Manchester Lutheran Church

# Policies and Practices Handbook

Last Updated: 10 May 2025

## Contents

# Operations

## Health and Safety

**Adopted on**: 10/5/2025
**Next review due**: 10/5/2026
**Health & Safety Lead**: Katy Myers
**Contact Email**: katyvictoriamyers@gmail.com

### 1. Statement of Commitment

Manchester Lutheran Church is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for all who attend our services, events, and small groups. We seek to comply with relevant UK health and safety legislation and to foster a culture of shared responsibility among all staff, volunteers, and members.

### 2. Church Meetings

- Carry out risk assessments of venues used for public church meetings.
- Ensure that all fire exits and evacuation procedures are clearly known and followed.
- Designate a person each Sunday to act as fire marshal and oversee evacuation.
- Keep walkways clear of trip hazards.
- Ensure that first aid equipment is available and a trained first aider is present.
- Log any accidents or incidents in an incident book and report where appropriate.

### 3. Small Groups at Private Residence

- Ensure the home is clean, well-lit, and free of trip hazards before hosting groups.
- Provide clear access and a safe exit route in case of emergency.
- Make available basic first aid supplies.
- Communicate clearly any household rules (e.g., use of kitchen, pet allergies, etc.).
- Take appropriate care with children attending, ensuring parents/guardians are responsible for supervision unless specific arrangements are in place.

### 4. Food

- Ensure that anyone preparing or serving food has basic food hygiene awareness.
- Only serve food that is bought pre-packaged or prepared in clean domestic kitchens using safe handling practices.
- Label any food that may contain common allergens (e.g., nuts, dairy, gluten).
- Store perishable food correctly and ensure food is not left unrefrigerated.
- Provide appropriate handwashing or sanitising options before serving.

### 5. Responsibilities

- The Health and Safety Lead will maintain the policy, keep records of risk assessments, and respond to concerns.
- All staff and volunteers are responsible for acting with reasonable care.
- Event leaders will be responsible for ensuring that safety measures are followed.

### 6. Review and Communication

- This policy will be reviewed annually or after any major incident.
- It will be made available to all staff, volunteers, and members and reviewed as part of onboarding new team members.

## Finance

**Adopted on**: 10/5/2025
**Next review due**: 10/5/2026
**Treasurer**: Pete Myers
**Contact Email**: pete@manchesterlutheran.church

### 1. Statement of Commitment

At Manchester Lutheran Church, we believe that all we have is a gift from God and that faithful stewardship of His gifts is an essential part of our calling as His people. Our financial practices are grounded in integrity, transparency, and trust in God's ongoing provision.

### 2. Financial Oversight

- The Church Council is responsible for oversight of all financial matters.
- The Treasurer is appointed to manage day-to-day financial operations and report regularly to the Council.
- Financial reports will be presented at every Council meeting and a full financial statement at the Annual Meeting.

### 3. Banking

- Church funds will be held in a designated church bank account in the name of MLC.
- There will be at least two unrelated signatories on the account.
- Online banking access will be limited to approved individuals with secure logins.
- Dual authorisation will be used for transactions where available.

### 4. Income and Giving

- All income will be recorded accurately, whether through bank transfer, cash, standing order, or giving platforms.
- Cash offerings will be counted by two unrelated individuals and recorded.
- Gift Aid will be claimed on eligible donations.
- Records of donors will be confidential and in line with the Data Protection Policy.

### 5. Expenditure

- All expenditure must be approved by the Council or within delegated limits.
- Receipts or invoices will be required for all spending.
- No individual may approve their own reimbursement.
- Payments will be made by bank transfer or cheque where possible.

### 6. Budgeting and Reserves

- An annual budget will be prepared by the Treasurer and approved by the Council.
- Spending should align with the approved budget unless otherwise agreed.
- MLC aims to maintain at least 3 months' operating costs in reserve.

### 7. Financial Records and Reporting

- Accurate records will be kept using appropriate software.
- Records will be retained for at least 7 years.
- Annual accounts will be independently examined if legally required.

### 8. Conflict of Interest

- Anyone with a financial interest in a decision must declare it and where possible withdraw from related discussion and voting.

