

# **BELONGING AT ST ANDREW'S**

## **PART VII LOOKING AFTER EACH OTHER AT ST ANDREW'S**



*One of the prized statements St Andrew's makes is the following:*

**WELCOME TO ST ANDREW'S ON THE TERRACE**

*Wherever you are on your faith's journey,  
wherever you have come from and wherever you are going to,  
whatever you believe, whatever you do not believe, you are welcome here.*

You're welcome as you are, whatever you believe,  
This booklet aims to describe St Andrew's Pastoral Care systems.

## **Let's begin with the Pastoral Committee**

A small group meets to coordinate the parish rolls  
and the Pastoral Partners network

Linda Wilkins is the convenor of this group  
which includes the Minister, (Susan), Maxine Cunningham,  
Brian Burrell and Lois Robertson.

Apart from the pastoral work which the Minister is able to do  
(along with other calls on her time),  
pastoral care at St Andrew's is offered by volunteers.  
It runs on an amateur-based peer or buddy system  
which operates differently from person to person  
though following a basic outline.

## PASTORAL PARTNERS

People who come to St Andrew's and who want to be part of this system have a pastoral partner matched with them.

Each pastoral partner has their own way of being a 'partner' to the people on their list. This depends on both their personality and their other commitments. It also depends on what the people whom they are partnering want in the way of contact.

Pastoral Partners are sometimes elders, but also include people who have a caring personality, with some sense of what church is about, and who are aware of the boundaries and shape of the pastoral partner position.

People who are matched with a pastoral partner also vary in their desire or need for pastoral care.

Some desire more contact, others prefer minimal contact.

The pastoral partner and the person matched with them need to discuss this.

If there is a wide difference in expectations on either side, then it is better to contact Linda and ask for a re-assignment.



Here are the guidelines we have refined recently for Pastoral Partners:

## Guidelines for Pastoral Partners

- Ensure the person you are partnered with understands this is a fairly low key relationship. It is not intended to take the place of a counsellor or spiritual director.
- Each of you need to realise that the person you are partnered with is also entirely at liberty to speak with the minister or anybody else in the congregation about any matter should they wish to.
- Any matters discussed between you are confidential unless stated otherwise. If you are concerned harm may be potentially or actually being done, you need to refer the situation to someone else. Do this *after* you've told your pastoral person you're going to do this.
- The minimum expectation is that you will keep in touch at least 2-3 times a year with your partner(s) by a variety of methods, i.e. by greeting them at church, phone, email, occasional card. Check which method suits your person. Let the relationship develop naturally. Make sure your person feels free to speak up if their level of need for pastoral care increases. You may be able to meet this need, or, a re-matching process may be necessary.
- It is also a minimum requirement that you *highly prioritise* attending any gatherings arranged for pastoral partners. These are planned to be twice yearly events. They're designed as opportunities to give you resources to help and to say thank you for what you do. They are also a chance to meet other people working as pastoral partners and learn together.



## Guidelines for people being partnered.

- You need to understand this is low key relationship because it is staffed by people volunteering their time after they have been asked to be pastoral partners. It is not intended to take the place of a counsellor or spiritual director but rather provide friendship/contact/information.
- Even though you have a particular partner matched with you, you are entirely at liberty to speak with the minister or anybody else in the congregation should you wish to. If you find there is a basic incompatibility with the partner you have been matched with, please speak with the minister or pastoral committee convenor. There will be no difficulty or shame on either side attached to making a re-match.
- Any matters discussed between you are confidential unless stated otherwise. If your pastoral partner becomes concerned harm may be potentially or actually being done, they will need to refer the situation on. They will do this *after* they have told you they are going to pass the matter on. This is for everyone's safety.
- The minimum expectation on the pastoral partner is that they will keep in touch at least 2-3 times a year by a variety of methods, choosing one or more which suits you both i.e. by greeting each other at church, by phone, through email, or occasional cards, etc. Be frank about which method would suit you. Feel free to speak up if your level of need for pastoral care increases or decreases. Your present partner may be able to meet this need or a new match may need to be found. This is done by speaking to the pastoral convenor, (not by making your own arrangements).

## For all of us:

If a more than usual pastoral need develops for yourself or friend/ fellow member, please let the minister or the pastoral committee know quickly. Check first with the person if they want information passed on. Please do **not** make public announcements about people's health or well-being in the Prayer book or church notices unless you have the person's permission *and* have discussed the matter with the minister beforehand.



## Keeping the Code

The PCANZ has a code of conduct required for elders, ministers and lay people working pastorally within the church. It would be consistent for pastoral partners to observe this code also. Even if a pastoral partnership is being conducted on a very low key level it is important it is done well. If you feel there's been a serious breach of this code please bring it **privately** to the attention of the minister or pastoral committee convenor.

## Appendix E-10: Code of Ethics in Pastoral Care

*(The 1996 General Assembly strongly encourages ministers, elders, parish councillors, sessions and parish councils to adopt the Code of Ethics as an agreed minimum standard of practice.)* This is an adaptation of the Code for the role of pastoral partners at St Andrew's – here referred to as 'Carers'.

### Introduction

...This Code is a statement of how the Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand understands the standards of conduct of those members who undertake the work of pastoral care in its name. In this context the term minister will include all, clergy and lay, who undertake the work of pastoral care.

Pastoral care involves the formation of special relationships characterised by openness and trust. These relationships are developed in a variety of settings and a variety of ways, from informal pastoral care to structured counselling situations.

This Code indicates acceptable ethical behaviour for those offering pastoral care. While its focus is pastoral care, it is also applicable wherever there is a ministry relation between people. By the grace of God we are called to serve, and through the power of the Holy Spirit we are sustained and encouraged to keep within this code.

### Responsibilities to Those to Whom We Offer Pastoral Care

- 1) Carers will deal truthfully with people, encouraging free and open discussion, upholding their best interests, rights and well-being.
- 2) Carers will respect the right of people to privacy and confidentiality of information except when there is a clear and imminent danger to those people or others, at which time they will be informed of those limits.
- 3) Carers will recognise the dignity and worth of every person and will offer pastoral care without unfair discrimination.
- 4) Carers will not abuse their position by taking advantage of people for personal, financial or institutional gain.

5) Carers will recognise that sexual intimacy in the pastoral situation is unacceptable and will not subject people to sexual exploitation, sexual harassment or sexual abuse.

6) Carers will recognise that there are limits to their competence and will refer people to others when this proves necessary or desirable. They will not attempt counselling.

7) Carers will recognise that there is a cultural context for pastoral care and will act with awareness and sensitivity.

### **Responsibilities to the Church**

1) Carers will uphold high standards of practice in pastoral care.

2) Carers will exercise stewardship in the time given to ministry, guarding against both over commitment and avoidance of responsibility.

### **Responsibilities to Colleagues and Other Pastoral Workers**

1) Carers will promote co-operation with colleagues, pastoral workers and members of other helping professions, treating them with consideration and respecting professional confidences.

2) Carers will seek mediation through the courts of the church (initially the pastoral committee and Parish Council) when conflicts with colleagues or others within the church community arise.

3) Carers will take action through the proper channels concerning unethical conduct by colleagues or other pastoral workers.

### **... Personal Responsibilities – (as appropriate to the level of pastoral care being offered)**

1) Carers will use bi-annual training nights for pastoral partners to maintain a high standard of pastoral care.

2) Carers will use regular opportunities for spiritual growth, personal recreation and refreshment.

3) Carers will seek to extend and enhance their knowledge.