

# FFWPU (UK) Conflict Resolution Policy

The following policy is broken down for clarity into three parts as follows:

Part A: Overview.

Part B: Clarification giving more details about the policy and procedures.

Part C: Annexes to assist in bringing a satisfactory outcome for both sides.

## **Part A - Overview**

**Route 1:** This involves both parties approaching each other and discussing their concerns in an open and honest way as described in some detail in **annex 2**. There is no need for additional support unless one or both parties seek advice. Route 1 usually brings the best results if both sides are willing to look for a solution.

**Route 2:** This is used when conflicts are more serious or where a satisfactory result cannot be found using route 1. In this case the Safe Church Team can be requested to be involved to mediate between both parties. It is important that when a conflict arises it is approached as quickly as possible and once the Safe Church Team are involved, they will respond within 3 working days to begin the process of reconciliation and to find common ground and to restore broken relationships and trust.

Route 2 will involve both parties writing down from their point of view what the conflict is about along with suggestions how it may be resolved. Once the Safe Church Team receive written statements, they will call a meeting within 7 days.

The Safe Church Team will then mediate to assist both parties finding an agreeable solution to the conflict. Once agreed, a written statement is then prepared detailing any steps that need to be taken which both parties then sign.

Following an agreed solution, the Safe Church Team will seek feedback to ensure any agreed steps have been taken and that the conflict has been fully resolved. Should there still be issues then the Safe Church Team will continue to support both parties.

If a solution cannot be found, then either party can appeal to the National Director. The National Director in consultation with the Safe Church Team's decision in this case would be final with both parties encouraged to abide by any decision taken.

## **Part B - Clarification giving more details about the policy and procedures.**

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to give members of the Family Federation for World Peace and Unification (FFWPU) the opportunity to raise a concern or address a conflict they may have with an individual member or any department within our Family Federation.

The purpose is to provide and encourage open and honest communication without worrying about being judged.

It is the duty of FFWPU to support the spiritual and emotional wellbeing of all its members.

Conflicts within our community are seen as opportunities to improve our commitment and service to each other.

### **Scope and Goal**

To deal with conflict in an efficient, respectful manner with a satisfactory outcome for both parties and to prevent further conflict and hurt.

As FFWPU promotes a peace-loving society, Safe Church Team mediators have a prayerful attitude in creating a caring and loving environment while supporting members with solving the conflict.

The goal is to see the issue/problem occurring as an opportunity to drive our own personal, professional and spiritual growth as well as strengthen relationships and productivity.

The procedure applies to all members of FFWPU.

### **Raising an issue:**

Members may raise an issue

- With a person directly (see Route 1)
- With the FFWPU leadership or the Safe Church Team in order to seek assistance in resolving the issue (see Route 2).

If the concern relates to a member of the Church Leadership or the Safe Church Team, the person should raise their concern with another member of the Church Leadership or Safe Church Team. See main leadership names at the end of this policy.

### **Route 1 — Personal approach**

1. Where an issue arises between a member and another member, a staff member or volunteer and if the member feels able to address their concerns without

involving other parties, they should consider going to the other person and express their concerns with a view to resolving their differences. See **annex 2** for guidance in how this may be best achieved.

2. The person initiating the personal approach should consider seeking counsel from a wise and unbiased senior leader or a member from the Safe Church Team before meeting the other party.
3. This approach may be useful for addressing personal disagreements and the perceived offences. This pathway will not be appropriate where there are concerns about significant power or position imbalances.
4. Where practicably possible, Route 1 should be the first attempt at resolving difficulties rather than going straight to the National Director or his/her management team. The personal approach is usually more successful in finding and solving disagreements.

