

PASTORAL AND LAYCOUNSELING POLICY STATEMENT

The objective of Pastoral and Lay Counselling at Faith Mission Christian Church is limited to Spiritual counselling in a Christian context. Counseling will be consistent with FMCC's Statement of Faith, Bylaws, organizing documents, and biblical scholarship. FMCC's eligible counselors may provide referrals when warranted. FMCC and its counselors will be held harmless with regard to referrals and their respective programs, services, or activities undertaken at the discretion of the counselee.

Counselling at FMCC is not designed or intended to provide diagnoses, treat any mental or physical disease, offer medical or holistic prescriptions, advise on legal matters (domestic, business, family, or otherwise), or advise on financial or tax matters requiring a professional.

Counselling services are of no charge to members or the general public. The Counselling relationship can end at the discretion of either party at any time for any reason or for no reason at all. Services are to be expressly solicited by the counselee, even if recommended by an officer of FMCC. Counselling is available to adults and minors, provided the minor's guardian provides consent for pastoral counseling and the counselling is conducted in presence of at least two adults.

Those eligible to provide Pastoral and Lay Counseling include: Minister Jasmine Young, MDiv., Pastoral Leader. Lay counseling is not available as of the time of this writing. In the future, lay counselors will have completed a written application, been members for at least one year, be qualified according to the bylaws for deaconate ministry, complete a questionnaire and background check about previous criminal histories of sexual offenses, violence against youth, and other criminal offenses. The written application asks questions designed to help us determine whether applicants have mature adult relationships as well as clear boundaries and ethical standards for their conduct with counselees. Background checks for all counselors will be completed annually. Personal references will be required. FMCC's counseling program/policy prohibits romantic or sexual relationships between counselor and counselee and prohibits close personal relationship with prospective counselees. This policy is reviewed annually for any warranted updates.

Code of Ethics

We maintain confidentiality of the counselee in and outside of the counselling session. Professionalism is expected from all parties. We maintain a Biblical basis for all counselling advice. We maintain Christian faith-affirming approaches to counselling.

It is also our policy to comply with applicable laws providing for nondiscrimination in employment against individuals with disabilities. Any counselee who believes he or she has a disability and may require an accommodation must contact the Pastor. A copy of this policy is provided with the Church Counseling Agreement.

Signatures

Senior Pastor

Date

Church Clerk

Date

Revised: September 2024

CHURCH COUNSELING AGREEMENT

Purpose:

Be it resolved, that all counseling at Faith Mission Christian Church is to be Biblically based rather than psychologically based. Our counseling help reflects our Biblical training and is therefore aimed at spiritual issues and offers spiritual solutions. The Biblical premises for counseling is two-fold: Man is created in the image of God, fallen and lost by the results of sin; the Word of God is powerful to provide wisdom and lead us to truth in our everyday lives.

Goal:

The goal of Biblically based counseling is to attempt to negate the detriments of the fall so that one lives not through fallen motivations but by those consistent with being an image bearer of God. For example, to be recreated (*Ephesians 4:21-24, Colossians 3:10, Romans 8:29*).

Guidelines regarding the safeguarding of members and counsellors against alleged abuses:

Whereas all counseling is to be done within the following guidelines:

- No counseling of the opposite sex or person under the age of eighteen (18) shall be done without another person present.
- Counseling of the opposite sex or person shall be done so that it is visible to adjacent areas.
- Individual counseling of the opposite sex shall be limited to four one-hour sessions unless extended after review and approval of the Board of Directors for additional specific number of sessions.
- Home visitation of the opposite sex or person shall not be made alone, but only if accompanied by another member of the pastorate, ministerial staff or volunteer.
- Use the Faith Mission Christian Church Counseling Application and Consent form at formal counseling sessions.

Signatures

I _____ have read the Church Counseling Policy, and I understand, and I agree to abide by the terms. Undersigned:

Church Counselor

Date

I _____ have read and understand the Church Counseling Policy, and I consent to the requested church counseling at my explicit free choice. Undersigned:

Counselee

Date

Revised: September 2024