### 10. Review

- This policy will be reviewed annually or upon major financial changes.

## Social Media and Communications

**Adopted on**: 10/5/2025
**Next review due**: 10/5/2026
**Media and Comms Lead**: Pete Myers
**Contact Email**: pete@manchesterlutheran.church

### 1. Statement of Commitment

At Manchester Lutheran Church, we seek to use social media and all forms of communication to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ, build up the body of believers, and engage our wider community with truth, love, and clarity.

### 2. Scope

- Official MLC social media accounts (e.g. YouTube, Facebook, etc.)
- Communications sent by church representatives (email, WhatsApp, messaging platforms, website updates, flyers)
- Volunteers or members speaking publicly in relation to MLC

### 3. Aims

- To promote the gospel in a faithful, clear, and respectful manner
- To safeguard the church, its members, and the public from harm or confusion
- To ensure transparency, accountability, and care in digital communications

### 4. Responsibilities

- The Pastor and designated volunteer(s) oversee official church communications.
- The Church Council will review and approve major online initiatives.
- Volunteers involved in communications must be authorised for specific tasks.

### 5. Guidelines for Social Media Use

Official Accounts:

- Only appointed individuals may post on official accounts.
- Posts must reflect MLC's theology and values, avoiding unbiblical, divisive, or inflammatory content.
- Comments on posts will be monitored. MLC reserves the right to hide or delete comments that are abusive, defamatory, or inappropriate.

Personal Accounts:

- Members are encouraged to share and promote church content but are asked to do so responsibly and in a manner consistent with Christian witness.
- Anyone publicly identifying themselves with MLC should avoid language or behaviour that discredits the church or its mission.

### 6. Photography and Video

- Consent must be obtained before sharing identifiable photos or videos of individuals, particularly children or vulnerable adults.
- All photo use must comply with our Data Protection Policy and consent forms.
- Livestreams and recorded sermons must avoid capturing images of children without express permission.

### 7. Internal Communication (e.g. WhatsApp, Email)

- Communication within church groups (e.g. volunteers, WhatsApp announcements) must be respectful and not excessive.
- Any sensitive matters should be discussed privately and not in group settings.
- Communications avoid gossip, unnecessary criticism, or inappropriate humour.

### 8. Crisis Communication

In the event of a serious incident or controversy, only authorised persons (typically the Pastor and Chair of the Church Council) may communicate publicly on behalf of the church. No individual should speculate or post unofficial responses.

## 9. Breaches of Policy

Concerns about communications that contradict this policy should be reported to the Church Council. Breaches may result in content removal and review of responsibilities.

## 10. Review

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Church Council and updated as needed.

## Safeguarding and Youth Work

**Adopted on**: 10/5/2025
**Next review due**: 10/5/2026
**Safeguarding Lead**: Katy Myers
**Contact Email**: katyvictoriamyers@gmail.com
**Manchester City Council Contact Centre**: mcsreply@manchester.gov.uk
0161 234 5001
**NSPCC Helpline (for advice)**: 0808 800 5000

### 1. Statement of Commitment

At Manchester Lutheran Church, we are committed to the safety and wellbeing of all people—especially children, young people, and vulnerable adults. Safeguarding is the responsibility of the whole church, and we will act to prevent abuse and respond appropriately where concerns arise. Our ministry is grounded in the love of Christ and the truth of Scripture, and we aim to reflect this in all our interactions.

### 2. Definitions

- **Child/Young Person:** Anyone under the age of 18
- **Vulnerable Adult:** An adult who is unable to protect themselves from harm due to age, illness, disability, or circumstance
- **Worker:** Any paid staff or volunteer acting on behalf of the church
- **DBS:** Disclosure and Barring Service—UK system for criminal background checks
- **Regulated Activity:** Work involving close, unsupervised contact with children or vulnerable adults, as defined by law

### 3. Biblical Basis

Children are a gift from the Lord (Psalm 127:3). We seek to care for them in ways that reflect Christ's love—with patience, respect, and truth—and are committed to protecting them from harm while nurturing their faith.

