



Employee Policy Handbook

Our Mission

To Know Jesus Christ and to Make Him Known

Approved by Staff Parish Relations November 2, 2025

Effective January 1, 2026

We welcome you to the staff of St. James United Methodist Church!

St. James strives to be a friendly, caring, compassionate, and Christ-centered church, both in its contact with the community and in its daily internal operations. As you enter into employment at St. James, you join a dedicated ministry team, serving Christ, His Church, and the community.

We believe the key to effective ministry is outstanding, supportive, and skilled people, who work well together in pursuit of the church's mission. Every staff member plays a vital part in the overall success of our ministry team. With a high work quality and a positive team spirit, our meaningful ministry reaches far beyond your particular job, area of accountability, and focused responsibilities.

Our ministry team is committed to supporting you in your work to help further develop your professional skills and meet the needs and goals in every aspect of the church's life. One of our objectives is to provide a work environment that is conducive to both personal and professional growth. We trust you will give your best efforts and find your service as a St. James employee to be challenging, rewarding, and meaningful.

We wish you great fulfillment and joy in your work as you share your talents, skills, abilities, and professional training with your co-workers and the members of our church.

Sincerely,

Staff-Parish Relations Committee
Senior Pastor
Executive Team

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INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT

This Employee Policy Handbook is designed to acquaint you with St. James United Methodist Church (the Church) and provide you with policies and procedures affecting your employment. It also describes many of your responsibilities as an employee and includes information about working conditions, compensation, and benefit programs.

You should read, understand, and comply with all provisions in this handbook. Violation may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

Employment with the Church is at will. The employment relationship may be terminated at any time, with or without cause, at the discretion of either St. James United Methodist Church or the employee. The policies and procedures outlined in this Employee Policy Handbook are not intended to constitute any legally binding contractual obligation, expressed or implied. They have been developed with great care and are designed to ensure fair and consistent treatment of all employees.

As ministry considerations change and needs arise, the Staff-Parish Relations Committee anticipates there will be modifications to the information, policies, and procedures contained in this handbook. The Church reserves the right to revise, supplement, or rescind any policies or portion of this Employee Policy Handbook at any time, as it deems appropriate. Employees will be notified of changes to the Handbook as they occur to the extent practical under the circumstances. Lack of notice does not mean the policy or procedure may not be or is not effectively changed.

The governing responsibility for personnel matters lies with the Staff-Parish Relations Committee (SPRC), which receives its authority from The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church.

The policies contained in this handbook supersede all previous written and unwritten policies and procedures of the Church. Questions concerning clarification should be directed to your supervisor or the Executive Director of Finance and Administration.

SPECIALIZED POLICIES, PROCEDURES, AND GUIDELINES

As a governing body, the SPRC has the responsibility to develop, adopt and oversee the personnel policies affecting all employees of the Church. There may be specialized policies, procedures, and guidelines – in addition to those contained in this handbook – adopted in order to meet specific needs of various programs and ministries, such as the Tuition Based Ministries. Matters not covered by this Employee Policy Handbook may be addressed through administrative guidelines when appropriate, upon the approval of the Senior Pastor, Executive Director of Ministries, or Executive Director of Finance and Administration.

DEFINITIONS AND EMPLOYEE CLASSIFICATIONS

Administrative Guidelines: Administrative guidelines and procedures are created by staff and approved by authorized supervisors within the parameters of Church Policy, in order to facilitate the ministry of St. James and provide for effective management and administration. Unlike guidelines, policy is created by the governing bodies of the Church, such as the Staff-Parish Relations Committee (SPRC).

Associate Pastors: When more than one pastor is appointed or employed at a local church, Associate Pastors are assigned to specific areas of ministry and are designated as Minister or Pastor of those defined areas in addition to duties as assigned by the Senior Pastor and/or Executive Team member.

Church Council: In order to provide oversight and leadership throughout the year, the Church Council serves as our Church Conference's executive governing body, monitoring ministry progress and voting on strategic matters. The Council's primary duties include setting strategic direction for the church, overseeing the church's governance and administration, and ensuring that our ministries accomplish the church's purpose, vision and plans. This committee is assigned its authority from The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church.

Church Lay Worker or Lay Employee: A lay (not ordained or licensed) person employed either full or part time in a local church.

Clergy: Clergy includes all persons appointed by the Bishop and Cabinet for service in our church, and are indicated by the titles "Minister" and "Reverend." This includes Ordained Elders, Local Pastors and Deacons. Clergy may be appointed to serve as "Pastors;" others may serve exclusively as "Directors" of various ministries. Elders and Local Pastors are not considered by law to be employees of St. James United Methodist Church.

Deacons: Deacons are ordained by the Bishop for "Word, Service, Justice and Compassion" and have clergy membership in the Annual Conference. Deacons are specialists who are hired by individual local churches to work in specific areas of ministry, serving under appointment by the Bishop.

Employee Groupings: All Church employees are under the direction and responsibility of the Senior Pastor, SPRC, and the Executive Staff Team. The Church has established three major departments as follows:

- **St. James Staff:** includes clergy, exempt and non-exempt employees whose job descriptions support the day-to-day operation of the church and its ministries.
- **St. James Learning Center:** includes the regular full-time employees – Director and Assistant Director, , and all Learning Center teachers, aides, specialty teachers, and coordinators.
- **St. James Kids LIFE:** includes the Director, administrative staff, and Kids LIFE teachers.

Executive Director of Finance and Administration: A member of the Executive Team; the Executive Director of Finance and Administration provides oversight and leadership in the areas of finance operations, business administration, human resources, facilities maintenance, and risk management.

Executive Director of Ministries: A member of the Executive Team; The Executive Director of Ministries serves in an administrative and supervisory capacity, charged with the day-to-day responsibilities regarding personnel and program issues. This individual is responsible for ensuring that the programs and ministries work towards fulfilling the mission, vision, and goals of the Church.

Executive Team: The Senior Pastor may designate an Executive team composed of the Senior Pastor's direct reports to coordinate decision making at a strategic level. This executive leadership team ensures that the flow of decision making remains effective. In the Employee Policy Handbook, certain responsibilities for management have been delegated from the Senior Pastor to this executive leadership team.

Exempt and Non-Exempt Status: All staff members are designated either as exempt or non-exempt employees, as defined by the federal Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA). The job description will state whether the position is classified as exempt or non-exempt. This designation determines some of the elements of your employment.

Full-time Employee: Employed for an average of 30 hours or more per week for an indefinite period of time. Employees with this classification are entitled to certain benefits as outlined in this handbook.

Intern: Temporary employment assignment limited in duration, and hours can fluctuate. Employees in this category generally have no benefits except those mandated by law.

Local Pastors: Local Pastors are persons who have been certified by the District Committee on Ordained Ministry as having completed all the prescribed educational and Disciplinary requirements for service. They may serve in a full-time, part-time or student capacity. They are appointed by the Bishop to serve in local churches. Requirements for continuation as a local pastor include educational progress and evaluative oversight by the District and local church.

Maintenance Staff: These persons are employed either full or part time to handle the maintenance and custodial needs of the church. The Maintenance/Custodial Staff is managed and supervised under the direction of the Executive Director of Finance and Administration.

Ordained Elders: An Ordained Elder is a person who is ordained by the Bishop for "Word, Sacrament and Order" and has membership in the annual conference. Elders serve under the appointment of the Bishop.

Part-time Employee: Scheduled for less than 30 hours per week on an average basis. Employees in this category are entitled to some benefits as outlined in this handbook on a pro-rated basis, proportionate to actual hours scheduled and worked.

Program Staff: Program staff members are employed either full or part time in specific areas of ministry (for example, Youth, Children, Senior Adult, Missions, etc.) as indicated by their job description. Program staff members are normally considered "exempt" employees.

Senior Pastor: When more than one pastor is appointed or employed at a local church, one is always designated as Senior Pastor, and charged with the ultimate leadership responsibilities. In the absence of the Senior Pastor, the Senior Associate Pastor in consultation with other Executive Team Members makes executive decisions relating to the church.

Staff-Parish Relations Committee (SPRC): Members of the SPRC are elected by the Church/Charge Conference of the church. The SPR committee consults with the Senior Pastor and Executive Team regarding personnel policy decisions and issues, including hiring and firing, and the performance evaluation process. The SPRC also works to enhance and simplify communication within the church by serving as liaison between the congregation, the pastors and staff, and interpreting the nature and function of the church's ministry. This committee is assigned its authority from The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church.

Supervisors: For the purpose of organization and management, staff members serve within a designated ministry area of the church (for example, Support Staff, Pastoral Care, Children, Youth). Each ministry area is overseen by a supervisor, who serves as a support and resource person for those within his or her area. This Supervisor is responsible for conducting interim and annual reviews for the ministry area's personnel, based on personal, professional, and church goals and objectives.

Support Staff: Employed either full or part time to perform a specific task or fill a specific need in support of the programs and ministries of the church. The Support Staff is managed and supervised by various members of the Executive Team as outlined in the staff organizational chart.

Temporary Employee: Employed for a limited period of time to perform a specific task or fill a specific need, as scheduled by the church; a temporary employee may be either full or part time. Employees in this category generally have no benefits except those mandated by law.

