

## FCBCLA PROCEDURE FOR CHURCH DISCIPLINE

1. The Pastors in the Executive Council has the authority and responsibility to conduct and mete out church discipline “for those members whose belief and/or conduct show an inability to abide by and uphold the Constitution and By-laws of the Church.” <sup>1</sup>
2. In the course of confronting the church member, gathering facts, and confirming the facts, the Pastors in the Executive Council will be guided by Matthew 18:15-16 [NASB] (v.15 - “If your brother sins, go and show him his fault in private; if he listens to you, you have won your brother. v.16 - But if he does not listen to you, take one or two more with you, so that by the mouth of two or three witnesses every fact may be confirmed.)
3. The Pastors in the Executive Council will gather initial findings on the nature and extent of the alleged sin, those involved, timing, and actions or steps already taken, and may do so with the help of pastoral staff, deacons, church leaders, and pertinent lay persons. If the Pastors in the Executive Council believes that a crime has occurred then the proper legal authorities will be informed.
4. The processes of investigation, gathering facts, discussion, and any counseling shall be held in private. The name of the person involved in the transgression and the nature of the transgression will not be disclosed to the public (within and outside of FCBCLA) until the process for dismissal from membership has commenced and when the case is brought forth to the church members for voting. At that point, the Pastors in the Executive Council shall have the discretion on the nature and extent of information to be disclosed for the purpose of voting to dismiss the member.
5. If the member is found to be in sin and agrees to church discipline, the Pastors in the Executive Council will plan, recommend or prescribe a path of prayer, repentance, and restoration, with follow-through. If a church employee is found to be in sin, then refer to the discipline process in the FCBCLA Employee Handbook.
6. If the member is found to be in sin and shows no sign of genuine repentance after being counseled and disciplined or refuses to accept counsel and discipline, the member may be removed from membership and fellowship by the Church. This process will be led by the Pastors in the Executive Council and will be guided by Matthew 18:17 [NASB] (“If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector.”) Removal from membership and fellowship will require a  $\frac{3}{4}$  majority vote of those present at the Church Members Meeting. At any time during the discipline process, the church member may exercise prerogative to submit a signed and dated letter of

resignation from membership and is effective immediately upon FCBCLA's receipt of said letter.

7. The Church may restore membership to a previously excluded member, at his/her request, upon evidence of genuine repentance, reconciliation, and recommendation by the Pastors in the Executive Council. Restoration of membership shall require  $\frac{3}{4}$  majority vote of those present at the Church Members Meeting. If the membership was dropped by resignation, then restoration of membership will follow the new-member process guided by the Membership Committee.
8. Should any disputes arise making the involvement of outside parties advisable, Biblical-based mediation will be sought prior to the involvement of other legal counsel.

[1] FCBCLA by-laws, Article III.