The use of this guide is the sole responsibility of the church concerned including any modifications made to the content to satisfy individual church needs.

We at Worker Ministries have prepared the guide based on all knowledge available to us. While Worker Ministries strives to make the information in this guide as timely and accurate as possible, we make no claims, promises, or guarantees about the accuracy, completeness, or adequacy of the contents and expressly disclaim liability for errors and omissions in the contents.

We assume no responsibility for the proper implementation of the content nor responsibility for final results since we do not possess control over such matters.

Worker Ministries is available to answer questions and assist any church at any time as we join you in promoting maximum safety in the safe operation of your church bus.

Worker Ministries
www.workerministries.com
Elon, North Carolina
Telephone: 336-449-5904
Email: hogsettjim@aol.com
FEDERAL REGULATIONS DECISION

The Board of Directors of our church has voted to adopt the federal regulations which are being added to the basic church policy under which we will operate our church vans. _____YES _____NO Additional requirements which surpass DOT federal regulations standards have also been adopted. _____YES_______NO

_______________________________________  (Signature/Chairman of the Board)
_________________________________________  (Date)
BASIC CHURCH BUS POLICY

The Board of Directors is responsible for development of the church bus policy and assigning a specific individual such as the pastor to implement the policy.

The board shall assure that all drivers are properly trained in the operation of the bus and they are supplied with pertinent information and instructions. The board is responsible for major items for upkeep such as insurance coverage, tires, and major repairs.

The church shall insure the bus. Minimum coverage shall include bodily injury and property damage, liability, medical payments, uninsured motorist, fire, theft, comprehensive and collision. The cost of the insurance shall be provided for in the annual church budget.

Use of the bus

1. **ELIGIBILITY:** Any church group has approval and authority to use the bus. Groups sponsored by or connected to our church shall be allowed to use the bus upon special request made to the Administrator and subject to approval of the Board. Trips of extended miles (greater than 50 miles) must be cleared through the Church Administrator in consultation with the Board.

2. **NUMBER OF PASSENGERS REQUIREMENT:** The maximum number of passengers may NOT exceed the total passenger capacity of the bus design, including the driver.

3. **SCHEDULING PROCEDURE:** All proposed uses of the bus should be requested through the Church Calendar Secretary.

4. **POINT OF ORIGIN:** The bus will leave from and return to the church parking lot. The bus will be parked in the designated parking area.

5. **TRIP SUPERVISION:** It is the responsibility of the group or trip sponsor using the bus to provide the proper adult supervision that does not include the driver.

IS A CHURCH BUS SUBJECT TO DOT REGULATIONS?

Since a church is not a business or government organization, those responsible for the operation of a church bus may conclude their bus is not subject to regulations of the federal and state Department of Transportation. Such thinking is the FIRST and most serious mistake that can be made in this situation.

The Department of Transportation is the federal and state department of government which regulates transportation safety. This regulatory agency states that churches in general either are exempt from the federal regulations altogether or fall within the definition of **regulated nonbusiness private motor carriers of passengers**

A church that owns or leases a bus or van will be a “nonbusiness private motor carrier of passengers” if: 1) the bus or van has a gross vehicle weight of 10,001 or more pounds or is designed to transport more than 15 passengers (including the
driver), **AND** 2) the bus or van is “involved in interstate transportation of passengers,” which basically means taking the bus or van outside of the state in which the church is located.

Local churches are exempt from the regulations if: 1) they do not take the bus or van outside of the state in which the church is located **OR** 2) they do not own or lease a bus or van with a gross vehicle weight of 10,001 or more pounds and do not own or lease a bus or van that is designed to transport more than 15 passengers (including the driver).

For example, a local church that is located in a town which is near a state line and has a van or bus that carries 16 passengers (includes the driver) and crosses the state line to transport people to church every Sunday is subject to the federal regulations (regardless of the gross weight of the vehicle or number of passengers it holds). On the other hand, a 20,000-pound bus designed to hold 50 passengers that is never used to cross state lines is exempt from the federal regulations. A 14,000-pound van that is designed to hold 18 passengers and occasionally crosses state lines is subject to the regulations. The same van that is never used to cross state lines is exempt from the regulations.

**Subpart G – Limited exemptions – church buses**

§ 391.68 **Private** motor carrier of passengers (nonbusiness). The following rules in this part do not apply to a private motor carrier of passengers (nonbusiness) and its drivers: (a) Section 391.11(b)(1), (b)(6) and (b)(8) (relating to general qualifications of drivers); (b) Subpart C (relating to disclosure of, investigation into, and inquiries about the background, character, and driving record of, drivers); (c) So much of §§391.41 and 391.45 as require a driver to be medically examined and to have a medical examiner’s certificate on his/her person; and (d) Subpart F (relating to maintenance of files and records).