Trustees: Members of the Board of Trustees are elected by the Church/Charge Conference of the church. This governing board is charged with the care and maintenance of church property and holds title to the church's property, buildings and equipment. Areas of responsibility include establishing policies and practices regarding maintenance and equipment, church property, Safe Gatherings, disaster planning, land acquisition and construction planning, and both property and liability insurance. This committee is assigned its authority from The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church.

Tuition Based Ministries (for example, Learning Center and Kids LIFE): Including the directors, these employees serve in extension ministries of St. James. All these staff members are covered by the provisions of this Employee Policy Handbook with exceptions made to further the unique ministry needs and staffing of Tuition Based Ministries. The SPRC and Executive Team must give approval to the personnel policy statements of each Tuition Based Ministry. The payroll and benefits expense for all staff members of Tuition Based Ministries shall be the responsibility of the respective ministries. Selection of members of the Administrative Committees of Tuition Based Ministries shall be upon nomination of the church nominating committee and election by the Church/Charge Conference.

GENERAL INFORMATION

EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES

All employees of St. James United Methodist Church (including Tuition Based and extension ministries) are “employees at will” according to Arkansas state law. None of the personnel procedures or policies shall be interpreted or exercised to change this status.

It is the intent of the SPRC and the Church to afford equal and fair employment opportunity to all qualified persons, in the context of a religious ministry and in accordance with the Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church. As a religious organization, the Church may under the United States Constitution and applicable state and federal laws, discriminate on the basis of religion, religious beliefs, and religious practices. However, the Church will not discriminate in the hiring, continued employment, and other personnel actions on the basis of protected characteristics.

The Senior Pastor, or designee, may accept applications for all positions. Under the oversight of the SPRC, the Senior Pastor, or designee, shall hire and terminate all employees. Employment decisions relating to staff of Tuition Based Ministries are delegated to the director of these ministries and appropriate supervisors.

All new employees are hired for a probationary period of at least 90 days. At the end of this probationary period, the Senior Pastor, or designee, may approve the employee as permanent staff. The SPRC may provide input to the Senior Pastor and/or Executive Team in the job performance of all staff members, and shall serve as the final appellate authority for any employee grievances.

Criminal History/Background Checks will be run on all qualified persons considered for employment and on all staff members not under appointment. Credit checks may be required on persons who are determined by the SPRC and Senior Pastor to have jobs indicating a heightened level of responsibility and exposure (for example, monetary responsibilities, the use of financial discretion, or security risks). Child and adult maltreatment check and drug tests may also be run in accordance with state and federal law. Applicants and staff members shall be given an opportunity to challenge records they consider to be inaccurate that are revealed through the process.

Staff members are expected to be good role models who provide a positive image of our local church and the United Methodist Church in the community as a whole. Religious beliefs and practices, personal conduct, and the Christian lifestyle of all staff members will be considered in the hiring and continued employment of persons for the Church.

OFFICE HOURS AND WORK SCHEDULES

The Church office is open from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Thursday, and 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. on Friday. For holidays or other uncommon circumstances (for example, inclement weather, construction, or an emergency), the Church may be closed or the office hours changed. The Senior Pastor, or designee, shall assess and determine modifications to the regular schedule.

Regular work hours are expected of all employees. The work schedules for employees vary throughout our organization. Employee supervisors will advise staff of their individual work schedules. Staffing needs and operational demands may necessitate variations in starting and ending times, as well as variations in the total hours for which employees may be scheduled each day and week. Support Staff work hours will be determined by the Executive Team. Since Program Staff members' work days may vary depending on the ministry assigned, each Program Staff member is to announce and adhere to scheduled office hours, with the schedule approved by the supervisor and the Senior Pastor.

REMOTE WORK POLICY

St. James UMC recognizes the ability and benefits of remote work when appropriate. We value the importance of our staff community, teamwork, and collaborative community thus the standard practice is on-campus work. Remote work may be approved when specific needs arise. Employees must submit a written request for remote work in advance, and approval must come from their direct supervisor or a member of the Executive Team. If remote work is found to hinder productivity or teamwork, the arrangement may be reevaluated.

TIME CLOCK

All non-exempt (hourly) employees are required to use the approved computer software, Time Clock Plus, to record their actual hours worked. Employees must record the actual time when they begin work, when they leave for a scheduled lunch break, when they return from their lunch period, and when they leave work at the conclusion of their work day. Employees may only record their start time when they are ready to begin work, and no earlier than 15 minutes before their scheduled start time.

Employees must submit written correction requests to their supervisor within one business day of submitting a timekeeping error.

STAFF SUPERVISION

The SPRC shall coordinate with the Senior Pastor and approve a plan detailing supervision and staff roles. Please refer to current Organizational Chart.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

St. James UMC aims to remain open during regular office hours and minimize closures due to inclement weather. The Senior Pastor, or designee, will determine if weather conditions significantly impact employees' ability to safely commute to or from work. If the church officially closes due to inclement weather, the inclement weather policy will be enacted, and employees will be paid for their scheduled hours.

Prior to working hours: Unless otherwise notified, staff members are expected to report to work on time. When inclement conditions are determined, staff members are expected to arrive at work as soon as safely possible. If the church office remains open, staff members may take Paid Leave or leave without pay for any additional time absent from work beyond what was allowed for inclement weather.

During working hours:

If weather conditions become hazardous during working hours and the church office remains open, staff may request permission from their supervisor or the Senior Pastor to leave early. If approved, the time away must be covered using Paid Time Off or taken as unpaid leave. Remote work can be requested if appropriate and in line with the remote work policy above.

Tuition Based Ministries:

Tuition-Based Ministries will follow the inclement weather closure policy recommended by their Administrative Committees. If a ministry closes or dismisses early due to weather, employees will be paid for their scheduled hours—unless they are already on Paid Time Off, unpaid leave, or absent for other reasons. Positions eligible for the remote work policy above may request the option if appropriate.

HOLIDAYS

The church office will be closed for the holidays noted below, and all full-time employees shall receive equivalent time off for the authorized holidays. When the holiday falls on a Saturday, it will typically be observed the preceding Friday. When a holiday falls on a Sunday or other special day in the church calendar, it will typically be observed on the following Monday.

The Church recognizes eleven (11) official holidays:

- New Year's Day (January 1)
- Martin Luther King, Jr. Day (third Monday in January)
- The Monday following Easter
- Memorial Day (last Monday in May)
- Juneteenth Independence Day (June 19)
- Independence Day, (July 4)
- Labor Day (first Monday in September)
- Thanksgiving (fourth Thursday in November)
- Friday after Thanksgiving
- Christmas Day (December 25)
- The day after Christmas (December 26)

In some instances, the actual dates authorized for individual departments may be modified, depending on ministry needs and operational demands.

When a holiday falls on a full-time employee's regular day off, a substitute paid day off shall be given by his or her supervisor at the earliest appropriate working day, with the approval of the employee's supervisor.

Exempt employees, who must work on a holiday or if the holiday falls on a normal day off, will receive another day off in place of the holiday. Non-exempt full-time employees who work on a holiday will receive holiday pay. Part-time employees who are not scheduled to work on holidays are not entitled to holiday pay. Part-time employees scheduled to work on holidays will be paid time and half. Paid time off for holidays will not be counted as hours worked for any purpose.

Since Tuition Based Ministries operate on an academic schedule, holidays for these programs will be set by the directors of these ministries, in coordination with each other, school calendars, and the Executive Director of Ministries.

EXPECTATIONS AND EVALUATION

JOB DESCRIPTIONS

There will be written job descriptions for each church position. Job responsibilities will be determined by the employee's Supervisor and approved by the Executive Team prior to submission to the SPRC. The Supervisor and the employee will utilize the contents of the job description when evaluating job performance. The job description will state FLSA status, the reporting relationship, physical requirements, and the full-time or part-time status of the position. The following key components are included in each Job Description:

- **Essential Functions:** The essential functions of a position are the central tasks that must be completed by the employee in the day-to-day execution of the job. Essential functions are the duties inherent to the position. They describe what the employee is required to do to meet basic task-oriented expectations.
- **Core Competencies:** Core competencies describe the Church's expectations about the basic character attributes, skills and abilities of the person who is doing the job. Competencies describe how you should conduct yourself as you execute your responsibilities.

GOALS AND PERFORMANCE EVALUATIONS

Employees and supervisors are strongly encouraged to discuss employee job performance and professional goals on an informal, on-going basis throughout the year.

Goals address the growing edge of a position. They should provide staff members with direction about how to focus their energy, encouraging the staff members to grow their area of ministry in defined and targeted ways. Goals should change from year to year to reflect the evolving strategic priorities of the congregation.

Formal performance evaluations are conducted on an annual basis to provide both the staff member and supervisor the opportunity to discuss the employee's personal attributes, and performance against annual goals. This process assists in encouraging and recognizing strengths, identifying and improving weaknesses, and discussing approaches for meeting goals. Additional assessments may also be scheduled when a need arises.

Each employee's performance normally will be reviewed and evaluated consistent with our ongoing annual evaluation schedule.