### 4. Areas of Application

This policy applies to:

- Sunday School and youth teaching during or after services
- Bible studies or discipleship with under-18s
- Youth participation in small groups
- Trips or events involving young people
- One-to-one discipleship or pastoral care
- Street outreach and home visits involving vulnerable people
- Any contact with children or vulnerable adults by church representatives

### 5. Safer Recruitment

We will:

- Require Enhanced DBS checks (with barred list check) for all staff and volunteers working regularly or unsupervised with children or vulnerable adults
- Recheck DBS certificates every 3 years
- Conduct interviews and take references for new volunteers or staff in regulated activity
- Keep a secure, up-to-date register of DBS certificates and their status
- Only allow those with safeguarding clearance to begin work with children or youth

### 6. Safeguarding Practice and Supervision

- At least **two adults** (preferably unrelated) must be present for any children's or youth activity
- Written **parental consent** is required for participation and for any off-site activities
- **Supervision ratios** will aim for at least 1 adult per 6 children (adjusted based on age and activity)
- Children must be **signed in and out** of Sunday School
- **Children and young people must never be left alone** with one adult
- **Physical contact** must be appropriate, non-invasive, and publicly observable
- **Discipline** must never involve shouting, physical punishment, ridicule, or emotional manipulation

### 7. One-to-One Settings and Transport

- One-to-one meetings with under-18s must be in public (e.g. cafés) or in an open, visible church space
- Parents must be informed and give written consent
- Church workers must not transport children alone without explicit written parental permission and prior safeguarding approval

### 8. Street Outreach and Home Visits

- Outreach volunteers must work in **pairs or groups**, never alone
- Volunteers must receive safeguarding and safety training
- No physical contact unless clearly appropriate
- No direct giving of money
- Home visits (e.g. to elderly individuals) must be pre-arranged and logged, preferably in pairs, and with DBS checks

### 9. Communication and Digital Contact

- No **private communication** (texts, email, social media) between workers and children
- Any digital communication (e.g. youth updates) must include parents or occur in supervised group channels

### 10. Responding to Concerns

- All concerns or disclosures must be reported immediately to the Safeguarding Lead
- Concerns will be logged and reported to the local authority if necessary
- Confidentiality will be maintained, sharing only with those who need to know
- Serious behavioural concerns will be referred to parents or guardians

### 11. Training and Oversight

- All workers in regulated activity must complete basic safeguarding training every 3 years
- This policy will be reviewed annually by the Church Council
- All volunteers must read and agree to this policy before beginning work with children, youth, or vulnerable adults

# Membership

## Baptism and Communion

**Effective Date:** 10/5/2025

### 1. Statement of Commitment

Manchester Lutheran Church (MLC) is a confessional Lutheran congregation. Our baptism, membership, and communion practices reflect our commitment to Scripture, the Lutheran Confessions, and the spiritual well-being of all entrusted to our care. We welcome all who seek to know Christ and live by His Word, and we offer instruction and pastoral guidance as part of their integration into the life of the church.

### 2. Baptism

#### *2.1. Eligibility for Baptism*

Baptism is offered to:

- Anyone of consenting age who, after simple instruction, confesses faith as described in the core of the church's confession and whose life is consistent with this confession.
- Infants and children of baptised parents wh, after simple instruction, confess faith with the expectation that they will be raised in the Christian faith and attend future instruction.

#### *2.2. Status After Baptism*

- All baptised individuals become **non-communicant members** of Manchester Lutheran Church.
- They are registered with the church and receive pastoral care and discipleship.
- They are not yet admitted to the Lord's Supper.
- They are not legal voting members of the congregation.

### 3. Communicant Membership

#### *3.1. Eligibility*

Anyone may become a **communicant member** who:

- Has received instruction in the summary of the church's Confession;
- Confesses faith in that confession;
- Lives a life consistent with that confession.

#### *3.2. Depth of Understanding*

A full understanding of every detail of the statement of the church's Confession is not required to become a communicant member. However:

- If, at any point, a communicant member forms a **fixed opinion** that **rejects any part** of the church's doctrinal confession, they may no longer continue as a communicant member.
- Pastoral care and dialogue will be offered before any decision to remove communicant membership is made.

