



VMCC Volunteer Handbook & Guidelines



Valley Mills Christian Church

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Thank you for serving as a volunteer at Valley Mills Christian Church!

This handbook should be used as a guide for helping our volunteers feel equipped in serving while also outlining expectations that ensure our ministry programs are in alignment with our core values. We do not expect this handbook to be all encompassing but do hope that you find it helpful as a reference/resource as you give of your time and talents to the important work God has laid upon each of us as we further His kingdom!

What Do We Believe?

CORE BELIEFS

The Bible – We believe that the Bible is God’s Word. It was written by men who were inspired by God and led by His Spirit. Therefore, it is accurate, authoritative, and applicable to our every day lives. (2 Timothy 3:14-17; 1 Thessalonians 2:13; 2 Peter 1:21)

God – We believe that there is only one eternal God who is the Creator of all things. He exists in three distinct persons: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. (Genesis 1:1; Deuteronomy 6:4; Isaiah 43:10-11, Luke 3:21-22)

Jesus – We believe that Jesus is the one and only Son of God. He was with God at the beginning and was born into this world through the Virgin Mary. He is both God and man. Because of His sinlessness and sacrificial death on the cross, He is the only one who can reconcile us to God, and assures us victory in this life. (John 1:1-2, 14; Philippians 2:5-8; Luke 1:26-38; Hebrews 7:26; Acts 2:22-24; 1 Corinthians 15:3-4; Acts 1:9-11)

The Holy Spirit – We believe that the Holy Spirit indwells every Christian and provides the power for living a life that pleases God. We also believe that the Spirit gives gifts accordingly so that the body of Christ might be built up into full maturity. (John 14:25-26; John 16:12-15; Acts 1:4, 8; 1 Corinthians 12:4-13; Ephesians 5:18)

Mankind – We believe that all people are created in the image of God to have fellowship with Him but because of their sin and rebellion they became alienated from God. Therefore, a person is

incapable of regaining a right relationship with God through his or her own effort alone. (Genesis 1:27; Romans 3:23; Galatians 3:22; Ephesians 2:8-9)

Salvation – We believe that the blood of Jesus Christ provides the sole basis for the forgiveness of sin. Therefore, only those who truly place their faith in Jesus' sacrifice on the cross will be saved. Salvation is a free gift and cannot be earned. Those trust in Jesus Christ are to repent of their sins, confess their belief in Him, and follow the Lord in Christian baptism (immersion). (John 3:16; Romans 10:13-15; Galatians 3:26-27; Acts 2:37-38; Acts 22:16; Matthew 28:19-20)

The Christian Life – We believe that all Christians should live for Christ and not for themselves. By obeying God's commands as found in the Bible and by yielding daily to the Spirit of God, every believer should mature and be conformed to the likeness of Jesus Christ. (Philippians 1:20-26; 2:1-7; John 14:23-24; Romans 12:1-3)

Eternity – We believe that those who have placed their faith in Jesus Christ will live eternally with God (heaven), and that those who have not placed their faith in Jesus will live eternally without God (hell). (Matthew 25:46; Mark 9:43-48; Revelation 19:20; 20:1-15; 21:8)

The Church – We believe that the church is the body of Christ, of which Jesus Christ is the head. The purpose of the church is to glorify God by loving Him and by making Him known to the lost world. We gather each Lord's Day, as did the early church for the purposes of study, fellowship, the breaking of bread, and prayer. We also live out our faith during the week that God may be glorified and people may see Christ in us. (Acts 2:42-47; Ephesians 1:22-23; Colossians 1:18; Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 20:7)

Marriage & Gender - We believe that God wonderfully and immutably creates each person as male or female. These two distinct, complementary genders together reflect the image and nature of God. (Genesis 1:26-27) We believe that the term "marriage" has only one meaning: the uniting of one man and one woman in a single, exclusive union, as seen in Scripture. (Genesis 2:18-25)

Valley Mills Christian Church Volunteer Covenant

I will **PROTECT THE UNITY** of our church by acting in love toward other members, by refusing to gossip, and by following the leaders. **Romans 15:5-7**

I will **SHARE IN THE RESPONSIBILITY** of our church by praying for its growth, inviting the unchurched to attend, and by warmly welcoming those who attend. **Matthew 28:19-20, Luke 14:23**

I will **SERVE THE MINISTRY** of our church by discovering my spiritual gifts and talents and using them with a servant's heart.