The Church may award pay adjustments in an effort to recognize employee performance. The decision to award such an adjustment is generally based on numerous factors, including the information documented during the formal performance evaluation process.

COMPENSATION

SALARY DETERMINATION

The key objectives of St. James' compensation practices are to ensure internal equity and external competitiveness.

The SPRC shall review annually, prior to the development of the upcoming year's budget, the compensation of all staff. The SPRC will report to the Finance Committee and Church Council the maximum compensation available for staff positions for the next fiscal year.

Clergy salaries will be recommended by the SPRC to the Church/Charge Conference in the manner required by the Arkansas Conference of the United Methodist Church.

Paydays are the fifteenth and the last day of the month unless those days fall on a Saturday, Sunday, or holiday. In such cases, paychecks will be distributed on the last working day prior to the 15th or last working day of the month.

Wages of staff members in Tuition Based Ministries will be established by the director of the Tuition Based Ministry after consultation with, and approval of, the Executive Director of Ministries. The Executive Director of Ministries will consult with the respective director in the implementation of the compensation plans.

COMPENSATION CHANGES

Following annual performance evaluations, the Senior Pastor and Executive Team will assign annual compensation changes for lay church staff, for implementation on April 1. Changes in compensation for clergy take place on July 1 of each year if approved. Compensation changes will be based on information from the employee's formal evaluation, available funds from church and other resources, and other relevant information from church life.

Compensation change, especially salary increases, will be based primarily on employee performance documented in formal annual evaluations, available funds, and with consideration given to your pay against market-based data.

Tuition Based Ministry staff compensation changes may be made by the director of the Tuition Based Ministry within the guidelines and timeline approved by the Administrative Committee and the Executive Director of Ministries.

Compensation changes for Tuition Based Ministry director positions will be set by the SPRC upon recommendation from Tuition Based Ministry Administrative Committees and appropriate supervisors, as part of the church's annual performance evaluation process.

OVERTIME COMPENSATION FOR NON-EXEMPT EMPLOYEES

When operating requirements or other needs cannot be met during regular working hours, non-exempt employees may be given the opportunity for overtime work assignments. All overtime work must be approved in advance. Overtime assignments will be distributed as equitable as practical to all employees qualified to perform the required work.

Overtime compensation is paid to all non-exempt employees consistent with federal and state wage and hour laws. Overtime pay is based on actual hours worked. Paid time off, , civil leave, mission leave, or any other leave of absence is not considered hours worked for purposes of overtime. Non-exempt employees will be paid overtime at the rate of 1 and ½ times their regular rate.

St. James encourages employees to have a balanced work and personal life. Overtime should be kept at a minimum. Therefore, non-exempt employees must not work more than 40 hours in any workweek unless their supervisor or their Tuition Based Ministry director approves the work in advance.

Replenishment (Compensatory) Time

Compensatory time is provided to allow employees a respite to refresh themselves physically, emotionally, spiritually, and to renew family relationships that may have been strained during the times job responsibilities require excessive work periods.

Because of the nature of ministry, it may be common for a staff member to work beyond regularly scheduled hours including evening and weekends. In these cases, at the discretion of the Senior Pastor or Executive Team member, compensatory paid time off may be allowed for replenishment. Compensatory time must be used within 60 days of the time it was earned.

Staff participating in mission trips or multi-day events, directly related to their job responsibilities, may receive up to one day of compensatory time for each day worked outside their regular work schedule.

The time allowed off may not necessarily equate an equal trade off of hours worked. It is generally understood that these times of intense ministry are the exception rather than the rule. If a staff member begins to sense that these periods of overtime become routine, please notify the Senior Pastor or a member of the Executive Team so that alternatives may be explored.

PAYROLL DEDUCTIONS

Typical payroll deductions may be divided into two categories – deductions required by law and deductions authorized in writing by the employee for the employee's benefit.

Federal and state laws require certain deductions from employee pay, including income taxes, Social Security and Medicare contributions (up to legal limits), as well as court-ordered garnishments and child support payments.

St. James seeks to offer employees various programs and benefits beyond those required by law. If eligible to participate, employees will be invited to participate upon hire and have an opportunity to adjust/renew benefits at the annual benefit information meeting organized by the Executive Director of Finance and Administration. At the start of employment and at the annual meeting, employees will be required to accept or decline the optional benefits St. James offers eligible employees. By voluntarily accepting the optional benefits, the employee authorizes deductions from their paycheck to cover the cost of participation in these programs. Eligible programs include, but are not limited to, the payments for individual elections such as insurance premiums, Section 125 (cafeteria plan), supplementary insurance premiums, and pension contributions. For more details about eligible benefits, see pages 25-26.

If you have questions about any deductions from your paycheck, please ask the Executive Director of Finance and Administration.

LEAVE AND ABSENCES

PAID TIME OFF (PTO) WITH ACCRUAL

Purpose

St. James United Methodist Church believes that its employees have a vital role in assisting the church to fulfill its mission. Although work makes up a large portion of an employee's life, we believe that a balance between work and nonwork activities is essential in order to maintain quality performance, spiritual growth, a positive work atmosphere and a healthy life balance. To support this philosophy, the church has designed a Paid Time Off (PTO) plan that incorporates vacation, personal and sick leave into one program.

The PTO program encompasses paid leave for illness, vacation, and personal leave. Guidelines for military service, jury duty, bereavement leave, Family Medical Leave, mission immersion experience, and continuing education are addressed on pages 21-25 of this handbook.

The PTO program applies to all regular, full-time and part-time employees. Interns, temporary employees, seasonal employees, and any other employees scheduled for less than 20 hours a week are not eligible for participation in this program.

Accrual Rate

Full-Time Employees (30+ hours/week)

- **Mid-Year Hires:** Employees hired mid-year accrue PTO at a rate of 3.33 hours per pay period, up to a maximum of 10 workdays for the remainder of the calendar year. Unused PTO from this period does not carry over to the next year.
- **Annual Accrual Beginning January 1 (Following Hire Date):**

| Years of Service | Hours per Pay Period | Days per Year |
|--|----------------------|---------------|
| Beginning January of the first full calendar year after hire | 7.3 hours | 22 days |
| Beginning January of the calendar year after 5 years of service | 9 hours | 27 days |
| Beginning January of the calendar year after 10 years of service | 10.66 hours | 32 days |

Part-Time Employees (20–29 hours/week)

- **Mid-Year Hires:** Employees hired mid-year accrue PTO at a rate of $0.041625 \times$ scheduled hours per pay period, up to a maximum of 10 workdays. Unused PTO from this period does not carry over to the next year.
- **Annual Accrual Beginning January 1 (Following Hire Date):**

| Years of Service | Accrual Rate per Pay Period |
|--|----------------------------------|
| Beginning January of the first full calendar year after hire | $0.09125 \times$ scheduled hours |
| Beginning January of the calendar year after 5 years of service | $0.1125 \times$ scheduled hours |
| Beginning January of the calendar year after 10 years of service | $0.13325 \times$ scheduled hours |

Procedures

In general, foreseeable PTO must be preapproved by and prescheduled with the employee's supervisor and must be taken in full hour increments. Approval for all scheduled time away is subject to applicable workloads.

Emergency PTO: In case of an emergency, employees may take up to 2 days of unscheduled PTO with less than 24 hours' notice, regardless of applicable workload.

PTO Restrictions: No PTO time will be granted during Holy Week or the two weeks prior to Christmas. In the case of illness during Holy Week or Christmas, employees must consult with their supervisor.

Weekend PTO Requests:

- Employees regularly scheduled to work on **Fridays** who request PTO will have a full scheduled workday (e.g., 8 hours) deducted from their PTO balance.
- Employees required / regularly scheduled to work on **Sundays** will also have a full scheduled workday deducted from their PTO balance.
 - Employees whose roles require Sunday work may only take PTO on Sundays **equal to the number of weeks of PTO accrued**.
 - *Example: An employee with two weeks of PTO may take off two Sundays per calendar year.*

PTO Carryover: A maximum of **40 hours** of unused accrued PTO may be carried over to the next calendar year. This carryover will be effective **January 1st of each calendar year**, and any additional unused PTO will be forfeited.

Negative PTO Balance: In the event an employee needs time away from work prior to accruing the necessary PTO hours, with prior supervisor approval, employees may take PTO before it is accrued, up to a **maximum negative balance of 40 hours**.

PTO at Termination: Employees will be paid for all earned and unused PTO upon termination, **except** in cases of involuntary termination or failure to provide sufficient written notice (see page 44). Final paychecks will include deductions for any **negative PTO balances**.

Clergy (Provisional or Full Connection Elders or Deacons, and Local Pastors):

A Vacation Policy for Appointed Personnel has been adopted by the Arkansas Annual Conference. Each clergy person under appointment by the Bishop of the Arkansas Conference shall be entitled to receive the following minimum vacation time during the course of the Annual Conference year (July 1 - June 30).