#### *3.3. Admission to Communicant Membership*

Communicant membership may be entered by:

- **Confirmation** (typically for youth or those new to the faith);
- **Rite of Reception** (for those transferring from another church after instruction); or
- **Private registration by the pastor**, if this is deemed pastorally appropriate.

### 4. Lord's Supper (Holy Communion)

- The Lord's Supper is offered to communicant members of Manchester Lutheran Church or those in altar fellowship with the Confessional Lutheran Church or the Confessional Evangelical Lutheran Conference (CELC).
- Participation in communion is a confession of shared faith and doctrine, as well as a reception of Christ's true body and blood.
- Guests are invited to speak with the pastor before communing.

### 5. Voting Membership and Legal Standing

- Only **communicant members** are legal **voting members** of the church who may serve in any kind of leadership, pastoral or teaching role consistent with the requirements for calls in our Confession.
- Non-communicant members do not have voting rights but are in reception of pastoral care and discipleship, they may serve in roles other than those involving leadership, pastoral care or teaching.

## Church Discretion, Discipline, and Reconciliation

**Effective Date:** 10/5/2025

### 1. Statement of Commitment

As a confessional Lutheran church, Manchester Lutheran Church (MLC) recognises that the spiritual care of its members includes both encouragement and correction. Our aim in every case is the restoration and strengthening of faith, never humiliation.

We seek, as far as possible, to handle spiritual concerns **quickly, quietly, pastorally, gently,** and **positively**—in accordance with Galatians 6:1 and Matthew 18:15–17. Where necessary, discretion and discipline may be applied as part of this pastoral care, with the goal of repentance, reconciliation, and spiritual health for the individual and the congregation.

### 2. General Principles

- Every effort will be made to address concerns informally and personally, through pastoral conversation, mutual prayer, and biblical encouragement.
- Discipline is always exercised under the gospel: not as punishment, but as a means of guiding someone back to truth, repentance, and spiritual renewal.
- At every stage, the pastor and church council will act with discretion, confidentiality, and prayerful care.

### 3. Levels of Discretion and Discipline

#### *3.1. Pause from the Supper*

**Purpose:** Pastoral and spiritual care

- The **Pastor and the communicant member will agree together** that, for a time, the member will not receive the Lord's Supper.
- During this period, the member will agree to **abstain from voting** in church matters, and may quietly step back from other church responsibilities for this period. Since the eating and drinking of the Supper is an act of proclamation, if an individual has stepped back from receiving the Supper, it is consistent to step back from teaching, pastoral and leadership roles.
- This is not necessarily disciplinary. Reasons may include:
    - Personal struggles or doubts
    - Desire for a time of reflection or repentance
    - Unsettled questions about doctrine or life
    - Sensitive situations requiring privacy.
- This is not a removal of membership but a **pause in participation**, handled discreetly and with mutual respect.

#### *3.2. Suspension from the Supper*

**Purpose:** Addressing spiritual or doctrinal issues, or inability to fulfil membership responsibilities.

- The Pastor, in consultation with the Church Council if appropriate, may move an individual from **communicant member** to **non-communicant member** status.
- Reasons may include:
    - A settled view inconsistent with the church's confession
    - A lifestyle or pattern of behaviour incompatible with Christian repentance
    - The individual's **inability** to examine themselves for the Supper due to **accident, infirmity,** or **cognitive decline**
- The individual remains a **non-communicant member under pastoral care and discipleship**, but is not admitted to the Lord's Supper or permitted to vote.

#### *3.3. Excommunication from the Fellowship*

**Purpose:** Protection of the congregation and faithful response to public, unrepentant sin of such a nature that it endangers the unity of the church or the faith or safety of others, especially the young and vulnerable.

- This is the most serious step and will only be taken after **repeated, patient, and pastoral attempts** at reconciliation.

- Excommunication involves **removal from the fellowship of the church** and **exclusion from open public events** of MLC.
- Grounds may include:
    - Persistent and divisive false teaching
    - Leading others astray or creating division
    - Predatory, harmful, or dangerous behaviour
- Individuals under excommunication may not contact church members, **except the pastor, council members, or designated pastoral team** members.
- Excommunication is **an extreme measure** primarily taken to protect others in the church, but is also a clear call to repentance with the ongoing hope of return.

