



**COUNTRY & TOWN**  
**BAPTIST CHURCH**

LOVING | GROWING | SHARING | SERVING

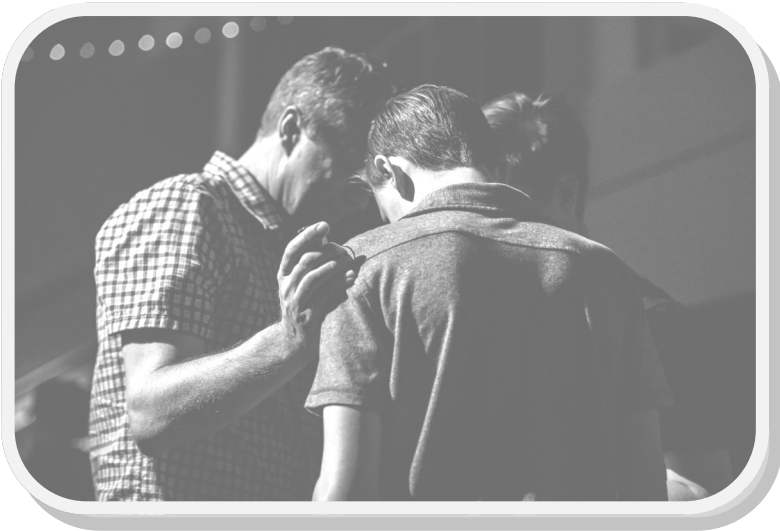


# **Pastor Relations Committee 2020**

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## Matthew 18:15-17

**If your brother or sister sins, go and point out their fault, just between the two of you. If they listen to you, you have won them over. But if they will not listen, take one or two others along, so that every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses. If they still refuse to listen, tell it to the church; and if they refuse to listen even to the church, treat them as you would a pagan or tax collector.**



## PASTORAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE

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### **What is the Pastoral Relations Committee?**

The Pastoral Relations Committee (PRC) serves to address problems that come before the Committee and to pursue reconciliation of disputes. The committee advocates for the congregation to the Pastoral Staff and advocates for the Pastoral staff to the congregation. Additionally, the committee mediates between members of the congregation. The framework for problem solving and conflict reconciliation shall be based on Matthew 18:15-17: *If your brother or sister sins, go and point out their fault, just between the two of you. If they listen to you, you have won them over. But if they will not listen, take one or two others along, so that every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses. If they still refuse to listen, tell it to the church; and if they refuse to listen even to the church, treat them as you would a pagan or tax collector.* The PRC also utilizes Ken Sande's *The Peacemaker. A Biblical Guide to Resolving Personal Conflict* and other resources from Peacemakers Ministries.

### **The Bylaws and the Pastoral Relations Committee**

The Pastoral Relations Committee is established to provide a forum for conflict reconciliation between the members of the Church and/or Pastoral staff, and to pursue reconciliation of disputes that may arise. The committee is to be an advocate for the Church to the Pastoral staff and an advocate for the Pastoral staff to the Church. The committee will also be an advocate between members of the Church. The Church Membership Covenant and supporting Pastoral staff job descriptions will be used as appropriate for reconciliation efforts. The operating framework for problem solving and conflict reconciliation shall be based on the biblical principles of Matthew 18:15-17 and other related scriptures.

## THE FOUR G'S

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Our approach to resolving conflict may be summarized in four basic principles, "**The Four G's.**"

***Glorify God*** (1 Cor. 10:31). Biblical peacemaking is motivated and guided by a deep desire to bring honor to God by revealing the reconciling love and power of Jesus Christ. As we draw on his grace, follow his example, and put his teachings into practice, we can find freedom from the impulsive, self-centered decisions that make conflict worse, and bring praise to God by displaying the power of the gospel in our lives.

***Get the Log out of Your Eye*** (Matt. 7:5). Attacking others only invites counterattacks. This is why Jesus teaches us to face up to our own contributions to a conflict before we focus on what others have done. When we overlook others' minor offenses and honestly admit our own faults, our opponents will often respond in kind. As tensions decrease, the way may be opened for sincere discussion, negotiation, and reconciliation.

***Gently Restore*** (Gal. 6:1). When others fail to see their contributions to a conflict, we sometimes need to graciously show them their fault. If they refuse to respond appropriately, Jesus calls us to involve respected friends, church leaders, or other objective individuals who can help us encourage repentance and restore peace.

