

TIMONIUM PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Presbyterian Church in America

Winning Hearts for Christ & Equipping Hearts for Life

August 16, 2007

Dear Potential Drivers,

We are thankful that you have expressed a willingness to help drive for our ministry outings. Throughout the ministry year, there will often be occasions when transportation to and from ministry events is needed. As a result, we believe it is prudent to equip our ministry drivers with wise principles of safe transportation. It is important to us, and we are sure to you as well, that we provide safe transportation to and from our ministry activities.

To reach this goal, we have put together several items that we are asking you to “*read, complete, and view*” as soon as possible to be qualified to drive for our various ministry activities.

PLEASE READ.

Attached in this .pdf file is TPC’s *Ministry Driver Screening Packet*. It outlines some steps you can take to avoid problems on the road. ***Please read this packet carefully.*** It should take you approximately 15 minutes to read.

PLEASE COMPLETE.

Also in the .pdf file is a straightforward *Ministry Driver Screening Form* (page 5). Please complete and return (p. 5 only) to the church office at least 24 hours before your ministry activity or event.

PLEASE VIEW.

Please view “*The Road To Safer Transportation*” made by the *Church Mutual Insurance Company*. The link for this is: <http://www.churchmutual.com/Video/videoplayer.php?filename=churchtravel> . We require all potential drivers to take 15 minutes to view this online video to make sure our auto, van, and bus trips are safer and more enjoyable - for passengers, for drivers, and for everybody.

Additional links that can be helpful to you:

"*Choosing Safe Drivers for Your Ministry*" by Brotherhood Mutual™ Insurance Company, <http://www.brotherhoodmutual.com/pdf/Driver-Screening.pdf>

"*How Churches Can Make Safer Transportation a Priority*" by Brotherhood Mutual™ Insurance Company, <http://www.brotherhoodmutual.com/pdf/dBench/DB17-2.pdf>

"*The Road to Safer Transportation*" by Church Mutual™ Insurance Company, http://www.churchmutual.com/admin/store/downloads/Safer_Trans.pdf

If you have any questions about the attached material, then please contact Mr. Larry Russell at the church office, 410-252-5663.

Thank you for your service to our congregation.

Mr. Larry Russell
Executive Director

TIMONIUM PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH'S MINISTRY DRIVER SCREENING PACKET¹

303 W. Timonium Road, Timonium, MD 21093
410-252-5663



"The heart of man plans his way, but the LORD establishes his steps." Proverbs 16:9

SELECTION OF SAFE DRIVERS²

An important part of Timonium Presbyterian Church's (TPC) ministry is providing safe transportation - be it shuttling the elderly or disabled for Sunday morning services, driving the youth group to a retreat or other youth activities, or taking preschoolers on a field trip. Screening our drivers before they get behind the wheel is critical to ensuring that those in our care are in good hands. Since people are entrusting their loved ones into our care, our drivers are called to a higher standard of driver safety.

We desire to select at least one primary qualified driver for each vehicle used in ministry whether that vehicle is owned, leased, or rented. We will keep a list of all approved, trained drivers, and we will seek to avoid situations where people not on the list are put into the driver's seat. We will seek to screen our drivers by using the following criteria:

1. **PROPER LICENSING.** We will take all reasonable steps to make sure our drivers are properly licensed for the vehicles they will operate.³ Most states require a commercial driver license (CDL)⁴ for driving buses and large vans. Generally, a commercial license is needed if the vehicle weighs more than 26,000 pounds or is designed to transport more than **16** people (including the driver).
2. **AGE.** We will carefully consider the age of potential drivers. Those under 21 or over 65⁵ pose considerably greater risk for auto accidents, according to the *Insurance Institute for Highway Safety*.⁶ Young drivers, regardless of maturity, lack "behind-the-wheel" experience, particularly when it involves transporting others. Elderly drivers *may* have slower reaction times and physical or visual impairments.
3. **EXPERIENCE & TRAINING.** We endeavor to identify drivers with as much experience as possible. Drivers of any age with less experience are more likely to have accidents. We will endeavor to choose drivers that are specially trained to handle a larger van or bus when necessary. The most severe accidents usually are caused by drivers' lack of understanding of the handling dynamics of longer vehicles, which are more prone to rollover than cars. We will require all van/vehicle operators (regardless of whether the vehicle is privately owned, leased, or rented) to view "*The Road To Safer Transportation*" made by the *Church Mutual Insurance Company*. The link for this is: <http://www.churchmutual.com/Video/videoplayer.php?filename=churchtravel>.⁷ We require all potential drivers to take 15 minutes to view this online video to make sure our auto, van, and bus trips are safer and more enjoyable - for passengers, for drivers, and for everybody.⁸

