

Bethany Chapel Standing Policies

Teacher Approval Policy: June 14, 2011

All teachers must be approved by the elders. Second adults do not necessarily count as teachers.

Sunday School Teacher Funds: June 9, 1991

Bill Gilbert made motion. Seconded by Rick Waltermire to set aside \$25.00 from which the children's Sunday School teachers may draw upon to purchase additional supplies at any time, and to maintain \$25.00 in that fund at all times, with this money to come from the general fund.

Spending Limit for Board: March 14, 1991

The motion by Loretta Forsythe. Seconded by Ruth Fisher to "allow the Board to spend up to \$500.00 without congregational approval, for church emergencies that may result in further complications" was nullified. Marie Shields made a new motion. Seconded by Clair Reaugh to allow the Church Board to spend up to \$500 for church operating expenses or missions, or to spend any amount necessary to correct an emergency situation. (Changed 10-14-2003)

Raising the Board Spending Limit to \$1000: September 14, 2003

Evelyn Simpson moved that we accept the proposal and authorize the Board to make decisions on unexpected increases in budgeted items and increase the Board limit on new purchases from \$500.00 to \$1000.00, without congregational approval. The motion passed 22 yes, 7 no and 1 abstentions.

Pastor Literature Budget: June 2, 1995

Motion made by Clair Reaugh. Seconded by Ruth Fisher to put \$50 on account for Pastor Steve to use for literature to give to those who have newly accepted the Lord Jesus as Savior.

Youth Group Activity Fund: November 10, 1992

Eva Lingenfelter made a motion. Seconded by Bill Gilbert to have a pre-approved activity fund for Pastor Steve to use for the youth group. A \$30.00 cap for each event.

Guest Speaker Amount Set: January 12, 1993

John made a motion. Seconded by Marie Shields that we set a policy that when Pastor Steve and the Elders have a guest speaker come to address our congregation we will pay them \$50 that day or shortly after. This policy was revised January 11, 1994 as such. Marie Shields made a motion. Seconded by Bill Gilbert that we guarantee each speaker \$75 plus whatever we get in the Love Basket.

Office Supply Budget: June 8, 1993

John Pappal made a motion. Seconded by Eva Lingenfelter that Pastor Steve be permitted to have a budget of up to \$50 per month to purchase office supplies and stamps.

VBS Budget: June 14, 1994

Pat Park made a motion. Seconded by Linda Ross that we approve a minimum of \$120 for VBS each year.

Gifts and Memorial Gifts to Bethany Chapel 1997

Rationale:

It is realized that we are to a place where we may start to have inquires from church members and others about outright gifts and memorial gifts to the church. Unrestricted monetary contributions should not be a problem. However, it is perceived that there may need to be some guidelines established for monetary gifts that are specifically designated or for outright purchases. If the designated monetary gift is for some item already approved for acquisition by either the building committee, the church board or the congregation, then there should be no problem. If the proposed gift is a specific item or is a monetary gift to purchase a specific item, then care needs to be exercised that the intended gift and its use will not be in conflict with other items selected or to be selected as enhancements to the church

Policy:

Any person desiring to make a memorial gift or other gift, other than unrestricted money or money to support an already approved acquisition to Bethany Chapel should first present the idea to the church board for consideration. The church board will then review the idea of the proposed purchase and determine if the majority of the board agrees that it would be an enhancement to the church and not be in conflict with any other item already in place or pending plans of the church. Care and sensitivity shall be exercised to not offend the giver. If the majority of the board determines that the proposed gift is inappropriate, an alternative gift of anticipated need may be suggested to the giver in substitution.

All memorial gifts, with the consent of the giver, shall be duly recorded in the official "Memorial Gift Book"

Bus Committee Expenses: April 10, 2001

John Pappal made a motion seconded by Marie Shields to empower the Bus Committee to make decisions regarding the needs and upkeep of the bus, not to exceed \$500. The committee is to make a monthly report to the Board on the activity of the Bus Ministry and related finances.

