

# Church Restoration Process

Grace Covenant Church

The goal of this process is restoration of the individual in their walk with the Lord and fellowship in the church. The steps in this process represent general guidelines to be used by the Board of Elders in their discretion. Because each individual's situation is different, the application of this Restoration Process by the Board of Elders may differ from the steps outlined herein.

Level 1 Done by first-hand witness

- 1) Apply Matthew 18:15-18
  - a. Go to person individually to seek reconciliation & extend forgiveness
  - b. Take a witness
- 2) May consult a pastor or elder on how to do this
- 3) Goal: Restoration of fellowship with God and the church
  - a. If unrepentant go to Level 2

Level 2 Done by their shepherd or pastor

- 1) Apply 1 Thessalonians 5:14 – is this an act of weakness, fainthearted, unruly?
- 2) Ensure that Level 1 has been done properly
- 3) Go to person individually to seek reconciliation & extend forgiveness
  - a. Confirm facts – confront behavior – suggest corrections
  - b. Share how we have forgiveness in Christ
  - c. Express concern if unrepentant
  - d. Suggest accountability
- 4) Possible suspension of Ministry Service
- 5) May consult a pastor or elder on how to do this
- 6) Goal: Restoration of fellowship with God and the church
  - a. If unrepentant go to Level 3

Level 3 Done by a team of Elders and Pastors by request of Servant Team

- 1) Follow through on Matthew 18:15-18 v.17
- 2) Confirm Level 1 & 2 have been done – do not repeat them
- 3) Go to person individually to seek reconciliation & extend forgiveness
  - a. Define inappropriate behavior in light of Scripture: 1 Timothy 5:24-25
  - b. Share the importance of repentance and restoration
  - c. Warn and explain the consequence of continued behavior – damage to the soul; loss of fellowship; dismissal from ministry service
- 4) To help them focus on issues/concern temporarily:
  - a. Remove from ministry service or leadership
  - b. Inform ministry leadership of this action
- 5) Put summary in writing
- 6) Report to Elders and Staff re: status
- 7) Highly recommend a personal accountability system
- 8) Goal: Restoration of fellowship with God and the church
  - a. If unrepentant go to Level 4

- Level 4      The issue is brought before the membership of the Congregation by Elder to get them to encourage the person to be restored.
- 1) Follow through with Matthew 18:15-18 v. 17-18
  - 2) Discuss and approve the communication plan at Elder Board level
  - 3) Tell it to the church being interpreted as a statement to the congregation or a letter to the church membership asking them to join the Elders in encouraging the person to repent. This letter may or may not contain charges, depending on the nature of the situation and the judgment of the elders.
  - 4) Write a letter to the person warning them that disciplinary action will come if they are unrepentant and/or explain to the person and their spouse what our process is. Show them a copy of the letter to be sent to the membership.
  - 5) Continue to seek restoration.
  - 6) Goal: Restoration of fellowship with God and the church
- Level 5      The issue is brought before the whole Congregation by Elder to express that the person is unwilling to repent. This would happen after a period of time from Level 4.
- 1) Follow through on Matthew 18:15-18 v17-18
  - 2) Discuss and approve the communication plan at Elder Board level
  - 3) Statement to congregation with no specific charges but to withhold fellowship from this person. Withholding fellowship meaning all church functions including Sunday worship.
  - 4) Assign someone to keep up with them.
  - 5) If they go to another congregation, we will endeavor to inform new church that this person is under discipline.
  - 6) Continue to seek restoration
  - 7) Goal: Restoration of fellowship with God and the church
- Level 6      Before the Congregation by Elder  
This level is done instead of Level 5 for leaders of the church-Elders, Pastors, lay leaders.
- 1) Apply 1 Timothy 5:19-20
    - a. Statement to congregation with specific charges
    - b. Mark them as an example
  - 2) Write a letter to the person informing them that they are under church discipline.
  - 3) If they go to another congregation, then inform the new church that this person is under discipline.
  - 4) Continue to seek restoration
  - 5) Goal: Restoration of fellowship with God and the church

If restoration does happen after Level 4 or 5:

- 1) Apply James 5:19-20
- 2) Follow up team meet with individual for prayer
- 3) Come back to Elders first and request restoration
- 4) New statement to congregation or membership
- 5) Mentor/actively discipline for at least one year
- 6) Do not put into leadership position for at least one year

# REVISION SHEET

Revision	Description of Revision & Writer	Doc. Owner	Release Date
O	Original issue of document which was approved Dec. 14, 2000 and revised March 2002.	RA	5/8/02