

CONFLICT RESOLUTION POLICY - NRUMC

1. Conflicts within the church should be addressed with the underlying principles of *Matthew 18: 15-20* always playing in the background:

"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. 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. If they still refuse to listen, tell it to the church; and if they refuse to listen even to the church, treat them as you would a pagan or a tax collector.

"Truly I tell you, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.

"Again, truly I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything they ask for, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven. For where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them."

2. Basic Structure of the Church: This is where accountability lies. Depending on the type of issue causing conflict, this would be the order of any actions.
 - a. Pastor
 - b. SPRC
 - c. Church Council
 - d. District Superintendent
 - e. Bishop
3. If conflict is with a member regarding staff, including Pastor:
 - a. The individuals in conflict should speak directly; face-to-face
 - b. If that is not possible, phone call is next recommendation
 - c. E-mail is least desirable, therefore, use only as last resort
4. A member of SPRC can be asked to attend any meeting of parties. If conflict is regarding a Pastor, Chair of SPRC should be included each time.
5. If member does not want to do any of the above recommendations, any conflicts should be in written format, dated, and signed by the person who wishes to address an issue. This written complaint should be given to the SPRC Chair. SPRC will NOT hear any verbal or anonymous complaints.
6. The Chair of SPRC will take any written conflict to the whole of SPRC, to determine whether any action should be taken regarding this conflict. If SPRC determines not to take any action, SPRC will inform the church member of this, and remind them that SPRC will remain aware of this concern.
7. SPRC may, at their discretion, arrange a face-to-face meeting with the member bringing the conflict. It is recommended to have the Chair of SPRC, plus an additional member of SPRC to attend this meeting. Following this meeting, the SPRC members will report back to the Committee.
8. If SPRC determines the concerns requires SPRC action, the Committee will address these issues with the Pastor, or employee, or others as need be. Any concerns must come from **individuals**. Therefore, even if a concern is shared by multiple members, the SPRC will only accept written complaints from single individuals.
9. All communications with SPRC will remain CONFIDENTIAL with members of SPRC. At no time, will SPRC recommendations be discussed with other members, unless required by law, or the Book of Discipline. SPRC is responsible for addressing any situations regarding paid staff and/or Pastors.

Adopted on December 9, 2023