

Pastoral Care Policy

Version 2

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1. What is Pastoral Care at Bayside Church?

- Pastoral care is equipping, leading and guiding God's people (1 Peter 5:2) to spiritual maturity (Ephesians 4:11-13), recognising that it is the responsibility of all believers to achieve this.
- The goal is to help people live life in all its fullness, in the strength of and according to the example of Jesus (John 10:10-11).
- Pastoral care involves strengthening, comforting, encouraging and urging believers to live a life of faith that is pleasing to God (1 Thess 2:12 & 3:2).
- At Bayside we believe pastoral care is not the sole responsibility of ordained or credentialed pastors, but is the vocation of all believers (1 Thess 5:11).
- Christians, committed to the belief that God loves us all unconditionally, seek to reflect that love in their care for others as God's word commands (John 13:34). Pastoral care happens when Christians help others whether by listening, responding, praying or providing caring support.

2. Values of Pastoral Care

- Pastoral care needs to be rooted in love, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control as found in 1 Cor 13:4; Gal 5:22; as well as grounded in compassion, humility, tolerance, forgiveness and thankfulness to God (Col 3:12-17), and with an emphasis on listening more than speaking (Jam 1:19-27).
- Pastoral care at times will require teaching, urging, warning and correcting (2 Tim 4:2).

3. Formal and Informal Pastoral Care

- It is recognised that pastoral care can come in the form of both formal and **informal** pastoral care. **Both forms are equally important and have spiritual significance.**
- First point of distribution of formal pastoral care is through the pulpit and the weekly messages preached. Any blogs written by the Senior Pastor that bring

encouragement and spiritual guidance are also a part of this. From time to time, a course or book will be formally recommended, and this too is also considered pastoral care.

- Formal pastoral care is carried out by official church representatives such as Pastoral Staff and Ministry Leaders on behalf of the church. Generally those that are in these official roles are responsible for the equipping of Network Leaders who look after Connect Facilitators. Connect Facilitators look after church members and are acting on behalf of Church Ministry Leaders as an opportunity to serve Christ by leading and guiding a small group of people in a voluntary capacity.
- Informal pastoral care is carried out by members of the congregation or connect group members through prayer, encouragement or practical help.
- When deciding how much “formal” pastoral care might be offered to someone, those in pastoral ministry must take into account the amount of informal pastoral care already given by friends and family within the Church and connect group (1 Tim 5:16).
- It’s important to recognise that pastoral care can be received in many ways at Bayside and that disappointment and offence should be guarded against, especially if the Senior Pastor or Ministry Leader does not visit or call, but others have stepped in instead.
- Bayside Church provides various opportunities for church members to connect and be a part of the community of faith. This includes Church Gatherings, Connect Groups, Serving, Friendships, Community and Personal Devotion. The more opportunities that a church member takes up the more they will feel connected and encouraged in their spiritual walk. The ways of connecting are demonstrated in the diagram. We acknowledge that pastoral care both formal and informal can be provided at any one of these opportunities in the wheel of connection.



4. How Do We Pastor at Bayside Church?

- In a church of our size, it's important for people to know others and to be known. It's impossible for the senior pastors and those in "formal" pastoral positions to personally know every person and to encourage, feed and support all church members. Therefore at Bayside Church we pastor by age and stage of life. This includes:
 - Bayside Kids (walking to Primary Years)
 - Bayside Youth (High School Years 7-12)
 - Bayside Young Adults (18-25)
 - Bayside Adults (encompassing singles, couples, families, men, women, seniors and special interest groups)
- The best way to administer pastoral care is in connect groups. A connect group is a small group that meets on a weekly, fortnightly or monthly basis, where people can develop friendships, are supported, prayed for and encouraged in their faith. People are encouraged to get into a group that suits their age/stage, gender or interest. **It's imperative** to understand that

connect groups will often be the place where pastoral care is received at Bayside. If an issue is outside the realm of responsibility for a connect leader they will advise their Network Leader or go direct to the Ministry Leader oversight.

- Those that can't join a connect group for whatever reason, can still go to their Ministry Leader Overseer if they are concerned about an issue, who then may appoint an appropriate pastoral carer. However it is important to note that a connect group will provide the best support and opportunity for ongoing spiritual growth (Acts 2:46).

