

Bethel Christian Church

Careful Service



Taking Care in Serving

For the Fruitfulness of God's people

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Bethel Christian Church

Careful Service

A conduct guide for all who serve in the ministry of Bethel Christian Church

Taking Care in Serving

Operating in the love of God we should be eager to provide the greatest degree of care we can for all the family members of the Church and those from the wider community who participate in our programs, in particular the children. Our aim is that everyone within our church will be able to safely participate and contribute in appropriate programs, and that they will be able to safely report any incidents of abuse or safety concerns.

Being called by God into holiness, we seek to walk blamelessly towards those we serve. We therefore expect all the leaders of Bethel Christian Church, both those who are paid by the church and those who volunteer their services, to honour all they serve by providing for them a safe and loving environment.

We expect all leaders and volunteers to comply with the screening required for appointment, and the ministry practice outlined below. They will be accountable to the law of the land and the Church Council. Church leaders will respond appropriately to all reports in the interest of all those involved. We use SafeMinistryTraining.com.au to appropriately screen and train our volunteers working with children and vulnerable adults

As a church community we acknowledge the high level of trust given to us by our members and people from the community. The rest of this document outlines our attempt to provide a structure which includes responsible screening and recruitment, clear boundaries, risk identification, leadership training and supervision.

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1. General Service Requirements

For all Leaders at Bethel Christian Church

- 1.1 In conjunction with the commands of Scripture, leaders will honour all they serve with loving, impartial service.
- 1.2 The qualities of leaders appointed by Bethel Christian Church will be directed by the Scriptures.
- 1.3 Respect must be given to all in differences of opinion, culture and faith.
- 1.4 Leaders must take the authority given to them as the opportunity to serve, not the right to stand over people in authoritarian ways.
- 1.5 Leaders will be expected to display the giftings of leadership and thus be appointed by the church to serve.
- 1.6 No leader to be appointed from the Church community will be considered for leadership until they have been a regular part of the church for six months or brought satisfactory references from a previous (current) church, are church members, and have submitted to the appropriate screening and training requirements of the church.
- 1.7 Leaders are not to engage in:
 - bullying;
 - harassment;
 - physical, emotional, sexual or spiritual abuse.
- 1.8 Leaders must not attempt to serve under the influence of any mind altering or addictive substance.
- 1.9 Legally prohibited substances must never be used.
- 1.10 Care must be taken not to knowingly use offensive language.
- 1.11 If married, leaders must not be involved in sexual relationships outside of their marriage.
- 1.12 If unmarried, leaders should remain chaste and not indulge in sexual relationships before marriage.
- 1.13 No form of involvement in pornography is acceptable.
- 1.14 Leaders should never be alone with members of the opposite sex in conjunction with their ministry, except in emergency situations.
- 1.15 All leaders should avoid situations of sexual vulnerability, for the persons they are with and themselves or where conduct can be reasonably construed as a breach of sexual standards in the Scriptures or this document.

- 1.16 Touching members of the opposite sex must be done sensitively and without sexual connotations, always giving total respect to their wishes.
- 1.17 Children's leaders should avoid working alone with children and never entertain children in their homes without the presence of other adults or leaders from the church.
- 1.18 Children's leaders should be alert to and trained in recognising sexual abuse and prepared to be mandatory reporters of any abuse.

For all volunteers at Bethel Christian Church and associated programs

- 1.19 Bethel Christian Church Council will oversee the appointment of appropriate volunteers.
- 1.20 Volunteers will honour all they serve with loving, impartial service.
- 1.21 Respect must be given to all in differences of opinion, culture and faith.
- 1.22 Volunteers must take the position given to them as the opportunity to serve, not the right to stand over people in authoritarian ways.
- 1.23 No volunteer may be appointed without have met the appropriate screening and training requirements of the church.
- 1.24 Volunteers are not to engage in:
 - bullying;
 - harassment;
 - physical, emotional, sexual or spiritual abuse.
- 1.25 Volunteers must not attempt to serve under the influence of any mind altering or addictive substance.
- 1.26 Legally prohibited substances must never be used.
- 1.27 Care must be taken not to knowingly use offensive language.
- 1.28 No form of involvement in pornography is acceptable.
- 1.29 Volunteers should avoid being alone with members of the opposite sex in conjunction with their role, except in emergency situations.
- 1.30 All volunteers should avoid situations of sexual vulnerability, for the persons they are with and themselves or where conduct can be reasonably construed as a breach of sexual standards in the Scriptures or this document.
- 1.31 Touching members of the opposite sex must be done sensitively and without sexual connotations, always giving total respect to their wishes.
- 1.32 Volunteers should avoid working alone with children and never entertain children in their homes without the presence of other adults or leaders from the church.

- 1.33 Volunteers working with children should be alert to and trained in recognising sexual abuse and prepared to be mandatory reporters of any abuse.
- 1.34 In the event that through partnership with another body not all volunteers will be required to comply with the faith and membership requirements of the Bethel Christian Church, they must nevertheless agree to not behave in any way, or promote any views or behaviour, that undermines the beliefs and values of the Church.

2. The Application of *Careful Service*

A guide for putting these principles into application

- 2.1 The church accepts the responsibility to inform and instruct its leaders and volunteers as to the contents and spirit of *Careful Service*.
- 2.2 All the Leaders and volunteers in the church have the responsibility to accept and apply the principles of *Careful Service* in their service.
- 2.3 The church must acknowledge any careless or wilful neglect or disregard of *Careful Service* and seek to remedy the lapse through discipline, specialised training or dismissal from office. Where any breach of trust breaks civil law then the Safe Ministry Contacts will notify the Police or appropriate body.
- 2.4 The church will use the *Safe Ministry Training* risk management system as their model for *Careful Service* in ministry, including the *Safe Ministry Incident Management Process*.
- 2.4 Where reasonable impracticalities arise with the principles of *Careful Service* the leader or volunteer must notify at least one Safe Ministry Contact and;
 - Ensure the safety of those to whom they minister and themselves.
 - Plan with the Safe Ministry Contact to reduce the possibilities of such impracticalities occurring in the future.
- 2.5 All members and volunteers of the church are responsible to report any breach of *Careful Service* by any of the Church appointed leaders or volunteers to a Safe Ministry Contact.

3. Careful Service in Pastoral Care

A Guide for the Pastoral Team at Bethel Christian Church

- 3.1 The exercise of pastoral care involves building trust. The church pastoral care givers are expected to do all they can to encourage trust in pastoral relationships.
- 3.2 The general guidelines given above relate to pastoral care givers.
- 3.3 The church endeavours to appoint pastoral care-givers who are sensitive to and qualified in the skills required for pastoral care.
- 3.4 Through the structure and accountability of Safe Ministry Training the church offers opportunity for pastoral care givers to improve their skills and have regular feedback and support.
- 3.5 Trust can only be established through considered confidentiality. Pastoral care givers will not share information received in their ministry to their spouse, family, friend, colleagues or any other person without the consent of the person disclosing the information. Confidentiality is excepted where the information is public knowledge, required by law. Where a risk to the safety of any person is involved confidentiality may also be excepted, however, notification to the discloser will still generally be advisable.
- 3.6 Where confidential information is received it should not be used, even anonymously, as illustrative material unless cleared by the discloser. Where records of confidential discussions are kept they must be secured from the public.
- 3.7 Pastoral care-givers must recognise the limits of their skills and experience and defer to more qualified practitioners when appropriate.
- 3.8 Pastoral care-givers shall avoid all abusive relationships
- 3.9 Pastoral care-givers must avoid behaviour that becomes partial, exclusive or indicates favouritism, particularly with children and youth.
- 3.9 Wherever the pastoral care relationship begins to become blurred with personal interest (romantic, financial etc), this should be acknowledged and a change of pastoral carer arranged in conjunction with the Safe Ministry Contact.
- 3.10 Pastoral carers should use the Safe Ministry Contact as supervisor where the pastoral contact becomes prolonged.
- 3:11 When visiting people in their homes, pastoral care givers should take a member of the opposite sex with them. If a series of counselling meetings are required then it is more appropriate that these be conducted in a location which allows privacy of conversation while allowing supervision by others (doors open etc).
- 3.12 It may be helpful in more formal or critical pastoral encounters to establish at the beginning the purpose and boundaries of the discussion, confidentiality issues and length of time.
- 3.13 Physical gestures of comfort should be only done when observable by others.