Requests for Assistance: March 12, 1996

It was suggested we should have a standing policy for the pastor to refer to in such cases. A motion was made by John Johnson that Bethany Chapel would make it a priority to honor requests for food or monetary help within the church community and/or members of the church family. All other requests

would only be honored after being evaluated on an individual basis and with board approval. Seconded by Ben Conner. Motion carried.

Kitchen Usage Rules : July 1996

Contact Loretta Forsythe (397- 2318) to schedule use of building. Key to be picked up at Williams Appliance Store between the hours of 9 a.m.- 5 p.m.

1. Furnish your own plates, tableware, cups and napkins.
2. Leave any rooms you use the way you found them.
3. If any tables, chairs, etc. are broken, they are to be replaced.
4. Provide your own garbage bags and take your garbage home with you.
5. Clean up after yourselves.
6. If you use our towels, dishcloths, potholder, etc. launder and return them to the premises.
7. Clean up spills, so we don't get ants.
8. **NO** food to be taken upstairs.
9. **NO** long distance phone calls.
10. Make sure stove is turned **OFF**.
11. Don't leave perishables in the refrigerator.
12. Leave everything the way you found it or better.
13. No alcoholic beverages, smoking, or use of any tobacco products.
14. Turn off lights, check rest rooms, and leave rest room doors open.
15. Lock outside door and leave the key on the inside window ledge when leaving.

Use of Bethany Chapel Building

1. Any active member or person who attends Bethany Chapel may request to use the facility.
2. Weddings performed by outside clergyman or other official must be board and pastor approved.
3. No use other than church related business. IE: Weddings, funerals, receptions, baby/bridal showers, anniversary/birthday parties, church fellowship dinners. Requests for any other functions must be board approved.
4. There will be no use of drugs, alcohol, and/or tobacco on the church premises.
5. Bethany Chapel facility will not be used for fund raising dinners or events.
6. If during usage by individual member or regular attendee damage occurs, parties using facility will be responsible for repairs or replacement of damage incurred.

Church Use Clarified September 28, 1997

A request was made from the ROTC of Marion Center Schools to use our basement to assemble hoagies for their fund raiser. A motion was made by John Pappal and seconded by Ruth Fisher to

grant permission for ROTC to use the basement in accordance with our policy rules. Discussion ensued as to how this would affect Bethany Chapel's fund raising stand in the past. In light of that question the following was added to the original motion. ...without any public acknowledgment of thank you and/or recognition of Bethany Chapel. No opposition to motion. Motion carried.

Copyrighted Music: October 8, 1996

Kathy Reaugh presented copyright information. After reviewing the information it was decided that the board needed more input before deciding if we needed to purchase a copyright permission contract therefore it was tabled. More information will be gathered and presented to the board. A motion was made by Clair Reaugh that we establish a policy to no longer copy music for use at Bethany Chapel unless copyright permission is obtained. Seconded by Randy Mardis. Motion carried

Flowers for Hospitalized: November 13, 2005

Flower ministry: Pastor Steve stated that Kathy Barr offered to handle the Flower Ministry. She asked for a copy of the guidelines. It was determined that they were printed in the March 11, 1997 Board minutes. Pastor will reference those minutes for clarification to Kathy. The guidelines allow \$25 for flowers. A Lynn Gearhart/Paula Mardis motion was unanimously approved to raise the flower allowance from \$25 to \$40.

Gideon Bibles Donations: March 11, 1997

The treasurer posed the question as to who would be responsible for ordering Gideon Bible's in accordance with the board policy. Discussion ensued. A motion was made by Clair Reaugh and seconded by Ben Conner that the Treasurer will order Gideon Bibles in the amount of \$35.00 based on guidelines as adopted as policy at the meeting of 3/11/97. Motion carried.

Upon the death of a spouse, parent, or child/children of a member or regular attendee a donation of \$35 will be made to the Gideons for purchase of Bibles in the memory of the deceased

Start Times for Special Services: November 28, 2004

Following discussion, a motion was made by Jim Lenze and Seconded Gil Widenhofer to establish a new policy for start times for Special Services for those that occur on a Sunday night, that they begin at 6:00 PM and for those held on any other night except Sunday that they begin at 7:00 PM. The motion passed unanimously.

