



As part of the Rio Texas Conference Child, Youth, and Vulnerable Adult Safety Policy, all clergy, staff, and volunteers in ministry with these populations must be certified every two years by following these three steps:

SAFE GATHERINGS SAFETY CERTIFICATION

1. REGISTER WITH SAFE GATHERINGS

Go to safegatherings.com and click on the red **Get Started** button. Fill out the online application:

- Select First United Methodist Church of Austin
- Please select the driver record box **ONLY** if you **KNOW** you will be driving for mission trips or other church-related activities (including youth events).
- References:
 - **DO NOT** list Pastor Taylor Fuerst as your clergy reference (she receives all requests automatically).
 - You **CAN** list Pastor Cathy Stone or Pastor Brad King as your clergy reference.
 - All references, including pastors, **MUST** have known you at least 6 months.
 - You **MAY** use another professional reference instead of a pastor.
 - FUMC lay staff members are happy to serve as your lay reference.
 - References **WILL** be emailed, so please use someone you know personally and notify them to expect a message that requires a response.

2. COMPLETE THE SAFE GATHERINGS ONLINE TRAINING COURSE

Once you have completed your online application, you will be shown a dashboard of options. The Safe Gatherings online training is a 1-2 hour course on safety guidelines and best practices, as defined by the state of Texas. It can be completed all at once or in segments, at your convenience. A final test is required. To begin, click next to **Course Completion** in your dashboard.

3. COMPLETE THE TRUSTED CON CONFIANZA ONLINE MODULE

This is a change for 2024 – This 30-minute interactive module addresses the details of the Rio Texas Conference policy and safety in ministry settings, and **takes the place of attending a scheduled webinar**. The module must be completed in one sitting.

Your certification is **NOT** complete until all three steps have been finished. You can check the status of your application on your dashboard at any time. The church receives notification when you are cleared to participate in ministry. For technical questions, contact Safe Gatherings at (888) 241-8258 or contact@safegatherings.com. For policy or FUMC questions, contact Safety Policy Administrator Emily Buchanan at emily@fumcaustin.org.

Thank you for your dedication and your service!