¹ Outlined here are some steps you can take to avoid problems on the road. It is not intended to be a complete safety manual. This packet, however, will be revised as needed.

² This section is based on "*Choosing Safe Drivers for Your Ministry*" by Brotherhood Mutual™ Insurance Company. (<http://www.brotherhoodmutual.com/pdf/Driver-Screening.pdf>).

³ *Maryland's Driver Handbook* - <http://www.marylandmva.com/Resources/DL-002A.pdf>; Maryland's Transportation Code

⁴ <http://mva.state.md.us/DriverServ/Apply/CDL/commercial.htm>

⁵ *Guide to Drivers Over 55 (form DL-039)* - <http://www.marylandmva.com/Resources/DL-039.pdf>

⁶ <http://www.iihs.org/>

⁷ <http://www.churchmutual.com/>

⁸ See also the *National Safety Council's* video presentation course called "*Coaching the Van Driver*." This video is designed to help van drivers read and respond safely to potential collision-producing situations. Learn more about this on the NSC Web site: <http://secure.nsc.org/train/course.cfm?id=81>

4. **DRIVING RECORD.** When appropriate, we will obtain a potential driver's driving records.⁹ We will look for people without reckless driving citations or multiple moving violations.¹⁰ We cannot allow someone with a poor driving record to operate a vehicle for the church, or transport ministry participants to a ministry event.
5. **FAMILIARITY.** All potential drivers for ministry events, unless a special waiver is granted, are to be members in good standing of TPC, should have attended TPC for six months or longer, and must be responsible individuals.

SAFETY PRINCIPLES

Below are a few safety measures¹¹ that will not only help to prevent accidents, but they will also help to reduce the seriousness of injuries when accidents do occur. We strongly recommend that you follow these principles, along with general safety and supervision measures, when operating any vehicle, but especially when operating a larger van:

1. **SEAT BELTS.** The driver and all passengers in a vehicle should wear seat belts. Those who don't are more likely to be ejected from the vehicle during a rollover, and those ejected tend to suffer the most serious injuries and fatalities. **Drivers are responsible to enforce safety rules such as the wearing of seat belts.**
2. **MATURE DRIVERS.** Use mature drivers who have driven often and have ample driving experience - especially if they will be driving larger vehicles like vans.¹² Drivers 25 or older are recommended.¹³ Drivers must be in good physical condition.
3. **APPROVED DRIVERS.** Only approved drivers may drive for ministry events and activities. A list of approved drivers will be kept to avoid situations where people not on the list are put into the driver's seat.

⁹ <http://www.marylandmva.com/DriverServ/DrRecord/default.htm>

¹⁰ Below you will find links to traffic laws and driving rules in Maryland...

Drinking & Driving Violations	Driving while under the influence (MD Transp. Code section 21-902)
Driving Without a License / With a Suspended License	Drivers must be licensed (MD Transp. Code section 16-101)
Driving Without Insurance / With Insufficient Insurance	Required Security (MD Transp. Code Title 17)
Driving Without Registration / With Expired Registration	Driving or allowing certain unregistered vehicles to be driven (MD Transp. Code section 13-401) Vehicles subject to registration (MD Transp. Code section 13-402)
Illegal U-Turn	Vehicle turning left or making u-turn (MD Transp. Code section 21-402)
Leaving the Scene of an Accident / Hit & Run	Accidents and Accident Reports (MD Transp. Code Title 20)
Mechanical Violations	Equipment of Vehicles (MD Transp. Code Title 22)
Reckless Driving	Reckless and negligent driving (MD Transp. Code section 21-901.1)
Running a Red Light / Stop Sign	Traffic Signs, Signals, and Markings (MD Transp. Code Title 21 <i>scroll to</i> Subtitle 2)
Seat Belt / Child Restraint Violations	Mandatory seat belt use (MD Transp. Code section 22-412.3) Child safety seats (MD Transp. Code section 22-412.2)
Speeding	Speed Restrictions (MD Transp. Code Title 21 <i>scroll to</i> Subtitle 8)
Unlawful Vehicle Modifications	Equipment of Vehicles (MD Transp. Code Title 22)

