

SENIOR PASTOR MARCUS MECUM



Dear Pastor,

We are looking forward to seeing you and your youth group at the Central Youth Conference to be held from July 21<sup>st</sup>-24<sup>th</sup> at the University of Cincinnati. Central Youth Conference promises to be another great event this year and we are looking forward to your participation.

As the sponsor of the Central Youth Conference, one of our primary concerns is the safety and well-being of each of the youth participants. Your church, along with each participating church, is responsible for providing qualified chaperones to assist with the supervision and oversight of the youth participants, which will help ensure their safety and well-being. This is an important responsibility that should not be taken lightly.

While the responsibilities of the chaperones cover many areas, perhaps none is more important than helping to prevent, identify and report any cases of sexual misconduct during the youth conference. It is a sad reality that every one of us working in youth ministry knows victims and perpetrators of sexual misconduct, including childhood sexual abuse. Church members want to believe that their church, their children's ministry and their youth programs are safe. They believe that sexual abuse would never happen in their church, in their building or at events they sponsor. Abusers take advantage of this environment of trust, especially where few safety measures are in place.

According to a study sponsored by a Christian research organization, more than a third of one Protestant denomination's churchgoers (37 percent) say they have been victims of the following types of sexual misconduct: unwanted sexual joking, unsolicited sexual messages, unwanted compliments and inappropriate glances. Researchers asked those victims where the misconduct took place. Seven percent say the misconduct occurred at church. Another study found that 10 percent of Protestant churchgoers under 35 have previously left a church because they felt sexual misconduct was not taken seriously. These statistics make it clear that sexual misconduct against younger church members does occur at churches and church events, and it is sometimes not dealt with seriously.

It is our goal to put on a youth conference that is safe, as well as fun, and to help us accomplish this we need cooperation from each participating church. It is our strong recommendation that each church participating in the youth conference:

- have policies in place related to training for chaperones and other adults who will be involved in interactions with minor children
- ensure that each chaperone is appropriately trained, in particular, in sexual abuse awareness. (There are many programs available for this type of training, including some that are online.)
- conduct background checks of chaperones

Ultimately, the oversight and responsibility for the chaperones you send to the youth conference rests with you and your church. To emphasize this point, we are requiring each Church participating in the youth conference to agree to the following:

- Your church will defend, indemnify and hold harmless 7 Hills, its trustees, agents, employees and volunteers, from and against any and all losses, costs, expenses, liabilities, claims, actions and damages (including, without limitation attorneys' and other professionals' fees and costs) incurred in connection with any legal action brought against 7 Hills, its trustees, agents, employees or volunteers, by a third party based on allegations of misconduct against a chaperone or other Central Youth Conference participant from your Church.
- The above obligation of your church will not apply and your church shall not be liable for any indemnification or expenses for actions or claims in any way arising from or caused by the willful, reckless, or negligent acts or omissions of 7 Hills or any of its trustees, agents, employees or volunteers.

Please confirm your understanding and agreement with this letter by signing and returning to us a copy of this letter, which shall then constitute a binding agreement. It is important that we receive this letter no later than July 14<sup>th</sup>, 2020.

Thank you in advance for your understanding and cooperation. We look forward to seeing you at the Central Youth Conference.

Very truly yours,  
7 Hills Church

Accepted and agreed to:

Church Name \_\_\_\_\_

Church Address \_\_\_\_\_

Authorized Individual (Signature) \_\_\_\_\_

Authorized Individual (Print) \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Church Name 7 Hills Church

Church Address 6800 Hazel Court Florence, KY 41042

Authorized Individual (Signature) \_\_\_\_\_

Authorized Individual (Print) \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_