### 4. Reconciliation

- In every disciplinary situation, at every stage, the goal is restoration in Christ.
- Individuals who repent and return to confession and faith may be restored to full fellowship.
- Reinstatement as a communicant member will involve a pastoral process of instruction, confession, and affirmation of faith.
- The church rejoices whenever a sinner is restored (Luke 15:7).

# Concerns and Grievances

## Complaints

**Adopted on**: 10/5/2025
**Next review due**: 10/5/2026
**Church Council Chair**: Pete Myers
**Contact Email**: pete@manchesterlutheran.church

### 1. Statement of Commitment

Manchester Lutheran Church (MLC) seeks to promote a culture of grace, openness, and accountability. We welcome feedback and take complaints seriously as part of our commitment to pastoral care and integrity.

### 2. Scope

This policy applies to complaints from church members, visitors, volunteers, and members of the public. Complaints may relate to:

- Conduct of leaders, volunteers, or members
- Actions taken by the church or its representatives
- Safeguarding, health and safety, or financial concerns
- Any matter causing distress, confusion, or dissatisfaction

### 3. Informal Resolution

Many concerns can be resolved informally through a conversation with the individual involved or a church leader. We encourage early resolution whenever possible in a spirit of Christian love and humility.

### 4. Formal Complaint Process

- Submit the complaint in writing to the Church Council Chair.
- Include your name, contact details, and a clear description of the issue.
- You will receive acknowledgment within 7 days.
- The complaint will be investigated and responded to within 28 days.
- You will be informed of the outcome and any steps being taken.

### 5. Appeal Process

If you are not satisfied with the response, you may appeal in writing to the full Church Council. The Council will review the matter and provide a final response within 28 days of the appeal.

### 6. External Concerns

Where a complaint involves criminal activity, safeguarding, or misconduct beyond the church's capacity, appropriate authorities will be contacted, including the DBS, police, or safeguarding bodies as needed.

### 7. Confidentiality

All complaints will be treated confidentially and with respect for those involved. Details will only be shared on a need-to-know basis in the course of addressing the complaint.

### 8. Review

This policy will be reviewed annually and updated to reflect best practice and feedback from those who have used it.

## Whistleblowing

**Adopted on**: 10/5/2025
**Next review due**: 10/5/2026
**Church Council Chair**: Pete Myers
**Contact Email**: pete@manchesterlutheran.church
**External Accountability Partner**: ???

### 1. Statement of Commitment

Manchester Lutheran Church (MLC) is committed to integrity, accountability, and transparency. This policy enables members, volunteers, and staff to raise concerns about wrongdoing without fear of reprisal.

### 2. Scope

This policy applies to all church members, volunteers, staff, and officeholders. It covers serious concerns such as:

- Criminal activity
- Financial misconduct or fraud
- Serious breaches of church policy
- Attempts to cover up wrongdoing

### 3. Principles

- Concerns will be taken seriously and investigated appropriately.
- Whistleblowers will be protected from retaliation or victimisation.
- Confidentiality will be respected as far as possible.
- Malicious or knowingly false allegations may lead to disciplinary action.

### 4. Raising a Concern Internally

Concerns should initially be raised with the Church Council Chair, or if involving a potential safeguarding issue then the Safeguarding Officer. If the concern involves one of these individuals, it should be directed to the Pastor or another member of the Church Council.

### 5. External Point of Contact

At each Annual Meeting, church members may nominate and approve an external contact person for whistleblowing purposes. This individual must be a communicant member of a congregation within the Confessional Lutheran Church or a member of a church body affiliated with the Confessional Evangelical Lutheran Conference (CELC). Their contact details will be made available to all members. This person may be contacted if:

- The concern cannot be raised internally.
- The whistleblower believes the matter has not been properly handled.

### 6. Investigation Process

- The concern will be acknowledged within 7 days.
- A preliminary investigation will determine the appropriate next steps.
- Full records will be kept, and the whistleblower kept appropriately informed.
- If criminal activity is suspected, legal authorities may be contacted.

