

## **COMPLAINT POLICY**

*Policy adapted by Calvary UMC, Fargo from Dakota Conference Office September 2018*

### **PURPOSE:**

To encourage all staff and congregants to disclose any wrongdoing that may adversely impact Calvary United Methodist Church attenders, employee, staff member or congregants, or the public at large. A complainant is an employee, staff member, congregant/attender of Calvary United Methodist Church who reports an activity that he/she considers illegal, dishonest, unethical, or fraudulent to one or more of the parties specified in this Policy.

### **POLICY:**

- A. If an employee, staff member or congregant/attender of Calvary United Methodist Church has knowledge of or a concern of illegal, dishonest, unethical, or fraudulent activity, employee, staff member or congregant/attender is to contact the Staff Parish Relations Committee by submitting a written complaint form to the Staff Parish Relations Committee or the complainant may make an appointment with a member of the Staff Parish Relations Committee to have the complaint recorded. All complaints should be first-person observances or labeled as second person information. The employee, staff member or congregant/attender must exercise sound judgment to avoid baseless allegations. An employee, staff member or congregant/attender who intentionally files a false report of wrongdoing will be subject to discipline up to and including termination. Examples of illegal or dishonest activities are violations of federal, state or local laws; paying vendors for services not performed or for goods not delivered; and other fraudulent financial reporting.
- B. The complainant is not responsible for investigating the activity or for determining fault or corrective measures; appropriate management officials are charged with these responsibilities.
- C. The Staff Parish Relations Committee shall receive, retain, investigate and act on complaints and concerns of employees, staff members or congregants/attendees regarding questionable accounting, internal financial controls and auditing matters, including those regarding the circumvention or attempted circumvention of internal financial controls or that would otherwise constitute a violation of the church's finance policies.
- D. Complainant protections are provided in two important areas -- confidentiality and against retaliation. The confidentiality of the complainant will be maintained. However, identity may have to be disclosed to conduct a thorough investigation, to comply with the law and to provide accused individuals their legal rights of defense.
- E. Calvary United Methodist Church will not retaliate against a complainant. This includes, but is not limited to, protection from retaliation in the form of an adverse employment action such as termination, compensation decreases, or poor work assignments and threats of physical harm.

F. Any complainant who believes he/she is being retaliated against must contact the Staff Parish Relations Team. The right of a complainant for protection against retaliation does not include immunity for any personal wrongdoing that is alleged and investigated.

G. Procedures for Submitting Complaint:

1. Employee, staff member or congregant/attendee reports knowledge of or a concern of illegal or dishonest fraudulent activity to the Staff Parish Relations Committee by submitting a Written Complaint, accessible on the church website or by leaving a message on the tip line.

Mail Address

Calvary United Methodist Church  
PO Box 175  
West Fargo, ND 58078

Tip Line (701)281-8008

2. Once it is determined an investigation is warranted, the Finance Committee will investigate accounting or financial allegations and the Staff Parish Committee will investigate warranted complaints specific to the interactions of people. Each committee may determine whether outside agencies are necessary to complete the investigation.

**Administration:**

**Post Office Box:**

- The SPR Chairperson will check the PO Box weekly online the USPS check-in access.
- When there is mail in the PO Box, the receiving SPR Chairperson will notify the rest of the SPR Team and a minimum of two members of SPR will be present for the opening of the complaint.
- If the complaint requires immediate action, SPRC will be convened.
- If the complaint does not require immediate action, the complaint will be reviewed at the following SPRC meeting.

**Online Submission:**

- The administrative assistant for the church will notify the SPRC Chairperson when an online submission has been received.
- Minimum of 2 SPRC members will review the message.
- If the complaint requires immediate action, SPRC will be convened.
- If the complaint does not require immediate action, the complaint will be reviewed at the following SPRC meeting.
- If contact information is provided by the complainant, SPRC will make contact within 2 business days of receipt of the complaint.

**Tip Line:** (SPRC will convene to for the initial 3-4 complaints, regardless of basis, to ensure protocol).

- A staff member will notify the SPRC Chairperson when a message has been received on the tip line.
- Minimum of 2 SPRC members will review the message.
- If the complaint requires immediate action, SPRC will be convened.
- If the complaint does not require immediate action, the complaint will be reviewed at the following SPRC meeting.
- If contact information is provided by the complainant, SPRC will make contact within 2 business days of receipt of the complaint.