¹¹ See also "The Road to Safer Transportation" by Church Mutual Insurance Company,

http://www.churchmutual.com/admin/store/downloads/Safer_Trans.pdf

¹² Driving a 15-passenger van is much different and more challenging than driving a family car or mini-van. Even experienced drivers may not always be able to get these large vehicles back under control when driving at highway speeds.

¹³ Drivers under age 21 or above age 65 present higher risks, and such drivers' suitability for driving for ministry events will be considered on a case by case basis.

4. **SELECT SAFE VEHICLES.** Select a vehicle appropriate for your ministry activity and the number of passengers. Avoid vehicles that are unsafe and or in poor condition. Make sure a vehicle is in good working order.
5. **INSPECT VEHICLE.** Before starting out on a trip, inspect the vehicle from front to back and pay close attention to the tires. Make sure brakes work well and are checked at least annually. Inspect a vehicle (inside and outside) before you drive it.
6. **LOOK FOR TREAD WEAR.** The *Tire Industry Safety Council*¹⁴ recommends that tires be replaced when the tread is worn down to one-sixteenth of an inch. Accurate measurements can be made with a tread depth gauge.¹⁵ Many van rollovers are initiated by tire blowouts. Make sure the tires are properly inflated - neither over nor under-inflated.
7. **DO NOT OVERLOAD THE VEHICLE.** The vehicle may be too heavy to maneuver properly during emergencies when fully loaded with passengers and luggage. Loaded luggage racks on top of a vehicle make controlling the vehicle more difficult. Also, an overloaded vehicle is more likely to cause a blowout.
8. **MULTIPLE DRIVERS.** To avoid fatigue on longer trips, have two drivers and take frequent breaks. If your passengers are children, a second adult also is important for supervision purposes.
9. **ADDITIONAL TRAINING.** Additional training may be required for handling larger vehicles. Certain drivers may be asked to obtain commercial driving licenses (CDLs). The extra training required to obtain such licenses will benefit all drivers every day.
10. **AVOID DISTRACTIONS.** Using a cell phone, a PDA, an iPod, a handheld GPS, etc. while driving is discouraged. Obey local laws regarding these devices. When a cell phone conversation is necessary, pull off to a safe location. Be sure to select an area which will not jeopardize your safety or cause a hazard for you or other drivers.
11. **BEWARE AND BE AWARE.** Beware of illness, fatigue, highway hypnosis, anger, and the effects of alcohol or other drugs. Do not drive under the influence of any drugs. Be aware of inclement weather and use extra caution when your visibility is reduced, when driving on wet pavement, ice, and snow.
12. **SPEED LIMITS.** Obey posted speed limits.
13. **BE SAFE!** When driving a vehicle, safe driving is your first responsibility. Good judgment must be exercised always while driving a motor vehicle. Safe driving requires alertness, caution, and courtesy. Safe driving also requires obeying all traffic signs and signals and staying within the speed limit. It also requires using seat belts whenever the vehicle is in motion. And finally, **safe driving requires a dose of common sense** - keep your head up, keep your eyes on the road, check your mirrors frequently, and watch out for other drivers.



¹⁴ <http://www.rma.org/>

¹⁵ The Penny Test. Put a penny into a tread groove (where tread is lowest) with Lincoln's head upside down. If you can see the top of Lincoln's head, it's time to replace the tire.

SEVEN RULES FOR PASSENGERS

Take the time to give your passengers a review of these important habits that really make a difference in keeping risks to a minimum.

