

Policy – Counseling Requests Woodlawn Christian Church

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish procedures for the handling of requests from individuals seeking formal counseling from a staff member of Woodlawn Christian Church.

Definitions

Formal counseling – Formal counseling represents more than one sequential session with a counselor. It is assumed that there are times when our ministers will be asked to provide Biblical wisdom for individuals within the church. This counseling may come as the result of a crisis or a request “to talk.” The staff of Woodlawn Christian Church does not solicit for counseling services.

Procedures

1. When a minister is presented with a request for formal counseling, the minister will verbally convey to the individual the fact that he is not a licensed counselor.
2. At the second session, the minister will verbally convey that formal counseling sessions will be limited to no more than three total. At the third session, the minister will provide written referral to a licensed Christian counseling service.

Note:

1. This policy is also applicable when a lay leader is approached for formal counseling.
2. It is assumed that an individual may, on an occasional basis, request a counseling appointment. It is up to the minister or lay leader to determine whether such sessions are sequential. Items to consider:
 - a. Are the counseling sessions with the individual dealing with the same issue over and over? If so, a formal counseling relationship may be helpful.
 - b. How often is the individual requesting a counseling session with the minister or leader? If more than once per month, a formal counseling relationship may be helpful.
3. It is always advisable:
 - a. For counseling to happen on a same-gender basis.
 - b. For counseling rooms to have a viewing window in the door.
 - c. For counseling to take place only when more than one staff person is on-site.