Youth Group Eligibility : December 13, 2005

Youth Group Criteria: To be eligible for Teen Youth Group, a person must have graduated from 6th grade or be age 13. The Elders decide to use either to qualify for eligibility

Pastor Steve Marriage Policy: July 11, 2000

- Wedding ceremonies will be limited to those who are members or faithful attendees of Bethany Chapel.

- New attendees will require a testimony of salvation & attendance of 6 months along with marriage counseling.
- Current members and/or faithful attendees will require marriage counseling.

Purchase Study Materials: June 8, 2004:

Chuck Wetzel brought a request from Jamie to order materials for Ladies Bible Study. Following Discussion, Deanna Gregory moved and John Johnson seconded that we establish a policy that as long as a Bible study is part of a church ministry, any study books needed should be purchased from the church budget. Passed unanimously.

Color Printer: May 13, 2008 John Johnson asked members about whether there is a need for a policy on color printing since we now have a color printer. Discussion followed. John Johnson moved that, being sensitive to the additional cost of color printing, that we reserve printing on color for special occasions and holidays (bulletin), and for brochures, pamphlets and the directory. Nathan Bish seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Borrowing Tables and Chairs from the Church: May 12, 2009 a motion was made by John Johnson and seconded by Nelson Fenton that we establish a policy that any member of the church may borrow tables and/or chairs from the church by scheduling them through the church secretary. The motion passed unanimously.

Policy/Offering Counters: August 12, 2008

John Johnson moved to establish the policy that offering counters should be chosen from present or past board members. Lynn Gearhart seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Policy/Travel Reimbursement for Guest Speakers and Missionaries: August 12, 2008

Randy Mardis moved to establish the policy (initiated by pulpit committee) to reimburse guest speakers and missionaries by using the following formula: Total miles round trip to and from Bethany Chapel divided by 20 miles per gallon multiplied by the current gas price. Nathan Bish seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Wilds Bus Driver Fees Covered: June 8, 2004

John Johnson reported the committee has met and there are no new items to report. He re-affirmed that the Bus would be used to go to the Wilds. There was a motion by Randy Mardis and seconded by Kevin McMeans that the church cover the expense for the trip to the Wilds for hotel and gasoline and for Nelson Fenton's registrations fee as he will be going as a bus driver. Passed unanimously. It was noted that a previous policy had been established whereby the youth pastor and his wife will have there registration fees and expenses covered.

Chase Car for the WILDS: June 9:2009

Pastor Jim made a motion to establish the following policy: All fuel costs for one chase car to/from the WILDS will be reimbursed according to our mileage policy. The motion was seconded by Nelson Fenton, carried.

Baptist only Missions Boards: October 8, 2002

The pastor noted that one of the auxiliary missionary speakers that had been invited and accepted was learned to be part of a mission board that will accept only Baptists. Given our policy to not support mission boards that would not accept potential people from our congregationally governed independent church, the pastor will un-invite the speaker.

Reimbursement of Pastor Mileage: June 13, 2000

John Johnson made a motion, seconded by John Pappal to set as Board policy the payment of mileage to the pastor at the current federal rate. Carried.

Church Discipline Policy: March 20, 2000

The discipline policy was presented for questions. There were none. Ben moved that the policy be accepted. Doug seconded. A paper ballot was distributed. The motion carried, 32 in favor, 1 opposed.

Purpose of Church Discipline:

Church discipline is for the purpose of maintaining a pure testimony as well as restoring our erring or fallen brothers or sisters in Christ. It should be natural for church members to care for one another, even more so when a fellow member of the body is spiritually hurting. It is only a callous and uncaring church where members will look the other way when a fellow member has fallen. Church discipline is never for the purpose to expose or to criticize our fellow members. It is remedial and thus for the purpose to help and aid one another.

Our primary concern is to honor and love the Lord through maintaining a pure testimony within our assembly. I Corinthians 5:6 teaches us that sin left unchecked will ultimately effect the whole body.

