

ST. PETER AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH
4730 Margareta Ave. Saint Louis, MO 63115

ESTABLISHED BOUNDARIES FOR PASTORAL CONFERENCE/COUNSELING

Time and Location of Services – Sessions will occur during regular office hours, or at times when other staff members are present within the building. No session will be held in any homes when there are only two adults present.

Length and Number of Sessions – Sessions will be limited to 50 minutes, with no more than 6-8 sessions.

Frequency of Sessions – The standard of one meeting per week will be observed.

Telephone Conference/Counseling Sessions – Sessions will be conducted in the same manner as if it were in person; observing all established boundaries.

Appropriate and Inappropriate Touching – While hugging might be appropriate before and after worship service it may not be appropriate in a conference/counseling session especially if only the counselee and the counselor are the only two present. Touching should always respond to the need of the counselee and not to the need of the counselor.

Referrals – Referrals will be made for those requiring additional counseling and/or counseling outside of the scope of the pastor and/or staff member.

Accountability through Supervision – Ministers and staff members will provide regular reports on their ministry (counseling/visitation) activities. Report shall include date, time, location and those present during conference/counseling session.

Screening of Workers – Reference checks, employment verification and background checks will be conducted before hiring.

High Risk Settings – Visitation and Counseling will be conducted in pairs. At no time shall any child/children meet or be left alone and/or behind closed doors with any adult persons.

Training – Training and a periodical review of policies and procedures will be required for all clergy, staff members, employees and officials of the church. Feedback will be solicited on how well policies and procedures are working and what changes need to be made.

Background Checks – Background checks will be conducted for those who work and wish to work with our youth and young adults.

Previous Misconduct – Once information is obtained regarding previous sexual misconduct, church leadership will evaluate to what degree the prior misconduct places the church at risk, and will determine a reasonable course of action based upon the fact, as well as advice and input from professionals, and denominational leadership. All information will be handled in the strictest of confidence