**HAZARDS FOR CHURCHES EXEMPT FROM DOT**

Although the church may be exempt from DOT regulations, the church board should seriously consider requiring that the **church bus and smaller ones such as 15-passenger vans** be operated on the basis of the regulations. There are two reasons for such a policy:

1. **SAFETY!** When any bus/van driver is on the open highway, he or she can directly impact the lives of passengers being transported, other drivers on the road, AND him or herself (church driver). While many individuals dismiss regulations as being a headache, you will find that DOT regulations are a **blessing** in disguise because they are realistic and adherence to such regulations can save lives.

2. **LIABILITY!** We live in a sue-happy society. And, churches are not exempt from lawsuits. To insulate the church from having to pay out large sums of money because of an accident, maximum liability insurance should be carried. However, when the insurer has to pay a large sum of money to one who has sued the church, the insurance premium could easily skyrocket. For this reason, **accident prevention** is the key to eliminating such a catastrophe and that is why it is advisable to comply with DOT regulations regardless of the church operating status. Furthermore, in case an accident should occur, “going the extra mile” can be a tremendous positive that is in the favor of the church.
FEDERAL DOT REQUIREMENTS

If the regulations apply to the church, here are the requirements for nonbusiness private motor carriers of passengers related only to operation of van designed to transport sixteen or more passengers including the driver:

DRIVER QUALIFICATIONS PER DOT

1. The driver must have a commercial driver’s license (issued by the state in which the church is located) with P endorsement. To obtain this license, the driver must pass a general knowledge test related to safe driving and another test related to transporting passengers. In addition, if the bus to be driven is equipped with air brakes, the driver must also pass a separate air brakes knowledge test.

2. The driver must:

   * Be in good health
   * Be at least 21 years of age
   * Speak/read English well enough to do the job and respond to official questions
   * Be able to drive the vehicle safely
   * Be able to determine whether the vehicle is safely loaded
   * Have only one valid driver’s license
   * Not have been convicted of motor violations in the past 12 months
   * Have valid medical certificate
   * Not be disqualified to drive a commercial motor vehicle

ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDED REQUIREMENTS WHICH SURPASS DOT REGULATORY STANDARDS

- Church member
- Be at least 25 years old and no older than 70
- Five years driving experience
- No reckless driving in past five years
- No more than two moving violations in last five years
- Church office will maintain list of qualified drivers and no other individuals are permitted to drive the church bus at any time and for any reason

EQUIPMENT

1. The vehicle must be marked on both sides with the motor carrier’s name or trade name; city and state of the church; and motor carrier identification number preceded by “USDOT.”

2. The vehicle must be properly equipped with adequate lighting devices, reflectors, electrical equipment, brakes, certain specified glazing and window construction, coupling devices and towing methods, emergency equipment, protection against shifting or falling cargo, and appropriate frames, cab and body components, wheels, steering and suspension systems. The vehicle’s fuel system must be maintained to the original manufacturer’s standards, and certain specific miscellaneous parts and accessories may be required.
3. The vehicle must be regularly inspected, repaired and maintained, and all vehicle parts and accessories must be in safe and proper working order at all times. Push-out windows, emergency doors and emergency door marking lights in buses must be inspected at least every 90 days. Records must be maintained.

SAFE DRIVING

1. The driver should comply with all safe driving regulations spelled out in the Commercial Driver's Study Manual. Some of the most important rules are highlighted below:

- Be sure the vehicle is safe and properly working before each trip and must ensure that emergency equipment is in place.
- Stop at all railroad crossings
- The parking brake must be set when the driver leaves a vehicle unattended.
- Emergency warning devices must be activated in an emergency.
- Headlights must be used from one-half hour after sunset to one-half hour before sunrise (or anytime there is not enough light to see clearly 500 feet away).
- If driver is involved in an accident, he or she must stop immediately and assist injured persons and take steps to prevent additional accidents at the scene.
- The driver must not smoke when the vehicle is being fueled.
- Written permission from the church is necessary for passengers to ride.

2. The driver must not drive for more than 10 hours following eight consecutive hours off duty; may not drive after having been on duty for 15 hours following eight consecutive hours off duty. Off duty time is not included in the 15-hour period; must not drive after being on duty more than 60 hours in any seven consecutive days. A driver log is a helpful way to comply with this particular regulation. (Note: The purpose of this requirement is to prevent driver fatigue; be careful about the requirement when your driver is also a professional driver for another organization, because the time is cumulative.)

For more information about the regulations, call the federal DOT at the DOT office in your state; the national Federal Motor Carrier Administration office in Washington, D.C. can be reached at (202) 366-4009. Additional information is available, including “A Motor Carrier’s Guide to Improving Highway Safety” at www.fmcsa.dot.gov. You should also check to be sure your own state has no regulations that would affect your church's use of vans or buses.

