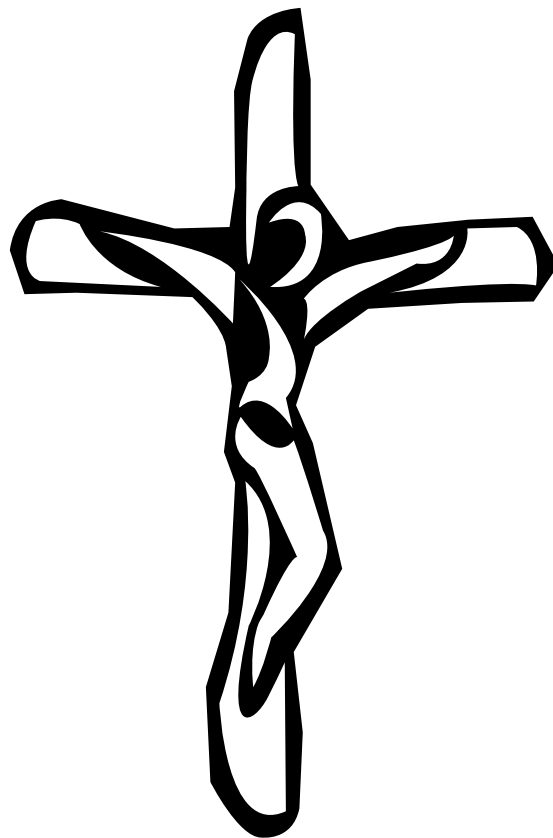


# Youth Ministry

## **Volunteer Staff:**

- **Application**
- **Background Check**
- **Guidelines**



This application is to be completed by all Youth Ministry staff and volunteers. It is part of our effort to provide a safe and secure environment for the youth who attend our ministry and programs. All information will be kept confidential, stored in a secured location and used only by the leadership of St. Mark's Lutheran Church. Thank you for your time and interest in working with our youth!

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Today's date \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Home phone \_\_\_\_\_ Work phone \_\_\_\_\_ Cell phone \_\_\_\_\_

When is the best time to reach you by phone? \_\_\_\_\_

May we call you at work? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_ Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail address: \_\_\_\_\_

Driver's License Number \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Class \_\_\_\_\_

Work status \_\_\_\_\_ part time \_\_\_\_\_ full time \_\_\_\_\_ student

Marital status \_\_\_\_\_ single \_\_\_\_\_ married—spouse's name \_\_\_\_\_ divorced

### **Ministry of Interest**

\_\_\_\_\_ Children's Church (preschool-6<sup>th</sup> grades) \_\_\_\_\_ Sunday school (preschool-12<sup>th</sup> grades) \_\_\_\_\_ Junior High (7<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grades) \_\_\_\_\_ Senior High (9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grades) \_\_\_\_\_ After School Mentoring (1<sup>st</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> grades)

Do you have any physical limitations or conditions that would prevent you from performing certain activities or duties pertaining to your area of ministry?

Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_ If yes, please explain \_\_\_\_\_

Do you have personal health and/or accident insurance? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_ If no, please note that by signing this application you are agreeing to the following statement: The applicant understands that St. Mark's Lutheran Church provides liability coverage for most church-sponsored events. The insurance is secondary to one's own insurance coverage, which is agreed to as being primary. In the event a volunteer is injured and is not personally insured, the volunteer agrees to cover the deductible rate costs required by the St. Mark's Lutheran Church insurance carrier. Please initial \_\_\_\_\_.

### **St. Mark's Lutheran Church History and Other Church Activity**

Are you a member of SMLC? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

If yes, when did you begin attending (month and year)? \_\_\_\_\_

If you are not a member, do you plan to become one? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

If no, why not? \_\_\_\_\_

Have you attended *The New Member, Bethel, or Real Faith for Real Life* classes? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

Any other classes you've attended? \_\_\_\_\_

Do you agree with the SMLC Statements of Faith, Beliefs, and Values? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

What are you doing to grow in your faith at this present time (small group, Bible study, etc.?) \_\_\_\_\_

Are there any other church ministries and activities you are currently involved in? \_\_\_\_\_

Are there any ministries and activities you were involved in but aren't anymore? \_\_\_\_\_

**Spiritual History**

Briefly explain what your Christian faith means to you. \_\_\_\_\_

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Please give your last place of worship (this will be used as a reference if you've attended SMLC for less than 3 years).