I Peter 4:10-11

I will **SUPPORT THE TESTIMONY** of our church by attending faithfully, living a Godly life, and by giving a portion of my finances regularly. **Hebrews 10:25, I Corinthians 16:2, Luke 6:38**

Additionally, as servants of God's kingdom, we encourage you to adhere to the following expectations:

- pray for our leaders and our ministries
- communicate respectfully with and about each other and the church in all contexts
- represent yourself and the church in a Godly manner, being mindful that your actions are often being observed by others (including social media)
- resolve conflicts quickly and biblically, and extend forgiveness when offended and carry no grudges
- make our thoughts captive to the obedience of Christ, to express criticism and negative feelings first, to the person privately, not to others, and seek reconciliation as far as possible
- disciple others to become servants and leaders

Conflict Resolution

In our spirit of willingness to serve God alongside others, it is important to follow scriptural guidance in situations where conflict or divisiveness may occur with others. If, as a volunteer or leader, you have a concern about the behavior of another volunteer or leader, you are encouraged to reflect on Matthew 18:15-16: “¹⁵ If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault, between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother. ¹⁶ But if he does not listen, take one or two others along with you, that every charge may be established by the evidence of two or three witnesses. ”

All conflicts and concerns should be addressed at the lowest level possible and information related to potential conflict should not be treated as gossip. If the conflict continues or there is a spirit of divisiveness, the Elders should be made aware of the matter.

Ministry Leadership Expectation

For those serving in a ministry leadership position, there is a need to live a life above reproach as detailed in Titus 1:6-9: “⁶ if anyone is above reproach, the husband of one wife,^[a] and his children are believers^[b] and not open to the charge of debauchery or insubordination. ⁷ For an overseer,^[c] as God's steward, must be above reproach. He must not be arrogant or quick-tempered or a drunkard or violent or greedy for gain, ⁸ but hospitable, a lover of good, self-controlled, upright, holy, and disciplined. ⁹ He must hold firm to the trustworthy word as taught, so that he may be able to give instruction in sound doctrine and also to rebuke those who contradict it.” While this text specifically refers to the role of Elders, it is reflective of the proper attitude and actions of any servant/leader.

Social Media Expectations

As a volunteer of Valley Mills Christian Church we ask that you represent yourself and the church in alignment with our core beliefs. Please refrain from posting content that contains illegal drug use, excessive alcohol consumption, sex, vulgar language, or extreme political positions. When interacting with people of social media represent Christ in your posts and

conversations. Refrain from hateful words and treat people with respect. Social media can be a great tool to bring people to Christ, but it can also be used to pull people away from Christ. Our hope is that each of our volunteers use their social media to further the kingdom of God and not hinder it.

Safety & Risk Reduction

In addition to the **spiritual** development of those we serve, safety in ministry is of utmost importance.

Background checks:

We require that all volunteers who work with children or teens under the age of 18 have a valid background check on file (background checks must be renewed every 2 years). It is the responsibility of each ministry leader to ensure that background checks are complete and current on volunteers serving within their respective ministry area(s).

No adult members of the congregation, whether volunteer or paid workers, who have been convicted of a crime against a child or a violent crime against another adult, will provide services in any church-sponsored activity or program for children or youth.

In the instance of those who have non-violent flagged areas on a background check, it is the responsibility of the ministry leader to follow up with the volunteer to discuss the concerns and document a safety plan that is approved by the Board of Elders before permission will be granted for serving with minors.

Driving: For volunteers who may be driving to transport minors, we require a driving record check as part of our background screening process. Volunteers who transport others as part of their ministry are required to maintain personal automotive insurance. The designated leader of the event must know each person designated to provide automobile or van transportation to or from church. The driver must:

1. Be at least 21 years old;
2. Have a valid state driver's license, qualified for the vehicle being operated;
3. Have no record of convictions for the past 5 years for drunken driving, driving under the influence, driving with a suspended or revoked license or reckless endangerment;
4. Have proof of insurance; and
5. Never be alone in a vehicle with a child not his/her own.

Environment: As a largely volunteer organization, we depend on our volunteers to see something and say something. This includes physical hazards in ministry space as well as perceived threats you may observe. Please report any safety concerns you may observe to your ministry leader.

Safety Personnel: We have a volunteer team of adults dedicated to the provision of physical well-being as well as emergency situations. Safety personnel are vetted by the Safety Ministry leadership.

