



STUDENT LEADERS MANUAL

September 1st, 2017



Unite Student Ministries

Table of Contents:

- I. Introduction**
- II. Our Vision**
 - A. Love of Christ Church Vision
 - B. Love of Christ Exists To
 - C. Dream Team Vision
 - D. Unite Students Vision
 - E. Unite Students Core Values
- III. Essentials**
 - A. The Essentials
 - B. Leader Requirements
 - C. Expectations of Leader Involvement
- IV. Lead Team Core Values**
- V. Security Guidelines**
 - A. Team Mission
 - B. Unite Students Rules at a glance
 - C. What is considered unacceptable behavior for students at a Unite Students event?
 - D. Problem Solving
 - E. Adult Visitors Policy
- VI. Small Group Meeting Guidelines**
- VII. Transporting Students to and from Student Ministry Activities**
- VIII. Social and Off-Site Activities Guidelines**
- IX. Personal Ministry and Mentoring Guidelines**
 - A. Example Pastoral Care Situations and Flowchart
 - B. Facts and Questions
 - C. Boundaries in Personal Ministry
 - D. Disclosure of Abuse and Mandatory Reporting
- X. Expulsion / Suspension from Student Activities**
- XI. Privacy**



Unite Student Ministries

- XII. Financial Handling**
- XIII. Student Ministry Care**
- XIV. Resources for Personal Ministry**
- XV. General Important Unite Students Information**
 - A. Holidays
 - B. Dress Standards
 - C. Guidelines for Social Media Pages
 - D. Children in the Student Ministry
 - E. Background Checks
 - F. Activity Release Forms



Unite Student Ministries



Unite Student Ministries

I. Introduction

Welcome to Unite Students, the student ministry of Love of Christ Church.

It's a great privilege to serve the next generation and we take that privilege seriously. We appreciate your desire to partner with us in leading this generation and making a positive impact on their lives.

It's really important that you understand all that you're committing to upfront and know that there are certain expectations we place upon you in regards to the way you live and conduct yourself as a leader.

This manual exists to empower you to make wise choices as a leader and protect you and our Church from any unwanted situations. This manual should form the basis upon which you lead in our student ministry.

By becoming a leader, you are agreeing to conduct yourself according to the guidelines in this manual. If you have any questions, concerns or issues with what is contained in this manual, please speak to a staff member about them.

As we reach students through our student ministry, the need for transparency, integrity, excellence and accountability is crucial.

The purpose of these guidelines is not to take the fun and excitement out of what we do as student leaders, but to create a place where we can do what we do best over the long-run, which is radically impacting students' lives in a passionate and exciting way.

We pray that your journey of leadership within Unite Students is fruitful and rewarding and that together we can have a huge impact on this generation.



Unite Student Ministries

II. Our Vision

A. Love of Christ Church Vision

- Love God, Love Others, and Make Mature Disciples of Jesus.

B. Love of Christ Exists to:

- Worship God with a sincere expression.
- Share the Good News of Jesus with others.
- Connect with other believers in meaningful relationships.
- Prepare disciples to fulfill their purpose.
- Encourage leaders in their God-given destiny.

C. Dream Team Vision

- The Dream Team exists to build the Body of Christ by each person fulfilling their calling and serving to make an eternal impact.

D. Unite Students Vision

- To see a generation of students who are connected in a life-giving relationship with Jesus and are planted in a thriving local church.
- Passionate about empowering teens through United Nights, Unite Student Conference, local mission trips, etc.

E. Unite Students Core Values

- **Love for God:** Maintaining a life of intimate, wholehearted commitment to God and His Word.
- **Love for People:** Expressing the fullness of God's love to the world around us.
- **Excellence:** Living by Godly principles of stewardship, honor, and serving together.
- **Attitude:** Leading and loving with passion and joy.



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III. Essentials

A. The Essentials

- Weekend Services.
- Pastoring them in small groups
- Train them through the Growth Track
- Empower them to live out their purpose through the Dream Team of our church.

If They Want More

Weekend Services



United Night

Small Groups



Small Group Leadership

United Night is a experience for students designed specifically to fuel their next step in Christ. Students from every Love of Christ Church campus gather together the second Wednesday of each month at our Bear Campus for United Night. This is also a time for new students to get connected in a small group.

Small Group Leadership. We believe real life-change happens in the context of relationships. As small group leaders, students have an excellent opportunity to connect with others, utilize their gifts, and live out the Great Commission through leading their peers.