Church \_\_\_\_\_ Pastor \_\_\_\_\_ Phone (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

What were the circumstances or reasons leading to your leaving this church? \_\_\_\_\_

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Were you involved in any ministries at this church? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_ If not, explain why? \_\_\_\_\_

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**Teen Ministry Gifts and Experience**

Special gifts and talents (music, teaching, drama, games, mentor, etc.) \_\_\_\_\_

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Special training classes, seminars or conferences you've attended relating to teen ministry (Seminary, Bible College, etc.) \_\_\_\_\_

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Describe any experience you've had working with children or youth in a church setting. \_\_\_\_\_

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Describe any experience you've had working with children or youth in a community setting (boy/girl scouts, coaching, etc.) \_\_\_\_\_

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**Personal Information & References**

List two references who can testify to your personal character and dependability. Remember that all personal information gathered will be strictly confidential, accessible to church leadership only, and kept in a secure place according to California State law.

1) Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
Address, City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
Relationship \_\_\_\_\_ Years acquainted \_\_\_\_\_  
E-mail address: \_\_\_\_\_

2) Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
Address, City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
Relationship \_\_\_\_\_ Years acquainted \_\_\_\_\_  
E-mail address: \_\_\_\_\_

If you have prior experience in ministry or with teens, please list two references that supervised you or worked with you:

1) Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
Address, City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
Relationship \_\_\_\_\_ Years acquainted \_\_\_\_\_  
E-mail address: \_\_\_\_\_

2) Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
Address, City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
Relationship \_\_\_\_\_ Years acquainted \_\_\_\_\_  
E-mail address: \_\_\_\_\_

Please answer the following and be assured that a "yes" answer will not necessarily disqualify you from being a Youth Ministries volunteer. If you answer "yes" to any of the following questions, please give details and explanations on a separate sheet of paper.

- 1) Have you ever been denied the opportunity to work with children/teenagers at any other church, institution, or any other setting? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_
- 2) Have you ever been under discipline at any church or ministry? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_
- 3) Have you ever been convicted of child abuse or a crime involving actual or attempted sexual molestation of a child? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_
- 4) Have you ever been convicted of a criminal offense, including the illegal use or sale of drugs? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_
- 5) Have you ever been hospitalized for alcohol or substance abuse? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_
- 6) Has your driver's license ever been suspended or revoked? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

Please indicate any additional factors or circumstances involving you or your background, which would cause a parent to be concerned or nervous about your supervising their children/teenagers.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

After time spent in prayer and discussing with my family and friends the commitment involved being on the teen ministries staff, I choose to commit to the following:

- \_\_\_ I acknowledge the Lordship of Jesus Christ in my life and have a personal relationship with Him.
- \_\_\_ I am committed toward growing and maturing in my relationship with God through devotional Bible reading, fellowship with other Christians, and Christian education opportunities.
- \_\_\_ I will attend worship an average of 3 Sundays per month.
- \_\_\_ I am committed to choices and a lifestyle that are both Godly and "above reproach," knowing that my lifestyle is a model for teenagers.
- \_\_\_ I will cooperate in a spirit of unity and loving support with the Youth and Children's Director, and volunteers.
- \_\_\_ I am making a commitment to the youth ministry for at least the full school year.
- \_\_\_ I will attend the volunteer staff meetings.
- \_\_\_ I will make a committed attempt to help recruit at least one other adult volunteer for our growing need in the teen ministry program.
- \_\_\_ I understand the philosophy of this teen ministry and agree with its purpose and commit to shepherding youth that God brings in my ministry.
- \_\_\_ I commit to memorizing the youth ministry purpose statement.
- \_\_\_ Because I am making a significant commitment and my presence is important, I agree to be consistent and timely to the program(s) I commit myself to. I also agree to communicate with the Youth and Children's Director if I will be absent.

The information contained in this application is correct to the best of my knowledge and I will do my best to fulfill the above expectations. I authorize any references, churches, or institutions listed in this application including any law enforcement agencies to give you any information regarding my character, background, and fitness for Youth Ministry. I release such reference from liability for any damage that may result from furnishing information to St. Mark's Lutheran Church.

I agree to a Background Check. Please initial \_\_\_\_\_.

I have read, understand and will comply with the Volunteer Staff Guidelines. Please initial \_\_\_\_\_.

**Signature** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_

Complete and return this form, **along with a copy of your Driver's license**, to the Church office or mail to the SMLC office, 1600 Union Ave., Fairfield, CA 94533

Interviewed by: \_\_\_\_\_

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

References check by: \_\_\_\_\_

Reference: \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

Reference: \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

Reference: \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

**Approval for Ministry**

\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Dear Youth Ministry Volunteer,

We have developed a Risk Management Policy to reinforce our vision for Youth Ministry, to ensure the safety and well being of our young people as well as the peace of mind of their parents. We want to provide sound Biblical principles in an enjoyable atmosphere, and do so in a safe environment for those God has entrusted to our care.