Evacuations: Should an emergency develop that requires building evacuation, volunteers should escort or carry children or others needing assistance out of the building and take them next door to the funeral home parking lot or our outdoor family pavilion.

Illness: If you suspect you or a family member may be ill, please stay home until all symptoms have subsided.

Harassment Policy:

VMCC is committed to providing an environment that is free of intimidation, retaliation or harassment. VMCC does not condone, nor tolerate any form of verbal, physical or visual harassment. Our commitment is to treat one another with respect; therefore no harassment will be tolerated. Harassment to or by any of VMCC's employees, independent contractors, Church members, vendors or volunteers will not be tolerated in any form (verbal, physical, visual or through other means (i.e., by email,

voicemail, text message, social media, or any other electronic devices.)) If you believe that you are being, or have been, harassed in any way, please report the facts of the incident or incidents to the Senior Minister or the Chair of the Elders board if your concern cannot be appropriated routed through the Senior Minister. All claims will be thoroughly and promptly investigated.

Ministries Involving Minors

Previous Church Attendance Rule for Volunteers who work with Minors

Volunteer workers must have been members or regular attendees of Valley Mills Christian Church for at least 3 months prior to the time they begin serving with minors in church-sponsored activities. Exceptions to the 3-month guideline may be considered in the following:

- 1) Has served in ministry with children for at least 12 months in a different church he or she attended prior to coming to Valley Mills Christian Church **and** able to provide reference from the staff person with whom they worked at that church previous church.

Youth Protection Training: As a volunteer working with minors, youth protection training is required every two years to understand risks related to physical, sexual, psychological, or other types of abuse. Youth protection training ensures that we are identifying and safeguarding minors who might be subject to suffering significant harm. It is the responsibility of the ministry leader to ensure that youth protection training is completed and maintained as current on each adult volunteer in his/her respective ministry area. Please scan the QR Code or follow the link to be taken to the training and self-certification form.

<https://valleymillscs.breezechms.com/form/childprotectiontraining>



Ministry Area Safety

No unauthorized or unscreened personnel are permitted to be in the active ministry areas while minors are present. If parents or other special guests are in an active ministry area with minors, they must be accompanied in close proximity by a screened ministry representative.

Two Deep Rule (No Alone Rule)

Whenever possible, volunteers will be assigned in teams of 2 or more in active ministry setting with youth. Church-sponsored groups of youth, whether they meet at the church or elsewhere, must have two or more adult volunteers present.

Bathroom Care

When possible, children will be encouraged to take care of their own bathroom needs. If bathroom care or assistance is needed by a youth, efforts should be made to request assistance directly through/from the parent or guardian when available. Should assistance be required by a ministry volunteer, the outer bathroom door must remain ajar while the volunteer assists the child while trying to provide as much privacy as possible for the child.

Overnight & Extended Days Outings

Overnight & extended day outings are to be carefully planned and communicated in advance. Such outings will require written permission slips from parents/guardians. The ministry leader is responsible for ensuring adequate staffing for the duration of all overnight & extended day outings, including the provision of both male and female adult volunteers when both male and female minors will be present.

Reporting Suspected Child Abuse

A report based on reasonable suspicion does not require proof that abuse or neglect has occurred or that the reporter witnessed the incident in question. Rather, reporting is a request for an assessment of the condition of a child. In the instance of an allegation of child abuse, all involved parties will respond with the utmost concern to the victim, parent, or other party making such an allegation. The accused will be treated with dignity and support.

It is the legal responsibility of any person working with minors to report all cases of child abuse they observe or suspect. Volunteers who suspect abuse or neglect should report their concerns to the ministry leader who will collaboratively assist in reporting to Child Protective Services and church leadership. It is the responsibility of the ministry leader to document relevant reporting information that may be critical to further investigation, including claims that may result against church insurance policies. It is the responsibility of the Board of Elders to launch a documented internal investigation within 48 hours of the alleged incident. All allegations and investigations shall be kept as confidential as possible by limiting information to those in a “need to know” capacity only.

Acknowledgement of Receipt of Volunteer Handbook & Guidelines

This is to acknowledge that I have received a copy of the Valley Mills Christian Church (“VMCC”) Volunteer Handbook and Guidelines. I understand that it contains important information and I acknowledge that I am expected to read, understand, and adhere to the policies and will familiarize myself with the material in the handbook.

Volunteer's Signature: _____

Print Name: _____ Date: _____