

Letter to Our Congregation

Dear Members of Alto Reformed Church,

As a church, we are called to make disciples, to help all people grow in faith and live as Jesus would want us to live. Early on, in 2020, our elders and staff began processing how the church should protect church attendees from abuse and allow opportunities for approved sex offenders to grow in their faith. We have seen first-hand that some who carry the label of sex offender are dangerous and should not be allowed to participate, but others must live under the label and stigma long after Jesus has forgiven and changed them. With input from our insurance company and other churches, we have approved a policy which we believe will both protect the innocent and allow participation of offenders who are approved by the elders and chaperoned at all times. We ask that you review this policy from both the perspective of a victim of abuse and an offender longing to grow. If you have concerns, questions, or wish to serve as a chaperone, please contact an elder or pastor.

Pastor Kevin

Attendance Agreement Policy for Those Convicted of Sexual Offences

Our desire is for Alto Reformed Church (ARC) to be a safe place for everyone. In order to do so, our leaders believe it is necessary to adopt an official policy regarding those who are convicted as sex offenders (henceforth referred to simply as “offenders”) who desire to attend our services or join our church.

Definition of Terms:

In the following statement of conditions, these terms shall have the assigned meanings:

- Service(s): Includes any gathered event held at Alto Reformed Church’s facility/property.
- Activities: Includes small groups, service events, retreats, conferences, or any other function sponsored by Alto Reformed Church, regardless of the event location.
- Supervisor: A member of the elder board or a pastor at the ARC designated to oversee the fulfillment of this contract with a given offender in fellowship with Alto Reformed Church.
- Chaperone(s): An approved delegate of the Supervisor who monitors the offender while attending an ARC service and/or activity. This person(s) must be the same gender as the sex offender and on the “Approved Leader List”. The offender must use unisex restrooms.
- Minor: Any person under the age of 18 years old.

Policies:

1. Any offender must self-disclose his or her status as an offender to a member of the consistory or staff prior to attending any services or activities at Alto Reformed Church. Whether through disclosure or discovery, as soon as the offender is realized, the protocols of this policy will be expected to be honored or the offender may not attend any ARC services or activities.
2. The consistory and staff must both be made aware of the offender. The staff will then notify the church’s insurance carrier and put into place the insurance required procedures.
3. The consistory or staff will contact the offender’s parole officer and/or counselor, if they have one, for the purpose of gathering information to be able to best keep the congregation safe and minister to the offender.
4. Offenders may not attend any ARC services and/or activities until signing the “Attendance Contract for Offenders”.
5. Offenders are prohibited from attending any ARC services and/or activities under any of the following circumstances:
 - a. If any victim of the offender is a member of Alto Reformed Church or known to regularly attend.
 - b. If the offender has a history of not following established contract agreements at other churches.
 - c. If the offender does not agree to or comply with the conditions for fellowship at Alto Reformed Church.
6. Offenders must attend ARC services and/or activities with a chaperone and those services must be predetermined. That chaperone must be approved by the consistory. If the approved chaperone(s) is/are unavailable, the offender may not attend that service/activity.
7. Offenders are prohibited from volunteering in any ministries that directly involve minors including nursery, children’s message, Sonshine Singers, Bible Class, Sunday school, Walk Out Worship, Vacation Bible School, youth group, etc.
8. The congregation of the Alto Reformed Church must be notified that an offender is attending our church after the offender has signed the “Attendance Agreement for Sex Offenders” and the “Attendance Agreement Policy for Those Convicted of Sexual Offences”. The policy will be made available for the congregation’s viewing. The offender’s name is not to be released unless the insurance carrier requires it.

Attendance Agreement for Sex Offenders

Offenders must commit to the following conditions for involvement at Alto Reformed Church:

I agree to the following conditions:

1. I will be assigned a Supervisor who will evaluate and monitor my access to Alto Reformed Church's services and activities. I will meet quarterly (or monthly if deemed necessary by the Supervisor) with my Supervisor to evaluate and monitor my involvement with Alto Reformed Church, for accountability, and for prayer.
2. I will follow all orders required by the court in which I was convicted.
3. I agree to have my name, offense, and a copy of this signed contract released to those deemed necessary (consistory, staff, etc.) by the Supervisor.
4. I will not attend any ARC services or activities without either my Supervisor or Chaperone.
 - a. I understand it is my responsibility to notify my Chaperone(s) each time I will be attending a service and/or activity and to make sure the Chaperone(s) will be attending with me.
 - b. The Chaperone and I will set up a meeting spot prior to each service or activity.
 - c. If my Chaperone(s) is/are not available, I will not attend that service or activity.
5. I will not serve at Alto Reformed Church in any ministry role without prior approval from my Supervisor.
6. I acknowledge and agree that all children and student areas are off limits during ministry times or when occupied by any children except when directly accompanied by my Supervisor or Chaperone(s). This applies even if my own children are attending Alto Reformed Church and are present and participating in ARC children's or student's ministries or activities.
7. I will not visit the home of an Alto Reformed Church family where children are present, without the parent knowing my history and offense level and giving permission for my entry into their home.
8. I will not be alone with children at Alto Reformed Church under any circumstances. If I find myself in this situation, I will leave the area immediately and report this to my Supervisor and/or Chaperone(s).
9. I understand that my Supervisor will retain records of our meetings and conversations, which will be available to the offender's parole officer, counselor, therapist, or court at their request.

I understand the above conditions. I submit to these conditions and wish to attend Alto Reformed Church. I submit to my Supervisor at Alto Reformed Church. I accept that if I break any of the above conditions, I will have to meet with my Supervisor for a course of action. I accept that at their discretion Alto Reformed Church's consistory may no longer allow me to be present at Alto Reformed Church's facility, services, events, or activities.

Alto Reformed Church's pastor(s), consistory, staff, small group leaders, and church members are released from any legal responsibility or liability for disclosure of the above information to the extent indicated and authorized herein.

Printed Name of Offender

Phone Number

Email Address

Address

Signature of Offender

Date

Printed Name of Supervisor

Signature of Supervisor

Date:

Supervisor File Cover Form

Name of Offender: _____

Address: _____ City, State, Zip: _____

Home Phone Number: _____ Work Phone Number: _____

Cell Phone Number: _____ Email Address: _____

Name of Supervisor: _____

List of Approved Chaperones:

1. _____

2. _____

Checklist of Obligations for Offender:

- Signed Attendance Contract for Sex Offenders
 - Placed in the case file of Alto Reformed Church Supervisor with other records and a copy of this document was provided to the offender and the parole officer (if the offender has one).
- Alto Reformed Church's insurance carrier has been notified.
- The congregation of the Alto Reformed Church has been notified that an offender is attending.
- Supervisor provided the parole officer with their contact information
- A schedule for quarterly meetings has been arranged.

Supervisor Pastoral Meeting Record

Name of Offender: _____

Date of Meeting: _____ Time of Meeting: _____

Discussion Notes (overview of main points of conversation):

Points of Pastoral Assessment:

- Did this individual reveal any non-compliance with his/her offender status?
Yes / No (if yes, then contact the parole officer or courts immediately)
Describe:

- Did this individual break any conditions of the Attendance Agreement?
Yes / No (if yes, then inform Alto Reformed Church's consistory immediately)
Describe:

- Did this individual express any elevated levels of temptation?
Yes / No (if yes, require them to speak with their Sex Offender Counselor)
Describe: