

Confidentiality and Trust Statement
Elders, NACC, 2019

Confidentiality

As leaders entrusted with the spiritual care of the congregation at Nelson Avenue Community Church, we have been charged to “hold in trust all sensitive matters confided to us”. There are many times when, as Elders, we are entrusted with personal information of our congregation as we support and encourage in the name of Christ.

We are committed to hold in high regard the dignity and respect of the people who have shared personal information with us, not sharing that information with others unless we have been given permission to do so. While there is some discretion required to make good decisions about confidentiality, in general we agree to the following:

- Hold in confidence any and all sensitive, personal or private information, unless permission has been given from any persons affected by the information, or unless sharing of this information is necessary to comply with our Safe Church policy or local law.
- If we feel the need to debrief information that is a burden to hold on our own, to do so with only one other trusted Elder, and to do so only with the permission of those to whom the information pertains.
- Be accountable to the other Elders when we have broken confidentiality, to receive support and encouragement.
- If appropriate, confess breaches of confidentiality to those with whom we have broken trust for forgiveness and restoration, and to rebuild trust.
- Since sharing information about Elder’s visits with people in our church community is a normal practice in Elder’s meetings, we will be proactive and clear about describing this practice when we meet with people. We will ask for permission to share content of our Elder’s visits with other Elders, while honoring wishes for confidentiality.

Trust

As maintaining trust within the congregation is very important as ambassadors of the Kingdom of Jesus Christ, it is also important among the Elders as a group. As such, we as Elders agree to the following:

When we have a grievance with one of the other Elders, we commit to talking first with that person. We will not first share our complaint with third party.

If we have trouble coming to a good understanding with that person, we will agree together to ask a trusted neutral third party to help us communicate well with each other to reach understanding.

The above agreements will apply to our interactions with congregants as well.

When someone comes to us to express a complaint about a third party (whether an Elder or congregant), we will encourage that person to talk directly with the one they have a complaint with rather than listening to the details of the complaint. If the congregant needs help knowing how to approach the other person in a good manner, guidance for general principles will be given.