

Process for Concerns / Conflict Resolution:

In all instances of conflict, Mutual Ministry will seek to promote face to face meetings or discussions with the parties involved, whenever possible. Otherwise, issues brought to our attention will be discussed at our monthly meetings.

1. Any member of Christ Lutheran Church can communicate a concern to a Mutual Ministry committee member either verbally, or in writing. Any active committee member is able to hear a complaint or concern. Mutual Ministry will not *formally respond* to anonymous complaints or concerns. The committee is usually willing to work through an intermediary depending on the nature of the concern.
2. A member can either meet with a committee member, the committee as a whole or the pastor directly with or without a moderator or intermediary, if that is their desire. Otherwise, the issue will be raised at the next monthly committee meeting, and a committee designee will report back to that individual regarding the outcome, or proposing next steps. All matters and opinions discussed at committee meetings are to remain confidential, and the committee must be in agreement as to responses to the individual, or any reports to the council or congregation.
3. The committee will always seek resolution whenever possible. If the nature of a concern or complaint involves seeking disciplinary action against the pastor, the matter must ultimately be referred to the Office of the Bishop of the NJ Synod. In such cases, the committee may seek to reprimand the pastor if the situation warrants such action, but further action will be referred to church council.
4. Regarding any issue with respect to theology or church structure, the committee is not empowered to make final decisions or changes without consent of the pastor, and/or church council if necessary.
5. Council liaison for Mutual Ministry will periodically present a progress report to church council regarding resolutions reached, or report unresolved issues that could potentially be brought to council's attention. Details of Mutual Ministry's discussions on issues of concern are to remain confidential, unless the committee agrees to make an issue public.
6. The committee will consider attending group or congregational meetings as a forum for conflict resolution, but will only do so with the advice and consent of the pastor and church council.
7. If a concern is raised which involves a council member, or a committee chairperson or member, the Mutual Ministry committee will arrange to meet with the individual(s) to discuss and seek resolution.

