Walking Together

Healthy Relationships at East City Wesleyan Church

A guide to responding to concerns in a way that honours Christ, values people, and seeks restoration.

> As far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone.
> **Romans 12:18**



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A guide to responding to concerns in a way that honours Christ, values people, and seeks restoration.

"As far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone."
Romans 12:18

Our first instinct is relationship.
Our final goal is restoration.
Our commitment throughout is to honour Christ and one another.

We Believe Relationships Matter

Church is more than a gathering of people who share beliefs.

We are a family being formed into the likeness of Christ.

Whenever people journey together there will be misunderstanding, disappointment and disagreement.

Conflict is not unusual - it is part of living in community. What matters is how we respond.

Our church culture is not built on avoiding conflict or winning arguments. It is built on listening well, speaking truth with grace, seeking understanding, and pursuing restoration. The Holy Spirit often works through humble listening, honest conversation and shared discernment.

Healthy churches are not churches without disagreement. They are communities that have learned how to disagree with humility, courage and love.

Our Commitments

Everything we do is shaped by four commitments.

- Restoration

Our goal is restored relationships wherever possible.

- Respect

Every person deserves dignity, compassion and the opportunity to be heard.

- Fairness

Natural justice guides every decision.

- Discernment

We seek God's wisdom together rather than simply deciding who is right.

Discernment is something we do together, not something we do to one another.

Most Conflict Never Needs A Formal Process

Most concerns are best resolved through honest, gracious conversation.



CONCERN

A concern arises in our relationships or ministry.

CONVERSATION

We speak together honestly, listen well, and seek to understand.

UNDERSTANDING

Understanding grows, grace is extended, and relationships heal.

RESOLUTION

We move forward together in unity and purpose.

Formal complaints are the exception, not the norm.
Our focus is always on restoration,
reconciliation and walking together in Christ.

Keeping People Safe

SAFE Church

Healthy relationships also mean creating environments where everyone is safe from harm. Some concerns are not relational disagreements and should not be handled through the normal conflict process.



These include:

- Abuse
- Harassment
- Bullying
- Violence
- Serious misconduct
- Situations where someone may be unsafe

In these situations, the priority is safety, support and appropriate action.

The Wesleyan Methodist Church of Aotearoa New Zealand is committed to providing safe environments for worship, work and study that are free from harassment, bullying and violence.

If you or someone you know needs support:

Contact:

National Safe Church Officer
safe@wesleyan.nz

Further Safe Church resources are available through WMCANZ office@wesleyan.nz and on the website w
church

Helping One Another Walk Well

Most concerns are resolved when people have the courage to speak with one another rather than **about** one another.

- Conversation requires humility.
- Listening builds trust.
- Grace makes reconciliation possible.
- Formal processes exist when they are needed, but they are never intended to replace healthy relationships.

One of the best ways we strengthen our church is by helping one another take healthy next steps when concerns arise. Sometimes someone comes to us feeling hurt, frustrated or confused by another person's words or actions. How we respond in that moment matters.

Rather than becoming a place where concerns stop, we can become people who gently encourage one another toward understanding, reconciliation and healthy conversation.

Helpful responses

Instead of taking sides, consider asking:

"Have you had the opportunity to talk with them about it?"

"It sounds like a conversation could really help bring some clarity."

"Would it help if I came with you or helped facilitate a conversation?"

"Can I pray with you before you speak with them?"

"How can I help you move towards resolution?"

Sometimes people simply need someone to listen and encouragement to take the next faithful step. Rather than becoming part of the conflict, we can become part of the solution.

Go to each other before going around each other.

If a conversation feels too difficult, encourage them to seek support from the Senior Minister, Staff Member, Small Group Leader or a Servant Leader.

Seeking support is a sign of wisdom - not failure.

When Should I Speak Directly?



Different situations require different responses.
Speaking directly is an act of love.
Seeking support is an act of wisdom.
Protecting people is always our first priority.

