

## **HAMILTON COMMUNITY SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH**

### **POLICY FOR INFIDELITY IN MARRIAGE**

Hamilton Community Church of Seventh-day Adventist is a grace-oriented church with contemporary worship aimed at sharing Jesus in a caring and acceptance atmosphere. We provide a clear and concise approach to spiritual maturity, thus creating a congregation enriched by loving, serving, and reaching out to others. Our mission statement is to present Jesus to our community and to provide a safe place for people to grow together in Him. We also envision being a place where the hurting, the frustrated, and the confused can find love, acceptance, hope, guidance and encouragement. We believe that Jesus died for our sins so that we may be reconciled back to the Father. Because of His love for us, we choose to live our lives in harmony with God's will. One of the most meaningful gifts from God is the marriage covenant whereby the one flesh union of marriage constitutes an intellectual, emotional, physical, and spiritual unity. "And the two will become flesh so they are no longer two, but one flesh" Mark 10:8. Within the realm of marriage, we learn what it is to truly love one another as God designed. Not only do we experience companionship, sexual intimacy, raising of children, and stability, but we also are image bearers of God. We are to display His glory as Creator and Redeemer to a world that may otherwise never catch a glimpse of God's love or redeeming grace. Because Satan sees this sacred union as one of his greatest threats, he is working hard to defile our marriages in any way he can. We know that for every truth, Satan brings us his counterfeit, and he is very crafty to deceive each of us through various means. So, the question is how will we deal with sins against God that pertain to infidelity in marriage?

Hamilton Community Church's team of elders believes that church discipline is about the grace of God. We also realize that church discipline is one of the most misunderstood and yet most desperately needed ministries within the church. We don't look at it as a last option for ministry, but one required of us in scripture as stated in 1 Corinthians 6:9-10. We believe discipline is the responsibility of the church body, our team of elders and our leadership team. Our intention is to bring believers back in line with God's standard and for His glory, the advancement of His Kingdom, and the blessedness of the individuals. We desire complete reconciliation for all parties involved.

## Recommendations for Management of Infidelity in Marriage

1. Upon admission, proof of, or request for help, the person/persons involved in infidelity shall be suggested to take a sabbatical, or step down from any leadership, office, or employment position they hold in the church to allow time for redirection and healing of all parties involved.
2. The core team of elders will offer or assign appropriate elders male/female to provide spiritual and directive counseling to the offended spouse, offending spouse and other party. Support and recovery groups as well as professional counseling will be available on site, or in the community for all parties, separately and/or together if the marriage party desires.
3. The Elder's counsel will consist of support through supportive in-person time, prayer, and Bible study as accepted. Referrals, or recommendations of pertinent materials and professionally trained counselors will also be available through invitation and/or upon request for the offended spouse, offending spouse and the offending person.
4. All parties will be permitted to continue, or start to attend support, or recovery groups at the church as appropriately outlined per needs and allowances.
5. If the guilty individuals involved refrain from the sin, they shall only be asked to take a Sabbatical from the church based on the offended spouses needs. This can be a time for seeking counsel, support and healing through the church, and/or in the community. This will also provide time for the marriage restoration to begin if desired.
6. If the individual, or persons who requested help has accepted it, and growth, or restoration in the marriage is occurring, they can stay/return to church together.
7. If guilty persons do not wish to refrain from sin, they shall be asked to leave the church for a determined time frame. If a re-entry is desired after this time, the Core Elders will assess it.

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8. If there is any aggressive, behavior, i.e. stalking, harassment, verbal slander, conflict and/or physical attacks, the opposing parties will be asked to leave and the appropriate authorities will be notified as needed and/or required.
  
  9. Church programs will not be available to aggressors to protect other attendees. Aggressors may meet with current core elders for prayer, Bible study and appropriate referrals for assistance. These appointments will be determined on a safety basis only.

We uphold the belief that the church is the Body of Christ. Our aim to provide a safe haven for all who come to worship. We will uphold the sanctity of marriage at all times.