5. What is the Responsibility of Someone Offering Pastoral Care?

- To encourage people to **be responsible for their own spiritual health.**
- To commit to praying, feeding and encouraging a member in God's Word.
- To direct people to Bayside Church's service-offering opportunities (see table below).
- To define boundaries and stick to them.
- To make "self" care a priority so that "flock" care (refer to Ministry Rule of Life section) can take place.
- To point people to Christ and therefore ask: "Have you prayed about this situation? What is the Lord showing you in His Word at this time?"
- To ask "Have you spoken to anyone else about this? Your connect leader?"

6. Bayside Church’s Pastoral Care Service-Offering

Community	Spiritual Growth	Practical Care
Weekly gatherings Connect Groups Contribute groups Prayer at gatherings Outreach opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Previous "Community" list • Discipleship/Leadership pathway • Courses • Ministry opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food parcels • Prayer Chain & Worship Events • Referral to professional services • Meals ministry

7. What is the Responsibility of Someone Receiving Pastoral Care?

- To request pastoral care when they need it. James 5:14 states “Is anyone among you sick? **Let them call** the elders of the church to pray over them and anoint them with oil in the name of the Lord.” Members must request visitation or access to a particular ministry. Church members who are ill, are housebound or in hospital will be offered a visit if those offering pastoral care are advised. Bayside Church will minister sensitively and effectively to the sick, dying and the bereaved.
- To understand that the outcome of pastoral care is to lead to wholeness and that individuals have a personal responsibility in that process to receive and respond to guidance that is given.
- To understand that the person providing formal pastoral care will be held responsible for them before God and therefore they need to be accountable to them. Hebrews 13:7 - “*Have confidence in your leaders and submit to their authority, because they keep watch over you as those who must give an account. Do this so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be of no benefit to you.*”
- To understand that although pastoral care is given, an individual has the freedom and choice to make their own decisions and to make their own mistakes.

- To be respectful of the time during which they seek pastoral care. For example, contacting the pastoral team should be made within office hours on the pastoral care line 0401 721 912, unless it is an emergency.

8. What Pastoral Care is Not

- Professional care provision – pastors can refer people to these services. Any issues that fall outside the realm of listening, praying and supporting will be referred on. It is the responsibility of the individual to follow this advice. The types of services to which referral will be made include: professional counselling (including marriage; mental health including depression, anxiety, suicidal tendencies etc; financial), medical assistance, mediation, social services such as meals on wheels and cleaning, homeless refuges and shelters and courses to manage finances.
- About developing co-dependency on each other. Pastoral carers need to be aware of the risk of needing others to need them and thereby encouraging inappropriate dependency. And those receiving care need to be encouraged to seek God for their needs (Matt 7:7; 1 Thess 4:12) and not be offended when boundaries are put in place.

9. Meals Ministry

- In the event of a distressing time, a birth of a child or illness, Bayside Church is able to supply 1-2 meals for a family. However this is only on the proviso that the family does not have others to support them at the time with this service.
- Bayside Church does not provide finances when Church members are financially struggling. Bayside Church can provide referrals to established services and professionals in the community. We are also able to provide food hampers (the number is at the discretion of the pastoral oversight).

10. Lifts to Church Services

- Informal lifts offered to friends within the Church are preferable. For legal and insurance reasons, Bayside Church's pastoral team is not able to formally organise lifts.

11. Bayside Church's Duty of Care

Keeping Children Safe

- Bayside Church takes seriously the care of children. All those serving in any capacity at Bayside Church are to obtain a Working With Children's Check. Bayside Church has developed a Safe Ministry Policy that can be obtained by contacting the office or on the church website.
- All volunteers/staff must have read and understood the Safe Ministry Policy, the Code of Conduct and reporting structure at Bayside Church and must have undergone training in the different forms and signs of abuse as well as how to proceed if abuse has been disclosed.