B. Leader Requirements

- Profession of faith.
- Completion of the Growth Track.
- Strive to serve in the areas of your spiritual gifting.
- Submission to the spiritual authority of the church leadership team.
- Completion of Student Ministry Application and Criminal Background Check



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C. Expectations of Leader Involvement

Church

- Attend a minimum of two Sunday services each weekend – serving in one and receiving in another.
- Attend other key church services (21 Days of Prayer, Christmas, and Easter).

Students

- Attend Wednesday night United Night monthly.
- Enthusiasm and encouragement at United Night.
- Be courteous and respectful to parents and other leaders.
- Be sacrificial towards student ministry.

Small Group

- Lead / co-lead in a weekly small group with the age-group of your choice.
- Pray for student small groups daily.
- Help staff the table in the foyer of your campus during small group sign-up periods.

Special Events

- Serve or participate in key student events, Encounter, local missions' trips, outreach events, etc.

Training

- Attend Small Group Leader Host Training before hosting, leading, or co-leading a small group. This class trains leaders in small group management, it helps leaders understand how to get their group organized. You only have to attend this training once.



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IV. Lead Team Core Values

A. Love for God

Intimacy – Do you pray, read your Bible and fast regularly?

Purity – Are you living a life of holiness, integrity and character?

Anointing – Do you have grace for the task?

B. Love for People

Relationship – Are you building, maintaining and enjoying strong relationships?

Influence – Are you developing a circle of influence?

Teamwork – Do you put cooperation ahead of the competition?

C. Work Ethic

Excellence – Do you demonstrate competence in your area?

Productive - Are you setting goals, taking risks, going the extra mile?

Frugal – Are you efficient with time and money?

D. Attitude

Servant – Are you considering others better than yourself?

Fun/Enjoyable – Are you having fun? Are you fun to be with?

Loyalty – Are you devoted to the call of God and to the church?



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V. Security Guidelines

A. Team Mission:

The Dream Team should work to ensure an enjoyable and safe atmosphere for all the students and adults present at any Unite Students event. We do this by developing and implementing policies pertaining to acceptable student behaviors. We are also flexible and modify policies as necessary pertaining to individual situations. We make ourselves available to connect with and pastor students during their time of need. We want to be open, accessible, compassionate, and worthy examples of God's love and grace.

B. Unite Students Rules at a glance:

- No PDA (Public Displays of Affection) i.e. kissing, arms around each other, anything *distracting*.
- No Cell Phones during the message, unless requested from the stage.
- No illegal substances.
- No weapons or objects of intimidation.
- Respect the property of others.
- Respect all staff and leadership.

C. What is considered unacceptable behavior for students at a Unite Students event?

- Students may not leave the auditorium for any reason except the following:
 1. Students are driving age and leaving to go home with keys in hand. If students say they must leave before the 9:00 pm, let out time. Please make sure they are going where they say they are going. Students must leave, not just go sit out in the parking lot – especially if it's early during the service.
 2. Students are waiting for their parents. They must wait in the lobby outside the doors under supervision until parents pick them up. Students will not be allowed to wander the halls or parking lot.
 3. If students are physically sick, please see a staff member.
- No one under the age of 18 is allowed in the halls, cafe, or upstairs during service times. Students must be in the auditorium.



Unite Student Ministries

- Phones – Calls may be taken in the lobby. Students may not leave the lobby to answer a phone call.
- Absolutely no PDA. PDA includes hand holding, heads on shoulders, arms around each other, hands on legs, touching anywhere, kissing, etc.
- Students are not allowed to sit in, hang out at their cars, or hang out in the parking lot once they are on church property. Students must come into the building. Hanging out on the sidewalk in front of the auditorium before and after service is permitted, but not during service.
- Students are not allowed to hang out in the restrooms. Students need to be in service.

D. Problem Solving:

Steps to confronting students in love:

1. Talk to the student immediately.
 - a. Introduce yourself
 - b. Ask Questions
 - Would you mind...
 - May I ask you not to...
 - c. Identify the inappropriate behavior and the reason why it is inappropriate
 - Distraction, safety, etc.
2. If the behavior continues, confront in **private** with a staff member.
 - a. Ask questions. Work to get to know the student and why they might be acting out.
 - Do you come with friends?
 - Do your parents know you're here?
 - Are they involved with the church?
 - What are you involved in at school?
 - b. If the behavior continues, removal from the property may be necessary. Consult with a staff member and a security team member.