- Those having served full time in the United Methodist Church from the time first appointed to five years: two weeks' vacation (2 Sundays)
- Those having served full time in the United Methodist Church from six years to ten years: three weeks' vacation (3 Sundays)
- Those having served full time in the United Methodist Church for eleven or more years: four weeks' vacation (4 Sundays)

Clergy vacation time shall be based on the number of years of service under ministry appointment in the United Methodist Church and not on the number of years of service in a given appointment. These minimum requirements reflect the Arkansas Conference Vacation Policy, as adopted by the Annual Conference in June 2010.

CONTINUING EDUCATION AND STUDY

Time off for job-related continuing education and study may be given to program and pastoral staff, upon approval of the staff member's supervisor and the Senior Pastor or Executive Team member. Support staff may also be given time off for job-related continuing education and study, upon approval of the employee's supervisor and the Executive Director of Finance and Administration. Employees will receive pay for regular scheduled hours while participating in continuing education.

A written request with sufficient notice (at least three weeks) is to be provided to the supervisor. Continuing Education and Study Leave shall not exceed two weeks annually.

Such leave may be granted by the Senior Pastor or Executive Team member on a schedule deemed appropriate and acceptable to the staff member and his or her supervisor, whether by the hour, day, week or in one continuing period, including any combination of such times.

Education may take place on the premises, as in study time, or away from the church, as in workshops, seminars and school classes.

The amount available to staff members shall be defined in each year's budget and may be dispensed only upon approval of the Senior Pastor or Executive Team member, .

Continuing Education and Study Time is in addition to, not in the place of, paid time off.

Assistance with the expenses of staff members of Tuition Based Ministries for job-related continuing education and study shall be paid by these ministries. The disbursement of funds for continuation education shall be based on administrative guidelines.

ST. JAMES MISSION TRIP PARTICIPATION

Mission Trips are excellent opportunities to build relationships and create a healthy atmosphere for ministry. Missional service provides an opportunity to serve those who are in need, to deepen in faith, and to set an example in service. St. James encourages qualified program and support staff (employees who are regularly scheduled for 20 hours or more of work) to participate in St. James sponsored mission trips, even if their job responsibilities do not include mission trip duties. Therefore, each qualified staff member is permitted to take up to one workweek of paid Mission Leave per calendar year - above and beyond the vacation schedule - in order to participate in local, domestic or international mission service.

Mission Leave is to be used exclusively to participate in a St. James sponsored Mission Trip for serving the needs of the poor and suffering while bearing witness to the Christian faith. Mission leave is subject to approval of the staff member's supervisor and a member of the Executive Team. A written request with sufficient notice (at least three weeks) is to be provided.

SPECIAL ABSENCES

A "Special Absence" may be described as one for any of the reasons listed below. Arrangement for this leave must be made in advance with the respective supervisor.

Death in the immediate family:

Absence for death in the immediate family shall not exceed four days with pay. The staff member's immediate family shall be limited to the following: parents, in-laws, spouse, siblings, children, grandparents, or grandchildren. A person living in the household of the staff member or spouse as a sole dependent of either will also be included.

Additional time off for such situations may be authorized by an Executive Team member as leave without pay or the employee may opt to use accrued PTO.

Civil Leave:

Employees are encouraged to cooperate in citizen responsibilities. When in obedience to a subpoena or direction by proper authority, an employee appears as a witness for the Federal Government, the State of Arkansas, or attends any court in connection with official duties, or serves on a jury in any State or Federal Court, civil leave shall be granted. Appearances in court under subpoenas and/or out of civic responsibility (such as eyewitness) will normally be considered excused time with pay. Official participation in a United Methodist denominational judicial or fair process hearing will normally be considered excused time with pay. Time for appearance in court for personal business will be the individual employee's responsibility. Employees may opt to use PTO or take leave without pay for this purpose.

Any employee who is summoned to serve on a jury will be excused from work while serving on the jury. When summoned, the employee should notify his or her supervisor immediately, and the employee will be expected to work during normal working hours except for the time the employee's presence is required in court.

The Church encourages all employees to fulfill their civic responsibilities by participating in elections. Generally, you should be able to find time to vote either before or after your regular workday. If you are unable to vote in an election during your non-working hours, the Church will grant you up to two hours of paid time off to vote. You must request time off to vote at least two working days before the Election

Day. Advance notice is required so the necessary time off can be scheduled at the beginning or end of the work shift, whichever provides the least disruption to the normal work schedule.

Non-Medical Leave of Absence:

To be eligible for a leave of absence, the employee must have been employed by St. James UMC for at least 12 months and must have worked a minimum of 1250 hours during the 12 months immediately before the leave begins. Medical Leaves are considered in a different section of this handbook.

Under normal circumstances, the request for leaves of absence must be made thirty days in advance of the leave date. An emergency leave request will be processed as soon as possible.

Leave of absence requests (both approved and disapproved) will be acknowledged by direct contact with the Executive Director of Ministries and Executive Director of Finance and Administration. If disapproved, the reasons for denial will be explained in writing.

Military leaves of absence will be granted consistent with current law and circumstances. Please see the Executive Director of Finance and Administration for more information.

FAMILY MEDICAL LEAVE ACT (FMLA)

The Family and Medical Leave (FMLA) is a federal law that provides eligible employees of covered employers with **unpaid, job-protected leave** for specific family and medical reasons. Eligible employees may take up to 12 workweeks of leave in a 12-month period for one or more of the following reasons:

- **Birth or Placement of a Child:** The birth of a son or daughter, or placement of a son or daughter with the employee for adoption or foster care, and to bond with the newborn or newly-placed child;
- **Care for a Family Member:** To care for a spouse, child, or parent who has a serious health condition, including incapacity due to pregnancy and for prenatal medical care;
- **Employee's Own Health:** For a serious health condition that prevents the employee from performing the essential job functions, including incapacity due to pregnancy and for prenatal medical care;
- **Military Family Leave:** For any qualifying exigency arising out of the fact that a spouse, child, or parent is a military member on covered active duty or called to covered active-duty status.

In addition to providing eligible employees an entitlement to leave, the FMLA requires that employers maintain employees' health benefits during leave and restore employees to their same or an equivalent job after leave. The law sets requirements for notice, by both the employee and the employer, and provides employers with the right to require certification of the need for FMLA leave in certain circumstances. The law protects employees from interference and retaliation for exercising or attempting to exercise their FMLA rights. The law also includes certain employer recordkeeping requirements.

Contact the Executive Director of Finance and Administration to arrange FMLA leave. FMLA leave must be requested in writing and approved in advance, unless unavoidable circumstances prevent such process. Circumstances relating to the leave of absence must be agreed in writing and must include agreements concerning insurance coverage, pension and other benefits during the leave.

FMLA provides eligible employees with unpaid, job-protected leave for qualifying family and medical reasons as stated above.

- Upon approval of an FMLA request, **St. James will provide up to 80 hours of paid FMLA leave** within a 12-month period. These hours may be used **in place of PTO**.
- After the 80 hours are used, employees may choose to:
 - Use accrued **Paid Time Off (PTO)** to continue receiving pay, or
 - Take the remainder of their FMLA leave **unpaid**.

Benefits During FMLA Leave

- **PTO Accrual:** Employees continue to accrue PTO during FMLA leave.
- **Health Insurance:** Employer-provided health insurance coverage continues during the leave. Payment arrangements for the employees portion of the health care coverage is required prior to leave beginning. These arrangements must be made with the Executive Director of Finance and Administration.
- **Voluntary Benefits:** Benefits paid through payroll deductions (e.g., vision insurance) are **suspended during unpaid leave** unless the employee arranges to pay premiums directly. These benefits will **resume upon return to active employment**.

Leaves of absence may not be provided or the employee may not be reinstated from leave if:

- 1) the employee advises the church that he or she will not return to work, in which case the employment relationship is deemed terminated and the employee's entitlement to reinstatement ceases;
- 2) the employee fraudulently obtains leave, in which case the church will not restore the employee's job; or
- 3) the employee accepts other employment while on leave, in which case the employee will not be entitled to any benefits, if any allowed during the leave period, and their employment may be terminated.

Upon returning from a leave of absence, the employee must be aware of the following:

- The Executive Director of Finance and Administration must be notified at least ten days before the proposed return date. Failure to do this could result in a delay in the employee's return.
- Staff members returning from medical leave must have a statement from their attending physician allowing them to return to work and specifying any restrictions.
- If an employee returns to work within the time period established for the leave, reasonable effort will be made to return the employee to the same job he or she left. However, due to conditions in the church or staff, employees may not be given their same job when they return, but in that situation will be given an equivalent position in the church staff.
 - An equivalent position would involve as much as possible the same or substantially similar duties, responsibilities and compensation as the employee's previous position. It would also entail substantially equivalent skills, effort, responsibility and authority.

PREGNANT WORKERS FAIRNESS ACT (PWFA)

This federal law went into effect on June 27, 2023. Employers are now required to provide reasonable accommodations for known limitations related to pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions, unless the accommodation will cause the employer an “undue hardship.” Employees who need reasonable accommodations due to limitations of pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions, should contact their supervisor and the Director of Finance and Administration to discuss specific needs and ways in which accommodations may be made.

EMPLOYMENT OF MINORS

All applicants for employment who are not at least 18 years of age will follow all Child Labor Laws. Minors cannot work during school hours unless they receive an exemption from the school. Work on school nights will be limited to federal, state, and local laws. Additionally, a parent/guardian acceptance letter and permission must always be received before a minor is allowed to work at the Church.

