

Forest Hills Church

Conflict Resolution Covenant

Purpose: At Forest Hills we commit to resolve conflicts and address concerns in a manner guided by scripture, specifically the rules of Christ laid out for us in Matthew 18. We call on all members to seek resolution through discernment of God’s will, personal responsibility, empathy, open communication, extension of grace, and above all, love.

Ephesians 4:26-27

“In your anger do not sin”: Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, and do not give the devil a foothold.

IMPORTANT: Commit to addressing concerns quickly so they do not take root. Do not let concerns and conflicts fester and grow.

If any person at Forest Hills Church has a concern or a conflict about something at the church, our practice will be to follow the steps outlined in this covenant. This applies to members and others active in ministry through the church.

Matthew 18:8-9

If your hand or your foot causes you to stumble, cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to enter life maimed or crippled than to have two hands or two feet and be thrown into eternal fire. And if your eye causes you to stumble, gouge it out and throw it away. It is better for you to enter life with one eye than to have two eyes and be thrown into the fire of hell.

Step 1: Self-Reflection to Discern God’s Will

Spend time in prayer and reflection.

- A Prayer Journal is available to aid in this step. It may be found on the church website or in the church office .
- What is your concern/conflict?
- What is your position on this matter?
- What value/personal principle underlies your position?
- What is your perception of the other person’s position on this matter?
- Is there history behind your concern and is this history impacting your reaction?
- Put yourself in the other person’s shoes- what might they say you contributed to this matter?
- What does God want? What is God’s point of view?
- Can you let it go?

YES Ephesians 4:31-32 Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. Be kind and compassionate to one another,	NO That is ok. Go on to step 2.
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forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.	
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Matthew 18:15

“If your brother or sister sins, go and point out their fault, just between the two of you. If they listen to you, you have won them over.

Step 2: Talk with The Person 1 to 1 “Care-front” vs “confront”

Preparation for this discussion:

- Plan ahead and practice what you want to say.
- Plan to meet in a neutral location.
- Remember that we are ALL part of the body of Christ.
- Pray

The actual discussion:

Matthew 18:20

“For where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them.”

- Begin the meeting with prayer.
- Goal of the meeting: discuss effort to work together to find a solution that satisfies both parties.
- Work hard to understand the other person’s point of view.
- Share using “I” statements example: I feel ... when... happens.
- Listen carefully and ask questions to help clarify your understanding.
- Determine together, if the matter is now resolved and whether each party is satisfied and able to move forward.

<p>YES</p> <p>Ephesians 4:31-32 Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.</p>	<p>NO</p> <p>Go on to step 3. Repeat step 1 as needed.</p>
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Matthew 18:16

But if they will not listen, take one or two others along, so that ‘every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses.’

Step 3: Get Some Objective Help

Set up a closed meeting with the Pastor and the other party in the conflict. You may choose to include one or two others, who share the concern, to participate in this meeting.

- Prior to this meeting provide a written statement describing the concern.
- All invited to this meeting will be made aware of who will be attending the meeting and that it will be a closed meeting.
- This step may require multiple meetings.

At the meeting:

Matthew 18:20

“For where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them.”

- Begin the meeting with prayer.
- Goal of this meeting: discuss the conflict in effort to resolve so that all parties are satisfied.
- Establish ground rules for respectful discussion.
- Determine, in collaboration with those presenting the concern, if the matter is now resolved and/or if the individuals involved are satisfied and are able to move forward.

<p>YES</p> <p>Ephesians 4:31-32 Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.</p>	<p>NO</p> <p>If not resolved, go on to step 4.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree upon any parts of the discussion that need to remain confidential • Agree upon what may need to be shared with others • Assign responsibilities for all areas of follow up if needed for resolution 	

Matthew 18:17a

If they still refuse to listen, tell it to the church;...

Step 4: Take It to The Church

Set up a closed meeting with CMMT, Pastor and the other party in the conflict. You may choose to include one or two others, who share the concern, to participate in this meeting.

- Prior to this meeting provide a written statement describing the concern and steps taken to date.
- All invited to this meeting will be made aware of who will be attending the meeting and that it will be a closed meeting.
- This step may require multiple meetings.
- If the person(s) with the concern are not comfortable or able to meet with CMMT the written description of the concern and statement from those who attended the Step 3 meeting will be used to present the concern to the CMMT.

At the actual meeting:

Matthew 18:20

“For where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them.”

- Begin the meeting with prayer.
- Goal of the meeting: discuss the conflict in effort to resolve so that all parties are satisfied.
- Establish ground rules for respectful discussion.
- Work to best utilize the many resources of the church to satisfy the conflict

- Determine, in collaboration with those presenting the concern, if the matter is now resolved and/or if the individuals involved are satisfied and are able to move forward.

<p>YES</p> <p>Ephesians 4:31-32 Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.</p>	<p>NO</p> <p>The Pastor or administrative board may consider bringing in a mediator or conflict resolution specialist</p> <p>If not resolved, go on to step 5.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree upon any parts of the discussion that need to remain confidential • Agree upon what may need to be shared with others • Assign responsibilities for all areas of follow up if needed for resolution 	

Matthew 18:17b

...and if they refuse to listen even to the church, treat them as you would a pagan or a tax collector.

Step 5: Shake the Dust

All individuals involved in the matter will try their best to:

- Understand that some matters may not be resolved, despite our best efforts.
- Let go of related anger, resentment and hurt feelings.
- Re-focus on Forest Hills Church current mission.

Ephesians 4:31-32

Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.

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