Our love for one another is also tested as we express it by our willingness to go to a fallen member. Galatians 6:1 teaches us that if a brother be *"...overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted."* The Amplified Bible has *"...if any person is overtaken in misconduct or sin of any sort, you who are spiritual, who are responsive to and controlled by the Spirit, should set him right and restore and reinstate him, without any sense of superiority and with all gentleness, keeping an attentive eye on yourself, lest you should be tempted also."*

True spiritual maturity in the saints should evidence itself in a willingness to go to our fellow brothers and sisters in Christ to help at their time of weakness. We go because we care, as well as with a desire to help and reflect the love of Christ.

Steps of Church Discipline:

Step 1

Self-examination

Whenever we see sin in the life of our brothers and sisters in Christ it should immediately prompt us to examine our own lives first. Christ taught in Matthew 7:5, ***"Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye."*** He did not say that we were to ignore and overlook their sin, but rather allow God to help us in the very same area that they struggle in and then we can go to them with real help and encouragement. One of the evidences that a person is truly spiritual and mature is that they are teachable and ready to allow the Lord to deal with sin in their own life first. Who is to go and help restore? Is it the pastor's job? Or the elders and deacons? None of us are exempt from being used of God to help our brother's and sister's in Christ.

Step 2

Go to your brother/sister seeking to gain them back.

This step requires an individual to approach the offending brother/sister privately without the involvement of others. Matthew 18:15 teaches us, ***“Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother.”*** The word “trespass” means to miss the mark, or to wander from the path of righteousness. What are some sins that the Bible says are to be disciplined? I Cor 5:11 states, ***“But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat.”***

Question: When should I go to my brother or sister if I see what I believe to be sin in their life?

Answer: According to Matthew 18:15 it is when you observe or know of behavior in a brother/sister’s life that is sin which requires discipline. (I Cor. 5:11) If your motive in going is to expose your brother rather than to help him, first allow God to change your motives and purify your life.

Question: May I tell someone else for the purpose of prayer?

Answer: No, Matthew 18:15 tells us first go to the person alone. Bringing another person into the picture at this time would be to violate what the verse says, but it would also bring some doubt into the fallen brother concerning your love him/her.

Question: What if I go to him and he admits his sin and is willing to repent and wants help?

Answer: Be the first one who is willing to help them in their time of spiritual need. Share with them God’s grace, mercy, and forgiveness. The great majority of times church discipline stops here where the facts reveal either unfounded reports, mistaken conclusions, or the evidence is verified and repentance takes place and fellowship is restored.

Step 3

If he/she rejects you, take with you one or two witnesses.

The next step according to Matthew 18:16, if needed, is very important. The witnesses are for the purpose that every word may be established. Those who go with you must have the desire to hear both sides and to verify that an erring brother/sister is in fact living in sin and disobedience to God. Accusations and rumors have hurt many an innocent person. These witnesses are to verify that there is or is not a genuine spiritual problem in their fellow member’s life. If there is sin in their brother’s/sister’s life, they are there to help. If no sin can be verified, they are there to help all involved to come to an amiable conclusion. If there is a sin problem and the brother is willing to listen and respond to his Christian friends, he now has a small group who are ready to help him.

Question: What if a church member refuses to be a witness in helping to restore a brother or sister in Christ.

Answer: For various reasons a church member may refuse to go with a brother or sister in Christ to help their hurting fellow member. God expects that our love should be such that we are willing to help. If a brother or sister still refuses, then it is God's way of showing you to take someone else with you. It is important to remember that the one you take with you (Galatians 6:1) is a fellow member who possesses and exhibits spiritual maturity. They were to evidence meekness in their life. Meekness requires us not to demand our own way, but be yielded to following God's way. One who actually "considers themselves", as Galatians 6:1 teaches, should lead the individual to understand that it could be they themselves who had fallen into sin. This should then lead us to a greater love for the fallen member.

Step 4

And if he neglect to hear them, tell it to the church. (Matthew 18:17)

If the fallen member refuses to hear the witness's that are taken with you, then it is required for you & witnesses to take it to the church. This would require that the matter be taken to the leaders of the church who are responsible for it's spiritual guidance. Who are the representatives of a local church? The pastor and elders have been given the spiritual oversight of the local church and are responsible before the Lord for the care and shepherding of the flock. They need to go to the erring brother or sister in Christ and establish and verify the facts. If the church leadership verifies that there is sin, they are to admonish the fallen member to return back to the Lord. If the member rejects their admonition, God has now lovingly allowed the member to be confronted by three different witnesses and for all of the facts to be clearly established. The three groups include: the individual brother/sister who initially observed or had knowledge of the sin, the individual's witnesses, and the spiritual leaders of the local church. All three are required to go to him prior to any public censure. This is to provide for the fallen member every opportunity for repentance and restoration to the Lord.