Working with Adults

- All pastoral carers (paid and voluntary) working with adults must recognise that they are placed in a position of trust and responsibility. Every person under a leader's care and ministry is entitled to be safe and feel safe at all times. Those working in adult ministry should therefore make every reasonable effort to avoid acting in a way which is likely to frighten or intimidate another person or compromise another's sense of physical, emotional or spiritual safety and wellbeing.
- Pastoral carers in adult ministry also need to clearly understand that while they may consistently be dealing with those who are their peers in terms of age, maturity, profession, etc, the nature of the relationship is not simply that of a peer. The moment that a person has taken on a position of leadership he/she has also taken on the inherent responsibility for those who will look to him/her for that leadership. This also means that if there is an indiscretion of any kind between an adult leader and a member of the group which he/she is leading, it is the leader who will always be regarded as the more culpable because of the nature of the trust relationship which has been bestowed upon the leader. Given that the nature of leadership involves authority and power, equal responsibility (and therefore equal culpability) for the crossing of boundaries in relationships with other people does not exist.
- Pastoral carers in adult ministry also need to be aware of the danger of working in isolation or without giving recognition to the collective wisdom of others. It is important that those in pastoral care have some form of supervision and performance accountability. This may be through meetings or in some other form, but it is vital that some system of personal accountability is in place. It is further expected that each pastoral carer (paid and voluntary) be open to scrutiny in areas of conduct and performance by the Senior Minister and the Board if and when the need for such arises.

Mandatory Reporting

- Bayside Church's Safe Ministry Policy requires mandatory reporting for the following issues. This reporting is to be done to the Pastoral Care Pastor (or the person they nominate in their absence):
 - Acute crisis – if a person indicates a wish to commit suicide or is assessed as being a risk to self or threat to others.
 - Any suspicion or disclosure of child abuse and neglect (basic psychological or physical needs of the child or young person are not being met). A child is defined under the age of 18.
 - Domestic or family violence where a person (regardless of age) is at risk of physical and psychological harm.

- If a person witnessed or heard something taking place on the premises of Bayside Church or at a Bayside program/event offsite, the person is to immediately notify the Pastoral Care Pastor, who will follow Bayside Church's policy and procedure where appropriate in such an event.

- In immediate and life-threatening situations that have occurred off site, a leader or facilitator is obligated to report direct to the authorities and then inform their ministry leader.

12. The Role of Prayer Ministry in Pastoral Care

- All pastoral carers should pray regularly for those to whom they are offering pastoral care. They also need to pray for help and guidance in their delivery of pastoral care.

- Prayer is offered in connect groups, however there are times that further prayer ministry may be required.

- Opportunities for prayer are offered in a variety of ways at Bayside Church: church services, connect groups and Healing Rooms ministry.

- One on one Prayer Ministry is offered at Bayside Church on the proviso that some or most of the following steps be taken before:
 - The person attends connect group regularly and receives prayer from Connect Leader and group if appropriate
 - Attending weekend services and going forward for prayer
 - Undertaking the discipleship courses such as Alpha and Freedom in Christ

- Praying and reading the Word themselves (SOAP)
- The person has attended Bayside's Healing Rooms ministry.

- Once these steps have been taken and prayer ministry is still required, the following also needs to be noted:
 - It is expected that the person contacts the church themselves
 - Appointment times are not set at the person's discretion. They are usually held during office hours unless under extreme circumstances
 - The person is ministered to in a team situation with intercessors praying
 - The time frame for prayer ministry is 1-1½ hours
 - It is recommended that a time of rest is made after ministry if possible

13. Confidentiality

- Pastoral care will seek to bring about Christ-like wholeness, both personal and corporate. The development of trust is of primary importance for honest relationships within ministry. However the person receiving care will be informed that it may be in their best interest that someone else on the team will be informed (other than the carer). The pastoral carer must be discreet with the information they are told. The pastoral carer is not at liberty to share confidential information with their spouses, family or friends.

- A pastoral carer however cannot assume any confidentiality if they share information with someone to whom they are offering pastoral care. If the person receiving the care asks for confidentiality, the carer must indicate to the person that they are obliged to report on certain issues (as mentioned previously).

- Pastoral carers should seek guidance from Pastors when faced with ethical dilemmas regarding confidentiality, individuals at risk and the law. If there is a risk of harm, either to the person concerned or to others, pastoral carers must consider it their duty to break confidence.