In accordance with the Federal Department of Labor, Child Labor Laws, and other applicable state laws, minors are not allowed to work in food service or any other areas of the church where they could be assigned hazardous duties. These duties would consist of, but are not limited to, electrical work, construction projects, roofing repairs, operation of mowing equipment, driving church vehicles, etc.

IMMIGRATION REFORM AND CONTROL ACT OF 1986

St. James is committed to full compliance with the federal immigration laws and will not knowingly hire or continue to employ anyone who does not have the legal right to work in the United States. Completion of the Form I-9 will be required as a condition of employment. As an ongoing condition of employment, employees will be required to provide documentation, as requested, verifying their identity and legal authority to work in the United States.

BENEFITS

INSURANCE

Individual medical, dental and life insurance coverage is offered to all eligible employees. Employees are responsible for a percentage of the total cost of the health plan chosen by the employee. This percentage is determined each spring, when the insurance coverage is renewed with a provider. Opportunities to enroll or decline are upon hire or change to eligible status, during open enrollment, or at time of a qualifying event. Insurance for Ordained Clergy will conform to recommendations of the Arkansas Conference of the United Methodist Church. Insurance coverage for all full-time appointed clergy (elders, deacons, and local pastors) shall be the same. Insurance costs for staff members of Tuition Based Ministries will be paid by these ministries.

If a lay employee elects not to enroll in the insurance program because of other existing coverage (such as under a spouse's policy), no other benefit or monetary remuneration will be provided to the employee. Coverage is available for a lay employee's spouse and children at the employee's expense. Arrangements for family member coverage must be made with the Executive Director of Finance and Administration.

WORKERS COMPENSATION

All employees are covered under Workers Compensation Insurance and should report all related accidents, illnesses, or injuries immediately to their supervisor and the Executive Director of Finance and Administration, who in turn will notify the Executive Team. A written report of injury must be filed with the Executive Director of Finance and Administration.

RETIREMENT PLAN FOR LAY EMPLOYEES

St. James offers a 403(b) plan to allow eligible employees (employees who are regularly scheduled to work regardless of classification of part-time or part-time) to defer a portion of their compensation on a pre-tax basis for their retirement. The United Methodist Personal Investment Plan (UMPIP) is administered by Wespith. Employees who meet eligibility requirements may enroll and elect to contribute to the plan upon date of hire or date of eligibility.

The Church will make plan sponsor contributions under the following conditions:

Employee has completed 12 months of service.

Employee is scheduled to work at least 1,040 hours per year

The employee is contributing a minimum of 2% of their compensation to the retirement plan.

If an employee goes on long-term disability, St. James will not contribute to the employee's plan. If the employee returns to work and continues to participate in the retirement plan as stated above, the church will resume contributing to the employees' plan.

Annual withholding contribution limits are established by the Internal Revenue Service; contributions over the allowable amount may be taxable. Plan sponsor contributions become vested to the employee immediately.

FEDERAL INSURANCE CONTRIBUTIONS ACT (FICA)

All employees in all categories are covered by FICA, under applicable federal labor laws and regulations. Clergy are considered self-employed for FICA purposes, responsible for both employee and employer portion of FICA taxes.

CHILD CARE BENEFITS

All St. James staff members have the opportunity of registering their children for care at the Learning Center or Kids LIFE ministry on a space available basis. Full-time employees will receive a discounted rate of 50% monthly tuition costs. Part-time employees will receive a discounted rate of 25% monthly tuition costs. This benefit is subject to income taxation if the level of the benefit meets or exceeds IRS guidelines. If space is not available for the child, the child will be given priority on the program's wait list.

BENEFITS SUMMARY

Following is an overview of benefits offered. Restrictions often apply.

| | <u>Full-time Employees</u> | <u>Part-time Employees</u> | <u>Temporary Employees</u> |
|------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Holidays | Yes | No | No |
| Paid Time Off | Yes | Pro-rated* | No |
| Leave of Absence | Yes | Negotiated | No |
| FMLA Leave | Yes | Pro-rated* | No |
| Special Absences | Yes | Yes | No |
| Continuing Education | Yes | No | No |
| St. James Mission Trip | Yes | Yes* | No |
| Workers Compensation | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Social Security and Medicare | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Tuition Discounts | Yes | Yes | No |
| Wage & Hour Laws | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Health & Life Insurance | Yes | No | No |
| Dental Insurance | Yes | No | No |
| Flexible Spending Accounts | Yes | No | No |
| Retirement Plan | Yes | Yes | No |

*employed for 20 hours/week or more

Changes in benefit elections during the plan year may be made at the allowable times, including new hire, change of status, qualifying event, and open enrollment. Please contact the Executive Director of Finance and Administration if you have any questions.

OPERATIONAL RULES

CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION

The protection of confidential information provided to the Church and its staff is vital to the interests and mission of St. James United Methodist Church. The Church's confidential information includes, but is not limited to:

- Financial and giving information.
- Personal information concerning those who have sought the advice and counsel of the Church, its pastors, and its staff.
- Medical and other personal information of employees.
- Personnel File information, such as employment performance, counseling, disciplinary, and/or termination information. Personnel files are the property of the Church.
- The St. James database is for internal church use only and may not be shared, sold, or distributed for private, political, or outside group use. Exceptions may be made, under certain conditions, for United Methodist related agencies, as directed by the Senior Pastor.

Employees who improperly use or disclose confidential information may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. If you have any question about whether certain information is confidential, you should consult with a member of the Executive Team.

MEALS AND BREAKS

All employees are encouraged to take periodic breaks and meal breaks. Hourly employees who leave campus for meal breaks or other reasons, must clock out when leaving and clock in upon their return to work.

Learning Center and Kids LIFE employees will need to follow guidelines and time schedule for breaks as provided by their director.

Salaried employees are requested to notify the receptionist at the Welcome Desk when they leave campus and their expected return time as courtesy to fellow staff, church members and guests.

APPEARANCE

In carrying on the work of the church, our employees will come into contact with our congregation and church visitors. Staff members' dress, grooming, and personal cleanliness contribute to the morale of all employees and impact the professional image the Church presents to the community. As their work will be under the constant appraisal of those people they come in contact with as they perform their duties, it is necessary for employees to present a favorable, clean and neat appearance.

Employees are also expected to dress according to the requirements of job duties and as approved by employee's direct supervisor. Particular ministry and support areas, such as Tuition Based Ministries or Maintenance Staff, may require uniforms.

The Church expects that employees have sufficient pride in their work and association with the Church to exercise mature discretion regarding personal appearance and demeanor at all times. When in doubt, employees should choose the more conservative option.

Please consult with your supervisor or the Executive Director of Finance and Administration if you have any questions regarding appropriate attire, personal appearance, or grooming.

OUTSIDE EMPLOYMENT

St. James UMC does not wish to interfere with employees' personal affairs or control their time away from the church. However, with the understanding that other employment may interfere with the accomplishment of church responsibilities, and in order to ensure St. James remains each staff member's first priority with regard to employment, full-time employees shall have no job outside the church, without written approval of a member of the Executive Team. All employees are judged by the same performance standards and subject to the Church's scheduling demands, regardless of any outside work requirements.

Part-time employees may hold outside jobs, with the express understanding that such a job should not interfere with the schedule and conditions of employment at the church.

Outside employment may present a conflict of interest and is not allowed when the outside employment relationship could have an adverse impact on the Church.

Any outside employment may not conflict with the beliefs, values, mission, vision, and ministry of St. James United Methodist Church.

PRIVATE LESSONS/TUTORING

St. James employees may provide private lessons on campus for individuals or groups of no more than six people under these conditions: lessons must be done after business hours, all Safe Gatherings guidelines must be followed, and the employee must place the scheduled lessons on the church calendar. The church will not assume any responsibility for scheduling individual classes nor payment for private lessons. If an employee does not follow the conditions or the number of lessons offered becomes excessive so that it interferes with scheduled work, this privilege may be revoked on a case-by-case basis.

SECOND CHURCH POSITIONS

Non-exempt employees who hold more than one position at the church will receive compensation for the second position commensurate with compensation normally paid for that position. For example: a Learning Center staff person wishes to work in the church nursery on Sunday mornings, outside her/his normal scheduled work time. The hourly rate paid for these hours will be within the usual rate paid to nursery childcare workers. Compensation for total hours worked for both positions, that is in excess of 40 hours for the week, however, will be paid at the premium rate of time and one-half.

DRUG-FREE AND ALCOHOL-FREE WORKPLACE

It is the policy of St. James United Methodist Church to maintain a drug- and alcohol-free work environment that is safe and productive for employees and others having business with the church.

The unlawful use, possession, purchase, sale, or distribution of or being under the influence of any illegal drug or controlled substance (including medical marijuana) while on church premises or while performing services for the church is strictly prohibited. St. James United Methodist Church also prohibits reporting to work or performing services under the influence of alcohol or consuming alcohol while on duty or during work hours. In addition, St. James United Methodist Church prohibits off-premises abuse of alcohol and controlled substances (including medical marijuana), as well as the possession, use, or sale of illegal drugs, when these activities adversely affect job performance, job safety, or the company's reputation in the community.

