

# Whistleblowing Policy

For St Luke's Church, 46 Cell Barnes Lane, St Albans AL1 5QJ

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**Updated by: Jennie Hall**

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Signed: .....

Role: .....

Date: .....

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## 1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 St Luke's Church expects the highest standards of conduct from all employees and volunteer staff and will treat seriously any concern that a member of the church may have about illegal or improper conduct.
- 1.2 St Luke's members will be expected, through agreed procedures and without fear of recrimination, to bring to the attention of the PCC any serious impropriety or breach of procedure.

## 2 WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THIS POLICY?

- 2.1 This Policy sets out a procedure that is designed to enable members of the church to notify the PCC of any reasonable suspicion of illegal or improper conduct. Where the concerns are about safeguarding children or young people, the Church's Child Protection Coordinator should be notified (see **SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE** below).
- 2.2 The PCC will be expected to act swiftly and constructively in the investigation of any concerns.

## 3 WHEN SHOULD IT BE USED?

- 3.1 Employees/Members of the Church who are worried about any kind of wrongdoing within the church are encouraged to speak up. It will not be assumed that they have a personal grievance.
- 3.2 The 'whistleblower' must act in good faith and must have reasonable grounds for believing the information to be accurate.
- 3.3 No person who uses this procedure in good faith will be penalised for doing so. The church will not tolerate harassment and/or victimisation of any person raising concerns.
- 3.4 A church member who is not sure whether the conduct he/she is concerned about does constitute illegal or improper conduct or is unsure about how to proceed can contact any member of the PCC for advice.
- 3.5 Any church employee or member who suspects fraud, corruption or other financial irregularity should ensure this is reported for possible investigation. Normally you must first report any suspicion of such an irregularity to the PCC (but see **MECHANISM FOR RAISING CONCERNS**).

## **4 MECHANISM FOR RAISING CONCERNS**

- 4.1 Where the issue concerns the Vicar or church employee then you should bring it to the attention of one of the churchwardens.
- 4.2 If Individuals feel unable to follow this route, then the next option is to contact the diocese through the Archdeacon of St Albans.
- 4.3 Depending on the nature of the concern the complainant will be asked to justify and support their claim. Normally the complainant will be asked to do this in writing. It will, therefore, be helpful to note down any facts and dates as they happen.
- 4.4 Where anonymity is requested efforts will be made to meet the request where appropriate but that might not always be possible. The earlier and more open the expression of concern the easier it will be to take appropriate action.
- 4.5 Each case will be investigated thoroughly with the aim of informing the complainant of the outcome of any investigation as quickly as possible.

## **5 EXAMPLES OF ILLEGAL AND/OR IMPROPER CONDUCT**

- fraudulent or improper use of the church's money or assets
- dangerous practices at church
- corruptly receiving any gift or advantage
- allowing private interests to override the interests of the church.

## **6 SAFEGUARDING VULNERABLE ADULTS, CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE**

- 6.1 All employees and volunteers within the church have a duty to report concerns about the safety and welfare of vulnerable adults and young people.
- 6.2 Concerns about any of the following should be reported to the church's Safeguarding Officer
  - physical abuse of a vulnerable adult or young person
  - sexual abuse of a vulnerable adult or young person
  - emotional abuse of a vulnerable adult or young person
  - neglect of a vulnerable adult or young person
  - an intimate or improper relationship between an adult and a young person
- 6.3 The reason for the concern may be the actions of an employee, a volunteer, a member of the church, another young person or someone outside the church. Whatever the reason, concerns must be reported.