

[Church Name]

CONFLICT RESOLUTION POLICY (SAMPLE)

It's important to recognize and manage conflict in a healthy manner. Conflict is essential in any type of organization. AS a growing, thriving church, it's expected that [Church Name] will from off and on experience internal conflict. Conflict can be good or bad, health or unhealthy, constructive or destructive.

[Church Name] recognizes that healthy resolution of church conflict requires that the people involved value one another as human beings, put forth the effort required to understand opposing points of view, and mutually agree that the good of the congregation is paramount. Members to be committed to handling conflict in a mature, loving and constructive manner and are to expect the same of church leadership and staff.

Healthy Conflict

[Church Name] recognizes that healthy conflict is necessary to keep an organization mindful of and focused on its mission. Healthy conflict is that in which members deal with their issues up front and talk directly to those with home they disagree. They bring substantive evidence with their particular viewpoints and their demands are reasonable. The present their viewpoints as clearly supportive of the mission of the church. They clearly have a deep love for the church, love and respect for the leadership of the church, and are honorable in sharing their viewpoints. The don't make personal attacks on others. They're thoughtful and concerned that they have correct information. They view themselves as working with the church leadership to find peaceful, loving solutions to the issue at hand for the good of all the people concerned. Once a vote is taken on an issue, they support the witness of the body evident in the vote, whether or not they are/were in agreement with the decision. They continue to be constructive and positive in their work for the common good of the church.

Unhealthy Conflict

Unhealthy conflict is that in which one or more members, based on non-substantive evidence, makes greedy demands, usually attacking the person or performance of others. Any such unhealthy conflict has the potential to disrupt and even to destroy the mission and ministry of the church.

[Church Name] recognizes the responsibility of all members to create and maintain a safe and healthy spiritual environment. [Church Name] understands destructive behavior to be opposed to the creation and maintenance of such an environment.

Direct Dealing

It's the policy of the church and its leadership to directly deal with people regarding issues of the church and to instruct all members in direct dealing. The Board of Directors, Pastor(s) and Council of Ministries will refuse to deal with proposals or concerns when the proponents of such are not willing to identify themselves by name. A member who purports to represent "many others in the church" or "they" will be asked to identify by name these other individuals. The individuals so named, as well as the person said to represent them, must be acknowledge their interest in person or in writing before the concern or proposal will be considered. If the individual(s) is(are) not willing to represent themselves or be identified, the Board of Directors, Pastor(s) and Council of Ministry will consider the matter a non-issue.

Conflict Resolution

Following scriptural guidelines, individuals who have a grievance or concern will be requested to take their concern directly to the individual(s) or ministry group involved. If that individual or group is unable to resolve the issue, then the parties may request, through the Board of Directors, that a facilitator be appointed to assist them in resolving the conflict. This meeting will be held only with all parties present.

If the conflict is still unresolved, the parties may request that the Board of Directors itself act directly in the matter of seeking a resolution. Again, all parties involved must be present at any meeting called for the purpose of addressing the conflict. In extreme cases, the Board of Directors may seek input from an Elder or may call for a formal Ministry of Reconciliation or Mediation as defined by [Church Name].

Issues that have not gone through the above process will not be placed on the agenda and will therefore be ruled out-of-order by the Moderator if raised at any Board or Congregational Meeting.

Effective Board of Directors Dealing

It's the policy of this Board of Directors to be aware of unhealthy conflict in the church and to ensure that unhealthy conflict is dealt with immediately and directly. The Board may choose to appoint two members to meet with the individual(s) involved in any such activity(s) and discuss the behavior. The goal of all such actions will be the restoration of a loving, ethical and healthy community of faith at [Church Name].

Members must recognize that to deal effectively with issues in the church, they must be willing to take ownership of and be identified with those issues. For the Board of Directors to handle conflicts effectively, it must have access to pertinent information, and further, such information may at times have to be shared with the full Board or its designee. **Board Members will refrain from being bound to keep secrets regarding church issues.** Board Members will refrain from taking part in divisive conversations. When information about the church is discussed with one Board Member, that information will be open to all Board Members. Therefore, when talking to church members or other interested parties about church concerns, Board Members must use discretion in the event their confidence (or their assurance of confidentiality) is requested.

I have read the Conflict Resolution Policy, I understand and I agree to abide by the terms.

Name

Date

Date Revised: _____