To ensure compliance with this policy, substance abuse screening may be conducted in the following situations:

Pre-employment: as required by the church for all prospective employees who receive a conditional offer of employment;

For cause: upon reasonable suspicion that the employee is under the influence of alcohol or drugs that could affect or have adversely affected the employee's job performance; and

Random: as authorized or required by federal or state law.

Compliance with this policy is a condition of employment. Employees who test positive or who refuse to submit to substance abuse screening will be subject to termination. Notwithstanding any provision herein, this policy will be enforced at all times in accordance with applicable state and local law.

Any employee violating this policy is subject to discipline, up to and including termination, for the first offense.

SMOKE-FREE WORKPLACE

Smoking is not allowed in church buildings or work areas at any time. "Smoking" includes the use of any tobacco products (including chewing tobacco), electronic smoking devices, and e-cigarettes.

Smoking is only permitted during break times in designated outdoor areas. Employees using these areas are expected to dispose of any smoking debris safely and properly.

SECURITY

Our safety and security is everyone's responsibility. If you see something that's concerning or suspicious, please say something! Effective security measures are a benefit to both the staff team and the church as a whole. Employees should guard keys with care. Report any lost, stolen, or malfunctioning keys to the Facility Manager immediately. Copying of any church keys is strictly prohibited.

Staff members are expected to familiarize themselves on the Emergency Management Plan (EMP) for their location. Employees are expected to attend the yearly EMP training.

EMPLOYEE PARKING

Employees Park at their own risk. The church will not be responsible for theft or damage to any vehicles parked on or near church property. Also, the church will not be responsible for personal property left in vehicles that is lost, damaged, stolen, or destroyed. Employees are generally encouraged to park in such manner that visitors to the church throughout the week and on Sunday mornings have ample parking adjacent to the church.

LOST AND FOUND

Employees should not bring large sums of money, jewelry or other valuables to work. The church will not be responsible for personal property that is lost, damaged, stolen, or destroyed. If you happen to find personal belongings that have been lost by another person, please turn them in at the Welcome Center desk so that they may be cataloged and placed in the church's Lost and Found.

NOTICE OF FEDERAL & STATE REGULATIONS

Posted information regarding federal and state employment regulations can be found in the Staff Kitchen, Learning Center Staff Break Room, and near the Kids LIFE Time Clock. Employees are responsible for checking these posted notices on a regular basis and for reading all posted materials.

ACCESS TO PERSONNEL FILES

Employee files are maintained by the Finance office and are considered confidential. Supervisors may only have access to personnel file information on a need-to-know basis for employees directly under their supervision. Employees may inspect their own personnel files and may copy them but may not remove documents from their files. Inspections by employees must be requested in writing to the Executive Director of Finance and Administration and will be scheduled at a mutually convenient time or as required under state law. Representatives of government or law enforcement agencies, in the course of their duties, may be allowed access to the file information.

Due to the requirements of state guidelines, Learning Center and Kids LIFE employees may have duplicate employee files. All documentation in a Learning Center or Kids LIFE employee must be duplicated for the church personnel files. Inspections by employees must be requested in writing to the program director and will be scheduled at a mutually convenient time or as required under state law. It is the responsibility of the program director to inform the Executive Director of Finance and Administration of when an employee requests to view their personnel file. The Director of Finance and Administration must be present when employees review any personnel file.

Once someone is no longer employed in a tuition-based ministry, those personnel files must be given to the Executive Director of Finance and Administration for proper storage.

LOST/UN-CASHED PAYCHECKS – LOST TAX WITHHOLDING FORMS

Employees are encouraged to use direct deposit for receiving wages. In the event that this is not possible then paychecks should be cashed/deposited within 45 days of issuance. Employees must report paychecks that are lost or otherwise missing to the Finance Payroll Administrator immediately so that a stop-payment order may be initiated. The Executive Director of Finance and Administration will determine when a replacement check can be issued. The employee will be responsible for reimbursing the church for the stop-payment fee charged by the bank.

The church will issue all W-2, 1099*/ and other income tax forms within the time required by federal and state law. If an income tax form is lost, the church will provide one replacement copy within 5 days of written request for replacement. If more than one copy of the same tax form is requested for the same tax year, the employee will be charged \$25 for any secondary replacement.

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY/WORK MADE FOR HIRE

All work prepared by an employee within the scope of his or her employment is considered “work made for hire”. Section 201 of the Copyright Act specifies that the employer is considered the author of a “work for hire” and that the employer owns all the rights to such intellectual property unless the employer and the employee “have expressly agreed otherwise in a written instrument signed by them.” Examples of such work include, but are not limited to, books or articles written, musical compositions or arrangements, etc. If it is the intent of the Church that ownership of an employee’s work made for hire be transferred to the employee, that the Church be permitted to use such work without payment of a fee, and that such transfer of ownership be documented in a written agreement. The Church will neither seek nor pay the costs of copyrighting suchwork.

In the absence of such an executed instrument the Church owns all works prepared by an employee on Church time or using Church facilities or other resources. In executing any such agreements, the Church will take into account any action that might result in tax penalties to the employee (or any other person) or the risk of loss of the Church’s tax-exempt status. Any such agreement will be signed by the Chairman of the Board of Trustees.

Employees, independent contractors, and any other persons may not use Church time, facilities, equipment, supplies, or personnel for any activity which is not performed on behalf of the Church but results in their own personal gain. Church facilities and other resources may not be used when performing outside contract work for a third party. The Church may agree to allow use of its resources for a fee (such as rent or reimbursementfor expenses). Any free use of such resources for non-Church purposes will be considered taxable income, subject to withholding.

COMPUTER, NETWORK, AND INTERNET ACCESS

St. James United Methodist Church provides employees access to computers, computer networks, software, information, the Internet, and other internal and external electronic communication systems such as e-mail, websites, social media and blogs, as well as telephones, voice mail systems, and fax machines. Collectively, these systems, services, and Church-owned or hosted information are referred to as “St. James Technology.” By accepting your passwords, setting your preferences, and/or using the devices, you in effect take on the responsibility to follow these policies.

In your use of the “St. James Technology,” you shall follow the following guidelines:

1. Employees must not disclose their password(s) or other access code(s) to others, nor permit others to use their account(s). Employees must not use accounts they are not authorized to use.
2. The Church may suspend an employee’s access at any time for any reason or no reason.
3. Employees are to use “St. James Technology” for Church purposes and limit their use for non-Church purposes.
4. Employees are to use “St. James Technology” in a manner that is both legal and consistent with the Church’s purpose, vision, values, covenants, and policies.
5. Employees must take care to protect the Church’s confidential and proprietary information.
6. Employees activities and data on “St. James Technology” may be monitored by the Director of Technical Services or Church management. You should not have an expectation of privacy when using “St. James Technology.”
7. The St. James database is for internal church use only and may not be shared, sold, or distributed for private, political, or outside group use. Exceptions may be made, under certain conditions, for United Methodist related agencies, as directed by the Senior Pastor.
8. E-mail data that no longer has a business purpose should be eliminated from the church’s electronic data storage system. E-mail should not serve as the repository for business records. If the content of an e-mail qualifies as a retainable business record, it should be reproduced in a manner consistent with standard record-keeping methods.
9. When accessing the Internet, visits should only be made to non-offensive sites. If by accident, you enter an offensive site, please notify the Director of Technical Services.
10. Unacceptable personal use of St. James email includes but is not limited to transmission of threatening or explicit pornographic material, gambling, chain letters, and personal unauthorized solicitations.
11. Any software loaded onto an employee’s workstation must be freeware or fully licensed by St. James and must be installed for Church purposes.
12. Some employees may be assigned laptops, iPads, or other electronic equipment. It is the responsibility of the employee to ensure the safe use and storage of these items. Damage to equipment when equipment is off campus may result in the employee reimbursing the church for equipment replacement.
13. It is the employee’s responsibility to ensure that use of any church electronic equipment is limited to the employee assigned to the equipment.

If an employee or anyone using an account assigned to an employee violates these guidelines, then the employee may be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the Church’s established disciplinary procedures up to and including employment termination. A violation of these guidelines may also be a violation of the law and subject you to investigation and criminal or civil prosecution.

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

If a staff member chooses to participate in personal blogging or other social media such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram and Flickr, you should be clear that you are not speaking as an official voice for the Church unless authorized to do so (in which case you should use the Church's official websites, blogs or social media outlets, not personal platforms).

Staff may use personal social media accounts to engage in conversation and to further promote ministry events, but personal accounts should not be considered the main source for ministry news, promotion, and evaluation.

The following should govern your personal social media activities:

Appropriate Content: Staff should keep in mind that any personal accounts used to engage in church conversation should respect the values of the United Methodist Church. St. James reserves the right to monitor employee use of public social media accounts regardless of location—employees can be held accountable for personally published material whether it was created at work on a church computer or with a personal electronic device on personal or work time. Personally published material must also comply with church policies on anti-harassment, ethics, etc., in the Employee Policy Handbook—this extends to all forms of public communication (including social media) both inside and outside the workplace.