### 7. Review

This policy will be reviewed annually, especially in light of any whistleblowing incidents or changes in best practice.

## Personnel

**Adopted on**: 10/5/2025
**Next review due**: 10/5/2026
**Pastor**: Pete Myers
**Work Phone**: 07857 057 006
**Contact Email**: pete@manchesterlutheran.church

## Our Pastor's Role and Availability

At Manchester Lutheran Church, our pastor is called to serve by preaching and teaching God's Word, administering the Sacraments, and caring for God's people with prayer, counsel, and encouragement. This calling shapes how the pastor's time is used and how best to reach him.

### The Pastor's Main Responsibilities

The pastor's primary work includes:

- Preparing and leading worship services
- Preaching and teaching the Bible
- Providing pastoral care and counselling
- Equipping and encouraging members to share Christ
- Leading outreach and discipleship efforts
- Guiding the congregation in faithfulness to God's Word

In addition, while the church is very small, the Pastor shoulders the primary administrative burden for the congregation.

While the pastor is glad to support many aspects of church life, it won't be possible to attend every event or meeting, nor to address every personal concern as fully as we might desire. The aim is to prioritise the spiritual care of the whole church and the faithful use of time.

### Weekly Rhythm and Rest

The pastor normally works full-time, with ministry often taking place in the evenings and on weekends. To remain spiritually and physically healthy for long-term service:

- One regular day off each week is protected for rest (normally Saturday), and will be published each week in the church's Tuesday email.
- A portion of time each week is given to prayer, study, and sermon preparation
- Time is set aside regularly for family and personal well-being

We encourage the congregation to honour this rhythm and support our pastor's rest and spiritual renewal.

### How to Reach the Pastor

You are warmly invited to contact the pastor:

- **For prayer or spiritual conversation**
- **To talk about the Bible or faith**
- **If you or someone you know is in need**
- **To request a visit, baptism, or other pastoral care**
- The pastor has a **dedicated work phone (07857 057 006)**, and it is **preferable to contact him on this number** (by call, text, or WhatsApp) for anything related to ministry. This helps keep communication clear and allows personal and family time to be respected.
- **Email** is also welcome for non-urgent matters.

If your message is non-urgent, please understand there may be a short delay in replying—especially on the pastor's day off. In urgent situations, the pastor will respond as soon as possible.

## Equality and Diversity

**Adopted on**: 10/5/2025
**Next review due**: 10/5/2026
**Church Council Chair**: Pete Myers
**Contact Email**: pete@manchesterlutheran.church

### 1. Statement of Commitment

Manchester Lutheran Church (MLC) is a Confessional Lutheran church, committed to proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ and upholding biblical doctrine as expressed in the Lutheran Confessions. Within this context, we affirm the dignity and value of every person as created in the image of God.

We seek to treat all people with respect, fairness, and Christian love, regardless of background, ethnicity, sex, age, disability, or socio-economic status.

### 2. Scope

This policy applies to all aspects of our church life, including worship, membership, service, volunteering, pastoral care, and employment (where applicable).

### 3. Commitment to Equality and Diversity

- We welcome people from all ethnic and cultural backgrounds.
- We will not tolerate harassment, discrimination, or exclusion based on race, age, disability, or socioeconomic status.
- We will seek to accommodate those with disabilities so they may participate fully in the life of the church.
- We will review policies and practices to ensure fairness and accessibility.

We affirm distinct biblical roles for men and women in the church in accordance with Scripture and our Confession of Faith.

### 4. Pastoral Distinctions

As a Confessional Lutheran church:

- We uphold the biblical distinction between male and female and the teaching that only men are called to the pastoral office (1 Timothy 2:12, Titus 1:6–9).
- We call all people to repentance and faith in Christ and affirm that every believer, regardless of past or present struggles, is a redeemed child of God.
- We will offer pastoral care that is rooted in Scripture and the gospel.

### 5. Responsibilities

- The Council is responsible for promoting this policy and ensuring it is followed.
- All members, volunteers, and staff are expected to treat others in a way consistent with the gospel and this policy.
- Any concerns or incidents should be reported to the Pastor or Church Council Chair.