PRE AND POST TRIP INSPECTION

A Pre Trip Inspection should be conducted just before each trip and results should be recorded on a pre-trip inspection report form. (Forms should be kept in the bus/van.) Any finding which would directly impact safety on the road should be corrected before leaving. In addition, a post trip inspection should be conducted upon return to the church to account for any changes in the condition of the church bus. A sample inspection report is shown on the next page.
PRE AND POST TRIP
VEHICLE INSPECTION

Vehicle Number: ___________  Date of Inspection: ___________  Mileage: ___________  

Inspect the operating condition of each item listed below. A check by any item indicates that it has been inspected. Any problems found should be indicated in the comment section. If no comments are made, it will be assumed that all inspected items are in safe operating condition. Enter N/A by item that is nonapplicable.

UNDER HOOD

_____ Hood latch secure, lube, and operates easily
_____ Engine Oil level is correct
_____ Antifreeze/radiator level is correct
_____ Automatic transmission fluid level
_____ Power steering fluid level correct
_____ Brake fluid level correct
_____ Radiator/overflow hoses (Check for, hardening, cracking, breaks)
_____ Battery (Check for cracks, leaks in case; excessive corrosion and looseness in cables and terminals)

UNDER HOOD CONTINUED

_____ Belts, water pump, alternator, power steering
_____ Leaks from radiator, engine, etc. (check under vehicle)

EXTERIOR

_____ Turn signals/Emergency Flashers working
_____ Headlights (high and low beam) and park lights
_____ Tail brake lights
_____ Examine van for fresh exterior body damage
_____ Cleanliness

EXTERIOR CONTINUED - CONDITION OF VEHICLE TIRES

Look for cuts or other damage, tread separation, dual tires that come in contact with each other or parts of the vehicle, mismatched sizes, radial and bias-ply tires used together, cut or cracked valve stems. Check for wheel and rim problems such as rust around wheel fasteners-check tightness; missing clamps, spacers, studs, or lugs; mismatched, bent, or cracked lock rings; signs of damage in wheels or rims that have had welding repairs. Check tire depth using a tire depth gauge. (Each front tire should be at least 4/32 inches deep; back tire, 2/32 inches deep.) Also, check for bulges, cracks, exposed cords of tread. Based on tire depth and inspection, record tire depth in proper space,

| Left Front | Good | Average | Fair | Reject |
| Right Front | Good | Average | Fair | Reject |
| Left Rear | Good | Average | Fair | Reject |
| Right Rear | Good | Average | Fair | Reject |

INTERIOR

_____ Operate turn signal/Emergency Flashers
_____ Horn operational
_____ All gauges/instruments/dash lights working
_____ Interior lights/dome light
_____ Steering
_____ Brakes
_____ Operate windshield wiper/check wiper fluid/rubber blades
_____ Mirrors (cracks, looseness, distortion) and windshield glass
_____ Air conditioning and heating operating properly
_____ Move van to check back-up alarm
_____ Seat/seat belts
_____ Emergency exit door and windows
_____ Cell phone is functional

SAFETY EQUIPMENT / LEGAL DOCUMENTS

_____ Fresh interior damage
_____ Passageway to and through rear exit door clear
_____ Housekeeping/cleanliness

_____ Child and booster seat in van if applicable
_____ First Aid Kit condition/fully stocked
_____ Fire Extinguisher (inspect monthly)
_____ Triangles available
_____ Registration Card and Insurance Card current
_____ Inspection certificate - current

POST TRIP INSPECTION – PERFORM AT END OF TRIP: Walk around the vehicle and look for any exterior damage which has occurred during trip and check status of tires (flat, leak, damaged). Check interior to assure it is clean for next trip! Record any problems on this report detected while driving the vehicle. Examples: steering (hard, shimmy, free-play), brakes (soft, scraping, too sensitive), and transmission (noisy or slow shift).

COMMENTS / PROBLEMS


By signature below, I hereby certify that I have, in fact, inspected all items checked on this report. Any problems or concerns have been written on this report.  DRIVER'S SIGNATURE

CHURCH ADMINISTRATOR'S SIGNATURE

(Note: In case of accident, call the pastor: 268-7470)  (This pre-trip report is to be placed in inspection file.)
WHY DO VEHICULAR ACCIDENTS OCCUR?

Accidents don’t just happen. Behind every accident, there is a cause.

An **unavoidable accident** is one which could not be prevented. Example: You are approaching a steep curve in the road and just as you begin maneuvering the curb, a deer suddenly jumps onto the road and hits your bus causing extensive damage.

An **avoidable accident** occurs when a driver does not do everything reasonably possible to avoid the accident. Example: You are stopped at an intersection and when the light turns green, you proceed ahead before looking in both directions to make sure other vehicles have stopped. Another example: A driver of a pickup truck runs the red light and crashes into your church van. While it can be argued that the driver should have stopped, this does not negate your responsibility in taking all reasonable precautions to avoid such an accident.

If we analyze any vehicular accident, we will find there are only three possible causes:

1. **Equipment failure**
2. **Lack of driver training**
3. **Human error**

Well **over 90% of accidents are caused by the negligence of the driver** who failed to do everything possible to avoid the accident.