Unite Student Ministries

- When you approach students, you must do it with loving tact. Unite Students services are designed to be guest friendly and we must be sensitive to that. Students may be first time guests or unaware of the rules. If a student is rude or refuses to abide by your request, then contact a staff member.
- If you have to approach student again for the same thing, or more than twice for anything, then contact a staff member. They will notify the appropriate staff member who will then connect with the student privately.
- If a student lies about where they are going, please let a staff member know so the issue can be resolved.
- For extremely physical PDA, the student should be confronted immediately in private.
- If there is a violent threat, then report to a staff member immediately and they will communicate with our in-house security team.
- If a fight breaks out, notify a security team member immediately. Team members are responsible for securing the area around the fight only. Do not intervene unless it escalates to a life threatening situation and police have not arrived yet. Do not attempt to break up the fight; merely secure the safety of the other students.
- For distraught students, please do not let them leave the building. If you cannot stop them, alert a staff member immediately and do not let the student out of your sight.
- If you ever encounter anything you are not sure about, ask a team leader or staff member. If they don't know the answer, they will help you find someone who does.

E. Adult Visitors Policy

When adult visitors wish to visit our United Night, they must bring a copy of a written email consent from a Love of Christ Church staff member.

The visitor must check in at reception and will be issued a visitor's badge, which must be returned at the end of the night.

If a parent wishes to visit a United Night, they may sit in the back of the program and be hosted by a leader at all times.



Unite Student Ministries

VI. Small Group Meeting Guidelines

When meeting with your small group, here are some guidelines and rules to protect you. These particularly apply to leading minors.

- Keep the door open to the room where you are having your small group. Parents who are home must be able to see what is going on.
- Ensure that your friendships with your students remain appropriate. These friendships should not become emotionally intense for either you or the students.
- Talk to parents on the phone before you speak to your students. Even if the student answers the phone, it's a good idea to ask to speak to their parent/guardian first. This particularly applies to middle school students.
- Have a small group at a house where there are parents present. The host student's parents should be home. This is mandatory for middle school students.
- All homes where small groups are held must be approved by a member of church staff. The host family must be known by the church and a church member.
- Avoid being alone with one or two students. If you only have one or two students in your small group, you should join another small group.

VII. Transporting Students to and from Student Ministry Activities

- A leader should never drive or transport a student without at least one other person in the car.
- Leaders should obey the road rules at all times for safety reasons and to be an example to students. This includes speeding, wearing seat belts, driving under the influence, etc.
- A leader should never carry a student on the back of a motorcycle.
- A leader should never transport more students in their car than the passenger capacity of their vehicle.
- You must arrange to pick up two students first and drop two students last, as this avoids you ever being alone in a car with one student.



Unite Student Ministries

VIII. Social and Off-Site Activities Guidelines

- Leaders should obtain parental consent for all off-site social activities.
- Leaders should not organize age-inappropriate activities (i.e. taking 13 year olds to R-rated movies).
- Leaders should check www.pluggedin.com for any violent, sexual or explicit content of movies before organizing to take students to the movie. Even if a student is old enough to see a movie, leaders are expected to use wisdom in the movies they watch with students within our student ministry.
- Leaders should not organize activities which put students at unnecessary risk.
- Leaders should always remember that they are representing Love of Christ Church and the student ministry wherever they go and should act accordingly.
- Leaders must drive safely when transporting students in their vehicle.
- School students should not be kept out later than 9 pm on school nights unless parental consent is given. This includes small groups finishing by 9 pm.
- Whenever possible, leaders should have another leader present at social activities.

IX. Personal Ministry and Mentoring Guidelines

A. Example Pastoral Care Situations and Flowchart

As a leader, there are things you are capable of dealing with, but there are also things you need to let a pastoral staff member know about. Notify a pastor of a pastoral care situation by calling the church for urgent matters or via email to a staff member within 12 hours for non-urgent matters.

As a leader, I can pastorally care for:

- Mild school issues.
- Friendships.
- Boy / Girl relationships.
- Homework.
- Time management.
- Relationship with God.
- Mild family issues.
- Mild sexual challenges – mild pornography, masturbation.



Unite Student Ministries

Situations which must be reported to pastoral staff:

- Substance abuse.
- Bullying at school.
- Severe family issues – divorce, separation, death.
- Abuse – sexual, physical, verbal, emotional.
- Eating disorders.
- Severe sexual challenges – severe sexual or pornography addiction, homosexuality.
- Mental disorders – fear, anxiety, depression, anger, shame, guilt.
- Life threatening situations – violence, suicide.

