

III.

ETHICAL STANDARDS FOR MINISTRY

Preamble

These Ethical Standards for Ministry for Te Haahi Weteriana o Aotearoa, the Methodist Church of New Zealand, set out the Church's position on standards of conduct for people, clergy and lay, who undertake ministry in the name of the Church. While the disciplinary standards of the Church always relate to presbyters and deacons, in this case the Ethical Standards also relates to others representing the Church.

This document is a declaration of commitment rather than of intent. It is by the grace of God that we are called to serve as presbyters, deacons and paid lay workers, and by the grace of God through the power of the Holy Spirit that we are sustained and called to uphold these standards.

Responsibilities to those to whom we offer pastoral care

1. I will deal truthfully with people, encouraging free and open discussion, respecting their integrity, rights and well-being.
2. I will respect the right of people to privacy and confidentiality of information obtained during pastoral ministry, except when there is a clear danger to the personal safety of themselves or others. Those in my care will be informed about these limits.
3. I will recognise the dignity and worth of every person and seek to avoid discrimination on the basis of race, colour, gender, sexual orientation, socio-economic group, disability, age, religious, theological or political belief.
4. I will not abuse my position by taking advantage of people for purposes of personal, political, financial or institutional gain.
5. I will not subject people to sexual exploitation or sexual harassment and abuse. Sexual intimacy in the pastoral relationship is inevitably exploitative and is therefore unacceptable.
6. I recognise that there are limits of my competence. I will not attempt formal counselling until appropriately trained. I will refer people on to others when this is necessary or desirable.

Responsibilities to the Church

1. I will uphold professional standards of practice in ministry and work for their advancement.
2. I will exercise stewardship in the time I give to the ministry of the Church, guarding against both over-commitment and avoidance of responsibility.

Responsibilities to Colleagues within the Church and outside the Methodist Connexion

1. I will promote co-operation and mutuality with Church colleagues and with members of other helping professions, treating them with respect, courtesy, fairness and good faith. I will respect professional confidences.
2. I will affirm the abilities, expertise and gifts of colleagues in ministry and value their positive contributions, while respecting their time constraints and commitments.
3. I will seek mediation and reconciliation through Connexional procedures when conflicts arise with colleagues or others within the church community.
4. I will take action through the proper channels to confront incompetent and unethical conduct by colleagues.

Responsibilities to the Wider Community

1. I will act to prevent and eliminate discrimination in the wider community against individuals and groups on the basis of race, colour, gender, sexual orientation, socio-economic group, age, disability, religious or theological or political belief.
2. I will encourage, as part of the pastoral task, participation in the shaping of social policies advocating the promotion of social justice, improved social conditions and a fair sharing of the community's resources. While respecting the law, I will act to change unjust laws.

Responsibilities to Ourselves

1. I will recognise there are limits that one person can do in ministry, and seek appropriate self care for my health and well-being, and that of my family.
2. I will use regular approved professional supervision to maintain accountability and a high standard of ministry.
3. I will use regular opportunities for spiritual growth.
4. I recognise that my knowledge and areas of competence continually need to be extended and enhanced and will regularly attend to this.
5. I recognise and will act on my need for personal recreation, refreshment and renewal.

Authorised by Conference 1993 as resource material for the Church.

IV. GENERAL STANDARDS FOR THE GUIDANCE OF MEMBERS

Methodists are a people under the authority of Jesus Christ as Lord, committed to the total mission of the Church. They are called to participate in the encounter of Christ with the world, and to remember Christ's word, "Love one another as I have loved you." In obedience to the revealed word of God, Christians, guided and empowered by the Holy Spirit, find their true freedom.

WE BELIEVE that we are called to keep festival on the first day of the week as the Day of Resurrection. We remember that all our days belong to God; and with joy we endeavour to participate regularly in Christian worship, the observance of the Sacraments of the Church and in Christian Fellowship.

WE BELIEVE that courtship, marriage, and family life and the general relationships between men and women should involve respect for persons and must be brought under obedience to Christ.

WE BELIEVE that we are accountable to our Lord for the stewardship of our powers, our time, talents and money.

WE BELIEVE that the whole of life should be brought under the word of God in Christian citizenship. We recognise further that we have a responsibility for our brothers and sisters, and that we are called to seek right relationships and to witness against contemporary social evils.

WE BELIEVE that we are called to the exercise of integrity in daily work and to the offering of all such work as a service to god.

WE BELIEVE that Christ claims the whole world for His own, and that we are called both to active participation in civic and national affairs and to service directed towards the attainment of world peace and justice.

Conference Minutes 1964