Such a startling statistic should motivate the church board to require the church to be in compliance with all DOT regulations even though the church may be exempted as stated earlier.

15 PASSENGER VANS

**Recent Accidents**

Many 15-passenger church vans carrying passengers have been involved in horrific accidents resulting in death or serious injury to occupants. Consider the following examples.

Example. A 15-passenger church van taking children home following an after-school program at a South Carolina church was struck by a truck. Six children were killed.

Example. A 15-passenger van carrying members of a Colorado church’s youth group rolled over, killing five teenage occupants.

Example. A 15-passenger church van carrying 11 teenage members of a Georgia church youth group rolled over, ejecting 10 of the passengers and killing three of them. The one teenager who was not ejected survived the accident. He was the only member
of the youth group who was wearing a seatbelt, even though seatbelts were available for each passenger.

Why Are 15-Passenger Vans Dangerous?

1. They are designed to carry cargo, not people, and so they do not comply with many of the basic safety requirements that apply to passenger cars or the stricter federal requirements that apply to school buses. For example, 15-passenger vans do not have flashing lights or "stop arms" that are required for school buses, and they have fewer emergency exits (the back door is blocked by the backseat in many vans).

2. They become top-heavy and prone to rollovers when fully loaded or occupied.

3. Most drivers do not have a commercial driver's license and have received no formal training on the use of such vehicles.

4. The side windows of most 15-passenger vans are made of tempered, not laminated glass. Tempered glass is much cheaper, and since 15-passenger vans were designed to carry cargo rather than people, the vehicle manufacturers have tended to use tempered glass for side windows. The problem with tempered glass is that it is far less likely to keep occupants from being ejected in an accident than laminated glass, which contains a middle layer of plastic.

5. The risk of rollover increases sharply when drivers make sudden maneuvers. This risk is quite common, since there are many conditions that may cause a driver to swerve suddenly, including something falling off a truck in front of the van, a person darting out into the street, or an animal running across the road.

NHTSA Advisory on 15-passenger Vans

The National Highway Transportation Safety Administration issued a rare "consumer advisory" in 2001 warning of the rollover risk of 15-passenger vans. The advisory concludes that a 15-passenger van with more than 15 occupants has a rollover risk nearly seven times greater than a lightly loaded van (fewer than 5 occupants) in a single vehicle accident. The rollover risk is nearly 3 times greater with more than 9 occupants than with less than 10.

The NHTSA reissued this safety advisory in April 2002, in part because of "several tragic rollover crashes involving religious groups on trips" during the summer of 2001.

Churches that continue to use 15-passenger vans to transport people are assuming an increased risk of liability unless they take specific steps to reduce that risk. If a court concludes that a church’s use of a 15-passenger van amounts to gross negligence, then the church may be assessed punitive damages (which are not covered under its general liability insurance policy), and the members of the church board may be personally liable.
Each driver should be trained on church policy and procedures. This should apply to those who possess a Commercial Driver's License and those who are not required to have a CDL based on the type of vehicle being operated.

It is recommended that training consist of the following components (estimated time: 3 to 7 hours depending on number of driver participants and license status)

1. Classroom instruction/discussion on topics listed in the individual Training Package.
2. Skill demonstration/practice in conducting Pre Trip Inspection
3. Over-the-road performance evaluation

Training should be documented in the individual Training Package and after completion, the package should be kept on file at the church for future reference.

A sample Training Package is shown on the next few pages.
DRIVER TRAINING PACKAGE

PEOPLES MEMORIAL CHRISTIAN CHURCH

Driver____________________________________

Training Date____________________________

Type vans authorized to operate:

_____15-passenger      Church Bus____
**INDIVIDUAL TRAINING CONTROL SHEET**

**DRIVER** ____________________________________________

By date and signature below, the instructor certifies the driver can perform each skill *correctly using the prescribed method which has been taught and in the required amount of time without any assistance*. The instructor’s signature beside a knowledge element including certifies that the employee has demonstrated an understanding of the knowledge based on oral and written questions which have been asked. By signature, the driver verifies that each skill and knowledge element shown on this page has been taught and he/she has had the opportunity to perform and *master* each skill and is satisfied that he or she has satisfactory job knowledge.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TRAINING ACTIVITIES INCLUDING SKILL AND KNOWLEDGE ELEMENTS</th>
<th>INSTRUCTOR’S SIGNATURE</th>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>DRIVER’S SIGNATURE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>INTRODUCTION</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review: Basic Church Policy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is a church bus subject to DOT Regulations? Discussion</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hazards for churches exempt from DOT regulations</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>FEDERAL DOT REQUIREMENTS</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Driver qualifications</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Equipment</td>
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<tr>
<td>Safe driving</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>PRE AND POST TRIP INSPECTION</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Church policy: Pre trip inspection must be conducted just before beginning trip and post trip inspection must be conducted upon return to the church – NO Exceptions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Demonstrate and driver perform inspect and operate fire extinguisher</td>
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<tr>
<td>Instruct on turning in inspection report which is properly documented by the driver and reporting any problems with the vehicle which are safety concerns to management</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CAUSES OF VEHICULAR ACCIDENTS</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three major causes which can be prevented</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concerns about 15-passenger vans</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>DEFENSIVE DRIVING</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review: Safe Driving Checklist</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Review handout on specific state child safety seat regulations</td>
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<tr>
<td>Video DVD Presentation: “Smith System” *</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>EXERCISES</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Demonstrate and driver perform Conduct Pre Trip Inspection <em>(Include review for CDL drivers who have met this requirement during skills test required for Commercial Driver’s License)</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Road test (satisfied when completed for CDL – copy of road test certification or copy of CDL on file; conduct road test for other drivers)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*Video DVD on Smith System of defensive driving entitled “Outside the Box” is available through the following web site: [https://store.smith-system.com/index.php/product/product/27/](https://store.smith-system.com/index.php/product/product/27/) (Order the step van version)*
SAFE DRIVING CHECKLIST

THE MOST COMPREHENSIVE LIST OF SAFE DRIVING RULES APPEAR IN THE COMMERCIAL DRIVER’S HANDBOOK TO WHICH DRIVERS WHO POSSESS A COMMERCIAL DRIVER’S LICENSE HAVE ALREADY BEEN EXPOSED.

THIS SAFE DRIVING CHECKLIST IS NOT A SUBSTITUTE FOR THE CONTENT OF THE COMMERCIAL DRIVER’S HANDBOOK. RATHER, THE PURPOSE OF THIS CHECKLIST IS TO PROVIDE REFRESHER TRAINING ON CRITICAL VEHICULAR SAFETY RULES WHICH DEAL WITH FREQUENT SITUATIONS TO WHICH DRIVERS OF CHURCH BUSES CAN BE EXPOSED.

RULES WHICH ARE CONFUSING OR NEED FURTHER CLARIFICATION SHOULD BE DISCUSSED DURING TRAINING. WHEN YOU UNDERSTAND THE RULE, PLEASE SIGN YOUR FIRST/LAST NAME AT THE END OF EACH SECTION TO SHOW THAT YOU HAVE READ AND FULLY UNDERSTAND THE MEANING OF THE RULE OR PROCEDURES. NO INITIALS, PLEASE!

BEFORE THE TRIP

1. Each driver who drives the church bus must have a Commercial Driver’s License with Passenger Endorsement and air brake endorsement (if bus/van is equipped with air brakes).

2. Individual responsible for safe operation of any church van/bus must verify that drivers are capable of operating the vehicle prior to unsupervised driving including completion of church training program.

3. Drivers must perform a pre-operational check of the vehicle completing the required vehicle inspection sheet before the vehicle leaves the church. The pre trip inspection report should remain with the driver throughout the trip and upon returning to the church, it should be turned into the Church Administrator.

4. Drivers must be familiar with and accountable for all safety policies and procedures.

EN-ROUTE PROCEDURES

5. Drivers are required to wear seat belt at all times the vehicle is in operation. Drivers are also personally responsible for making sure all passenger clients are also wearing their seat belt at all times the vehicle is in operation (assuming bus/van is equipped with seat belts).

6. Depart on time and stay on schedule, but never at the expense of passenger safety.

7. Drive safely and smoothly. Operate at all times in compliance with applicable traffic regulations, ordinances, and laws of the jurisdiction in which the vehicle is being operated.

8. Drivers must drive defensively, observing all speed limits and other traffic laws while operating the vehicle; be very careful when approaching intersections and never make an abrupt move/turn that could possibly cause your van to turn over! Also, come to a complete stop at all stop signs.

9. A vehicle with passenger doors in the open position should not be operated with passengers aboard. The doors should not be opened until the vehicle is stopped or at a railroad crossing. A vehicle with inoperative doors should not be operated with passengers aboard.

10. Passengers are not permitted to stand while our vehicle is in motion including standing in the step-wells of the vehicle.
11. Fueling the vehicle when passengers are being transported should be avoided unless it is necessary.

12. Vehicles should not be left unattended at any time when passengers are aboard.

13. Drivers may NOT use personal cell phone while driving the vehicle and NO audio devices with headphones or earplugs covering both ears permitted while driving.

14. When actually driving, you should have both hands on the steering wheel at all times.

15. Drivers should plan their route in a manner that minimizes or eliminates the need for backing and other maneuvers that increase the risk of an accident.

16. Drivers should choose the safest location possible to park vehicles.

17. Windshields, windshield wipers, headlights, taillights, emergency light covers, side windows, and mirrors must be kept clean at all times.