Step 5

but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican.

The last step, according to Matthew 18:17, is to exercise corporate local church discipline on the erring member. If the erring member rejects all attempts to bring them to repentance, then the local church must follow through with corporate (church) discipline. At this time it needs to be brought before the local church congregation and announced that the individual is being disciplined. This action would require members to be notified verbally by the church leadership of disciplinary action during a church business meeting limited to church members.

Question: If a member of a family is under church discipline, are other members of that family also under discipline.

Answer: No. Only the member under discipline is to be excluded from fellowship. It must also be kept in mind that when a member of a family is disciplined, it does have an effect upon all members of the offender's family. This is why it is so important to understand that my sin does effect others around me. No man lives unto himself ^{Rom 14:7}. When one member hurts, we all hurt. ^{II Cor. 12:26}

Question: What if it is a family member that is living in sin?

The truth is we are all members one of another if we belong to the body of Christ. True love for your own family always requires the very best for them. No one is above or exempt from the need of church discipline; not the pastor or elders, or personal family members. Love for them should motivate a family member to be willing to go to them privately. When sin is allowed within a family with little or no response or consequences, it sends a powerful message to the remaining members that obedience to Christ is of little importance. The temptation to other remaining members will be greater and tempt others within your family to fall to the same sin or other temptations believing that there are few or no consequences. Also, note in **I Timothy 5:19-21**, public rebuke was for the purpose of not only to help the offender, but others also who are tempted with sin. Public rebuke will cause others to fear the ramifications and consequences of sin in their own lives. When we fail to obey Matthew 18, we ultimately will be responsible for sin in the lives of other members in our body.

Question: If it is a family member that is disciplined, how should other family members respond?

Answer: As an immediate family member you have dual responsibilities to both your family and your local church. You will have a tremendous need for wisdom from God to know how to conduct yourself around your family member who is under discipline. Children will still be expected to obey their parents and parents are still required to train their children. When a family member is disciplined by their local church it creates a situation where each and every member of the family needs to carefully seek God's wisdom and direction for their family.

Question: What if we discipline someone and it doesn't work? What if things get worse instead of better?

Answer: This question assumes that obedience to the Lord is only proper if it benefits me. Many times God calls us to obedience and the outcome is not good. God is far more concerned about obedience to Him than He is the outcome. God is responsible for the outcome, I am responsible to obey Him and trust Him. Whenever I refuse to follow through with obeying Matthew 18, I establish myself as a law unto myself. In effect, I rebel against God. The Bible says that rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft. When Saul refused to follow Samuel's instructions, God told Saul that his disobedience was rebellion. ***"For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of the LORD, he hath also rejected thee from [being] king."*** ^{I Samuel 15:23} Many times the sin that we see in others is actually just a reflection of the sin that God sees in our own lives.

Matthew 18 tests our loyalty and true love for Jesus Christ. Saul's answer to Samuel when shown his rebellion is very enlightening. Listen to Saul's reason given for refusing to follow through on God's clear instructions. ***"And Saul said unto Samuel, I have sinned: for I have transgressed the commandment of the LORD, and thy words: because I feared the people, and obeyed their voice."***¹
Samuel 15:24

Question: What does breaking fellowship with the offending party mean?

Answer: When a Christian is under discipline, the Word of God teaches us that we are to no longer fellowship with him. I Corinthians 5:11 says we are not to keep company with the individual. To keep company means to "mix up together, to be intimate with another".

