

Cornerstone Guidelines for Conflict Resolution

It is our prayer that all members and friends of Cornerstone will follow the example of Jesus Christ in treating each other with love and respect (Ephesians 4:2-3). Recognizing that differences of opinion are inevitable in any human endeavor, however, our church desires to establish a conflict resolution policy that we ask members and friends to follow.

Our goal is that the people of Cornerstone will not walk away from the church because of conflict but will work together to overcome differences and find the common ground we share in Christ (John 13: 34-35). We should try to be “warmly assertive” with each other!

Conflict may be as simple as a difference of opinion between 2 people, or it may be dissatisfaction with one or more of the church’s leaders, or it may involve an argument involving 2 or more parties concerning policies or direction of the church.

Therefore, we hope that:

1. In all interactions with each other, the people of Cornerstone will respect different ideas and views and will express disagreement with Christian love (1 Peter 4:8).
2. The members and friends of Cornerstone will refuse to gossip (James 4:11) either directly or through social media (Face Book, etc.). Gossip is talking about people instead of to people. It is gossip if it does not honor or build up the other person(s).
3. Conflicts (disagreements or disputes) should be addressed as soon as possible. The longer conflict is unresolved, the harder it is to resolve (Matthew 5:23-24).
4. If two parties have a disagreement, the ideal response is for them to meet together, face to face, to discuss the matter and seek common ground (Matthew 18:15).
5. If for any reason it is not possible to meet one-on-one, parties with a conflict or disagreement should seek the mediation of a church leader (Matthew 18:16), pastor or member of the Board of Directors.
6. If any person in the church has a concern or a complaint about a leader of the church, whether pastor or lay official, that person is strongly encouraged to discuss the matter directly with the leader involved (Matthew 18:15).
7. Depending on the situation, a mediator, either within or sometimes outside the congregation, may be recommended (Matthew 18:16).
8. If mediation is unsuccessful in resolving a conflict, the matter may be referred to the Office of Church Life and Health of the Unified Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches (denominational offices) for assistance.
9. Mediators asked to intervene in a conflict shall strive to propose resolutions to the conflict. Resolution is defined as mutual agreement or understanding among the parties in a conflict. In all circumstances, confidentiality shall be respected.
10. Anyone who believes they are in a conflict situation and is unsure of how to proceed should first contact the pastor or a member of the Board of Directors for counsel. Edited 4/19/17

Name (printed)

Signature

Date