Our Risk Management Policy will include some new forms that we are asking all current and future leaders to complete, as well as new procedures for everyone to be aware of. We are asking each adult—paid or unpaid—to give us written permission to conduct a background check. In return, you will be part of a team that truly cares for you and those in our ministry. You will also be provided training and encouragement to ensure that you are fully equipped to succeed in this ministry partnership.

We realize that these new procedures may seem extreme, but we can assure you that we have only the best intentions for both our leaders and children. We understand that some might have concerns about the background checks we will be asking your permission to conduct. We assure you that these checks are being done to ensure the safety of the youth here at St. Mark's. Therefore, the highest security measures have been taken to secure any data that is required. We also want to assure you that our background checks are completely confidential, and are done to uncover criminal/sexual misconduct only. To ensure the accuracy of this report, we will require certain information from you, along with your signature for approval. If you feel that you cannot comply with this request, we will understand and will assist you in finding another ministry where your gifts, passions, and experience can be fully engaged.

As always, my door is open to answer any questions you may have on this new policy. You can reach me at 707-344-3325 or [Justin@stmarksfairfield.org](mailto:Justin@stmarksfairfield.org). Again, our heart is to provide a wonderfully gifted ministry run by equally gifted leaders.

Sincerely,

Justin Devine  
Director of Youth and Children's Ministries

We live in an age where child abuse is a reality in our society. The church must deal with this issue by taking steps to protect the youth in our care. St. Mark's Lutheran Church has implemented a policy that will safeguard our young people while promoting a positive, nurturing environment for ministry to them. The guidelines below are to be strictly followed by anyone working with youth.

## **YOUTH MINISTRY STAFF GUIDELINES**

### ***Transportation***

Only licensed and insured individuals are to drive youth to and from church-related activities. Vehicles transporting youth must have the adequate number of seatbelts for youth traveling in that vehicle. Seatbelts are to be worn any time the vehicle is in motion. Drivers must always use precaution when driving youth and consistently drive in a safe manner. When driving teenagers home, male staff members will transport male teenagers and female staff members will transport female teenagers.

### ***Overnight Activities***

At least two adults will supervise overnight activities. If the participants are male and female, then male and female staff members must be present.

### ***Movies***

For the Middle School Ministry movies can be rated G or PG. For the High School Ministry movies can be rated G, PG or PG-13. If an R rated movie is shown (like the *Passion of the Christ*) each youth under 17-years of age needs to have a permission slip signed by their parent/guardian BEFORE the movie is shown.

### ***Individual Counseling***

Team counseling is preferable whenever possible. Female volunteers should counsel females and male volunteers should counsel males. When team-counseling sessions are not possible, notify another staff member of the location of the session and with whom you are meeting. Counseling should be done in a public place where private conversations are possible, but should occur in full view of others. Guard carefully to avoid seclusion.

### ***Confidentiality***

There are limits to confidentiality when working with teenagers. Staff members must immediately report to the youth pastor if a minor discusses hurting him or herself, hurting someone else or someone is hurting them. Questions about such conversations or other issues of confidentiality must be discussed promptly with the Director of Youth and Children (or Pastor Todd if the Youth Director is unavailable). This is not considered breaking confidence.

### ***Corporal punishment***

Corporal punishment (spanking, etc.) and other forms of punishment involving physical pain are not appropriate. This rule holds true even if parents have given permission for corporal punishment. If you need help with misbehaving teenagers or discipline techniques, consult with the Director of Youth and Children.

### ***Touching***

Appropriate physical contact between staff members and teenagers is generally encouraged in the church setting. However, physical contact should be minimal and only in the presence of other staff members. Appropriate touching should be limited to handshakes, "high fives", brief hugs or a brief touch on the shoulder. Inappropriate touching includes long hugs, having teenagers sit on your lap, and any type of kissing. A Youth's preference not to be touched should always be respected.

### ***Dating or sexual involvement***

No staff member is to date a teenager or be romantically or sexually involved with a teenager. There are no exceptions to this guideline.

Staff members must report suspected or observed misconduct by other staff members in the Youth Ministry to the Youth and Children's Director immediately or to Pastor Todd immediately.

Staff members must avoid even the appearance of misconduct. This is necessary in order to maintain parental confidence and avoid mistaken allegations.

Staff members who disobey these guidelines may be reassigned or relieved from their Youth Ministry responsibilities at the discretion of the Youth and Children's Director.