Transparency: You may refer to the Church and your involvement as a staff person, but because many readers will associate your opinions with those of the Church, always make it clear that you are speaking for yourself and not on behalf of the Church. To ensure transparency, the Church recommends (but does not require) including a disclaimer to that effect. *Example: The posts on this site are reflective of my own personal opinions. They have not been approved by St. James United Methodist Church nor do they necessarily represent the views and opinions of St. James United Methodist Church.*

Respectful Disagreement: You may disagree with St. James UMC and its leaders, provided your tone is respectful and you do not resort to personal attacks. You may comment on other churches, but you must do so respectfully without ridiculing, defaming or libeling them in any way. Published material should not conflict with the mission of the Church.

Feedback and Response: You may encounter both positive and negative feedback regarding the Church in social media. Any comments or postings regarding the Church or its staff that you deem important or deserving of a response should be forwarded to an Executive Team member and/or Senior Pastor. Likewise, any media representatives who contact you seeking comments from a Church representative should be forwarded to the Senior Pastor, or designee. This policy will ensure that accurate and consistent information will be given for those matters that are appropriate for public knowledge.

Confidential Information and Relationships: Care should be taken to protect the Church's confidential and proprietary information. All information posted to a personal account should be considered public. Regardless of privacy settings, it is possible that information may be shared by others in a more public setting. Take care not to purposefully or inadvertently disclose or publish without prior authorization any confidential or proprietary information.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Church employees have an obligation to conduct church business within guidelines that prohibit actual or potential conflicts of interest. Even the appearance of a conflict of interest may harm our ministries.

An actual or potential conflict of interest occurs when a staff member is in a position to influence a decision that may result in the staff member's own personal gain or personal gain for a relative, as a result of church business. For the purposes of this policy, a relative is any person who is related by blood or marriage, or whose relationship with the staff member is similar to that of persons who are related to you by blood or marriage.

No "presumption of guilt" is created by the mere existence of some relationship with outside firms. If you have any influence on transactions involving purchases, contracts, or leases, etc., it is imperative that you disclose the relationship in writing to an Executive Team member as soon as possible, so safeguards may be established to protect all parties.

Personal gain may not only result when a staff member or relative has a significant ownership interest in a firm with which the Church does business, but also when a staff member or relative could receive any kickback, bribe, substantial gift, or special consideration as a result of any transaction or business dealings involving the Church.

This policy establishes only the basic framework for evaluating, considering, and avoiding actual or potential conflicts of interest. The purpose of this policy is to provide general direction so you may seek further clarification on issues related to the subject of acceptable standards of operation. You should consult the Executive Director of Ministries or Executive Director of Finance and Administration with questions about actual or potential conflicts of interest.

SOLICITATION

In an effort to assure a productive and harmonious work environment, persons not employed by or who are not members of St. James United Methodist Church may not solicit, distribute, or post literature without following the communication standards listed in our Church Policy Manual.

The Church recognizes that employees may have interests in events and organizations outside the workplace. Employees may not solicit, distribute, or post literature concerning these activities during working time without prior permission from their supervisor. Working time does not include lunch periods, work breaks or any other periods when employees are not on duty.

Staff Members should take care not to misuse church relationships, the church name, and the church database if soliciting for non-St. James or non-United Methodist related events and organizations.

DISCIPLINARY POLICIES

DISCIPLINE PROCEDURES

The supervisory discipline process allows for appropriate and consistent ways to address unsatisfactory performance or behavior in the workplace. The primary purpose of any disciplinary action is to improve performance, correct a problem, prevent recurrence of a problem, and prepare the employee for satisfactory performance and/or behavior in the future.

The supervisory discipline system generally includes four steps:

1. verbal warning,
2. written warning(s),
3. probation,
4. termination of employment

Steps may be varied or bypassed all together as supervisors deem appropriate at the time, with or without notice, in supervisors' full and complete discretion.

A Consultation Form may be used in the resolution of the following issues:

- Written warning of a performance improvement issue,
- Written warning to share a grievance,
- Consultation on employment issues between an employee and the employee's supervisor, or
- Other issues of concern to an employee or his or her supervisor.

Blank Consultation Forms are available from the Executive Director of Finance and Administration and are stored on the church computer server. Information recorded in the form should be concise and specific, with time and date references. Completed Consultation forms should be submitted to the Executive Director of Finance and Administration, for placement in the employee's personnel file.

PROBLEM RESOLUTION OF MATTERS NOT INVOLVING SEXUAL MISCONDUCT OR CHILD ENDANGERMENT

St. James is committed to providing the best possible working conditions for our employees. Part of this commitment is our encouragement of an open atmosphere where problems, complaints, suggestions, and questions receive a timely response.

The Church strives to ensure fair and honest treatment of all employees. All staff members are expected to treat others with mutual respect and are encouraged to offer positive and constructive criticism to one another. If a problem or issue arises between staff members, the first course of action should be open and honest communication between the two staff members. If that fails, a supervisory resolution may be required.

If a staff member disagrees with established rules of conduct, policies, guidelines, or practices, he or she may express concern through the problem resolution procedure. Employees will not be penalized, formally or informally, for voicing a complaint, concern, suggestion, or question in a reasonable, professional manner within an appropriate setting. St. James expects staff members to attempt to resolve problems in the workplace in the most informal manner possible.

Generally, staff members should:

- Present the problem to their direct supervisor.
- If the supervisor is unavailable or if it would be inappropriate to contact the direct supervisor, the employee may present their problem to a member of the Executive Team.
- If the direct supervisor is a member of the Executive Team, and is unavailable or if it would be inappropriate to contact this supervisor, you may present your problem to another member of the Executive Team or the Senior Pastor.
- The supervisor receiving the report or the Executive Team member will respond to the stated problem after interviewing appropriate persons, reviewing documents associated with the issue, and consulting appropriate persons.

If the employee's problem is not addressed or remedied to their satisfaction, you may talk with the Senior Pastor.

SEXUAL AND OTHER HARASSMENT / SEXUAL ETHICS POLICY

Harassment, including sexual harassment, is disrespectful, degrading, and would detract from our mission and ministries. St. James strongly disapproves of and will not tolerate harassment of our employees.

St. James United Methodist Church affirms the policies and procedures of the United Methodist Church stating that sexual abuse within the ministerial relationship and sexual harassment within the church is incompatible with biblical teachings of hospitality, justice and healing. Sexual Harassment is described as, “any unwanted sexual comment, advance or demand, either verbal or physical that is reasonably perceived by the recipient as demeaning, intimidating, or coercive.” Sexual harassment must be understood as an exploitation of a power relationship rather than as exclusively a sexual issue. Sexual harassment includes, but is not limited to, the creation of a hostile or abusive working environment resulting from discrimination on the basis of gender. St. James United Methodist Church has a zero-tolerance policy for sexual harassment.

Employees are expected to maintain a productive work environment, free from sexual harassment in the form of unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature that creates a hostile or offensive environment.

Supervisors have the responsibility of maintaining a productive work environment for employees, free from any form of harassment and in particular, sexual harassment. No supervisor can create an environment that is sexually offensive or hostile for employees. Nor can supervisors or managers threaten or insinuate either explicitly or implicitly that an employee’s refusal or willingness to submit to sexual conduct will affect the employee’s job.

Sexual abuse within the ministerial relationship occurs when a person within a ministerial role of leadership (pastor, educator, counselor, youth leader or other position of authority) engages in sexual contact or sexualized behavior with a member of the congregation, a client, employee, student, staff member, co-worker or volunteer. Sexual abuse within the ministerial relationship involves a betrayal of sacred trust, a violation of ministerial role and exploitation of those who are vulnerable.

Misconduct of a sexual nature within the life of the church interferes with our moral mission. St. James United Methodist Church stands in opposition to the sin of misconduct of a sexual nature in the church and in society at large. St. James United Methodist Church commits itself to fair and expedient investigation of any charge of sexual misconduct within the church, and resolves to take immediate appropriate action in compliance with The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church. Further, St. James United Methodist Church bears affirmative responsibility to create an environment of hospitality for all persons, male or female, which is free of misconduct of a sexual nature and encourages respect, equality and kinship in Christ.

Annually at a Church/Charge Conference presided over by the District Superintendent or designated Presiding Elder, the church membership approves a *Policy Statement on Misconduct of a Sexual Nature*.

Some cases of sexual harassment can be resolved informally between the parties. In all other instances, misconduct of a sexual nature should be reported to the Senior Pastor. If the conduct involves a clergy person, it should be reported to the Chairperson of the SPRC and the District Superintendent, or in their absence, the presiding Bishop.

Procedure for harassment / sexual misconduct resolution:

If you experience what you consider inappropriate behavior from a church volunteer or a member of the church staff, you may choose to inform the person of the inappropriateness of the behavior and demand that the behavior cease. If you choose not to confront the person alone, or if the behavior persists, ask someone to accompany you to confront the accused.

Make every attempt at reconciliation. If you do not wish to confront the person, if the behavior persists, or the behavior places you or someone else in a position of danger, report the incident to your Supervisor, the Executive Director of Finance and Administration, or the Senior Pastor.

