



# The Church of Jesus Christ in Christian Fellowship



February 8, 2020

*By unanimous vote of the Council of Elders the following are the regulations regarding sex offenders for the Church of Jesus Christ in Christian Fellowship:*

## **Conditional Membership**

It should be understood that all persons, sex offender or not, hold church membership conditionally. This is not to say that not being a member of the Church of Jesus Christ in Christian Fellowship would deny anyone salvation. However, there are some who wish to worship with us that, as a consequence of their wrongdoing, would have additional conditions placed upon them.

*“Any member of this Church of Christ transgressing or being overtaken in a fault shall be dealt with according as the scriptures direct.” -Doctrines of the Saints 2a:71*

It must be explained to sex offenders that, regardless of the nature of their souls today, regulations have been put in place for both for their safety and the safety of others.

## **Full Disclosure**

Any sex offenders wishing to worship in the Fellowship must disclose their sins to the Church of Christ. This means the Fellowship as an origination, any other denomination they are affiliated with, and members they may come in contact with.

*“By this ye may know if a man or woman repenteth of their sins: Behold, they will confess them and forsake them.” -Doctrines of the Saints 33a:43*

Disclosure is both appropriate and necessary. It is not done to shame those that have sinned or remind them of their past, but to make aware those with vulnerable family members, particularly children. It is not effective to disclose this just once. Leaders and members will change over time. Everyone called to leadership positions must be advised of the presence of any and all sex offenders in their jurisdiction, and this disclosure must be done respectfully and based on the facts, everything reported must be true. No conjecture, opinion, speculation, or analysis is necessary or warranted. Those in leadership positions should consult with local legal counsel to obtain guidance on what is legally appropriate.

## **The Covenant**

All sex offenders must enter a covenant agreeing to all conditions prior to membership. This covenant will include regulations on their interactions with other members.

*“And again, every person who belongeth to this Church of Christ shall observe to keep all the commandments and covenants of the Church.” -Doctrines of the Saints 4b:6*

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This conditions include, but are not limited to:

1. Confessing repenting of their sins
2. Confessing their sins to local authorities if they have not done so already
3. Keeping any and all of the conditions of their parole
4. Never being around minors (anyone under the age of 18)
5. Having a “support buddy” to be with them at all times when meeting with members

## **Confession and Repentance**

Confession and repentance is key to Christian living. Some sins are violation not just of God’s Laws, but also mans. When we break certain laws we are required to confess of these sins not only to God but to local law enforcement.

*“Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works.” -James 2:18*

As proof that we have repented we are humble, changed in Christ. While there is no work we can do that will save us, we are moved by Christ to do good works. Sex offenders must turn themselves in as part of the repentance process. Clergy in the Church of Jesus Christ in Christian Fellowship are required to turn someone in if they refuse to turn themselves in. This is not to punish them, but to protect the innocent.

## **Obey the Laws**

Those that have been charged must keep their parole. Leadership must be made aware of the conditions of their parole and should help the former sex offenders keep the conditions of that parole.

*“Keep the Law of the Lord thy God in thy heart; and none of thy steps shall slide.”  
-Doctrines of the Saints 93a:26*

It is up to former sex offenders to ensure they are keeping parole. That said, it is our duty as Saints to uplift one another. One of the things we in the Fellowship can do to help our brothers and sisters is to become a “support buddy.” These act as guardian angels to witness of their character and to protect the innocent, should either need arise. It is recommended that 3-5 persons be called to such a role to help both with availability and greater fellowship.

## **Ineligibility of Callings**

Registered sex offenders should understand they they are ineligible for any leadership positions and may not hold any callings that would require them to be around children.

*“Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners.” -1 Corinthians 15:33*

This ineligibility is to protect all those that may be placed in harms way, not to punish anyone for past sins.

## Exceptions

Exceptions may be warranted in some situations. Those looking for an exception must bring their cause to the Council of Elders.

*“And in case that any decision of this quorum is made in unrighteousness, it may be brought before a general assembly of the several quorums known as the Council of Elders, which constitute the spiritual authorities of the church, otherwise there can be no appeal from their decision.” -Doctrines of the Saints 5b:23*

Any proof required must be presented by those requesting the exceptions. This will include, but may not be limited to:

- Court transcripts
- A written and/or in person confession (as requested by the Council)
- Two (2) or three (3) witnesses to the character of the former sex offender
- Any other information requested by the Council

It should be understood that even if all evidence is in the favor of the former sex offender, the Council of Elders can and may still vote not to grant the individual their request. The vote of the council must be unanimous, with all current members of the Council participating in the vote. If anyone is not present, unwilling to vote, or votes in the negative, the exception will be denied.

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