

Administrative Policies for ULV

Cancellations During weekdays, the ULV office will be closed due to weather consistent with cancellations by the East Penn School District. This is to discourage congregants from attempting to reach the church during dangerous conditions. Delayed school openings or early dismissals do not affect the office hours but employees may be given extra time to get to work or the ability to leave early at the discretion of the Minister. Evening activities on days the church office is closed are at the discretion of the activity leader. If Sunday services are cancelled for any reason, notice will be posted on Facebook and sent via the phone service available to any member or congregant.

Confidentiality The nature of ministry is to protect the confidentiality of information and nurture the trust placed in the leadership of the ministry. In the course of service to the ministry, volunteers may have access to confidential information. Volunteers and congregants may not disclose or share confidential information they may have access to without express written permission from ULV. Confidential information may be related to congregants, employees or the work and finances of the ministry. Confidential information includes but is not limited to names, addresses and contact information, prayer requests, account information, passwords and financial information.

Disruptive Behavior: Unity of Lehigh Valley affirms the inherent worth of all people, and seeks to create an open and inclusive spiritual community. This requires a safe and supportive environment, which includes addressing any situation which impinges on the individual's or the community's well-being. Such situations will be addressed promptly, directly, clearly and with compassion and consistency.

Disruptive behavior under this Policy means one or more of the following behaviors:

- **Dangerous:** The individual's behavior is a threat, or reasonably perceived to be a threat, to people engaged in the ministry's activities or to property for which the ministry is responsible.
- **Disruptive:** The individual's behavior has a significant negative impact on ministry activities and/or significantly interferes with the development of healthy relationships within the spiritual community.
- **Offensive:** The individual's behavior is such that reasonable persons regularly attending ministry activities could **reasonably** decide to leave or not join the community.

1. Since prayer is foundational to who we are, when disruptive behavior arises, the leadership will respond first with prayer (including, to the extent possible, when immediate action under Section 5 is necessary)—holding the situation and all those involved in a space of love and

wholeness. Throughout this process, ministry leaders will maintain a prayerful space in all discussions.

2. In order to address disruptive behavior fairly and effectively, leaders will endeavor to keep accurate and timely records which document observed behavior and actions taken. Written records provide context and continuity should similar issues arise again either involving the same individual or someone different.
3. It is the responsibility of the Board of Trustees together with the credentialed leaders to prayerfully discern when action needs to be taken on disruptive behavior using the criteria specified above. Persons identified as disruptive will be responded to as individuals of sacred worth; stereotypes will be avoided. To determine the necessary response, the following questions may be appropriate:
 - a. Is it a conflict between the individual and others in the ministry?
 - b. Is there a known professionally diagnosed condition of mental illness?
 - c. What is the frequency and degree of disruption caused in the past?
 - d. How likely is it that the problem behavior will diminish in the future?
4. The Board, with prayerful consideration and rational decision-making, will decide upon the necessary response on a case-by-case basis. The following three levels of response are recommended for consideration:
 - a. LEVEL 1: The Board, after or as part of an initial investigation, assigns a team of at least two people to meet with the individual. This team should consist of a Board member and/or Minister, and a lay leader within the congregation. This team will clearly articulate concerns and work with the individual to co-create a plan of action which addresses the impact of any disruptive behavior on the community and works to assure that such behavior doesn't continue.
 - b. LEVEL 2: The Board in writing excludes the individual from ministry activities as appropriate for a defined period of time, with reasons and the conditions of return made clear and supplemented as appropriate orally.
 - c. LEVEL 3: The Board in writing excludes the individual permanently from ministry activities and/or premises. The Board sends a letter to the individual explaining the expulsion and the individual's rights and possible recourse, if any. If appropriate, the letter should be presented during a face-to-face conversation.
5. **IMMEDIATE RESPONSES: If the disruptive behavior presents an immediate danger to anyone in the ministry, an immediate response**

is required. In such circumstances, those in the most responsible position should take action to establish safety. Immediate one-time action could include:

- a. Asking the individual to leave.
- b. Immediately suspending the meeting or activity until such a time as it can safely be resumed.
- c. Calling the police department and requesting assistance.

Anytime any of these actions are undertaken without a Board member or Minister being present, the senior Minister and President of the Board, or those acting as same, must be notified by phone as soon as possible. The senior Minister, or person acting as same, should assure that in all situations a written report is submitted to the Board promptly.

6. The Board will review the immediate response and shall send a follow-up letter to those individuals whose behaviors appropriately require further restrictions or exclusions. The letter in reasonable detail will explain the further restrictions or exclusions and what steps, if any, must be taken before returning to the activities involved.
7. Whether and how an individual's membership in the ministry is implicated as a result of disruptive behavior is not the focus of this Policy. While disruptive behavior may be a cause for the loss or restriction of membership rights, such issues should be addressed separately, normally through the ministry's bylaws.