***Go and Be Reconciled*** (Matt. 5:24). Finally, peacemaking involves a commitment to restoring damaged relationships and negotiating just agreements. When we forgive others as Jesus has forgiven us and seek solutions that satisfy others' interests as well as our own, the debris of conflict is cleared away and the door is opened for genuine peace and humility. Prepare to continually hear from Him.

## What are the Responsibilities of the Pastoral Relations Committee?

The committee serves to lead reconciliation efforts between the Pastoral staff and the congregation, or between members of the congregation. The PRC takes a proactive approach to conflict resolution. By educating the congregation and pastors in Peacemaker Policies and biblical peacemaking, we desire to see conflicts between individuals resolved quickly.

Before bringing a conflict before the PRC, every effort should be made to resolve the conflict on an individual level, as per Matthew 18:15-16. If, after following the peacemaking principles found in Matthew 18, conflict still remains between congregation members or between a member of the congregation and a Pastoral staff member, then the PRC will assist in resolving the conflict.

## How does the Pastoral Relations Committee Resolve Conflict?

### The Matthew 18 Process

A general principle taught in Matthew 18 is that we should try to keep the circle of people involved in a conflict as *small* as possible for as *long* as possible. If we can resolve a dispute personally and privately, we should do so. But if we cannot settle matters on our own, we should seek help from other people, expanding the circle only as much as necessary to bring about repentance and reconciliation. This is one of the great blessings of belonging to the church: Whenever you cannot handle a problem or conflict on your own, you can turn to the body of Christ for guidance and assistance. This process of involving others may involve five steps.

*Galatians 6:1: Brothers and sisters, if someone is overtaken in any wrongdoing, you who are spiritual, restore such a person with a gentle spirit, watching out for yourselves so that you won't be tempted.*

## **FIVE STEPS OF THE MATTHEW 18 PROCESS**

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### **Step One: Overlook Minor Offenses**

Before you consider involving others in a conflict, it is wise to review the steps that you can take to resolve a dispute in private. To begin with, evaluate how you can use the situation as an opportunity to glorify God, serve others, and grow to be like Christ. Then seriously consider resolving the dispute unilaterally by overlooking minor offenses and giving up certain personal rights.

### **Step Two: Talk in Private**

If you have wronged someone else, God calls you to go to the other person to seek forgiveness. If another person has committed a wrong that is too serious to overlook, it is your responsibility to go to the other person and show him his fault, making every effort to resolve personal issues and promote genuine reconciliation. Or, if you are dealing with material issues that are too important to walk away from, you can try to reach an agreement through negotiation. Throughout this effort, it is appropriate to seek counsel and encouragement from godly advisors who can help you see your own faults more clearly and respond to the other person wisely. If repeated efforts to resolve the matter in these private ways fail, and if the matter is too serious to overlook, you may proceed to the next step in the Matthew 18 process.

### **Step Three: Take One or Two Others Along**

If a dispute cannot be resolved in private, Jesus tells us to ask other people to get involved. "But if he will not listen, take one or two others along, so that `every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses'" (Matt. 18:16). Paul gives the same instruction in Philippians 4:2-3. In some cases, the others may serve as intermediaries, shuttling between both sides to promote understanding. In most cases however they will act initially as mediators, meeting with both parties simultaneously to improve communication and offer biblical counsel. If necessary, they may eventually serve as arbitrators and provide a binding decision about how to resolve the matter (see 11 Cor. 6: 1-8).

## **Step Four: Tell it to the Church (Church Accountability)**

If your opponent professes to be a Christian and yet refuses to listen to the reconcilers' counsel, and if the matter is too serious to overlook, Jesus commands you to "tell it to the church" (Matt. 18:17). This does not mean standing up in a worship service and broadcasting the conflict to church members and visitors alike, since unwarranted publicity is totally inconsistent with the intent of Matthew 18. Instead, you should inform the leadership of the other person's church (and probably yours as well) of the problem and request their assistance in promoting justice and peace by holding both of you accountable to God's Word and to your commitments.

