



Dear Friends,

"Let the children come," Jesus says to his disciples who are cautious and afraid. The reign of God is a place where children are unconditionally welcomed, deeply loved, and caringly nurtured as followers of Jesus. **Our mission at Gloria Dei is to be a caring, healing, and welcoming church, doing justice and celebrating the new life that comes in Jesus Christ.** Part of that mission is to create a community that is safe; a place where we can all grow in our love of God and one another.


Unfortunately, we live in a world that can be dangerous for children and others who are vulnerable. It is our sacred duty to protect everyone so that the inherent dignity of each life can be celebrated and nurtured. Gloria Dei has a long history of developing policies and procedures that are designed to keep our community safe.

Recently, we have reviewed and discussed our requirements for volunteers. Instead of requiring only the minimum protections, the church council has adopted a new policy that allows us to go above and beyond the minimum. Our intention is to create a community that is more than safe; a community in which each is loved and valued; a community in which we can explore our faith and our gifts; a community that attends to all the ways we hurt one another.

We all need to continue to learn about appropriate speech and touch. We all want to watch out for the one that is vulnerable or at risk of being bullied. We continue to learn about behaviors that, at one time seemed acceptable, but now no longer serve the good of the community. We are learning new languages to describe one another. It's important for us to grow as a church in love and justice.

Thank you for taking these procedures seriously even though they may take more time than our previous requirements. Think of the additional time and attention as part of our call to love God and our neighbor. Thank you for helping to make this a safe and loving church. God bless you!

In Christ Jesus,


Pastor Bradley E. Schmeling