It's really important that when a student discloses information to you, that you make them aware that you may be legally bound to report the information to a pastoral staff member.

Under no circumstances should you promise to keep something a secret.

B. Facts and Questions:

Q: What if a student confides in me about something dangerous or harmful?

Always report immediately to your pastoral staff if a student confides in you about any of the following or anything you perceive as dangerous or harmful:

- Something that harms themselves (cutting, depression, suicidal thoughts, sexual relationships, etc.)
- Something that harms others (bullying, threats of self-harm, etc.)
- Illegal (underage drinking, drug use, etc.)
- Abuse (physical, emotional, sexual, neglect- *report immediately to a pastoral staff member*)

Q: What do I do if a student confides in me about something I'm not sure how to handle?

Do not hesitate to contact a staff member. They will help you identify the appropriate next step.



Unite Student Ministries

Q: What is an appropriate next step for a student who is struggling with a very dark or addictive issue?

Connecting a student with a LIFE (Living in Freedom Every Day) Small Group is a great first step.

C. Boundaries in Personal Ministry:

- Never text with a student about sensitive issues. Set a standard where you will only discuss important things face to face, or at the very least, over the phone. By vocalizing their struggles out loud, they are allowing the light of God to shine in a “dark” place (Ephesians 5:13).
- Be careful with your time. Do not feel the pressure to devote all of your time and energy to one student or situation. Set healthy boundaries for yourself and remember that the Student Ministry Coordinator can help you find the appropriate one on one care if needed.
- Have “unreachable hours.” When you enter a mentoring relationship with a student, let them know certain days/times you cannot be reached unless it is a life or death emergency, i.e., after 9 pm, on vacation, etc. If these boundaries are set from the beginning, they will respect them.

D. Disclosure of Abuse and Mandatory Reporting

You have a legal duty to report information of abuse towards a minor to your age group pastor. You should never promise a minor to keep anything a secret.

X. Expulsion / Suspension from Student Activities

Student ministry is all about creating a safe culture and environment for students to enjoy. Under certain circumstances, a student may be banned or suspended from student ministry.

You are responsible to complete an incident report for any of the following situations to a staff member for further investigation:

- Acts of violence.
- A student carrying a weapon.
- A student carrying drugs (including alcohol) other than prescription medication.
- Bullying / Emotional abuse.



Unite Student Ministries

- Sexual or predatory activity.
- Gangs.
- Theft or deliberate damage to property (both Church property and students property).
- Blatant disregard of leaders or security personnel.
- Any behavior that is contrary to the type of culture we're building at our student events.

Students who do not abide by the rules and boundaries of the student ministry may either be permanently banned from attending or given a period of suspension before they are allowed to come back. In any case, the pastoral team will determine the best course of action. It's important that you, the leader, report all incidents to them.

Complete an incident report form at check-in for any of the above-mentioned behavior.

XI. Privacy

As a student leader, you will be given access to students' personal information. It's important that you treat this information with confidentiality and abide by the privacy policy of Love of Christ Church.

Here are some general common-sense guidelines:

- If a student does not want to be contacted, don't contact them.
- If a student or parent requests the removal of their details from our database, make sure you report this to a staff member so they can remove them from our system.
- Don't give out a student's number to anyone without their permission.



Unite Student Ministries

XII. Financial Handling

You may be required to handle finances from time to time. This may be in the form of:

- Collecting event registrations at the Events Table.
- Counting the offering at a student event.

Some general guidelines for handling finances:

- When counting money / offerings, at least, two people (preferably three) should count together.
- Remain above reproach at all times. If the checks and balances don't match up, you are opening yourself to accusation and the possibility of being removed from leadership if you are suspected of stealing the Church's money.
- Be sure to complete all count sheets correctly and thoroughly.
- If in doubt, contact a staff member immediately.

XIII. Resources for Personal Ministry

Visit unitestudents.org/leaders-resources for the following:

- "Move One Step" Questions.
- Water Baptism Info.

You Version Bible App and Bible.com- search "Plans", then "Youth"

- There are a variety of devotional plans on topics such as anger, divorce, cutting, lying, dating, abuse, depression, death, worry, temptation, and more.
- The "What's Next: Student Edition" plan is a great tool for students who are new Christians.

