

## **Calvary Baptist Church, Boise, Idaho**

### **Child Protection Policy**

Calvary Baptist Church (the “church”) defends the sanctity of human life at every stage of growth, and seeks to protect persons from injustice. The church is firmly committed to the care of families and their children. We consider abuse or neglect of children as contrary to Christian morality and as an offense against the dignity of the human person.

The Bible is foundational to our understanding upon which all policies, procedures, and ministries must stand. Mark 10:13-16 tells us:

*<sup>13</sup> People were bringing little children to Jesus to have him touch them, but the disciples rebuked them. <sup>14</sup> When Jesus saw this, he was indignant. He said to them, “Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. <sup>15</sup> I tell you the truth, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it.” <sup>16</sup> And he took the children in his arms, put his hands on them and blessed them.(NIV)*

Jesus teaches us to value young people, and He modeled that to us through holding them and blessing them. Our goal is to maintain a safe, secure, loving environment where children may experience God’s love and grow strong. When children are physically, mentally, emotionally, or sexually abused or neglected, the church has the child’s safety and well-being as its primary concern. Ministry care is available for the child, the family, and for the accused. The actions described below are meant to ensure the safety and protect the rights of all.

#### **Policy**

Abusive or neglectful behavior in any form is outside the scope of employment for all persons at Calvary Baptist Church, and is not acceptable behavior for any persons associated with the ministry of the church. All employees and volunteers of the church must comply with state and local laws (please see *Idaho Child Protection Manual* for details), as well as with church policy and guidelines about child protection.

This policy and implementation guidelines are intended to thwart child abuse, mitigate harm to others, and provide guidance to church personnel in responding to allegations. They are meant to emphasize our deep concern for the child and his/her family; to safeguard against fraudulent claims that may ruin the reputation of innocent persons; and to assist in the reconciliation wherever possible.

#### **Guidelines for Implementation**

All Church workers must conduct themselves with discretion and virtue, aware of their responsibility before God as ministers and representatives of Christ, and aware of the sensitivity of our culture to these questions.

## Definitions

For purposes of these Guidelines, the following definitions apply:

- “Child” and “Children” means any person(s) under 18 years of age.
- “Child abuse” means any unlawful sexual act to or with a child, as defined by Idaho statutes and case law, and any other physical, mental, or emotional abuse to or neglect of a child.
- “Personnel” encompasses the Calvary Baptist pastoral and support staffs, teachers, and volunteers who serve in ministry to children.

## Prevention

1. **Application.** All volunteers and staff working with children on an on-going basis will complete an application appropriate to their area of ministry. All applications will include authorization for screening concerning prior criminal convictions. All applications, screening forms, and reporting documentation shall be kept confidential.

2. **Volunteer and Staff Assignments.** Any location of an activity involving children must be available for viewing and accessible to parents, staff, or other personnel at any time.

3. **Information.** The church will provide all volunteer and staff workers with a copy of this Child Protection Policy.

## Reporting and Response

1. **Confidentiality.** To protect the reputation of all involved, those who know of an alleged incident of child abuse should disclose information only to those authorized to receive such information under Idaho law or these guidelines.

2. **Initial Reporting.** All observers (18 years of age and older) of suspected child abuse are required by statute to report suspected abuse to either law enforcement or the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare (IDHW) within 24 hours. They are also strongly encouraged to report such suspicions to the Ministry Leader, Senior Pastor, Staff Member, or a Children’s Ministry Leader.

3. **Response Team.** Depending on the circumstances, a Response Team may be formed consisting of the Senior Pastor, the Personnel Chairman, a deacon, and at least one layperson knowing the affected individuals (victim and/or accused). The Response Team will develop an appropriate plan of action for working with the parties involved.

## Action Where Guilt is Determined

Any pastor, employee, or volunteer of the Church who admits to, does not contest, or is found guilty of an incident of abuse or neglect of a child shall be terminated.