

## CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY

### *Principles*

1. As Church leaders, we welcome all church members to come to us with spiritual, emotional and relational struggles.
2. Everything that you share will be treated with care and respect, and held in confidence. However, the promise of confidentiality has limits that you should be aware of from the outset of any conversation.
3. Legally, we have a responsibility to speak to others in authority if we learn that:
  - ✓ you pose a threat to yourself or others  
or
  - ✓ there is physical, psychological, emotional, financial, or sexual abuse, or neglect of a child or vulnerable adult involved  
or
  - ✓ a crime has been committed.
4. Conscientiously, as leaders of the church we also feel a responsibility to speak to others to ensure that we are providing the kind of care and support that will be in your best interest.

### *Practice*

Please understand that, while we will never gossip or speak lightly of any member, we do feel a responsibility to do the following when hurting people come to us for help:

- We may talk to at least two of our elders or ministry team to get their advice and prayer support. There are situations – when the issues are serious enough and could affect the whole church – when conversations will be shared with the whole leadership team.
- When other members of the church are involved (e.g., when relationships are broken, when there is anger or disappointment, gossip), we may approach those other people in an effort to get both sides of the story and to foster reconciliation.
- When we are made aware of a struggle that someone else in the congregation has experienced, we may well speak to that person without disclosing your identity.

We don't want the fear of exposure to keep you from approaching one of us, if you have something that cannot be shared with anyone else in the church, let us find you a Christian professional counselor, who can respect your request for confidentiality.