Again in I Corinthians 5:11 the same phrase is used and the words "no not to eat" are added. Certainly Christians were allowed to eat with non-Christians at this time. So this would remove the idea that you continued to deal with him just like any non-Christian. "No not to eat" carries with it the idea of no longer being able to do anything that would require close fellowship. In

II Thes. 3:6 the words ***"withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly"***. The Greek word "withdraw" means to abstain from familiar intercourse with another. The idea intended seems to be to avoid close fellowship with the offending party. Our actions should clearly show we do not condone nor approve of the actions of the fallen member. We should clearly show that we are separating ourselves from the member, but at the same time leaving the door open for godly counsel to encourage him to return to the Lord. The intent was that the offending party would miss the fellowship and seek to do whatever is necessary to restore fellowship with the Lord and His fellow brothers and sisters in Christ. This would then exclude the member under discipline from enjoying fellowship with us around the Lord's Table. But it would not keep the member from attending church services that will expose him to the edifying and reproving ministry of the Word of God.

What should be some of the positive results of being willing to obey Matthew 18?

1. Gossip should be minimized. When each member of the body is committed to first go to a member in sin with the desire to help and not expose, then gossip will be seen for what it really is - sin. It should prompt each of us as a part of the local church to give a good report of those who belong to our church. Children who grow up in homes where gossip and slander are common occurrence, learn early that there is something wrong when people say they love one another and yet speak evil of one another when the person being gossiped about is not around. Obedience to this portion of Scripture will help to build homes where love abounds and the children know that there is a real and visible commitment to Jesus Christ as well as for those we love.
2. Loyalty to Christ as well as one another will be maximized. When it is understood that if and when a member should fall into sin that they have a church family who is committed to their very best. They can know that others will not gossip about them, nor attempt to make their spiritual failures public knowledge without first coming to them. Some Christians who are bound by sin in their life inwardly plead that someone would care enough to help them. A

church committed to Matthew 18 will ultimately produce loyalty among the membership. It is comforting to know that if someone goes to my pastor or elders, or whoever it may be, that they will refuse to listen until the individual first goes to the offending party with the desire to help.

3. A church committed to Matthew 18 will exhibit genuine love one for another. The world will see that we are different and that we take the Word of God seriously. The Bible tells us that when they see our love for the Lord (***He that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me...***^{John 14:21}) and our commitment to one another, it becomes a powerful public testimony to others that Jesus is Lord, and we really do love each other.

4. A church committed to Matthew 18 will learn and reap the great benefits of learning to forgive those whom have offended them when the sinning saint turns back to the Lord and seeks reconciliation. II Corinthians 2:6-11 speaks concerning church discipline and the need for the local church to be ready to forgive and restore the offender:

Sufficient to such a man is this punishment, which was inflicted of many. So that contrariwise ye ought rather to forgive him, and comfort him, lest perhaps such a one should be swallowed up with overmuch sorrow. Wherefore I beseech you that ye would confirm your love toward him. For to this end also did I write, that I might know the proof of you, whether ye be obedient in all things. ^{II Cor 2:6-11}

May the Lord help us to be a church that exhibits a genuine love for Jesus Christ and His Word. May we be obedient in all things. May we be a church where our love for one another motivates us to seek to help the saints who are hurting and fallen. It is easy to discipline out of carnality. It is easier still to ignore those who are fallen. But it will take the grace of God to discipline out of love.

Child Abuse Policy/ Child Protection Policy

Rationale:

1. Sexual molestation in the Church is not something new. Only in the past decade though has it become a topic for open discussion. Unfortunately, the openness has been forced upon the church through costly litigation and media attention. Often an attitude of denial or minimization has existed among churches concerning this tragic problem. Many local church leaders and members still cannot believe that sexual molestation could ever occur in their church.
2. The Bible teaches us that the abuse of children is a serious offense against God, and against His creation. As a church, we believe that we are to have the highest standards of behavior when dealing with children.
3. Adults who work with children and adolescent youth should understand that sexual relations with minors can lead to a felony conviction and imprisonment in a state penitentiary. The law views such misconduct very seriously, as it should. Church workers should also understand that the church insurance policy may not provide them with legal defense of a sexual misconduct charge or pay any portion of a jury verdict assessed against them on account of such conduct.
4. Supervision should be maintained before and after any event or activity involving children until the children are no longer under our supervision.
5. Victims of abuse need love, encouragement, and support. This extends not only to current victims, but to the many in our society who are adult survivors of childhood abuse.
6. All staff-paid and volunteers who work with children should undergo appropriate screening. No person who has been known to have been previously convicted of child abuse should work with children or youth, for both the safety of the children, as well as the importance of not placing a temptation in the path of a person known to have moral failure in this area of their lives.