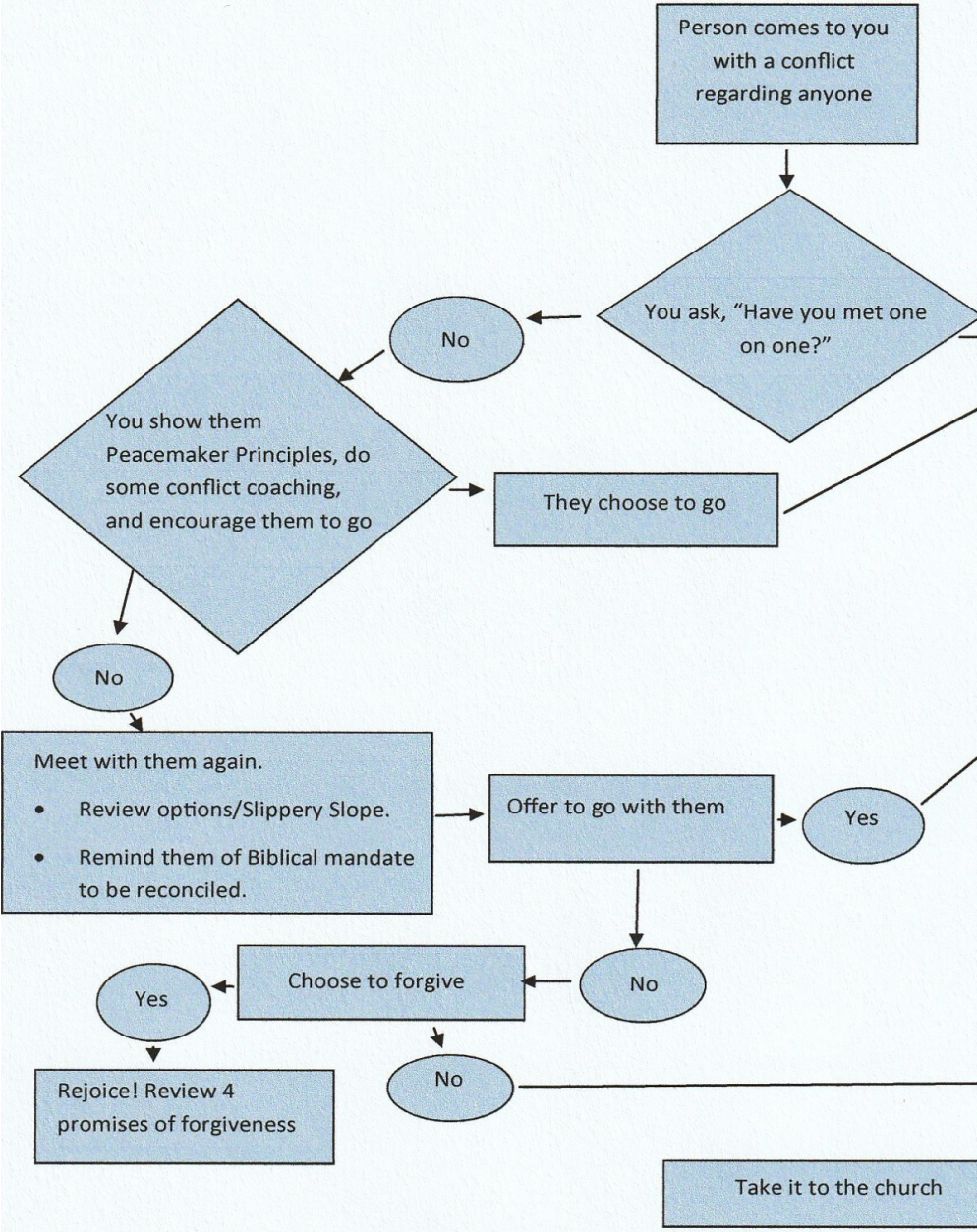
## **Step Five: Treat Him as a Nonbeliever**

God calls his people to act justly, seek peace, and be reconciled with others. If a Christian refuses to do these things, he is violating God's will. If he refuses to listen to his church's counsel to repent of this sin, Jesus says the church should "treat him as you would a pagan or a tax collector" (Matt. 18:17). Jesus' use of the word *as* is significant. Since only God can know a person's heart (1 Sam. 16:7; Rev. 2:23), the church has no power to decide whether a person *is* a believer. Instead, the church is called only to make a functional decision: If a person behaves like a nonbeliever would – by disregarding the authority of Scripture and of Christ's church – he should be treated as if he were a nonbeliever. In other words, the church should not pretend that things are all right with people who claim to be Christians and yet refuse to listen to God as he speaks through the Scriptures and the church.