14. Not Everyone is Welcome

- Whilst most people are welcome to attend Bayside Church gatherings, in certain cases Bayside Church reserves the right to ask people to leave. These cases include:

- Sexual Predators – those that refuse boundaries put in place and choose to continue to stalk children and women
- Antagonists – those that continue to be divisive and cause doubt, confusion and division
- Quarrelers – similar to Antagonists, those that continue to quarrel and ruin a person's reputation and create havoc.

Ministry Rule of Life

The premise for these considerations is that as ministers, it is vital that we keep God at the centre of our lives. Above all else we seek to have biblical mandates for the rhythms of our lives. We will do this by putting highest priority on the following:

1. The Word of God

- Our lives are to be built on and shaped by the Word of God – not by the cultural norms of the age and times in which we live. His word is food to us and it is the primary means of our revelation from Him.
- We will commit as far as is possible to spend time each day in His Word, seeking His face, dwelling in His presence and praying out of the revelation we have received from His word.
- By using the “SOAP” method as a leadership team we will be able to delight in sharing and building one another up with what God is speaking into our lives – fresh manna, new mercies and supernatural comfort on a daily basis.

2. Solitude and silence

- In a world full of noise, we commit to places of silence and solitude in the same way that Jesus went to desolate places to pray.

3. Mini Shabbat

- On a daily basis we commit to short moments of connection and reconnection with our Father – recognising His presence and purpose in our lives.
- We acknowledge our need for Him in thought, word and deed.

4. Studying God’s Word

- We will commit ourselves to enlargement of our hearts and minds by regularly studying as guided by the Holy Spirit.

5. Sabbaths

- Each week following the biblical principle we will set aside 24 hours in which we stop, rest, delight and contemplate the goodness of God in our lives.

6. Recreation

- We will seek to have a life and interests outside of Bayside Church that contribute to our health and wellbeing which will in turn contribute to that of our family and those around us.

7. Service and mission

- Healthy service is having clear and realistic expectations. We must look at the goals we have put in place and regularly assess where we are with those goals. This will mean that there will be some great opportunities or initiatives that we do not take part in.

8. Physical fitness and wellbeing

- We will encourage one another to regularly care for our physical temples by having healthy eating habits, being consistent in exercise, and getting the right amount of sleep for us as individuals. In this we will respect our God given limits.

9. Emotional health

- We will embrace emotionally healthy skills and behaviours that follow biblical principles and commit to loving well as outlined in **1 Corinthians 13**.

10. Family

- We are committed to assisting each other to look after our families' needs and will support one another at defining moments to the best of our ability.

Business Policy Statement

It is our desire to create a safe place for people to experience church life as part of our church family. We believe that people generally expect that church should not be a place where business is conducted and nor do we want to create an environment where motive for relationship is potentially influenced, or perceived to be influenced, by business opportunities. Therefore, we ask that people attending Bayside Church activities (such as weekend services, connect groups, events, etc) do not use these activities for any business-related purposes. Our general rule of conduct would be “Let the church be the church and let business be kept in the business arena.”

The following guidelines provide further advice on business practices within the context of Bayside Church:

- Conduct all business in a manner worthy of our Christian witness and values.
- Refrain from selling or promoting products or services in which there is a vested interest (where the individual making the approach stands to make a financial gain as a result of the approach).
- Do not directly approach others in the church community for the purpose of selling or promoting products or services. This specifically includes distribution of advertising material, invitations, email messages and/or phone calls for the purposes of soliciting business, party-plan selling, multi-level marketing and network marketing.
- Do not invite others to functions or private gatherings where the focus of the activity is to promote goods or services.
- Product deliveries should not be made in the church building or at official church activities (events, connect groups, etc.)
- Refrain from seeking professional advice or making business enquiries at any church activities.
- Be aware that Bayside Church does not take responsibility for any business transactions between individuals.
- Do not expect that services or products will be provided at discounted prices.
- Notify the Office Manager or a pastoral staff member if you are aware of any breach of these guidelines.
- All breaches of these guidelines will be followed up and appropriate action taken to rectify the situations created.

It is noted that Bayside Church will promote certain business activities, products and services where it is considered that these are primarily for the benefit of members and are within the boundaries of their reasonable expectations of a church to do so. The activities will include, but not be limited to Bayside publications, conferences

(including promotional material within policy guidelines), product/resources by visiting ministries, services provided by Bayside Community Care.