Purpose:

The purpose of this policy is to effectively communicate information to congregation members to make them aware of the vital issues and concerns related to sexual abuse including:

- **Safeguarding the children and youth of our church from sexual molestation**
- **Protect church staff and volunteer workers from potential allegations of sexual abuse**
- **Limit the extent of our church's legal risk and liability due to sexual abuse**

Policies and procedures are established herewith to provide safeguards against child sexual abuse include the following four primary areas of attention:

- Worker selection
- Worker supervision
- Reporting Obligations
- Response to allegations

Components of the Policy:

In response to these areas, the congregation of Bethany Chapel, Marion Center, PA through the Pastor, and Elders, and through necessary counsel with the Church Board shall oversee, implement and manage the following components of the congregation adopted Child Abuse Policy.

1. Screen all paid employees, including clergy, who work with youth or children.
2. Screen all volunteer workers for any position involving work with youth or children.

Specifics:

A. Screening Procedures

Primary Screening Procedures:

- All children/youth workers must be a member of Bethany Chapel for no less than 6 months. Exceptions may be made by the elders.
- Require each new applicant to acquire and allow the church to possess copies of valid Act 34 (Criminal Record Check) and Act 151 (Child Abuse) Clearances.
- Any individuals with Act 34 reported offences or Child Abuse Act 151 violations are not acceptable workers with children and youth.
- Each applicant will be required to complete a "Primary Screening Form for Children and/or Youth Ministry."
- The pastor and/or elder(s) shall conduct a personal interview with each applicant being considered for a children/youth worker position.
- The pastor and/or elder(s) shall conduct a reference check for applicants who are not readily known by the congregation. The check shall include, but not be limited to, references listed by the applicant and references at previous churches attended. This will be conducted only if the applicant signs a release form consenting to the reference check and releases the church, or any member from liability for injury or damages caused by the remarks shared from the investigation.

B. Supervising Church Workers

- **Use the Two Adult Rule:** When possible, have two adults present during all church activities. When possible, one of the adults should be the parent of one of the children.
- **Identifying Suspicious Behavior:** Any inappropriate conduct or relationship between an adult and a minor, or between minors, should be confronted immediately and investigated by church officials. Prompt warnings against inappropriate conduct should be issued, and the situation monitored very closely. The adult worker's services should be terminated for continued violation, or if a warning was issued, or for a single violation of sufficient gravity. Inappropriate conduct observed between minors must be discussed between those involved and if deemed appropriate, discussed with parents. Continued inappropriate conduct may result in barring the involved youth from future activities and events.

C. Reporting Procedures

Children and youth workers are encouraged to be alert to symptoms of child abuse and to report suspicious behavior to the Pastor or Elders. If deemed appropriate, the Pastor or Elders will contact the Indiana County Children and Youth Services.

1. A written detailed summary of the observations, names of people involved, times, dates and actions taken should be compiled as soon as feasibly possible and filed with the Elders or Pastor.
2. Do not pre-judge the situation. Take the allegations seriously, but reserve judgment until all the facts are clear.
3. Be careful to safeguard the privacy and confidentiality of all involved.
4. The Church attorney should be contacted for legal counsel in addition to the church insurance carrier.
5. The parents of the alleged victim should be notified as soon as possible.
6. It is inappropriate to confront the accused until the safety of the child is secured.
7. Treat the accused with dignity and support.

