

However there are circumstances where we cannot promise total confidentiality:

- If you or someone else has committed a criminal offence, or if we are worried for your personal safety, or that of others, we may need to involve other people.
- Where something may be a matter for church discipline we may need to share information with the elders of the church (for more information on this see Section 8 of the *Church Constitution*).

Other than in extremely exceptional circumstances no information will be shared with others without you being told about it first.

Who should I contact?

One of the main ways in which we deliver pastoral care as a church is through our Housegroups (there is a leaflet in this series all about *Housegroups*). So a great starting point, if you have any concerns, either personal, or about church life, is to talk to your housegroup leader. There is a contact number for a leader from each housegroup on the weekly notice sheet.

If you are not in a housegroup or, for whatever reason, would prefer not to talk to your housegroup leader then contact:

Ken Cowen (Elder)

0151 475 0928 * ken@christchurchliverpool.org

Andrew Evans (Elder – Full-time)

0151 726 8909 * andrew@christchurchliverpool.org

Kath Knapman (Women's Pastoral Worker)

0151 734 3256 * kath@christchurchliverpool.org

Maurice McCracken (Elder)

0151 727 7803 * maurice@christchurchliverpool.org



Pastoral Care

What is pastoral care?

Pastoral care is sometimes called “the care of souls.”

By pastoral care we mean the work of the local church in sustaining, guiding, healing and bringing about reconciliation between people and God and between people.

Pastoral Care at Christ Church

Our pastoral care at Christ Church includes the work of the church in preaching, housegroups, 1 to 1 discipleship, Christianity Explored courses, the Lord’s Supper, baptism, marriage preparation, men’s and women’s social events, away days and weekends, caring in times of need and developing and growing friendships.

Our aim as a church is to present people “perfect in Christ” – that is to see people mature and grow as Christians – through understanding better the good news of Jesus as revealed in the Bible and applying its truth to their lives.

This means that most of the time our pastoral care tries to be proactive – that is to teach one another the Bible and apply it to our lives so that when we face problems and hardships we are equipped to know what God teaches, to trust his love and grace and have friends around us who will encourage and help us.

We believe that for most people, most of the time, the normal activities of the church and the personal friendships formed there provide the support we need to share in life’s joys and help us in its struggles.

Pastoral care in times of need

From time to time each of us finds ourselves in situations where we feel that the activities (eg housegroup) and people (eg personal friends in the church) who normally care for us are not sufficient.

This might be a difficult situation in the workplace, conflict with people we live with, bereavement, struggling with a particular sin or any one of a hundred other struggles we can face.

Often what we need is quite simply – for example a meal in someone else’s home, a chat over a coffee or a room to stay in for a night away from our own house.

We recognise that this is an important part of our care for one another and all the members of the church are committed to looking after one another, and others who come into our church family, in these ways as much as we are able.

Pastoral counselling

Pastoral counselling is a more specialised part of pastoral care that can help us deal with life’s pressures and crises. Pastoral counselling usually involves meeting with one of the older members of the church, often but not always a church leader, and talking through particular issues.

At Christ Church our goal in pastoral counselling is always to come to understand what the Bible teaches on a particular issue, how God’s truth, grace and love can help us deal with life’s pressures and, where appropriate, how you can work practically to deal with issues.

Issues that can often benefit from pastoral counselling include financial problems, depression, anxiety, parenting issues, sexual issues, grief, addictions and others.

Anyone at Christ Church who is involved in pastoral counselling will also be aware of other people and organisations (such as doctors, debt advice organisations and Christian counselling organisations) who may also be able to help.

Confidentiality

At Christ Church we recognise that much damage is often done in churches through gossip and rumour.

When you speak to someone at Christ Church about an issue or problem you can be confident that your privacy will be respected. We encourage married people to share openly with their spouse but you can be confident that information will not go further than this.