### 6. Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if required by legal or pastoral considerations.

## Volunteer

**Adopted on**: 10/5/2025
**Next review due**: 10/5/2026
**Church Council Chair**: Pete Myers
**Contact Email**: pete@manchesterlutheran.church

### 1. Statement of Commitment

This policy outlines the principles, practices, and expectations related to volunteers serving within MLC. Volunteers play a vital role in the life and mission of the church, supporting our gospel-centered work and contributing to our worship, teaching, hospitality, and outreach.

### 2. Definition of a Volunteer

A volunteer is someone who freely offers their time, skills, and service to the church without financial remuneration. Volunteers may be members or regular attendees of MLC who are committed to our mission and Confessional Lutheran doctrine.

### 3. Recruitment and Involvement

- Volunteers will normally be members of the church.
- Individuals interested in volunteering will be invited to speak with the pastor.
- All volunteers must agree to uphold the church's values and safeguarding practices.

### 4. Roles and Responsibilities

- Volunteers will be assigned roles appropriate to their skills, gifts, and character.
- All volunteers are expected to serve faithfully, respect others, and be accountable.
- Where roles involve leadership, contact with children, or vulnerable adults, appropriate safeguarding checks will be conducted in accordance with our Safeguarding Policy.
- A Volunteer Agreement will be written and signed for every volunteer, outlining their role, responsibilities, and the expectations of both the volunteer and Manchester Lutheran Church.

### 5. Support and Oversight

- Volunteers will receive guidance, training, and support relevant to their role.
- Regular feedback and informal check-ins will be offered by a leader or the pastor.
- Volunteers may raise concerns or questions at any time and will be listened to respectfully.

### 6. Code of Conduct

Volunteers are expected to:

- Serve in a spirit of humility, joy, and faithfulness.
- Treat others with kindness, patience, and respect.
- Avoid gossip, conflict, or behaviour that undermines the church’s unity or witness.
- Maintain confidentiality where appropriate.
- Follow safeguarding, health and safety, and data protection procedures.

### 7. Ending a Role

- Volunteers may step down from a role at any time with reasonable notice.
- The church leadership may also end a volunteer role if necessary, especially if concerns arise regarding conduct, safety, or doctrinal alignment.
- In either case, this will be handled with grace and clarity.

### 8. Review

This policy will be reviewed annually and updated as needed by the Church Council.

## Conflict of Interest

**Adopted on**: 10/5/2025
**Next review due**: 10/5/2026
**Church Council Chair**: Pete Myers
**Contact Email**: pete@manchesterlutheran.church

### 1. Statement of Commitment

This policy is designed to ensure that the integrity and transparency of MLC is maintained by managing actual, potential, or perceived conflicts of interest.

### 2. Scope

This policy applies to all members of the Church Council and any individual acting on behalf of MLC in a decision-making capacity, whether paid or unpaid.

### 3. Definition of Conflict of Interest

A conflict of interest arises when a person's judgment or actions could be influenced by personal, financial, or other interests unrelated to the church's mission. This includes:

- Financial gain or benefit to self or close family
- Personal relationships
- Dual roles or loyalties

### 4. Declaration of Interests

- All Council members must declare any personal or financial interest in matters under discussion.
- A register of interests will be maintained and reviewed annually.
- New Council members must complete a declaration of interests form upon appointment.

### 5. Managing Conflicts of Interest

- Individuals must withdraw from discussion and decision-making where a conflict exists, unless otherwise agreed by the Council.
- The remaining members of the Council will determine the appropriate course of action to protect the integrity of the decision.
- All decisions relating to conflicts will be minuted for transparency.

### 6. Pastoral Remuneration

Pastors who serve on the Church Council may receive remuneration for their services to the church, including stipends, housing, or expense reimbursement. This does not constitute a conflict of interest if:

- The arrangement is transparent, justified, and in line with UK charity law.
- The pastor does not participate in decisions relating to their own remuneration.

### 7. Breach of Policy

Failure to disclose or appropriately manage a conflict of interest may result in removal from the Council or disciplinary action.

### 8. Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or upon significant changes in governance or legal guidance.