The Way We Walk Together



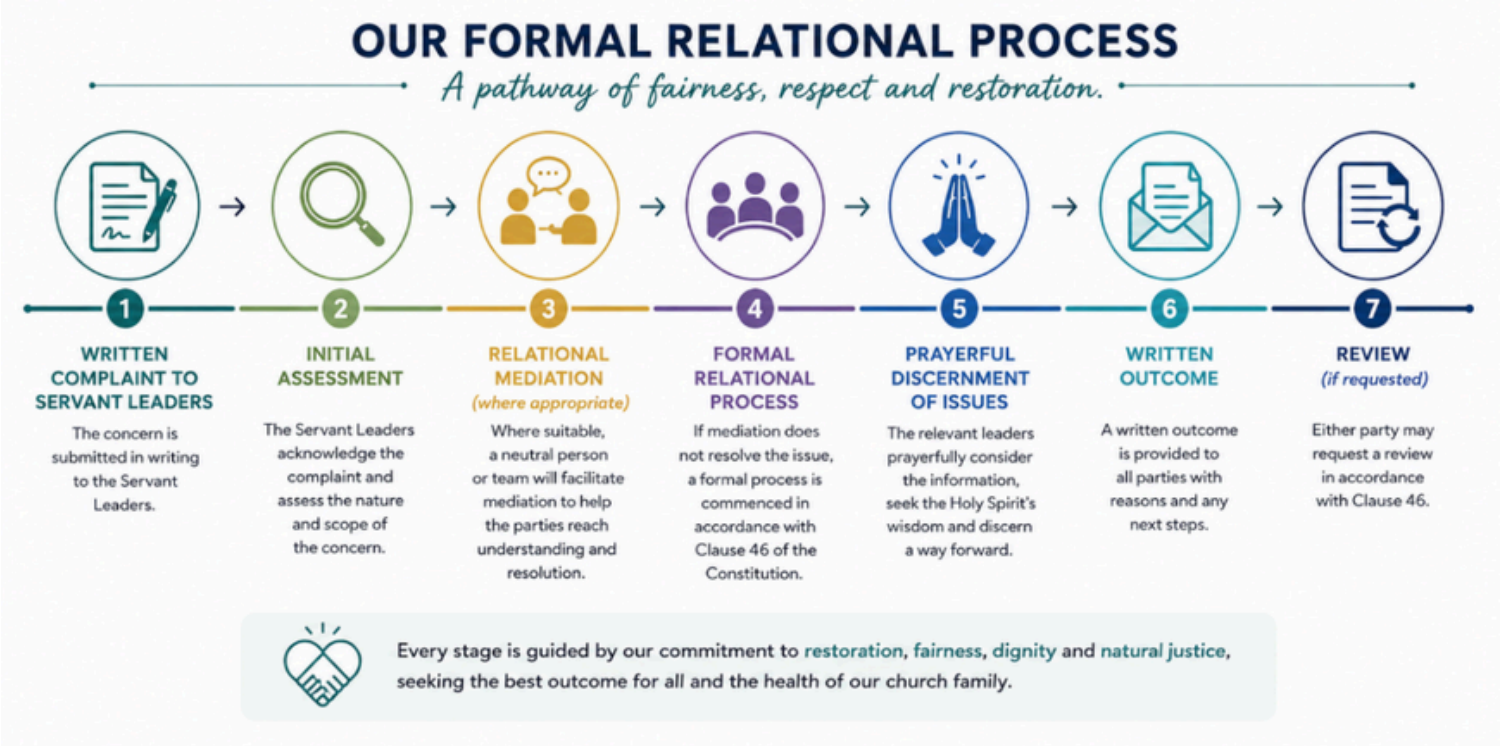
Our pathway is intentionally simple.
Most concerns are resolved in the first three stages.
The formal process exists when genuine attempts at restoration have not resolved the concern, or where the issue is significantly affecting relationships, ministry or the wider church community.
Every stage reflects the same commitment:
To honour Christ by honouring one another.

When is a Formal Process Appropriate?

A formal process is appropriate when:
✓ Honest conversations have genuinely been attempted without resolution.
✓ Supported conversations or mediation have not restored the relationship.
✓ Trust has significantly broken down.
✓ The concern is ongoing or escalating.
✓ The issue is affecting ministry, leadership or the wider church community.
✓ A fair and accountable process is needed to help everyone move forward.

A formal process is generally not appropriate because:

- A conversation feels awkward.
- Someone prefers to remain anonymous.
- There is general frustration without attempting conversation.
- There is disagreement with a leadership decision alone.
- Someone wishes to avoid the responsibility of seeking reconciliation.



What happens?

The full process is contained in **Clause 46 of the East City Wesleyan Constitution** which is available here [Link to website]

Choosing the Right Pathway

Not every concern follows the same process.

Some matters require different pathways to ensure people are protected and appropriate accountability is maintained.

If your concern relates to...	Follow this pathway	Contact
Relationship conflict, misunderstandings, ministry concerns or disagreements	**East City Wesleyan Relationship & Conflict Resolution Process**	Senior Minister, staff member or any Servant Leader
Abuse, harassment, bullying, violence, sexual misconduct, or concerns for someone's safety	**WMCANZ Safe Church Process**	National Safe Church Officer **safe@wesleyan.nz**
Concerns regarding the serious misconduct of the Senior Minister or other pastoral staff	**WMCANZ Ministerial Misconduct Process**	Assistant National Superintendent via the National Resource Centre **office@wesleyan.nz** **09 271 6460**

Not sure which pathway applies?

If you're unsure, speak with the Senior Minister or a Servant Leader or contact the National Resource Centre office@wesleyan.nz

We will help ensure your concern is directed to the appropriate process.

Safety always takes priority over process. No one is expected to confront another person where abuse, intimidation, violence or a significant power imbalance makes doing so unsafe.

Walking Together

Go to each other before going around each other.

When concerns arise, let us choose

- to pray before reacting,
- to listen before assuming,
- to understand before judging,
- to speak truth with grace,
- and to pursue restoration before division.

May East City Wesleyan always be known as a community of **open hearts, open ears, and open arms**, where people are loved, truth is spoken graciously, and Christ is honoured in the way we walk together.



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