

CommUNITY Church's Policy for members/potential members who are or may be declared Sex Offenders

The basic concept of a church is one of safety and a place where one can worship their Father without fear of the bad things that occur in the outside world invading that trusting environment.

Realizing that we are all sinners, in this world, where a large segment has turned against God, there are many avenues for those who would commit the most heinous crimes to become members of a church – many of whom have characteristics which are unknown to the church community.

Once a church is aware, through information received from any number of potential sources, that such a person is visiting, attempting to join, or already a member, the church must take action. This action is mandated both in legal as well as moral responsibility and cannot be taken lightly or “swept under the rug” because that person is, or has been, respected in the church or community.

While the church is a place to heal, and it might well be argued that we need to help this person heal, our first responsibility is to insure that no harm come from a lack of action – no matter how unpalatable that action may be.

Our personnel at CommUNITY Church make it a high priority to assure the safety of all our congregants, both young and old and utilize the databases listing people who might present a threat to any of them.

We need the help of all members to provide information on potential problems (hard facts, not gossip or suppositions) and we need it as soon as this information becomes known. This is the responsibility of all members and it is not “snitching” – it is vital to the existence of the church body.

With all this in mind, we have taken the following steps to assure that we do the best we can to assure that we protect the congregation while offering the peace that the church community can offer those who sincerely desire to repent and live a Christ like life. As we know, Our God did not necessarily pick those of immaculate character to do His work.

If a person who is a registered sex offender wishes to attend CommUNITY Church, the following procedures will be followed:

1. The person must meet with the Senior Pastor and another of the Pastor's choosing for a formal interview.
2. Members/member of the church staff will meet with the person's counselor/probation officer.
3. The person will complete a form which will authorize release of all information from any official or repository of records concerning his/her criminal history.
4. The individual must have an “appointed” handler (one who is not a friend or relation) who will be with the person 100% of the time while on church premises or at any church events or activities. This person will be meeting the offender at the door and sit with him/her during the services. This person will also escort the offender to the bathroom and will assure that no young person is in that facility during the time the offender is there. This “escort” will assure that the offender is kept from the nursery area or other areas occupied by those under 18 years of age.
5. The person will be allowed only to “adults only” activities and any attendance other than the scheduled Sunday service will be subject to individual approval by the Senior Pastor or his designee.
6. The offender will agree to continue in verifiable personal therapy and will agree to communication between the Senior Pastor (or his designee) and the therapist.

The church reserves the right to institute a panel which will work with the Senior Pastor, or at the Pastor's discretion, assume the primary role in making decisions regarding matters brought to it from the Pastor's office. This panel would make decisions which will become "the line in the sand" as to the handling of sexual offender matters as well as designation of escorts for the offender.

CommUNITY Church intends no malice toward the family of such offender and will attempt to make such regulations as unobtrusive and innocuous as possible, but it may be impossible to achieve the level of safety we desire and are, in fact, obligated to implement without bringing some attention to the offender family.

CommUNITY Church reserves the right to exclude any person it deems to be a threat to the integrity of its facilities, for any valid reason, until convinced that the threat no longer exists.

Understandably, there will be some upset by such implementation. We are aware of this potential but find ourselves in the position of having to recognize a situation which may occur and may have already occurred. This must be addressed forthwith.