4. Careful Service to Children & Young People

A Guide for Leaders and volunteers who minister to children & young people

- 4.1 The children and young people at the church are significant members of the church. Leaders and volunteers who work with them should seek to encourage their participation in the whole life of the church.
- 4.2 All the general guidelines given in Part 1 above apply to leaders and volunteers working with children and young people.
- 4.3 Leaders and volunteers must not abuse children in any form.
- 4.4 By exercising ministry with children the leaders and volunteers accept responsibility to provide a well planned and safe environment for that service. This planning must also include the requirements of civil authorities (eg. Safety procedures, first-aid provisions etc).
- 4.5 The church requires that all leaders and volunteers who work with children, including those on the Pastoral Team must comply with the principles in this document and pass appropriate screening.
- 4.6 Leaders and volunteers must receive regular training in child protection and make themselves aware of the characteristics and signs of child abuse. (Training is available for free through Safe Ministry Training.)
- 4.7 Leaders and volunteers must not apply any form of physical discipline or corporal punishment.
- 4.8 Leaders and volunteers will not make available or allow the use of any prohibited material.
- 4.9 Leaders or volunteers who reasonably suspect that another member of the leadership or the church is or has abused a child must report this to a Safe Ministry Contact, and to the Civil Authorities where appropriate.
- 4.10 Except in the case of medical emergency or immanent physical danger physical contact with a child should be initiated by the child or occur with their permission. This contact must never be or able to be construed to be sexual in nature.

5. Careful Service and Church Finance

Maintaining integrity in matters of finance

- 5.1 The church accepts that financial integrity is essential in all the financial transactions of the church.
- 5.2 Excepting for stipends and approved money given, Leaders must not seek personal advantage or financial gain from their position or from their pastoral relationships.
- 5.3 Leaders handling church moneys must:
- Have clear and appropriate systems in place.
 - Must not handle church offerings alone but in the presence of another, documenting clearly all money received.
 - Not involve the paid clergy in the counting of church offerings.
 - Ensure that moneys collected are banked promptly.
 - Ensure that church accounts have more than one signatory.
- 5.4 Where leaders are offered personal gifts they should;
- Establish for whom the gift is intended (discretion may be needed as to whether the gift should be accepted).
 - Consider if their integrity is being compromised.
 - Consider if the acceptance of the gift would cause offence if known publicly.
- 5.6 Leaders, including clergy, should avoid entering into financial loans or borrowing with those with whom they have a pastoral relationship.

6. Appendices

6.1 Key Terms

Abusive Relationships

Abuse in relation to an adult includes the following behaviour:

- bullying;
- emotional abuse;
- harassment;
- physical abuse;
- sexual abuse;
- spiritual abuse.

Bullying means the repeated seeking out or targeting of a person to cause them distress and humiliation or to exploit them. It includes:

- exclusion from a peer group;
- intimidation;
- extortion.

Child abuse means the following conduct in relation to a child:

(Child means anyone under the age of 18)

- bullying;
- emotional abuse;
- harassment;
- neglect;
- physical abuse;
- sexual abuse;
- spiritual abuse.

Emotional abuse includes the following actions that may cause emotional harm. It includes, name calling, threats, ridicule, intimidation, isolation, hostility, rejection.

Harassment means unwelcome conduct, whether intended or not, in relation to another persons where the other person feels with good reason in all the circumstances offended, belittled or threatened. Such behaviour may consist of a single incident or several incidents over a period of time. It includes

- Physical contact;
- Gestures or language (overt or implied) including continual and unwarranted shouting;
- Unjustified or unnecessary comments about a person's capacities or attributes;
- Openly displayed offensive pictures, posters, graffiti or written materials;
- Unwarranted communication in any form (phone, email, texting etc), and
- Following or stalking.

