

# **FIRST UNITED CHURCH VOLUNTEER MANUAL**

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223 – 3<sup>RD</sup> AVENUE NORTH EAST  
SWIFT CURRENT, SASKATCHEWAN

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**Volunteers are vital to achieving the mission of First United Church as “a caring community of faith pursuing compassionate outreach”.  
Church Council, ministry personnel and staff value and support our volunteers.**

Scope of this manual: Volunteers who have been recruited to accomplish the work of Council, committees, and working groups.

*A volunteer program is fundamental to a healthy church.*

- It gives everyone a voice and the space to contribute.
- It promotes engagement and active participation.
- It is essential for a strong, inclusive, and resilient church.
- It promotes change and growth.
- It provides skills, talents, and perspectives essential to a church’s relevance and sustainability.
- It increases the capacity of a church to accomplish its mission.

*Volunteer involvement is personal*

- It promotes a sense of belonging.
- It provides the opportunity for everyone to become involved according to his/her individual preferences and motivations.

*Volunteering is about building relationships*

- It connects people in the congregation.
- It involves people in the causes they care about.
- It helps people to feel part of a church family.

*Volunteers have rights*

- First United Church is committed to providing a safe and supportive environment for volunteers.

*Volunteers have responsibilities*

- Volunteers are accountable to First United Church.
- They must act with respect for the church and its mission.
- They are expected to act with integrity.

*Volunteer Supervision and Communication*

- Who do I report to? Who do I go to with questions and concerns?  
The Organizational Chart ([www.firstunitedsc.ca](http://www.firstunitedsc.ca)) will help to answer these questions.

### *Liability Insurance*

- First United Church does not have liability insurance for volunteers or for people they may be transporting

### *Recruitment*

- A broad range of strategies is implemented to reach out to potential volunteers.
- People are invited to volunteer in meaningful ways that reflect their skills, needs, interests, and backgrounds.
- Each committee is expected to ensure that each volunteer's role is clearly described.

### *Screening*

Criminal Records Checks (CRC) and Vulnerable Sectors Checks (VSC) are required every five years for:

- Sunday School teachers and volunteers
- Youth Group volunteers
- Volunteer visitors to hospital, care homes, or private homes
- Volunteer drivers
- Adult Volunteers providing child care

There is no fee if the volunteer takes a covering letter from the church to the RCMP. This letter is available at the Church Office. The Committee Chair will advise volunteers to take the covering letter to the nearest RCMP detachment and pick up the completed CRC/VSC when ready. Volunteers leave completed CRC/VSC in a sealed envelope at Church Office for Chair of Council. The Chair of Council will be the only person to view the document, which will then be returned to volunteers. No copy will be retained. Chair of Council is responsible for keeping a record, and for informing Committee Chairs when checks are due to be redone (after 5 years).

### *Orientation and Training*

Each committee is expected to ensure that:

- Volunteers receive a copy of the Volunteer Manual and will sign off once they have read it. The committee chair will retain the signed document.
- Volunteers are orientated to the church, its policies and practices appropriate to their role, as well as orientation specific to their role.
- This manual is to be reviewed by all committee members and working groups at the first meeting of each year.

### *Handling Money*

- Volunteers handling money are expected to follow guidelines in the *Financial Handbook for Congregations: Good Management Practices*, United Church of Canada, 2010.

### *Support and Supervision*

- Volunteers receive the level of support and supervision required for their role and are encouraged to give and receive feedback.

### *Records*

- Each committee or working group is expected to keep an up-to-date list of volunteers and their contact info.

### *Identification Tags*

- Volunteers are encouraged to wear a tag with “First United Church Volunteer” while on volunteer duty.

### *Relationships*

- Volunteers are ambassadors for First United Church. They are encouraged to be friendly, caring, and supportive.
- To protect everyone involved, volunteers must not accept money or gifts from those receiving their services. Money may be accepted for specific shopping or errands.
- The Organizational Chart ([www.firstunitedsc.ca](http://www.firstunitedsc.ca)) shows a volunteer: Who do I go to with questions about my relationship with the person receiving my services? A copy is also available in the church office.

### *Confidentiality*

- Volunteers must respect the confidentiality of all private information regarding those receiving their services. e.g. medical information, family problems, names of those receiving Christmas hampers. (Appendix A – Volunteer Agreement)

### *Safety*

- Child abuse: Volunteers are required by law to report to Social Services or the police if they suspect that a child may be abused or neglected. (Appendix B – Duty to Report)
- Elder abuse: If a volunteer suspects abuse or neglect of an elderly person by a family member, neighbor, or friend, he/she should contact the RCMP (306-778-4870) or Social Services. If a volunteer suspects abuse in a special care home, he/she should talk to the manager. If a volunteer suspects abuse by a doctor, he/she should contact the College of Physicians and Surgeons (1-800-667-1668).
- Volunteers should be given a copy of the Saskatchewan Conference Sexual Abuse Prevention and Response pamphlet. (<http://www.sk.united-church.ca/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/SA-broch-Sept-15-updated-1.pdf>)

### *Conflict and Problems*

- The Organizational Chart ([www.firstunitedsc.ca](http://www.firstunitedsc.ca)) will show a volunteer: Who do I go to with an interpersonal conflict or other problem?
- Conflict will be resolved in accordance with First United Church's Conflict Resolution Policy. (Appendix C – Conflict Resolution Policy)

#### *Illness*

- Volunteers who are ill should “call in sick” and stay home and recuperate.

#### *Volunteer Recognition & Appreciation*

- The greatest recognition and benefit of volunteering is the satisfaction gained from serving others. First United Church expresses a sincere thank-you to those individuals who donate their time to our mission. An appreciation event will take place each year, for example, during National Volunteer Appreciation Week in April, or at the end of the Sunday School year.

**Appendix A – Volunteer Agreement**

VOLUNTEER AGREEMENT

I, \_\_\_\_\_, have read and agree to the terms  
(name printed)  
of the Volunteer Manual, and agree that I will keep confidential any personal information about  
individuals which comes to me as a result of carrying out my responsibilities as a member of the First  
United Church \_\_\_\_\_ Committee / Working Group.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name (printed)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

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

\*\*\*Once signed, this Volunteer Agreement is retained by the Committee Chair.\*\*\*

## **Appendix B – Duty to Report**

Every person who has reasonable grounds to believe that a child may be in need of protection has a legal obligation to report the information to a child protection worker or the police.

### **How to Report:**

Report to Social Services (306-778-8219) or the RCMP (306-778-4870)

### **What to Report:**

- Your name, telephone number and relationship to the child. (This information remains confidential.)
- Any immediate concerns about the child's safety
- The location of the child
- The child's name
- The child's age
- Information on the situation and any other relevant information.

## **Appendix C – Conflict Resolution Policy**

### Conflict Resolution between Members or Adherents

#### Purpose:

As a church, we are responsible for addressing concerns in a constructive manner so that we will grow in faith together, while loving and caring for each other.

#### Policy:

To follow a systematic procedure of conflict resolution to ensure all voices are heard; with the hope that resolution can be achieved.

#### Procedure:

1. Should an individual member or adherent find themselves in conflict with another they are encouraged to speak to that person directly to see if there can be some resolution.
2. Should they feel that they cannot do that by themselves, they should seek support from a neutral party (i.e. the Minister). In the case of volunteers working on the same project, the matter may be referred to the chair of the Working Group or Committee.
3. If resolution to the satisfaction of all parties cannot be achieved it is recommended that referral to the Executive of Council be made. The “Dispute Resolution Policy Handbook, 2008, United Church of Canada” will be followed.