D. Responding to Allegations of Abuse

Basic Principles

1. All Allegations need to be taken seriously
2. Situations must be handled forthrightly with due respect for people's privacy and confidentiality.
3. Full cooperation must be given to legal authorities under the guidance of our church attorney
4. Adequate care must be shown for the victims
5. A specific spokes person shall be selected by the Pastor and Elders for the purpose of addressing media and congregation questions regarding the matter in a discrete, informed, diplomatic manner. This is to help avoid conflicting reports, potential for media hype and work to protect the integrity and reputation of the church. In all probability, legal counsel will be sought in an effort to protect the rights of all involved. In most cases, a written statement will be developed that will serve as the official and only response from the church which can be read with consistency.
6. Any person contacted for an interview or for comment aside from the selected spokesperson should refer the inquiry to the spokesperson or the Pastor if the selected spokesperson is not known. The Pastor and\or Elders will decide if legal counsel should be present during any interviews from authorities or social service agencies.
7. A position statement will be issued that clearly outlines the precautions the church takes with regard to sexual abuse as stated in this adopted policy.

Congregational Questions & Suggestions - Developing Caring Relationships:2/04/04 -

In seeking to be a church where both Truth and Love are typified in our midst, the elders recommend to our church board and church family the following guidelines for our church.

Policy:

When members and friends of Bethany Chapel have questions or concerns about the church's ministries, we want to make it possible for those questions and concerns to be addressed. But we also understand that there is a proper way when seeking answers to questions. We want to be a church family which is open and forthright with our lives and ministries. Hence, we solicit ways in which we can improve to be better ministers and servants of Christ. We all understand that gossiping, judging one another, slander, and using "back door" methods are not ways to build wholesome, trusting relationships in any church family. The goal is to have a church family that is open and honest, and that does things properly. We want to avoid becoming a church family that is secretive and closed to scrutiny, yet at the same time, we want to guard against developing a body of believers who practice complaining and backbiting. As elders, we would like to submit to our church family some guidelines when there are questions about ministries here at Bethany Chapel.

Questions & Concerns About A Fellow Christian

It is important to maintain a distinction between questions and concerns about a ministry, and questions and concerns about people in the ministries of Bethany Chapel. The Bible itself warns us of how we are to treat people in the body of Christ. Hence we seek to protect the testimony and integrity of our brothers and sisters in Christ. We understand that no one is above correction and examination when it comes to ministry. But we encourage people who have questions or concerns with individuals, whether it be the pastor, an elder, a deacon, a Sunday School teacher, or a fellow member, to first seek to speak to the person(s) privately before making it a public issue of concern. It is the very least that we would want done for ourselves if the problem involved us. This enables a person to get first hand information concerning questions about them. By seeking to go around the person, it will usually tend toward gossip, and broaden the scope of the problem, rather than correct it. More people will usually be drawn into the problem, and make "correcting" the original problem more difficult.

If we see a fellow brother or sister in Christ unfaithful, or involved in sin or wrong behavior, then we need to love them enough to go directly to them. Matthew 18:15-17, Matthew 7:1-5, Matthew 5:23-26, and Gal. 6:1 are all texts that address dealing with a brother or sister involved in possible sin. If a person cannot get an answer that satisfies them, then they should take a brother or sister in Christ with them so that together they can come to a resolution. If the individual cannot come to an acceptable resolution, then they should go to either the pastor or an elder for assistance in finding a proper solution to their question or concern. Remember, in dealing with others, seek to deal with them in the same manner in which you would want others to treat you. (And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise. **Luke 6:31**)

Questions & Concerns About A Ministry

Questions and concerns about the ministries here at Bethany Chapel can usually be easily dealt with by going to the person in charge of the ministry. If the person(s) cannot answer the question(s) satisfactorily, then seek out a deacon or an elder to assist you in getting an answer, or talk to the pastor. Remember the goal should never be to find fault with a ministry, but rather to help and assist that ministry to be more effective. Suggestions are always welcome.

General Suggestions

There may be times when a person has suggestions for our church and would like to share them with us. We have provided a suggestion box for this purpose. It is important that each suggestion be signed. There are numerous reasons for this. It will help the pastor, or church leaders to contact the originator of the suggestion to seek clarity or more information, and to report progress as the church leadership seeks to help. Suggestions without a signature will not be addressed.

Also Remember:

According to our constitution, if a situation ever arises where the leadership refuses to give a satisfactory answer to question(s) raised, there is a provision to bring the concern before the congregation at a specially-called congregational meeting. (See Article 6, Sec. B of the church constitution.) Hopefully, most, if not all concerns can be addressed in a less formal manner when they are brought to the attention of the proper people.