



2702 30<sup>th</sup> Ave S. Fargo, ND 58104  
701.232.4476

## **DISCLOSURE**

*We realize that starting counseling is a major decision and you may have questions. This document is intended to inform you of our policies, state and federal laws, and your rights. If you have any other questions or concerns, please ask and we will try our best to give you all the information you need.*

### **Bethel Church Counseling Ministry Disclosure and Privacy Notice**

It is our privilege at Bethel Church to offer counseling with a trained Counselor / Pastor. We offer counseling to individuals, couples, and families seeking a biblical perspective on the issues of life. We require anyone receiving counseling from the Bethel Counseling Ministry to read and sign this informed consent. You have a right to obtain a copy of this form, if you desire.

A Counseling Ministry staff member will contact you once your initial paperwork is received. We will assign you a Counselor, a Pastor, refer you to the Director of Care Ministry, or make a referral to other resources in the community.

### **Confidentiality**

In adhering with the code of ethics for the American Association of Christian Counselors (AACC) and the ethical standards for counseling in the state of North Dakota, all information disclosed within sessions and the written records pertaining to those sessions are confidential and may not be revealed to anyone without your written permission, except where disclosure is required by law. Some of the circumstances where disclosure is required by the law are: (1) where there is a reasonable suspicion of child, dependent, or elder abuse or neglect; (2) where a Counselee presents a danger to self, to others, to property; or is gravely disabled. (For more details see Bethel's Notice of Privacy Practices form.)

### **Confidentiality of Email, Phone, Fax and Social Media Communication**

It is important to be aware that email and any cell phone or cordless phone communication, including text messaging, can be rather easily accessed by unauthorized people and, hence, the privacy and confidentiality of such communication can be easily compromised. Emails, in particular, are vulnerable to such unauthorized access because servers have unlimited and direct access to all emails passing through them. Faxes can be sent erroneously to the wrong address. Please notify your counselor at the beginning of counseling if you decide to avoid or limit in any way the use of any or all of the above-mentioned communication devices. While reasonable backup, security, and other safeguards are in place, there is always some risk of inadvertent disclosure of information that comes with using these tools. By signing this informed consent, you agree to accept the risk of disclosure that comes with the use of these tools. Please do not use email or fax in emergency situations.

The various forms of social media (including but not limited to: Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, etc.) could compromise your confidentiality. Please do not use any of these or like forms of social media as a form of communication with the Bethel Counseling Ministry or your Counselor. Our policy is to not accept friend or contact requests from former or current Counselees. Please feel free to discuss this policy with your Counselor or one of the Bethel Counseling Ministry staff members.

### **Litigation Limitation**

Due to the nature of the counseling process and the fact that it often involves making a full disclosure with regard to many matters that may be of a confidential nature, it is agreed that should there be legal proceedings (such as, but not limited to, divorce and custody disputes, injuries, lawsuits, etc.), neither you, your attorney, nor anyone else

acting on your behalf will call on your Counselor to testify in court or at any other proceeding, nor will a disclosure of the counseling records be requested. We do not offer custody, psychiatric, or psychological evaluations.

In addition, you, the Counselee, sought biblical counseling as such adhered to by Bethel Church, a non-profit religious organization. You, as the Counselee hereby acknowledge your understanding of the following condition and further release from liability Bethel Church and its agents or employees, from any claim arising from the undersigned participation in the above mentioned biblical counseling program, the same being identified as follows:

This is a church-based non-profit ministry providing counseling. Anyone receiving counseling from Bethel Counseling Ministry agrees to release Bethel Church, its Pastors, Counselors, agents, and all employees from liability. Your signature at the end of this form is your agreement to these conditions.

**Consultation**

Your Counselor consults regularly with other professionals regarding his/her Counselees; however, the Counselee’s name or other identifying information is never mentioned. The Counselee’s identity remains completely anonymous, and confidentiality is fully maintained. Considering all of the above exclusions, if it is still appropriate, upon your request, your Counselor will release information to any agency/person you specify unless he/she concludes that releasing such information might be harmful in any way.

**Telephone and Emergency Procedures**

If you need to contact your Counselor between sessions, please call Amy Hashbarger, Administrative Assistant, at 701-232-4476. You may need to leave a message via voice mail. Your call will be returned as soon as possible. Bethel Counseling Ministry is not a crisis counseling center. If an emergency situation arises, please hang up and call the Police (911). A Bethel Church Pastor may be available to provide spiritual help, if there is an emergency situation. You can call the church at 701-232-4476 and leave a message with the answering service when the office is closed. If you need to talk to someone right away, you can call one of the following 24-hour crisis lines: 2-1-1 or FirstLink at 701.235.SEEK (701.235.7335).

**Cancellation**

Since scheduling of an appointment involves the reservation of time specifically for you, a minimum of 24 hours notice is required for rescheduling or canceling an appointment.

**Fees**

We are so thankful God has provided resources for this ministry. We suggest people who receive counseling partner with us through a \$20 non-deductible, cost-sharing donation for each visit. Donations may be made at the front desk before or after appointments or on our website at [www.bethelc.com](http://www.bethelc.com).

There is no child or pet care available during your scheduled appointment times. Each session is approximately 50-60 minutes in length.

**HIPAA**

I have received and read a copy of the notice of Privacy Practice and Clients’ Rights document.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

I have read the above agreement and office policies and general information carefully. I understand them and agree to comply with them:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print Name