XIV. Student Ministry Care

1. Ask "Are you okay"?

Start a general conversation, preferably somewhere private (never alone with the opposite sex). Build trust through good eye contact, open and relaxed body language.



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Ask open-ended questions: “What’s been happening?” “How are you doing?” “I’ve noticed that…”

2. Listen without judgment.

Guide the conversation with caring questions and give them time to reply. Don’t rush to solve problems for them. Help them understand what solutions are available

3. Encourage action.

Summarize the issues and ask them what they plan to do. Encourage them to take one step, such as talk to their parents or get in a small group. If they’re unsure about where to go to for help, guide them to the appropriate next step. Never leave a conversation without assigning homework.

Ask: “What do you think might help your situation?” “Have you considered talking to your parents?” “Would you like for me to talk to someone with you?”
Homework examples: getting into a small group, finding scripture promises that apply to the situation, talking to their parents, finding a hobby, identifying an accountability partner

4. Follow up.

Put a note on your phone to call them in a week. If they’re desperate, follow up sooner. Encourage them in their next step and ask if they have had the opportunity to take that step.

Ask: “How are things going?” “Did you speak with your parents?” “What did they suggest?” “What did you think of their advice?” “Did you go to the small group?” “Were you honest with someone about your situation in the small group?” “How did your homework go?” “Can you share the results with me?”

XV. General Important Unite Students Information

A. Holidays - The office at Love of Christ Church is closed for the following holidays:

New Year’s Day
Memorial Day
Independence Day



Unite Student Ministries

Labor Day

Thanksgiving Day

Day after Thanksgiving

Christmas Day

Day after Christmas

B. Dress Standards

"People look on the outward appearance but God looks on the heart." (1 Corinthians 9:19-23)

The first phrase is not the heart of the verse, but it's the truth. Students and adults will base their impression of our ministry on their impression of us. For this reason, student leaders will dictate the type of clothing worn, inappropriate dress is unacceptable because it sets a bad example for others and can be a stumbling block for the opposite sex.

General appearance and dress guidelines

- Beards and mustaches must be appropriately trimmed, and hair must be styled in a way that reflects professionalism.
- All clothing should be modest to protect the reputation of the student leader and the body of Christ. Attire should also be clean and neat, which communicates personal discipline and recognition of self-worth.

Unacceptable dress includes:

- Bare feet.
- Excessively worn, faded, torn, or tight-fitting jeans.
- Sweatshirts and sweat suits.
- Tank tops or immodest necklines.
- Skirts or dresses shorter than 3 inches above the knee.
- Any clothing with written words, messages or slogans.
- Tight-fitted or revealing clothing.
- Spandex
- Shorts



Unite Student Ministries

C. Guidelines for Social Media Pages

As a Unite Students Leader you are seen by our members and outside parties as representative of the church. The following tips and guidelines can help you uphold your integrity and that of Love of Christ Church when using your personal social media accounts.

- Represent God, not yourself.
- Make sure your communication, photos, videos, words, links, likes, tags, etc. are above reproach. "Be careful, however, that the exercise of your rights does not become a **stumbling block** to the weak." (1Corinthians 1:8-9, NIV)
- Manage your content and privacy settings.
- Express your opinions in a clear, loving, and logical way when engaging in dialogue with others.
- Avoid creating web properties that compete with the church's official web presence. Link to content from official sources rather than third-party or non-sanctioned social media accounts.
- Remember that what you say is a reflection of Love of Christ Church, Pastor Steve, and Jesus Christ, even when you provide disclaimers.

D. Children in the Student Ministry

We understand that caring for your children is a large responsibility and that it can be difficult to manage this responsibility and minister to the students. We want to convey, in loving terms, the expectations we have for you as a leader. Student Leaders are not allowed to let their children attend the Wednesday small groups or other student events due to providing an Atmosphere of ministry to our students who will be attending. Love of Christ Church will provide reimbursement in the case of a financial hardship for an individual who desires to host a student small group and needs to hire a babysitter. This is not meant to provide childcare for an entire small group, but rather to help those who have a specific need. See Childcare Reimbursement Sheet for additional information.

E. Background Checks

Background checks are required for all leaders working with students under the age of 18. This includes both middle school and high school students. small group leaders should fill out a background check when they are submitting their small group information if this has not previously been filled out at Dream Team 401.



Unite Student Ministries

F. Activity Release Forms

Activity Release Forms should be used for any Church-related activity where you will be liable for students. This includes United Night transportation and student events involving travel or outings planned as a campus.

