**Place of Grace Church**

**“Extended Grace Ministries”**

**Counseling Guidelines**

We’re so glad that you’re taking this important step to seek Godly counsel. Our goal in providing biblical counseling is to help you meet the challenges of life in a way that will please and honor the Lord Jesus Christ and allow you to enjoy fully His love for you and His plans for your life.

God’s Word tells us he came so that we could have life – abundant life **(John 10:10)**! This means God’s desire for us is to have more than what is merely necessary to survive; His desire is for us to flourish and experience joy in Him.

Jesus promises us, **“*Come to me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest”*** *(Matthew 11:28).* No matter what your situation, this is a time in your life that the God of all creation knows and understands completely, and therefore, there is great hope!

This form is helpful for us to start getting to know you and your situation, as well as to communicate these first important points which explain some of our perspectives and convictions which we believe are honoring to God and the best way we can truly be of help to you.

**Biblical Basis:**

We believe that the Bible provides thorough guidance and instruction for faith and life. (2 Peter 1:3 and Romans 15:4) Therefore, our counseling is based solely on scriptural principles rather than those of secular psychology or psychiatry. Nor do our counselors prescribe or otherwise provide evaluations for pharmaceutical therapy. If your physician has advised that you need such treatment, or that you may have symptoms related to an organic issue, you should seek advice and evaluation with a physician or psychiatrist of your choosing (We can help you find one if needed).

*\*We ask that all of those we counsel be regular attendees to our Sunday morning worship services. Other vital components to your growth will be assigned during the course counseling. We will be ready to help in each step along the way*.

**Not Professional Advice:**

Although some of the pastoral or lay counselors of this church may hold degrees or be licensed in other fields, such as medicine or psychology, they do not practice as professional doctors, psychologists, or psychiatrists in their role as Place of Grace Biblical Counselors. Therefore, if you have significant legal, financial, medical, or other technical questions, you should seek advice from independent professionals not associated with Place of Grace. Our pastoral and lay counselors will be happy to cooperate with such advisors and help you to consider their counsel in the light of relevant biblical principles. By signing this “*Consent to Biblical Counseling*” you are giving Place of Grace the permission to counsel you/your child and you agree to hold Place of Grace harmless in any and all matters associated with the biblical advice you/they receive.

**Confidentiality:**

Confidentiality is an important aspect of the counseling process, and we will carefully protect the information you entrust to us. With this said, please note that there may arise certain situations when it may be necessary for us to share certain information with others: **(1) When a counselor is uncertain of how to address a particular problem and needs to seek advice from another counselor, pastor, or elder in this church; (2) when the counselor sees an opportunity to involve appropriate PGC staff in additional care for others involved; or (3) when there is a clear indication that someone may be harmed unless we otherwise intervene.**

***\*****Please be assured that our counselors strongly prefer not to disclose personal information to others, and they will make every effort to help you find ways to resolve a problem as privately as possible.*

**Resolution of Conflicts:**

On rare occasions, a conflict may arise between counselor and counselee. In order to make sure that any such conflicts will be resolved in a biblically faithful manner, we require all of our counselees to agree that any dispute that arises with the counselor or with this church as a result of counseling will be settled with mediation within the church according to the principles of scripture and the authority of this local church (Matthew 18: 15-17, Ephesians 4:17-32).

Having clarified the principles and policies of our counseling ministry, we welcome the opportunity to minister to you in the name of Christ and to be used by Him as He helps you to grow in spiritual maturity and prepares you for usefulness in His body.

If you have any questions about these guidelines, please talk with a pastor or elder, or member of the counseling team. If these guidelines are acceptable to you, please sign below.

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Counselee Date