

Protocol for Handling Church/Personnel Related Issues

The protocol for church/personnel related issues in the guidelines for Staff Parish Relations Committees are based on the biblical principles found in Matthew 18:15-17

“If your brother or sister offends you, go and tell them their fault, between you and them alone. If they listen to you, you have regained your friend. But if they do not listen, take one or two others along with you, that everything said may be verified by two or three witnesses. If they still refuse to listen, tell it to the church. And if they still refuse to listen even to the church, let them be to you as a Gentile or tax collector.”

When matters of concern are brought to the attention of a Staff Parish Relations member steps should be taken to assure that concerns are taken seriously and addressed. While it is understood that all matters cannot be resolved to the satisfaction of all parties, the following steps should assure that every effort has been made.

The SPRC member approached will follow the steps outlined below and follow up with the persons involved in a timely manner:

1. First, the person voicing the concern should be asked if they have spoken directly to the staff member with whom they have a concern. If they have not, they should be encouraged to before any further discussion takes place.
2. If the direct approach is unsuccessful, or either party refuses to have the discussion, then one or two members of staff parish will offer to act as mediator between the two parties. (In the case of Union Church, one of those should be the staff member's liaison person)
3. If the concern is still not resolved to the satisfaction of both, then both the staff person and parishioner will be invited to attend a meeting with the full staff parish committee.
4. At no time should these matters be discussed with anyone other than the persons involved at each level of the resolution process.
5. Concerns are not to be kept anonymous. The issue will not be made available to the whole church, but must be shared with the staff member about whom the concern is shared and who has the concern.
6. Secrets do not solve problems, they cause problems to grow and resentments to fester. Clear communication and Christian compassion for all involved will strengthen the body of Christ.