***James 3: 17-18 : But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peace-loving, gentle, compliant, full of mercy and good fruits. Unwavering, and without pretense. And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace by those who cultivate peace.***

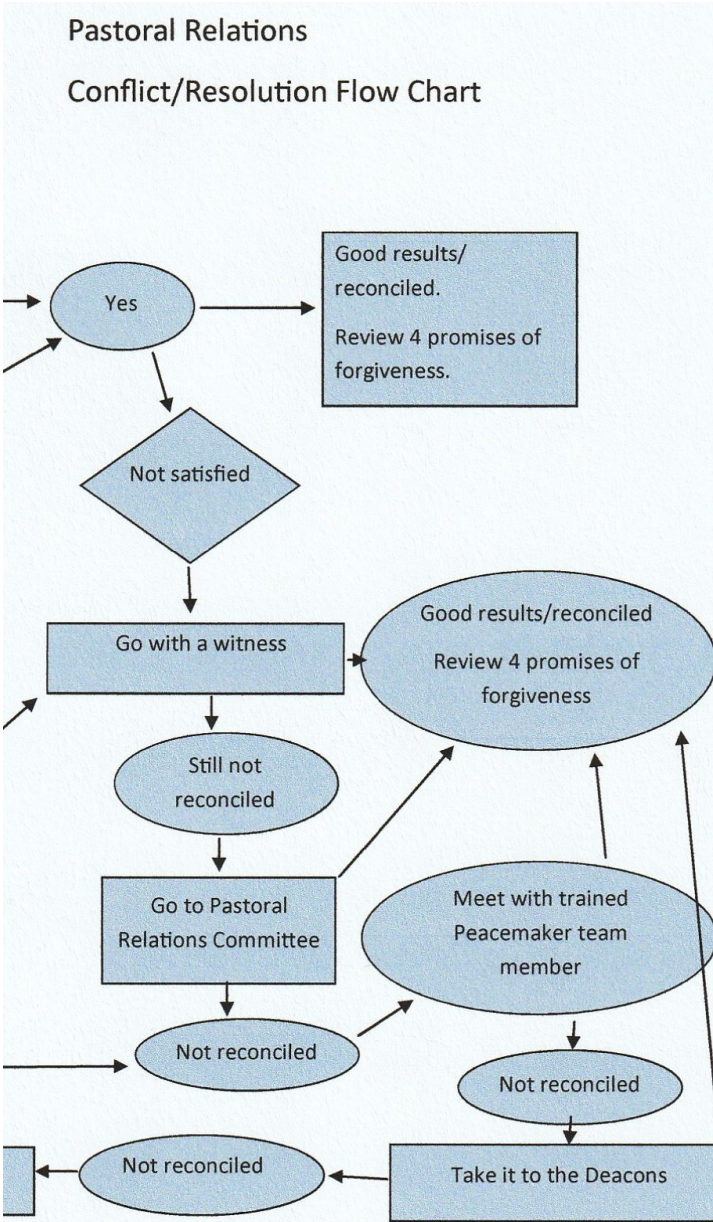


Once a member of the PRC is made aware of the unresolved conflict, the PRC will utilize the Pastoral Relations Conflict Resolution Flowchart to intervene and, ideally, assist in a successful conflict resolution.





Additionally, the PRC may need to recommend formal mediation with a professionally trained Peacemaker Team member and also involve the Deacon body.



## **Advocating for the Congregation**

The PRC advocates for the church body in many ways. The PRC may utilize a church-wide survey which serves to highlight both the current strengths and weaknesses of C&T. Survey results can assist the PRC in identifying potential sources of conflict within the church and proactively taking steps to resolve them. As needed, the PRC will coordinate with the Personnel Committee to assess and assist with meeting ministry needs.

## **Advocating for the Pastoral Staff**

The PRC offers a "safe haven" whereby any of the Pastoral staff may approach a member of the PRC to assist in conflict reconciliation in a confidential setting and without fear of recrimination. The Pastoral Staff member is encouraged to first meet one-on-one with the individual with whom they are in conflict. If this is not feasible then the PRC member will agree to go and be a witness to help in the conflict resolution process. The PRC recognizes that there are unique circumstances within the Pastoral staff that affect the PRC as they work toward reconciliation. The first is that there is a working relationship between the Senior Pastor and the supporting Pastoral staff whereby the Senior Pastor is responsible to lead the Pastoral staff and the Pastoral staff members answer to the Senior Pastor in an organizational structure. That being the case, many of the day to day discussions and potential problems will be resolved similar to a typical workplace setting. However, where opinions or unilateral action by members of the Pastoral Staff have an adverse effect on the congregation, or effectiveness of the ministry efforts, then it is appropriate for the PRC to become involved. The second circumstance is when the Pastoral staff is dealing with a situation that demands professional confidentiality. In those instances, any conflict reconciliation may better be pursued outside of Country & Town rather than through the PRC.

