

BETHANY YOUTH LEADER POLICY HANDBOOK

The policies in this handbook will explain many of the practices and expectations of a youth volunteer at Bethany Lutheran Brethren Church. It is not a contract, but rather should be used as a guideline. This handbook is not exhaustive and cannot contain every situation. Bethany Lutheran Brethren Church maintains the right to modify or add new policies at any time.

Mission Statement

“To make disciples who believe, obey, proclaim, and live God’s Word.”

Requirements of a Youth Leader

A good youth leader will make students feel welcomed, be a good example, participate in events, intentionally seek out conversations with students, and keep students' personal information confidential. These things are all expected from a youth leader at Bethany.

Youth leaders are also required to the following:

1. Acknowledge the Lordship of Jesus Christ in their life and have a personal relationship with Him.
2. Be committed toward growing and maturing in their relationship with God through quiet times, active attendance at church, and involvement in accountable relationships.
3. Agree to support the teachings of Bethany Lutheran Brethren Church as stated in the church’s statement of faith.
4. Have read and will follow the guidelines of the Bethany Youth Leader Policy Handbook.
5. Have an approved application
6. Be able to pass a background check
7. Agree to maintain appropriate physical and emotional boundaries with students
8. Acknowledge a good leader is a good follower and team player and strive to be supportive to the youth director and the rest of the leaders.
9. Be committed to choices and a lifestyle that are both godly and “above reproach,” knowing that their lifestyle is a model for students.
10. Regularly attend the youth leader meetings.

11. Acknowledge the importance of their presence and agree to be consistent and on time to the programs/ministries they commit themselves to.

Trustee and Elder Board

The Trustee board and Elder Board are referred to in this document. The Trustee board is made up of elected members of the congregation, and the Congregational Financial Officer. Their primary functions are to oversee the budget of the Church, as well as its facilities, including the parsonages. The Elder board is made up of elected members of Bethany LBC, as well as the Pastors on staff. The primary function of this board is to spiritually guide, disciple, and care for the Church. They are the overseers of the Lead Pastor and elected boards.

Sexual and Other Unlawful Harassment

1. Any form of harassment, including sexual harassment, is absolutely prohibited. Any person who is aware of instances of harassment has a responsibility to report the instances to his/her supervisor or the Pastoral staff.
2. Sexual harassment may include, but not limited to:
 - a. Unwanted sexual advances;
 - b. Visual conduct such as sexual gestures and/or the display of sexually suggestive or offensive objects;
 - c. Verbal conduct such as making or using derogatory comments, slurs, or jokes; Verbal sexual advances or propositions;
 - d. Verbal abuse of a sexual nature; degrading words or actions; or, suggestive or obscene letters, notes, or invitations;
 - e. Physical conduct such as touching, rubbing, impeding movement, or assault.
3. If you experience or witness sexual or other unlawful harassment involving a youth member or leader, report it immediately to the Youth Director, Elders and Lead Pastor.

All allegations of sexual harassment will be quickly and discreetly investigated. To the extent possible, your confidentiality and the confidentiality of any witnesses and the alleged harasser will be protected against unnecessary disclosure. When the investigation is completed, you will be informed of the outcome of the investigation.
4. In cases where a supervisor or a pastoral staff member is involved in the allegation, all complaints/allegations should be addressed to the Elder

Board of the Church or a committee appointed by them to thoroughly investigate the matter in confidence. After reviewing all the facts, Bethany Lutheran Brethren Church through its officers will make a determination concerning whether reasonable grounds exist to believe that harassment or discrimination has occurred.

5. Disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal, will be taken against any person who is found to have engaged in harassment or discrimination. No person will suffer retaliation for reporting instances of discrimination or harassment.
6. To help ensure the safety of the students involved in youth group and to help protect the youth leaders from any false accusations, a youth leader should never be alone with a student of the opposite gender (with the exception of immediate family members). It is strongly encouraged to avoid situations where a youth leader is alone with a student even if the student is the same gender as the youth leader.

Statement of Confidentiality

Being a volunteer at Bethany Lutheran Brethren Church requires a commitment to confidentiality, respecting the privacy of those who are involved in its ministries. Private and confidential information acquired during the course of any youth leader's youth group-related activities is to remain confidential.

Safety

Safety is of paramount importance. Every youth leader is responsible to help assure that we have a safe place to work. Report all unsafe conditions to your supervisor immediately. Feel free to make suggestions that will add to the safety of the youth group and those involved.

It is Bethany Lutheran Brethren Church's Policy to require an adult member in the church building anytime someone is in the church building. An adult should never be alone in the church building with a minor.

At youth group the only people who should be in attendance are leaders with approved applications and students who are in the appropriate age group. Any non approved adults will be asked to leave immediately. Students who are outside the appropriate age group will be asked to not return.

Representation and Appearance

Because the visible church is made up of its people, the image you present to those who work around you and those who come in contact with you, will affect the attitude people have about Bethany Lutheran Brethren Church. Always be aware that your conduct and attitude are making statements about yourself and the church. High expectations regarding integrity and responsibility are placed upon you because of the position you hold.

Appearance is everyone's responsibility. This requirement for neatness, modesty and professional appearance also extends to personal grooming. The opinions and impressions that people get from you influence their perception of Christians, Bethany Lutheran Brethren Church and Bethany Youth Groups.

Personal Conduct

Personal conduct of each youth leader is of critical importance as we strive to build confidence and a sense of excellence in everything we do in service to those we come in contact with. This requires a high level of respect for the people with whom you interact. Integrity of the highest order is the minimum accepted behavior. As you come in contact with a great deal of information that has been acquired in confidence, your protection of that confidentiality will be required at all times. A violation of the trust that is placed in you to maintain these personal qualities will be grounds for dismissal.

Use of Personal Electronic Devices

Students are expected to keep their cell phones out of sight during youth group with the purpose of eliminating distractions. To set a good example and maintain consistency, youth leaders are expected to do the same.

Traffic Fines

Traffic fines are recognized as a violation of safe operation of a vehicle. Therefore, all traffic fines are the sole monetary responsibility of the youth leader.

Alcohol and Drugs

The abuse of alcohol or drugs will be grounds for dismissal.

Expectations of Students

1. Respect property, one another, staff and adult leaders.
2. No bullying will be tolerated at any time.
3. No possession or use of alcohol, drugs or tobacco is allowed.
4. No students can leave (walk or drive) the church property during youth group meeting times.
5. All cell phones or any other electronic devices must be kept out of sight and may be not allowed at all for some events.
6. No fighting, weapons, fireworks, lighters, explosives, or any other pyrotechnics are allowed.
7. It is expected that the students will dress appropriately.
8. All students are expected to respect and comply with event schedules.

Parents will be notified if their child fails to comply with these expectations and may be asked to pick up their child. Youth leaders are expected to follow the same rules of conduct as the students during youth events.