## **Route 2 — Safe Church Team assisted approach**

- a. Route 2 should be used in any of the following situations.
  - Route 1 being unsuccessful in restoring the relationship; and/or
  - There are concerns about significant power/position imbalances; and/or
  - The issues relate to perceived bullying; and/or
  - The issue relates to a strong disagreement with the manner in which a staff member or volunteer has performed their responsibility.
- b. If the conflict exists between parties within the same community, the community pastor can mediate. If the conflict exists between parties in different communities, the Safe Church Team can mediate. The Safe Church Team will keep the pastors informed if they see that it is necessary. If an issue is brought to one's direct leader, manager or pastor then that person is to provide support to all parties to find a solution.
  - Where the Church Leadership considers the issue to be sufficiently serious, they are to appoint a member of the Safe Church Team to assist in resolving the conflict.
  - The Safe Church Team representative will guide the parties through the process. Each party is allowed to invite one person who can witness the process and advocate for each party.
- c. Where all parties involved in the matter are willing to work towards restoring relationships, the Safe Church Team will assign a mediator to assist in resolving the conflict, who will:
  - Value confidentiality at all times.
  - Be skilled and trained in performing the position of conflict mediator
  - Meet with each person separately to ensure they are given an opportunity to express their concern in private, working through their underlying concerns in moving towards a resolution.

- Clearly communicate the process to be used to each party during the resolution meetings.
  - Hold a meeting with the parties together to identify common ground, work through the issues and determine the course of action.
  - It is vitally important to follow up to ensure that the solutions are being implemented, and;
  - If appropriate, monitor the situation over the following weeks, including to check-in with the parties to ensure that the situation is resolving and that relationships are being restored.
- d. The Safe Church Team should make sure that the mediator is clear about their role to support both parties to find a solution. Read **Annex 3** for guidelines on the role of a mediator.

### **Names and contact information for the UK leaders and Safe Church Team.**

#### **National Director:**

Michael Balcomb                      Email: ukdirector@ffwpu.org.uk

#### **Senior Management Team:**

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#### **Safe Church Team:**

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Adopted by the Board of Trustees of FFWPU (UK)

**Date:**                                      **Name:** Tim Read

**Date:**                                      **Prepared by:** Safe Church Team

#### **For review:**

Date:    Notes:  
     First issue

## Part C: Annexes to assist in bringing a satisfactory outcome for both sides.

### Annex 1

#### Time Scales for Dealing with Conflict

##### Route 1:

Once one party has approached the other then both should make every effort to resolve the issue. It should be considered that the best results are achieved when acting quickly and immediately once a conflict has occurred. The Safe Church Team are always available to give guidance before approaching the other party.

##### Route 2:

1. If Route 1 cannot end in agreement and full resolution, then upon seeking support, both parties with the same leader having met them for an initial meeting is required to write down in full their understanding of the problem and pass it forward. The approached person for support having now received written evidence of the conflict or disagreement will at that point also ensure a copy is passed to the Safe Church Team. Written evidence should include key facts of your grievance including:
  - Date and time of any incidents!
  - Where they took place:
  - What happened,
  - Names of the people involved and the names of any witnesses.
  - Set out any evidence to support your grievance.
  - Outline any suggestions to resolve your grievance.
2. Upon receiving the written grievance, the Safe Church Team should call both parties in to discuss the problem. This meeting must happen within 7 days. If, however, due to unforeseen circumstances and the line manager or one party is not able to meet within this time frame a written explanation must be given to the other parties and an agreed date set for the meeting to take place. If the appointed mediator is not available within the next 21 days an alternative and agreed upon person should be appointed. While in person meetings are preferable, it is acceptable for the meeting to take place remotely online.
3. If a solution cannot be found having worked with the Safe Church Team, then the grievance can be taken to the National Director with the additional notes of what happened during other meetings and full consultation by the Safe Church Team. It is important that full and written documentation be maintained with copies available for the Safe Church Team department so that the most appropriate and fair decisions can be made which both sides can agree on. Depending on the problem it may be suggested that a third-party mediator be brought in who has specific knowledge, experience and understanding regarding the nature of the grievance. However, if having taken the grievance to the National Director and an

agreed solution cannot be found between and by the two parties, then the National Leader will make a decision in conjunction with the Safe Church Team with both parties encouraged to accept the decision.