Keep a written record of your experiences including dates, times, places, witnesses and circumstances. Keep any written material you may have received from the person. Then present a written complaint to the Executive Director of Finance and Administration and Senior Pastor that includes:

- 1) Name of the accuser,
- 2) Name of the accused,
- 3) Nature of the alleged violations,
- 4) Dates of the occurrences,
- 5) Names of any witnesses to the occurrences,
- 6) Place of the occurrences,
- 7) The resolution you seek, and
- 8) Your signature and the date the complaint is filed.

In every instance of a child's or youth's report of experiencing inappropriate behavior, the adult who receives the report shall immediately forward the complaint to the Executive Director of Finance and Administration and Senior Pastor. According to Arkansas law, any person receiving a report from a child under the age of 18 indicating sexual abuse of that child is also required to report the abuse to the proper authorities. Instances involving adults shall be reported to the Executive Director of Finance and Administration and Senior Pastor.

The Senior Pastor, or designee, will conduct an examination of the complaint with the tact and discretion appropriate to the circumstances. Action will be taken as quickly as possible, but adequate time must be provided for obtaining all the facts relating to the harassment charge. Confidentiality will be maintained as much as possible. Complete confidentiality may not be guaranteed, due to the nature of the grievance. The accuser must provide adequate documentation. No person shall be penalized or subject to retaliation for filing a complaint of sexual harassment in good faith or cooperating in the investigation of such a complaint. While St. James United Methodist Church is committed to prohibiting sexual harassment and encourages employees to report such actions promptly, malicious false accusations will not be tolerated and appropriate action will be taken, up to and including termination.

The Senior Pastor will make a decision as to the validity of the charges and will determine the degree of discipline for the harasser and/or accuser. If any staff member is found, after an appropriate investigation, to have engaged in harassment / sexual misconduct, prompt remedial action, up to and including termination, will be taken to stop the harassment or misconduct and to prevent its recurrence.

If conflicts remain unresolved regarding staff personnel, the SPRC Chair and Senior Pastor shall convene a meeting with the accused, the person bringing the accusation, and each supporting person, and will attempt to come to an agreeable resolution to the issues. The SPRC will be the final appellate authority on all harassment charges.

Procedures for dealing with harassment/sexual ethics issues shall be in accordance with and amenable to The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church, the policies of the Arkansas Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church, and the St. James Safe Gatherings Policy.

SAFE GATHERINGS YOUTH AND CHILDREN PROTECTION POLICY

St. James maintains a current Safe Gatherings Policy approved by the Board of Trustees and the Church Council. This Safe Gatherings Policy applies to all employees, for the protection of children, youth, protected adults, and volunteers at church sponsored events. All employees shall be provided a current Safe Gatherings Policy and receive Safe Sanctuary training as part of new employee orientation.

While it is our intent that this policy shall apply to all church sponsored and calendared programs of the church, the Church recognizes that the Tuition Based Ministries must also comply with the licensing requirements of the Arkansas Department of Human Services (ADHS). Therefore, whenever the licensing requirements of ADHS and the Safe Sanctuary Policy shall be in conflict, the licensing requirements of ADHS shall prevail.

In no event shall the procedure for reporting incidents alter the obligation of any mandated reporter of child abuse or child neglect to avoid or delay reporting suspected child abuse or neglect as required by law.

In the State of Arkansas, all persons who are employed by a house of worship are mandatory employees. Therefore, all employees of St. James United Methodist Church are considered mandatory reports of abuse.

TERMINATION

Regarding the “employment at will” policy of the church, the following items apply:

Staff members are not authorized to say or do anything that is inconsistent with this “at will” policy. Nothing contained in this manual, or in any other documents provided by St. James UMC shall form any basis for an employment contract that will change or otherwise amend the “at will” policy. Nothing contained in this manual, or in any other documents provided by St. James UMC shall constitute any guarantee to continued employment.

Although notice is not required for termination of employment, a full-time employee wishing to terminate employment is requested to give notice in writing to the Senior Pastor at least 30 days prior to termination, exclusive of vacation time. Part-time employees are requested to give two weeks’ notice, exclusive of vacation time, in writing to the supervisor. Staff members of Tuition Based Ministries will provide notice to the director of the ministry. Failure to give this notice may result in loss of accumulated vacation time.

INVOLUNTARY TERMINATION

An employee deemed to be doing unsatisfactory work shall be informed of such by the employee’s supervisor during his or her performance evaluation or through the supervisory discipline procedure. Because employment is at will, the Senior Pastor may, in his or her discretion, terminate the employment at that time or at any time thereafter. If, however, the decision is made not to immediately terminate the employee and to evaluate the employee’s improvement for an additional period, it is understood that the Senior Pastor retains the right to terminate the employee if the required improvement is not made within the additional period.

Termination for cause is not required since each employee is an at-will employee. The SPRC shall serve as the final appellate authority for grievances concerning terminations.

Certain serious types of conduct (theft, criminal charges, insubordination, and any other conduct which the Senior Pastor reasonably determines to be incompatible with the ministry of the church) may result in immediate termination of the employee by the Senior Pastor regardless of any other provision herein. In the absence of the Senior Pastor, the Senior Associate Pastor in consultation with the Executive Team or Chairperson of SPRC may terminate the employee, or authorize the employee’s supervisor to terminate the employee. If the Senior Pastor, Senior Associate Pastor or Chairperson of SPRC cannot be reached immediately, the employee’s supervisor may immediately suspend the employee until action is taken by the Senior Pastor.

A Tuition Based Ministry employee deemed to be doing unsatisfactory work shall be informed of such by the program director during his or her performance evaluation or through the supervisory discipline procedure. Because employment is at will, the Director, in coordination with the supervisor of Tuition Based Ministries and the Executive Director of Ministries, may terminate employment. If, however, the decision is made not to immediately terminate the employee and to evaluate the employee’s improvement for an additional period, it is understood that the Director, in coordination with the supervisor of Tuition Based Ministries and the Executive Director of Ministries, retains the right to terminate the employee if the required improvement is not made within the additional period.

TERMINATION PAY

Termination pay shall include pay for any unused Paid Time Off, except in the case of voluntary termination (resignation) without proper notice, and involuntary termination.

EXIT INTERVIEW

It is recommended that any employee terminated for any reason may have an interview with his or her supervisor. The purpose of which shall be to discuss performance and to outline all remaining aspects of the employee's job in detail in order to make possible the transition of that position to the next employee. This interview and its contents shall be documented in the employee's personnel file.

FEDERAL AND STATE UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

As a church, St. James United Methodist Church is exempt from paying federal and state unemployment taxes. Therefore, all Church employees, including Tuition Based Ministries employees, are ineligible to draw unemployment benefits from these programs should their employment be terminated.

Employee Policy Handbook

St. James United Methodist Church

321 Pleasant Valley Dr

Little Rock AR 72212

Approved by Staff-Parish Relations Committee

November 4, 2025

Drew Simon, Chair

Approved by Church Council

November 19, 2025

Phillip Jett, Chair

RECEIPT OF EMPLOYEE POLICY HANDBOOK

I understand that the Employee Policy Handbook for St. James United Methodist Church of Little Rock, Arkansas, (“the Church”) describes important information about the Church and my employment relationship with the Church. I understand that the Executive Director of Finance and Administration is responsible generally for interpreting the policies in the Handbook. I understand that I should consult with the Executive Director of Finance and Administration or my supervisor whenever I have any questions, comments, concerns, or suggestions about information in the Handbook. I also understand that I should consult with the Executive Director of Finance and Administration or my supervisor about any issues not addressed in the Handbook.

I UNDERSTAND THAT I HAVE ENTERED INTO MY EMPLOYMENT RELATIONSHIP WITH THE CHURCH VOLUNTARILY. I ACKNOWLEDGE THAT THERE IS NO GUARANTEED, SPECIFIED LENGTH OF EMPLOYMENT. I UNDERSTAND THAT EITHER THE CHURCH OR I MAY END THE EMPLOYMENT RELATIONSHIP “AT-WILL” – WITH OR WITHOUT REASON, AT ANY TIME, AND WITH OR WITHOUT NOTICE.

I recognize that the information, policies, and benefits described in this Handbook are necessarily subject to change. I acknowledge that revisions to the Handbook may occur at any time, with or without reason, and with or without notice. Lack of notice does not mean the policy or procedure may not be or is not effectively changed.

I acknowledge that this Handbook is not a contract of employment or a legal document. I recognize that this Handbook does not create any obligation on the part of the Church to have any reason to end the employment relationship, to handle matters in a certain manner, or to provide certain benefits or programs to me.

Finally, I acknowledge that I have access to the Employee Policy Handbook. Although certain sections were highlighted with me during my orientation, I understand that it is my responsibility to read and comply with all of the policies contained in this Handbook and any revisions or amendments made to it.

By signing this receipt, I acknowledge that I have read and I understand the policies contained in the Handbook, and I am fully aware of my obligations at all times to comply with the responsibilities set forth in the Handbook.

**Sign your name here:* _____

Date Signed: _____

Print your name: _____

Witness Signature: _____

****Signed original will be placed in the employee’s Personnel File.***