



## Consent to Counseling Form

### **The Scope and Nature of EP's Pastoral Counseling Ministry:**

The EP Counseling Ministry is an extension of the church's commitment to help people lead effective and fruitful lives (2 Peter 1:8). Our counselors are committed to coming alongside struggling people to help them bear their burdens and experience the fullness of God's grace.

We believe that the Bible provides thorough and true guidance to enable people to deal with life's problems. Therefore, our counseling is based on scriptural principles rather than those of secular psychology. The pastoral counselors of this church are trained and certified in biblical counseling methodology. They are not state licensed psychotherapists or mental health professionals, and should not be expected to follow their methods. All of the counseling provided by EP Church is pastoral in nature, although certain gifted counselors sub-contract with our pastoral leadership in order to provide for the full range of our congregation's counseling needs.

**EP Counselors:** The EP Counseling Ministry is under the oversight of the Counseling and Care Pastor, Dr. Bob Borger. In addition, to the Counseling and Care Pastor, counseling services are provided by referral to an EP Ruling Elder, Tom Thompson, MA, who often counsels with his wife, Mary. Referrals to female counselors are available by contacting Dr. Borger. Information about each counselor is available on our website. The other EP pastors are also available for assistance. The Counseling and Care Pastor can provide assistance in determining who may best meet your particular need.

**Confidentiality:** Confidentiality is an important aspect of the counseling process, and we will carefully guard the information you entrust to us. Possible circumstances for the limited sharing of confidential information include:

1. Pastoral counseling is a team-centered approach. On occasion other EP Counselors, church staff, or church officers may receive "as needed" information to coordinate your care. If you are presently attending another church, with your consent, we may have contact with those church leaders.
2. When there is a clear indication that someone may be harmed unless others intervene.
3. When a person persistently refuses to renounce a particular sin and it becomes necessary to seek the assistance of the church to encourage repentance and reconciliation (Cf. Proverbs 15:22; 24:11; Matthew 18:15-20).

At any time, upon your request, the counselor will furnish to the counselee the names and circumstances of any additional person with whom your confidential information was shared. Please be assured that our counselors strongly prefer not to disclose personal information to others, and they will make every effort to help you find ways to resolve a problem as privately as possible.

**Financial Support:** The cost of EP's Counseling Ministry is largely subsidized by EP Church and therefore, while membership in the church is not required; some participation in the life of the congregation is strongly encouraged. In order to maximize our services to others, financial sharing of our costs is appreciated according to the following sliding scale per 90 minute session:

Less than \$30,000 annual income – as able.

\$30,000 - \$45,0000 annual income -- \$15.

\$45,000 -\$100,000 annual income -- \$35.

\$100,000 + annual income -- \$70

Please make checks payable to EP Church with "Counseling Fund" written in the memo portion of the check. Unfortunately, the IRS does not allow the above sliding scale contributions to be tax-deductible; however, additional gifts to the counseling fund to benefit others are deductible. EP is committed to providing Biblical counseling for every communing member without causing excessive financial burden. If you have financial constraints, please speak with your counselor about the matter.

**Counseling of minor children:** If counseling involves the participation of your minor child with the EP Counselor, your signature below certifies that you are the child's parent or legal guardian and that you give your consent to have them counseled according to this agreement.

**Resolution of Conflicts:** On rare occasions a conflict may develop between a counselor and a counselee. In order to make sure that any such conflicts will be resolved in a biblically faithful manner, we require all of our counselees to agree that any dispute that arises with a counselor or with this church as a result of counseling will be settled by mediation and, if necessary, legally binding arbitration in accordance with the *Rules of Procedure* of the Institute for Christian Conciliation, a division of Peacemaker Ministries. Judgment upon an arbitration award may be entered in any court having jurisdiction (for a copy of these *Rules of Procedure*; please visit [http://www.peacemaker.net/site/c.aqKFLTOBIPH/b.3910015/k.5590/Rules\\_of\\_Procedure\\_for\\_Christian\\_Conciliation.htm](http://www.peacemaker.net/site/c.aqKFLTOBIPH/b.3910015/k.5590/Rules_of_Procedure_for_Christian_Conciliation.htm) ).

**Agreement:** By signing this consent, you agree that you will not attempt to subpoena or require any counselor to appear in any legal proceeding related to any matters discussed during counseling; nor will you attempt to subpoena any notes or records related to this counseling. Having clarified the principles and policies of our counseling ministry, we welcome the opportunity to minister to you in the name of Christ and to be used by Him as He helps you to grow in spiritual maturity and prepares you for usefulness in His body. If you have any questions about these guidelines, please talk with your counselor or his or her supervisor. If these guidelines are acceptable to you, please sign below.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_