1. Always follow the driver's instructions.
2. Talk quietly.
3. Stay seated while vehicle is in motion.
4. Keep head and hands inside windows, sunroofs, etc.
5. Be courteous to the driver, to other passengers, and to passing motorists.
6. Ask permission before opening windows, adjusting the radio, etc.
7. Always wear your seat belt, if one is provided.

WHAT TO DO IN CASE OF AN ACCIDENT

- Stop your vehicle in the safest place. Turn off the ignition. Get out carefully and determine if anyone is injured. Administer first aid, if needed, but do not try to move an injured individual.
- Call the police (9-1-1 in most places) immediately. Tell them about any injuries. They will notify EMS.
- When proper, move your vehicle to a safer place to prevent additional accidents. If your vehicle cannot be moved, turn on hazard lights, and ask the police to help you set flares until the vehicle can be towed.
- Document the names of individuals at the scene of the accident. Note especially: license plate number, driver's name, address, phone number, license number and state, insurance company and contact phone number.
- Cooperate with the police and other individuals involved, but be cautious in your speech.
- If the other individual accepts responsibility for the accident, do not accept any money offered to you at the scene.
- Never agree to ignore an accident, even if there appears to be no damage. You may find out later there were actually hidden damages or injuries. Information still needs to be exchanged for church documentation.
- Write a detailed account of the accident. Note especially: witnesses, passengers, time, weather conditions, road conditions, skid marks (if any), injuries, and vehicle damage. If possible, draw a diagram of the scene of the accident.
- If a camera is available (you may even have a camera in your cell phone), take pictures from various perspectives showing the damage, position of vehicles, skid marks, and anything else documenting what happened. Make copies of the pictures.
- Contact a church officer and be prepared to report the accident to an insurance agent or company. Do not give out personal phone numbers of church officers.

SCREENING FORM

This form is to be completed, signed, and returned to the church office.

You may be asked to complete a new form annually, or on a situational basis.

MINISTRY DRIVER SCREENING

Driver's Name (as shown on license): _____

Driver's Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

E-mail: _____ Telephone Numbers: _____ (Cell) _____

Date of Birth: _____ Driver's License State and Number: _____

Is this a Commercial Driver License (CDL)? Yes No

Social Security Number: _____

(Please provide your SSN if you've given your permission to obtain copies of your driving records.)

Which Vehicle(s) Will You Be Driving?

Make: _____ Model: _____ Year: _____ Lic. Plate #: _____ State: _____

Make: _____ Model: _____ Year: _____ Lic. Plate #: _____ State: _____

Are You The Primary Driver? Yes No

Primary Driver = You drive the vehicle more than once per month or more than 12 times per year.

In The Past Three (3) Years:

1. Have you been at fault¹ for any accidents²? Yes No
2. Have you had any moving traffic violations³? Yes No
3. Have you had any insurance company cancel or refuse to provide you with auto insurance? Yes No
4. Have you had your driver's license revoked, suspended, or restricted? Yes No
5. Have you had any physical impairments other than corrective glasses? Yes No
6. Have you ever been charged with or convicted of "driving while intoxicated" or "driving under the influence"? Yes No

If any questions(s) 1-6 have been answered with "yes," please provide full details below: (dates, descriptions, citations, fines, or other explanation). *Answering, "yes" to these questions will not automatically exclude you from being approved.*

Signed* _____

Date _____

**By signing, you are giving Timonium Presbyterian Church permission to obtain copies of your driving records.*

OFFICE USE ONLY

Screening Completed: _____ Date: _____

Driving Record Checked: _____ Date: _____

Video Instruction Completed _____ Date: _____

Approved by: _____ Date: _____

This screening form will be kept on file indefinitely. All information collected will be placed in a secure file.

¹ "At Fault Accident" - Collision where you were negligent. "Not at Fault" - Collision where the other party was negligent.

² "Accident" - A sudden fortuitous event. Often used to refer to a collision or insurance event. See <http://www.carinsurance.com/InsuranceTerms.aspx>

³ "Violations" - Police involved occurrences where you were cited by law enforcement.