18. Vehicles should never be left running and keys should be removed whenever a vehicle is left unattended.

19. Know the clearance for the church van/bus to assure it can clear bridges, canopies, etc.

20. Never let a passenger off the van/bus and into the street!

Driver Signature: __________________________________________

DRIVING IN INCLEMENT WEATHER

A number of driving hazards including reduced visibility, reduced steering control, and frequent braking are created when operating a vehicle during inclement weather. The following guidelines must be followed by Drivers operating the church van during times of inclement weather:

1. Increase the stopping distance between the church bus and other vehicles.

2. Be aware that bridges will freeze before other areas due to their elevation above the ground.

3. Black ice on asphalt roads cannot be seen. If the potential for black ice exists, drivers should exercise extreme caution.

4. When rain first begins, the water may mix with oil on the road surface creating a potentially hazardous situation. Caution should be exercised.

5. To reduce instances of hydroplaning on standing water, reduce speed and always keep tires at a proper inflation.

6. Avoid driving into deep puddles if possible. If deep puddles are impossible to avoid, slow down before entering the puddle, keep a firm grip on the steering wheel, and do not brake.

7. When driving through high water, slow down and place the transmission in a low gear. When the vehicle exits the water, apply light pressure on the brakes repeatedly for a short distance.
When it is safe to do so, make a test stop to assure that the brakes are sufficiently dry and operational.

8. When driving in fog, slow down, turn on low beam lights, and use the right edge of the roadway to identify and maintain road position.

9. When driving on slippery surfaces, lightly tap the brakes when needed to prevent brake locking.

10. When a skid occurs, steer in the direction of the skid.

Driver Signature: ______________________________________________

DRIVING AT NIGHT

There are a number of hazards including reduced visibility, glare, the need for increased reaction time, and an increased number of tired or intoxicated drivers who are associated with night driving. The following procedures should be utilized to help drivers prepare for safe night driving:

1. Inspect and clean headlights, taillights, windshield, clearance lights, reflectors, and turn signals.

2. During darkness, interior lighting and lighting of step-wells on vehicles should be sufficient for passengers to enter and exit safely.

3. Increase your space cushion by driving a slightly slower speed than you would during the day; never allow speed to exceed headlight visibility.

4. Turn on lights early and avoid the glare of oncoming bright lights by watching the right edge of the roadway. If someone is needlessly using bright light, do not turn your bright lights on in response to their lights.

5. Do not brake more than necessary. Use engine and lower gears to help you to slow down the vehicle when traction is poor.

6. Keep the fuel tank at least one fourth full at all times to avoid possibility of depleting gasoline and becoming stranded in an area where gasoline station may not be near.

Driver Signature: ______________________________________________

BACKING

As previously indicated, backing is strongly discouraged. If backing is absolutely necessary, the following procedures should be utilized:

1. Except when backing out of a parking stall, drivers should only back a vehicle when it is absolutely necessary. If it becomes necessary to back the vehicle while the vehicle is in service, the driver should use an adult as a spotter if necessary. The use of a spotter does not relieve the driver of the responsibility to back the vehicle safely.

2. Before backing, check carefully in all directions including the rear of the vehicle.
3. Always turn on the emergency flashers when attempting to back.

4. If the vehicle does not have a working back up alarm, begin honking the horn and continue to give short continuous beeps on the horn while the vehicle is in motion.

5. As a rule when stopping in traffic, stop far enough back to see the rear tires on the vehicle ahead. This allows a driver the ability to go around a stalled vehicle on the left or right without the need for backing.

6. Do not enter intersections and crosswalks until they are free of traffic and avoid all positions where backing a large vehicle would be required.

7. If the view is obstructed, the driver should exit the vehicle when it is reasonably safe to do so to check behind and around the vehicle.

Driver Signature: 

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**DEALING WITH BRAKE FAILURE**

The guidelines below are provided to assist drivers in safely maneuvering a vehicle during brake failure:

1. Do not force the brake to the floor as this destroys any chance of rebuilding brake pressure.

2. Gently pump the brake pedal to see if you can restore pressure.

3. Sound horn and flash lights to alert other drivers of the problem.

4. Shift to the lowest gear possible.

5. Remain calm and guide the vehicle into an environment where it can be slowed and brought to a natural stop.

6. Look for a natural upgrade or a large open parking lot that can be used to coast the vehicle to a stop.

7. Do not pull the parking brake unless there is no other alternative as it can put the vehicle in a tailspin. If the parking brake is utilized, leverage should be controlled by hand to prevent the brakes from locking.

Driver Signature: 

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**TIRE PROBLEMS**

To ensure that the vehicle remains under driver control in the event of a tire blowout, the following procedure should be followed:

1. The loud bang of a tire blowout is an easily recognizable sound although it may take several seconds for the vehicle to react. If the sound of a blowout is heard, stop the vehicle immediately.