4. Should an agreement still not be found then the National Director may take action to minimise the effect the conflict is having on the wider community. Any decision made at this level is not available for appeal. Decisions taken at this level should be made within 40 days once it is clear common ground cannot be found.
5. Although certain time scales have been introduced it is crucial that those in leadership positions take seriously perceived difficulties and conflicts and work diligently to resolve them. The Safe Church Team has been specifically established to make every effort to ensure that when difficulties arise then the impact on those involved and the wider church is kept to a minimum with hopefully full resolution and the restoration of all relationships.
6. Once a solution, agreement or final decision is made when Route 2 is used then it should be written down and signed by those involved along with any agreed steps to implement.

## **Annex 2**

While everyone in a conflict situation tries their best to help resolve the disagreement and find common ground, sometimes a little help is required. The following is a suggested approach to a very sensitive and often emotionally challenging situation.

### **How to engage in conflict resolution.**

Try to realise – and visualise – that both sides of the conflict stand in God’s presence, equal in spiritual origins, equal in destiny, equally real, equally human, equally unique. Fully immerse yourself in this realisation as best you can in preparation before lovingly sorting out your conflict and hurt feelings.

Approach the other party and suggest you should meet, and each have five or ten full minutes in which to clearly, quietly, explain your point of view, your perception of what was actually said or done – what the fight is really about, how feelings were hurt, how the matter should be resolved. Choose to let the other speak first.

Listen to the feelings of the other person. Try to restrain your own and empathise with your sparring partner’s emotions. Feel ‘his’ hurt, ‘his’ indignation, ‘his’ anxieties. Put aside your own – and feel his. (‘His’ represents both genders for brevity.) Ask yourself – If someone had said or done to you what you have said or done to the other, how would you feel? Before speaking, calmly wait in silence until your sparring partner’s ten minutes are fully up – even if it means he finishes before time and both of you remain in silence for a while. Acknowledge as pleasantly as you are able, that you have heard what he has said and you can understand why he is upset. In that instant of self-control, realise that you have gained a modicum of control over yourself, and you have taken the first step to healing the situation.

On the other hand – if you have not truly understood what he has told you then invite him to explain further – and again do your best to put yourself in his place. Feel his pain. Understand his anger. When you have received the other person into your understanding and acknowledged it, his ego defences will begin to lessen, you will see him begin to relax. Both of you will feel better.

Having done this, quietly, slowly, carefully – you then give an equally clear picture of the way that you felt in the circumstances. Do not use words calculated to set your opponent down and thus upset him. Remember that: you are making effort to control your ego as a prelude to unconditional love. You are working to achieve peace and understanding between you – not points.

You should each give the other the right to disagree in gentle words – giving valid reasons for the disagreement. Find the fortitude within yourself to recognise that you, as a human being, cannot possibly be always right since you, like everyone else, has been born with a controlling ego-drive which forces you to take up and strongly defend your position. Remember that whilst you believe yourself to be right, he too believes the same thing.

Try to accept the 'reality' of a person – whether you agree with them or not, even if it causes you shock or displeasure. Remember, you do not know the full circumstances of the other person. If you judge, criticise, condemn in any way, you will have erected a barrier between yourself and that person which will not be removed, no matter how much you may wish to overlook everything negative in him and become friends in the future. Unknowingly, what you reject in him will remain as a foundation for future discords which will build up and eventually outweigh the affection. Unwittingly, you will say things in the future reflecting your underlying secret mistrust or displeasure. Instead of accepting his weaknesses with love and helping him deal with and overcome them, you will put him on his guard against you and he will never fully trust you. Your ego and his ego will have had a secret battle which neither of you will be fully aware of consciously.

### **Annex 3**

#### **Mediation.**

A trained mediator's role is to act as an impartial third party who facilitates a meeting between two or more people in dispute to help them reach an agreement. Although the mediator is in charge of the process, any agreement comes from those in dispute.

Mediation is a way to mend relationships when there is a disagreement. Mediation is held by a neutral person. The mediator is impartial meaning they do not take sides. They are there to help everyone involved find a solution they can all agree to. It is not about judging who was right or wrong in the past but looks at how to agree on working together in the future.