Gifts and Gratuities Employees are compensated for the work they do for ULV. We appreciate the gratitude congregants may show for the work done by employees but employees should never accept gifts of anything of more than nominal value from congregants and may not request compensation from congregants for church work. This does not prohibit employees from entering into private, arms-length contracts to perform work for congregants away from church and outside of regularly scheduled hours of employment.

Harassment: ULV is committed to maintaining a positive, constructive working environment where all employees may pursue personal career satisfaction. ULV will not tolerate harassment based on race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, sex, age, disability, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity or political ideology. Harassment not only violates the church policy but also may be a violation of state and federal law. ULV, its employees and its congregants are responsible and accountable for maintaining an environment free of harassment.

Discriminatory harassment includes verbal or physical conduct intended to threaten, intimidate, offend, demean, or coerce; and may impair a person's

ability to enjoy his/her time at ULV. Harassment may take many forms, including:

- gestures, physical acts, slurs, or taunting
- verbal abuse, epithets, comments, or jokes
- displaying derogatory objects, cartoons, posters, drawings, or pictures.
- Sexual flirtation, touching, advances, or propositions
- Verbal abuse of a sexual nature
- Graphic or suggestive comments about an individual's dress or body
- Sexually degrading words to describe an individual
- The display of sexually suggestive objects or pictures.

Harassment may also be any unwelcome or offensive conduct relating to an individual's race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, sexual orientation, sex, age, disability, veteran status, or political ideology.

Investigating Harassment complaints:

1. Have the congregant or outside contractor put into writing what was done and how s/he believes this was a form of harassment. If s/he does not feel comfortable writing a complaint then the discussion will be summarized in writing and the complainant will sign the summary.
2. A Board member and the Minister (or two Board members if the Minister is a part of the complaint) will evaluate whether or not the conduct is or is not harassment. This evaluation will be communicated to the complainant. If the conduct is harassment, the investigation will proceed.
3. Discuss the complaint with the accused and ask how s/he would like to respond. If the individual admits harassment or the alleged conduct, then action should be taken. If s/he denies the alleged conduct then further investigation should be discreetly conducted including contacting any potential witnesses.
4. An investigation, if necessary, should be conducted in confidence without using the names of the accuser or accused. A decision related to the veracity of the complaint and any appropriate action will be based upon the information obtained and evaluated in the investigation.

Any congregant who believes that s/he has been subject to or has knowledge of harassment, as outlined in this policy should immediately notify the senior Minister. If the complaint is with the Minister, report the matter to the President of the Board of Trustees. A prompt, thorough and confidential investigation will be conducted. If the investigation substantiates the complaint, corrective action will be taken, up to and including exclusion of the offender. The person who registered the complaint will be advised of the determination of the investigation.

ULV will not in any way retaliate against anyone who makes a report of discriminatory harassment in good faith, nor will it permit any manager or employee to do so. Retaliation is a serious violation of this policy that should be reported immediately.

Security and Access Codes The Church maintains locks on all entrances and doors should remain closed and locked except when the church is open for activities. The Third Street entrance requires a key to unlock and keys will be restricted to the Administrator, the Minister, and anyone with a need due to facility duties. The Lot entrance is based on an automated code access. The Administrator will maintain a log of all keys, codes and the persons with access to the building. Those with code access may include employees, Board members, space use leaders and teachers. Failure to maintain building security, unauthorized use of the building or destruction of ULV property will be grounds to remove access codes and require return of any keys.

Smoking Area ULV is a smoke-free building for its employees and congregants. Anyone who wishes to smoke should move beyond the direct flow of traffic in and out of the building and properly dispose of all smoking materials.

Solicitation Persons not employed by ULV may not enter its premises at any time for the purpose of solicitation of or distribution of literature to employees or congregants. Prohibited activities include, but are not limited to selling merchandise, and distributing literature, pamphlets, or printed materials of any kind on the premises. Employees may not engage in solicitation of congregants either on church property or utilizing confidential information related to congregants. Subject to approval by the Minister and/or the Board, certain fundraising activities may be permitted on Sundays.

Bulletin Boards are provided downstairs for posting items of common interest with prior authorization by the Minister before posting.

Space Use Anyone desiring to use the ULV facilities for an event or on a regular basis should complete a Space Use form specifying the contact person, the intended use, the desired area(s) of the building to be occupied and the compensation agreed upon for the use. These forms will be updated on an annual basis and will be maintained by the office Administrator. All Space Use will be subject to the current version of the Building Rental Guidelines published and available from ULV.

Volunteer Background Checks: In compliance with Pennsylvania law, any volunteer wanting to work with youth will provide a clear background check including a Child Abuse History Clearance and Pennsylvania State Criminal History. Both may be obtained by the volunteer without charge at the website: <https://www.psp.pa.gov/pages/request-a-criminal-history-record.aspx>