2. Thumping or heavy vibration is often indicative of a flat tire. If these events occur, the vehicle should be stopped immediately.
3. A heavy feeling in steering is often indicative of a front tire flat while a flat on the rear of the vehicle will often cause a feeling of sliding. If these events occur, the vehicle should be stopped immediately.

4. In the event of a flat or blowout, the steering wheel should be firmly gripped until the vehicle can be brought to a safe stop.

5. When a tire failure occurs, immediately release the accelerator pedal until the vehicle slows down. As the vehicle slows, gently pump the brakes and find a location to safely pull off the road. After stopping, check all tires and promptly notify Church Administrator of the situation.

Driver Signature: ____________________________________________________

RIGHT TURNS ON RED AND CROSSING RAILROAD TRACKS

When driving a bus (15 passenger and driver), you may NOT turn right on a red light. Also, the bus and all other passenger vans MUST stop before crossing railroad tracks regardless of whether or not a train is approaching the crossing. The following procedures were designed to insure safety for the driver as well as the passengers and other motorists and must be utilized when approaching and crossing railroad tracks:

1. Upon approaching a railroad crossing, proceed into the far right lane of two lane road.

2. Turn on the four-way flashers at a minimum of 100 feet before reaching the railroad tracks.

3. As you approach the track, roll down window, turn off heaters, fans, etc. (If passengers are noisy, ask them to remain quiet so that a train can be heard if one is approaching.)

4. Stop the vehicle no closer than fifteen (15) feet and no further than fifty (50) feet away from the track. The vehicle must stop behind the white line, if such line is present, and not in the path of the crossing barrier.

5. Open the vehicle door and listen for an approaching train before proceeding across the tracks. Look in both directions while listening. (When operating a vehicle with an electric door, it will be necessary to place the lever in PARK position before activating the door.)

6. If it is concluded that no train is approaching, close the door, move lever to DRIVE position on vans with electric doors, check left mirror for traffic, proceed slowly over the tracks to avoid vehicle damage, and turn off the four-way flashers after the vehicle is across the tracks.

Driver Signature: ____________________________________________________

VEHICLE LIGHTING

The following guidelines apply to all transit vehicles during operation:

1. Lights should be turned on during the period from sunset to sunrise.

2. Lights should be turned on when windshield wipers are in use as a result of rain, fog, smoke, or snow.
3. During darkness, interior lighting and lighting on step wells in buses should be available for passengers to enter and exit the bus safely.

4. Use lights when inclement weather or environmental factors reduce the ability to discern persons and vehicles on a street and highway at a distance of 500 feet.

5. Four-way hazard lights must be used when
   a. A vehicle is disabled or involved in an accident.
   b. Parking a vehicle in an area where the vehicle cannot park completely off the roadway
   c. Stopping at a railroad crossing and
   d. Stops or other situations make the use of lights appropriate.

Driver Signature: ________________________________

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

1. EMERGENCY: In any accident or emergency situation involving the church bus/van, our church should be represented at the scene by only one individual in any ensuing discussion with authorities, insurance representatives, etc. The driver will be the spokesperson on the scene for the church in any such situation.

2. In case of a vehicle break down, the driver should contact the Church Administrator immediately.

3. In case of an accident, the driver or a passenger should call 911 and contact the Church Administrator immediately.

4. The driver is responsible for filling out all forms required by the law enforcement as well as accident reports required by the church.

5. If you must stop on a road or the shoulder of any road, you must put out your emergency warning devices within ten minutes. Place your warning devices at the following locations:
   - If you stop on a two-lane road carrying traffic in both directions or on an undivided highway, place warning devices within ten feet of the front or rear corners to mark the location of the vehicle and 100 feet behind and ahead of the vehicle, on the shoulder or in the lane you stopped in.
   - Back beyond any hill, curve, or other obstruction that prevents other drivers from seeing the vehicle within 500 feet.
   - If you must stop on or by a one-way or divided highway, place warning devices 10 feet, and 200 feet toward the approaching traffic.

When putting out the triangles, hold them between yourself and the oncoming traffic for your own safety so other drivers can see you!

6. When it is necessary to evacuate the van/bus (such as fire or other emergency), calmly assist the passengers and instruct them to move to a specific safe zone away from the van (defined by driver) and remain there until emergency has ended.

Driver Signature: ________________________________
OPERATION OF 15-PASSENGER VANS

1. Only drivers who receive specific training on the use of 15-passenger vans are to operate these vans.

2. When possible, have fewer than ten occupants on board. For example, if there are eighteen individuals being transported using two 15-passenger vans, nine should be seated in each van.

3. Load occupants starting at the front of the van. Example: If there are nine individuals being transported, fill the first nine seats starting at the front. Also, passengers should be distributed evenly from side to side for balance.

4. Each occupant is required to wear a seat belt at all times. (Nearly 80 percent of those killed in 15-passenger van rollovers in 2000 were not wearing seat belts.)