Sexual abuse means the abuse of a child or any other person for his or her gratification or for the gratification of others. It includes the following elements:

- Sexual touching or fondling;
- Being encouraged or forced to touch or fondle another person;
- Kissing or holding in a sexual manner;
- Being encouraged or forced to perform oral sex;
- Vaginal or anal intercourse;
- Vaginal or anal penetration with an object or any body part.
- Making any sexual gesture or action in another person's presence;
- Making any sexual references or innuendo using any form of communication;
- Voyeurism;
- Exposure to any form of sexually explicit or suggestive material;
- Discussion of or inquiry about, personal matters of a sexual nature;
- Being encouraged or forced to masturbate self or others, or watch others masturbate;
- Indecent exposure

Spiritual abuse means the mistreatment of a person by actions or threats when justified by an appeal to God, faith, religion or the Scriptures. It includes:

- the use of a position of spiritual authority to dominate or manipulate another person or group;
- the isolating of a person from friends or family;
- claims for inappropriate deference to a person with spiritual authority;
- the use of Christian terminology to justify abusive behaviour.

Church means Bethel Christian Church

Civil authorities means the police and relevant State government child protection authority.

Clergy means the Pastor set aside by the church and ordained to the pastoral ministry and all other Elders appointed by the church.

Grooming is any behaviour that includes manipulation which cultivates a false sense of relationship with any person leading to the initiating or hiding of abusive behaviour.

Leaders are those appointed by the church to lead or participate in the ministries provided by the church.

Pastoral care means the care provided by the Pastor, Elders or any other person appointed by Bethel Christian Church to members of the congregation and the community involved in the different ministries of the church.

Physical discipline means any form of punishment or reward applied to the body.

Prohibited material includes:

- Any material classified by the Film and Literature Classification Office to be unsuitable for children to see, read or play (computer games).
- Material which the church has deemed unsuitable for children to see, read or play.

- Any material or product prohibited by law for children. E.g. alcohol, tobacco products, illegal drugs, prescription drugs not prescribed for the child and gambling products.

Safe Ministry Contact is an appointed person with whom anyone in the Church community can report their concerns about a person, program or activity.

Bethel Christian Church's Safe Ministry Contacts are (as of October 2019):

- James Krieg (0402 951 068, bethelnorwood@gmail.com)
- Wan Ting Tham (0413 502 970, wan_ting888@yahoo.com.au)

Volunteer means any person not in a leadership role who assists in running a program within or associated with the church.

6.2 Leader Code of Conduct



Leader Commitment (Code of Conduct)

Developed by www.safeministrytraining.com.au
Endorsed by Ansvär Insurance

Personal Leader Commitment

1. I commit to conducting myself in a manner consistent with the Safe Ministry Training “Leadership Training Course” when serving at Bethel Christian Church;
 - a. I will treat adults, children and young people with respect and value, without favouritism.
 - b. I will behave appropriately, being faithful to my appointed tasks, being an example to others, and being careful in how I physically interact with others.
 - c. I will never use physical punishment or abusive language - even as a form of discipline.
 - d. I will act transparently, as far as possible, ensuring that another adult is present or within eyesight when I am with a vulnerable person (including other people’s children).
2. I commit to ensuring that the spaces and activities I’m responsible for are safe and do not put people at risk of significant harm.
3. I commit to including vulnerable people (and/or their carers/significant other) in discussions about decisions that will significantly affect them.
4. I commit to encouraging openness by listening to people’s concerns with a willingness to support them and help them.
5. I commit to reporting any concerns or suspicions about harmful behaviours and significant risks to the Bethel Christian Church Safe Ministry Contacts without bias or partiality.
6. I will submit to the Bethel Christian Church leader screening process to ensure I’m a suitable person to work with vulnerable people.
7. I will submit to disciplinary steps if I am found to violate these commitments or act in an otherwise inappropriate or illegal manner at Bethel Christian Church.