

# FBC Pastoral Counseling Policy

*The counseling provided addresses the following predominate areas:*

- |                             |                           |                      |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------|
| *Pre-marriage relationships | *Panic attacks            | *Addictions          |
| *Marriage relationships     | *Grief/Personal loss      | *Purpose             |
| *Worry                      | *Unforgiveness/Bitterness | *Self-worth issues   |
| *Anxiety                    | *Spousal abuse            | *Theological issues  |
| *Anger                      | *Homosexuality            | *Spiritual questions |
| *Depression                 | *Sexual abuse             | *Negative patterns   |

## ***Request for Service:***

In order to request an appointment to receive counseling services the counselee should call FBC and make an initial request through the Counseling Ministry Assistant. All inquiries will be handled in strict confidence.

Please note that FBC is committed to the spiritual health of its' members. Thus, counseling of FBC members always takes precedence over all non-member related services.

## ***Confidentiality:***

Any statements made in confidence in the course of counseling will be kept in strict confidence by the counselor. As noted above, the duty to maintain confidences may not apply in the context of child abuse. A legal duty to report known or reasonably suspected cases of child abuse generally overrides the duty to maintain confidences (at least for persons who are required to report under state law). Further, the counselor may reserve the right to disclose confidential information in specified situations such as threats of suicide or intent to harm another person.

## ***Pre-marriage***

Counselees will contact counseling office and will be required to take the SYMBIS test and pay the SYMBIS fee. After that, counselees will be contacted to make an appointment. There is no suggested donation for pre-marital counseling. Members and non-members that miss 3 sessions will be given a referral, if possible. Not showing, cancelling the day of the session, or continuously rescheduling sessions are considered missed appointments. All notes made in session belong to the church/counselor.

### ***Marriage***

Counselees will contact counseling office and will be required to take the SYMBIS Plus test and pay the SYMBIS Plus fee. After that, counselees will be contacted to schedule an appointment. If further sessions are needed, the suggested donation will be \$20 for each session. Members and non-members that miss 3 sessions will be given a referral, if possible. Not showing, cancelling the day of the session, or continuously rescheduling sessions are considered missed appointments. All notes made in session belong to the church/counselor.

### ***Individual Counseling for members***

Counselees will contact counseling office and will be able to schedule an appointment. If further appointments are needed, the suggested donation will be \$20 for each session. Members that miss 3 sessions will be given a referral, if possible. Not showing, cancelling the day of the session, or continuously rescheduling sessions are considered missed appointments. All notes made in session belong to the church/ counselor.

### ***Individual Counseling for non-members***

Counselees will contact Counseling office and will be required to have a referral from a pastor, teacher, or leader in the church. If further sessions are needed, the suggested donation will be \$20 for each session. Non- members will need a different referral if **any** session is missed concerning the initial referral. Not showing, cancelling the day of the session, or continuously rescheduling sessions are considered missed appointments. All notes made in session belong to the church/counselor.

### ***Counseling for Staff members***

Pastoral counseling for FBC staff members is considered a high priority in order to maintain a healthy work environment. However, this ministry is solution-focused, not intended for an extended period-of-time. We ask that FBC staff members respect the time allotment. There is not a suggested donation for FBC staff members. All notes made in session belong to the church/counselor.

Full name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

### **FBC Pastoral Counseling Policy**

1. I am not a licensed counselor, therapist, or psychiatrist. I am a pastoral counselor who will use the word of God as my text, the Holy Spirit as my guide, and Jesus Christ as my model. This pastoral counseling office comes under the leadership of FBC Texarkana. Counselees are encouraged to be active participants in the church.
2. After the initial appointment, if the pastoral counselor determines that the counselee will benefit from a guided study, the suggested donation for each session will be \$20. There may be some additional costs for tests administered, books required, or material distributed.
3. It is not my practice or purpose to counsel individuals or couples over an extended period-of-time. Typically, the counseling time is not to exceed 8 sessions because this is solution-focused counseling. We ask that FBC staff members also respect the time allotment.
4. Opposite gender counseling will be done during office hours when other staff members are present. Opposite gender counseling will be done in a room with a window, making all counseling sessions visible to office staff.
5. It is also my policy to counsel children with their parents present, if at all possible. These sessions may include private talks combined with a time of talking with the parent in the room. It may also be important to include the children's minister in these sessions.
6. Homework assignments can be given before and/or after each session. Completing outside assignments is vital to your future spiritual and emotional health.
7. Non-members will need a referral for an initial appointment and a different referral if **any** session is missed concerning the initial referral.
8. Members and non-members that miss 3 sessions will be given a referral, if possible. Not showing, canceling the day of the appointment, or continuously rescheduling are considered missed appointments.
9. All notes made in session belong to the church/counselor.

I have read the Pastoral Counseling Policy and agree to adhere to it.

\_\_\_\_\_

(Signature)

\_\_\_\_\_

(Date)

# Community Resources

**National Suicide Prevention Hotline-** 1.800.273.8255

**Texarkana Domestic Violence-** 24-hour hotline 903.793.4357- Please call 9-1-1, if in immediate danger.

**Southwest Arkansas Counseling and Mental Health Center-** 870.773.4655- SWACMHC provides help for mental health and/or substance abuse problems as well as youth experiencing legal troubles. This program serves Hempstead, Howard, Lafayette, Little River, Miller, and Sevier counties.

**Texarkana, Texas Community HealthCore-** 903.831.1034/1-800-832-1009- This program serves as the mental health, addiction, and intellectual disability governing authority for the greater East Texas regions. These counties include Bowie, Cass, Gregg, Harrison, Marion, Panola, Red River, Rusk, and Upshar.

**Friendship Center-** 903.792.1301- The Friendship Center provides benevolence according to need.

**Randy Sams Outreach Shelter-** 903.792.7024- Randy Sams is a shelter for those without housing.

**Hospice of Texarkana-** 903.794.4263- Hospice provides care for those at the final life stage.

**Opportunities Inc. of Texarkana-** 903.791.2270- Opportunities helps those with intellectual disabilities. This program involves Head Start, work assignment, adult development, and residential housing.

**Harvest Regional Food bank-** 870.774.1398- This organization helps feed the hungry in Northeast Texas/Southwest Arkansas.

**Watersprings Ranch-** 870.772.7187- Watersprings Ranch is a Christian based long- term residential home for those children, birth through 18, that have been abused, neglected, abandoned or displaced.