5. Absolutely nothing is to be loaded on the van roof.

6. Van drivers should be well rested which is especially critical during long trips. Drivers experience more fatigue between 12 midnight and 6am. For this reason, when possible, the 15-passenger van should not be operated during this time unless another driver who is rested can assume driver duties for this time frame. Also, be aware that 3:00 to 5:00pm is a time when fatigue is common. On long trips, schedule rest stops every two hours.

7. Drivers should drive cautiously (maintain a safe speed under the conditions and be especially careful on rural and curved roads).

8. Inspect tires monthly to check for wear and proper inflation. (Worn or improperly inflated tires increase the risk of a blowout. And, a 15-passenger van’s tendency to roll over increases dramatically during emergency maneuvers, such as a panic response to a tire blowout.)

9. If the van’s wheels drop off the roadway, gradually reduce speed and steer back onto the road when it is safe to do so.

10. Because of the van’s size and shape, you must be especially mindful of crosswinds. Crosswinds can be created by open fields, overpasses and bridges, as well as exiting tunnels. Crosswinds are also created by larger vehicles and buses.

11. Drivers should keep the van’s gas tank as full as possible.

12. The 15-passenger van should not be driven in excess of 60 mph.

13. Towing heavy or multiaxle trailers is prohibited.

14. A cell phone should never be used by the driver while operating the vehicle under any circumstances.

15. Vans should be maintained properly and inspected frequently by a competent mechanic. Keep a logbook of all maintenance performed.

16. Drivers should be at least 25 years of age.

Driver Signature: ________________________
Driver ____________________________________

S U 1. Does not use personal cell phone while driving and when passengers are on board.
S U 2. Does not slouch in the seat while driving. Arms are not on or out of window frame.
S U 3. Is wearing sturdy shoes which are fully covering foot. No sandals, flip-flops, or open-toed shoes.
S U 4. Uses seat belt correctly at all times.
S U 5. Checks to make sure all passengers are using seat belts.
S U 6. Uses signals for all maneuvers in traffic.
S U 7. Does not jerk the vehicle when stopping and starting.
S U 8. Uses the brakes without stomping or slamming (stops vehicle smoothly).
S U 9. Presses the brakes slightly to warn tailgaters to slow down or uses flashers when there is an emergency on the road and vehicle must come to a quick stop.
S U 10. Does not whip around corners, slows down to 2 to 5 miles per hour when turning corners. Positions vehicle for proper safe turns. (Squares the corner and does not cross over curving when turning.)
S U 11. Does not travel too slow or too fast for conditions of the road or for the posted speed limit. Always drives appropriate speed for conditions.
S U 12. Keeps four seconds distance between vehicles ahead and our van.
S U 13. Does not start into an intersection without proper caution, uses the four second rule. Keeps safety cushion under control.
S U 14. Slows down when green light has been green for some time at a distance.
S U 15. When approaching railroad track, rolls down window and then stops 15 to 50 feet from railroad tracks, opens door, uses flashers, and looks and listens. Closes door and then proceeds across tracks.
S U 16. Stops at the plane of the intersection before entering traffic from parking lot, etc.
S U 17. Checks mirrors, looks over shoulder, signals, moves into passing lane, signals and returns to proper lane.
S U 18. Stops behind plane of intersection. Does not cross over white line at the intersection.
S U 19. Signals at proper distance for an intended turn. Cancels signal when maneuver is completed.
S U 20. Keeps schedule safely; does not jeopardize safety for schedule.
S U 21. Keeps the four second rule in mind when following someone in all dry weather conditions. Adds seconds when weather conditions dictate a change in driving behavior. Keeps safety cushion in control.
S U 22. Does NOT enter area under a canopy which would cause van to hit canopy.
S U 23. Does NOT park van at an entrance for an unnecessary period of time causing other vehicles not to be able to get to entrance.
S U 24. Gets out and looks behind vehicle, for obstacles, before backing or uses spotter.
S U 25. Uses defensive driving skills throughout the trip; i.e. Keep eyes moving, leave yourself an out, make sure they see you, gets the big picture, aims high in steering.
S U 26. No vehicular accident during trip
S U 27. Complies with all other safety regulations per knowledge required for obtaining CDL.

(Continued on next page)
MAJOR STRENGTH:

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED BASED ON SPECIFIC EVALUATION (LIST):

FOLLOWUP:

OVERALL EVALUATION (CIRCLE ONE): Satisfactory Unsatisfactory

Certification of Road Test:

Driver’s name____________________ Social Security No____________________

Operator’s or Chauffeur’s License No__________________ State____________________

Type of bus ______________________ This is to certify that the above-named driver was given a road test under my supervision on ____________, 20____, consisting of approximately ___ miles of driving. It is my considered opinion that this driver possesses sufficient driving skill to operate safely the type of church motor vehicle listed above.

Signature of examiner____________________ (Title) __________________________

Examiner’s Organization: __________________________

Address: __________________________________________

Reviewed by Church Administrator: __________________________________________