

Procedures for Expressing Concerns, Differences, and Disagreements

This process is to be followed when someone has a concern regarding another person, or issue, within our church and is based on Christian principals as set forth in Matthew 18: 15-17 *“If another member of the church sins against you, go and point out the fault when the two of you are alone. If the member listens to you, you have regained that one. But if you are not listened to, take one or two others along with you, so that every word may be confirmed by the evidence of two or three witnesses. If the member refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if the offender refuses to listen even to the church, let such a one be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector.”* By following the process as described below, we feel that most issues will be resolved prayerfully and thoughtfully, before they grow out of proportion and harm the relationships within our church family, and the ministry of our church.

If you are a person with a grievance:

1. Take time to prayerfully discern God’s will in the situation.
2. Go directly to the person with whom you have a problem and talk with the person about it.
3. If the conflict is not resolved after the meeting, then it is appropriate to deal with the concern in Session.
4. A signed one-page summary of the concern should be written. Forms are available in the church office and on the website.

If a person approaches you as a third party with a grievance against another person:

1. Encourage the person to prayerfully discern God’s will in the situation.
2. Encourage the person to go directly to the other party involved in order to work out the problem.
3. Ask the person to get back with you after they have had the meeting and let you know how it went.
4. If it has not been resolved, then it is appropriate to ask the person to write a signed one-page summary of the concern.

From this point the procedure is the same. This is also the procedure if the complaint or disagreement is with the Session itself.

5. Place the signed form in the mailbox of the Clerk of Session and a copy in the Pastor’s mailbox so that this can be put on the agenda for the next Session meeting. Copies of the one-page summary will be made available to all session members. (during the pandemic, mail the form to the Clerk of Session and the Moderator of Session)
6. Elders will read and discuss the summary, listening for God’s direction. After achieving consensus on how to proceed, the Session may refer the matter back to a committee or decide to address the concern itself.
7. All parties involved shall be in attendance at the committee or Session meeting in which the matter is discussed.
8. If agreement and reconciliation are not achieved after sincere attempts to do so, and if Session deems the issues serious enough to affect the peace and unity of the church, they may bring in an outside mediator.
9. At any time during the process, either party may contact the pastor or the Clerk of Session for clarification of their rights under the rules stated in the Book of Order.

Your Name: _____

Name the person this concerns: _____

What is the concern? _____

Briefly describe the steps you have taken to resolve this concern with the party(ies) involved.

What have the two of you agreed to?

Concern Summary