

## **Local Church Safe Sanctuaries Team/Committee**

### Purpose/Guidelines

**Purpose:** The June 2011 Session of the Upper New York Annual Conference adopted the resolution on “Safe Sanctuaries” (2011 Pre-Conference Booklet, pp 59-65) which directs “[e]ach church/charge, district, agency and ministry group shall have a Safe Sanctuaries committee or team in place no later than December 31, 2011.” This team shall be amenable to the local church’s governing board (Church Council/Administrative Board) and shall have the following responsibilities:

- Developing the local church’s Safe Sanctuaries policy in accord with the guidelines and standards outlined in the resolution adopted by the annual conference.
- Overseeing the implementation of this policy in the local church setting.
- Serving as the linking body between the local church, the district and the annual conference’s Sexual Ethics Committee regarding Safe Sanctuaries matters.

**Guidelines:** A local church Safe Sanctuaries Team or Committee should consist of 6 – 8 adult members, nominated by the church’s Nominations and Leadership Development Committee and elected by its Charge Conference. Diversity in terms of gender, race/ethnicity and age is encouraged and will greatly enhance the effectiveness of the team. It is recommended teams be divided into terms of service or classes to ensure a balance of experience and new membership. It is further recommended the chair of this team be elected as an at-large member of the church’s governing board.

**Note regarding teams serving a multi-point charge:** the adopted policy allows a charge comprised of more than one local church to be served by a single team. If this practice is adopted, it is paramount the charge-wide team include persons from each church on the charge.

**Training for Safe Sanctuaries Teams:** The Conference’s Sexual Ethics Committee, charged with coordinating the overall implementation of the conference policy, will begin its work this fall. Local church Safe Sanctuaries Teams should expect to begin receiving information from the Committee soon after.

Training for all local church Safe Sanctuaries Teams will be offered at the district level in March and April of 2012.