis for determining 'reasonable suspicion' may include, but are not limited to:

1. Abnormal or erratic behavior
2. Information provided by a reliable and credible source
3. A work- related accident
4. Direct observation of drug or alcohol use; or
5. Presence of the physical symptoms of drug or alcohol use (i.e. glassy or blood shot eyes, alcohol odor on breath, slurred speech, poor coordination and/or reflexes)

Supervisors are required to detail in writing the specific facts, symptoms or observations which formed the basis for their determination that reasonable suspicion existed to warrant the testing of an employee.

SPECIMEN COLLECTION AND LABORATORY TESTING REQUIREMENTS:

All drug and alcohol testing of all employees and applicants shall be conducted at a medical facility or laboratory selected by FLUM. Employees or applicants must be accompanied by a supervisor to the site where the sample will be given and be identified by the supervisor. The testing procedure shall be conducted in accordance with the rules and regulations of the drug testing facility.

POST ACCIDENT OR INJURY TESTING:

Any employee who is operating a FLUM vehicle or other FLUM moveable equipment which is involved in an accident or incident which may be the subject of a worker's compensation claim will be tested in accordance with the policy of the worker's compensation carrier's policy. The drug test will be conducted as soon as possible, but no later than 32 hours after the accident. An alcohol test will be conducted no later than 8 hours after the accident. Local law enforcement shall be allowed to conduct their investigation and may require a breathalyzer test, blood alcohol test or urine specimen to be drawn. If law enforcement does require testing, then no additional test of a similar nature shall be required of the employee provided that the law enforcement agency provides a copy of the results to FLUM.

VI. CONSENT

Before a drug and alcohol test is administered, employees and job applicants will be asked to sign a consent form (see enclosure) authorizing the test and permitting release of test results to those FLUM officials with a need to know.

The consent form shall provide space for employees and applicants to acknowledge that they have been notified of the FLUM drug testing policy and to indicate current or recent use of prescriptions or over-the-counter medications.

If there is a confirmed positive test result that may have been the product of prescription or over-the-counter medication, the employee shall be required to present satisfactory evidence of the medicine taken.

REFUSAL TO CONSENT:

An employee, including temporary, part-time, seasonal or otherwise employed in any manner whatsoever, (hereinafter called employee), who refuses to consent to a drug and alcohol test as requested in accordance with this policy, is subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination. The reason for the refusal shall be considered in determining the appropriate disciplinary action.

VII. CONSEQUENCES OF A CONFIRMED POSITIVE TEST RESULT

If an employee's positive test result has been confirmed, the employee is subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination. Factors to be considered in determining the appropriate disciplinary response include the employee's work history, length of employment, current job performance and the existence of past disciplinary actions.

COUNSELING AND REHABILITATION:

FLUM encourages employees to voluntarily seek assistance for drug and alcohol related problems. The church may consider the fact that an employee voluntarily seeks counseling or assistance in determining the implementation of disciplinary procedures according to this policy.

SUBSEQUENT POSITIVE TEST RESULTS:

If an employee tests positive a second time while employed, that employees shall be discharged.

VIII. VEHICLE OPERATION

Any employee who tests positive, or who is convicted of any alcohol/drug violations, shall not be permitted to drive or operate any FLUM vehicle or motorized equipment, or perform tasks which may pose a safety problem to the employee or others until written approval has been obtained from the Administrator. *The employee's job classification and rate of pay may be changed to reflect some change of duties.*

IX. GENERAL RULES

Employees who are taking prescription medicine or over-the-counter medication that could adversely affect their job performance level (e.g. antihistamine or other drugs that which cause drowsiness or reduce alertness) should disclose to their immediate supervisor the medication and nature of the illness or injury.

All property belonging to FLUM is subject to inspection at any time without notice because there is no expectation of privacy. Property includes, but is not limited to FLUM owned vehicles, desks, containers, files and storage lockers.

An employee who has reasonable basis to believe that another employee is using drugs or alcohol in violation of this policy shall report the facts and circumstances immediately to his/her supervisor.

Failure to comply with the intent or provisions of these rules may be grounds for disciplinary action. Refusal by any employee to take the required drug test or follow these general rules will result in immediate relief from duties pending disposition of any disciplinary actions.

X. CONFIDENTIALITY OF TEST RESULTS

Privacy will be provided for testing, and all information from an employee's or applicant's drug and alcohol test is confidential. Only those people with a need to know shall be informed of the test results. Disclosure of test results to any other person, agency, or organization is prohibited unless written authorization is obtained from the employee. The result of a positive drug test shall not be released until the results are confirmed. The test results shall not be made available to a law enforcement agency.

XI. SEVERABILITY

The provisions of this policy are severable. If any provision is held by a court of competent jurisdiction to be invalid, unenforceable, or unconstitutional, it shall not affect the validity, enforceability or constitutionality of the remaining provisions which are adopted separately and independently.

**Forest Lake United Methodist Church
Employee Consent Form**

I, _____, hereby certify that I understand and agree that I am about to receive the following test:

I hereby consent to a blood test to detect the presence of alcohol/drugs in my system.

I hereby consent to a urine test to detect the presence of alcohol/drugs in my system.

I hereby consent to the conducting of the test to detect the presence of alcohol/drugs in my system and permit the release of the test results to those FLUM Officials with a need to know. I acknowledge that I have been notified of the FLUM drug testing policy.

I hereby refuse to consent to a test to detect the presence of alcohol/drugs in my system.

I have taken the following drugs, substances, or alcoholic beverages within the last 96 hours.

- Sleeping Pills
- Diet Pills
- Pain Relief Pills
- Cold Tablets
- Anti- Malarial Drugs
- Prescription Drugs
- Over-the-counter medications
- Any other medication or substance
- Alcoholic Beverages
- None of The Above

Note: The space to the right of each category is made available to permit any voluntary explanation or clarification of any of the above categories. The employee should print his/her name at the top and should place his/her initials in each set of an applicable parenthesis and should place the date and his/her signature at the bottom.

Date: _____

Signature: _____

Witness: _____

I, _____, an employee of Forest Lake United Methodist Church, hereby acknowledge receipt of a copy of the Substance Abuse Policy adopted by the Staff-Parish Relations Committee and the Administrative Board on _____. I agree to abide by the Church's drug and alcohol testing rules, and agree to submit to drug or alcohol testing at any time as a condition for my initial or continued employment. I authorize any laboratory or medical provider to release test results to FLUM. I understand that this agreement in no way limits my right to terminate my employment or be terminated in accordance with federal or state law.

Signed

Date