## Who is the Pastoral Relations Committee?

The PRC is comprised of five members (including at least two men and two women). Characteristics of committee members include:

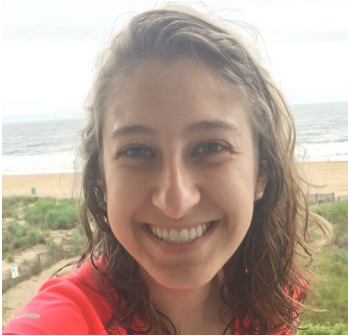
- Being firmly rooted and grounded in their faith.
- A Christian character that commands the respect of the congregation.
- Possessing strong reconciliation skills with the ability to appreciate different points of view.
- The ability to keep all business of the committee in the strictest confidence.
- Having good listening skills, patience, and flexibility.

*Matthew 7: 3-5: Why do you look at the splinter in your brother's eye but don't notice the beam of wood in your own eye? Or how can you say to your brother, "Let me take the splinter out of your eye, and look, there is a beam of wood in your own eye."  
"Hypocrite!" First take the beam of wood out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the splinter out of your brother's eye.*

## THE PASTORAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE

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**SARAH HEINTZELMAN**



I have been attending C&T since 2000. As a kindergartner at a Christian school, I accepted Christ as my Savior. My faith really became my own when I entered the youth group and had many opportunities to apply what I had learned about God through faith, prayer, and serving Him. Through the many youth group activities, mission trips, and service projects I was taught how to daily cultivate my relationship with God and be a living testament to others around me through my actions, words, and prayer. I currently co-lead the Young Single Adult Small Group, volunteer with the youth group, and play the keyboard as a member of the worship team.

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## DAVE McDONALD



My faith journey is a bit a-typical. I was raised Catholic and ‘hit’ the sacramental milestones. Throughout college, I only sporadically attended church. After marrying my college sweetheart, we began attending a small Southern Baptist church. Around the time of our second child’s birth, tragedy struck a fellow church family. Their faith and hope in our Savior, Jesus Christ, kept them going and drove my faith deeper. Around the age of 30, and after being baptized, then dedicating our two children, the sudden passing of one of the youth leaders (a husband and wife team) and subsequent passing of their oldest son left the remaining leader, and youth group of this church seriously hurting. A fellow member and I co-led for 1 ½ years to comfort, lead, love, worship, and grow with the youth.

Since moving to PA in 2013, we have called C&T home. It’s a wonderful place to continue in my faith journey and grow in love, understanding, and appreciation for God’s sovereignty, Jesus’ endless love, and the Spirit’s constant guidance in our lives. I continually pray to *lead* my family as I attempt to *follow* Jesus’ example. In doing so, I previously served on the Personnel Committee and currently serve on the Pastoral Relations Committee. I also co-teach the K & 1<sup>st</sup> grade Sunday School class and assist with VBS.



I am a Christian and believe in God, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit. I gave my life to Christ when I was 12 at a Methodist church camp in Western Pennsylvania. My wife Evelyn and I married in 1972 and have two married, grown children with children of their own. Before coming to C&T, Evelyn and I attended Baughman Memorial United Methodist Church in New Cumberland and while there, I held most every position in that church, taught many Sunday School classes and led small groups. At C&T I am serving on the Personnel Committee, Pastor Search Committee, Pastor Relations Committee and Church Council. In my professional career I worked in Information Technologies from 1967 to 1987 at various companies (most recently with Highmark). In 1987, I started a computer consulting company and then sold it in 1999 and retired. Owning my own business provided the luxury of serving on boards of Christ centered organizations.



I grew up in the United Methodist church. There I helped create and occasionally lead our contemporary worship band. While attending Lebanon Valley College, I played bass in the praise band “He Is Savior” for several semesters. Sadly, the Christian community on campus didn’t provide the fellowship for which I longed, and I wasn’t properly prepared to engage in the world alone. My faith journey was reinvigorated as I found myself dating my future wife. On a date at an event by the Race Track Chaplaincy, I recommitted myself to Christ and eventually was baptized here at C&T. Since becoming a member, I have served as a teller, play bass in the praise band, and currently serve on the Pastoral Relations Committee.



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## ELIZABETH STEVENSON



Growing up in a Christian family, I accepted Jesus as my Savior at a young age. While in my high school youth group, I realized that being a Christian doesn't just mean attending church on Sundays and being a "good person". I needed to grow my faith and my relationship with God. I joined a small group, began reading my Bible, and was baptized. I went on to attend Messiah College where I met my husband, Jim.

I began attending C&T soon after college and became a member. I have served in Women's Ministry, Personnel Committee, taught small groups and AWANA, served in the nursery and preschool, and helped plan VBS. A former English teacher, I am now a Stay-at-Home-Mother to our daughters, Rebekah and Katherine.