

APPENDIX F

ANONYMOUS COMMUNICATIONS POLICY SOUTHMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Southminster Presbyterian Church does not consider information that is offered anonymously. This policy does not apply to information received in which or for which there is sufficient factual evidence to warrant disciplinary action.

The church universal is called by Christ to be an agent of reconciliation. Individuals bringing allegations or accusations under cloaks of anonymity work directly against this call because reconciliation, when concerned with others, can never be a unilateral action. Furthermore, anonymity precludes seeking redress or agreement but rather fosters division as it allows neither substantiation nor attribution. Without these, there cannot be any sense of procedural integrity, the absence of which is an affront to the polity of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

This policy concerns information for which there is no verifiable attribution. It does not concern conversations/communications between parties that are appropriately private or confidential.

The term *anonymous communications* includes telephone calls, e-mails, and letters.

Telephone communications:

- Calls from unidentified persons will either not be passed through or will be disconnected.
- Unidentified voice-mail messages will be deleted.

E-mail messages:

- Messages from an unidentifiable or alias e-mail address will be deleted after examination of the contents.

Postal mail:

- Mail bearing no return address will be opened by the Office Assistant or by the Church Secretary.
- The contents will be briefly scanned to determine if the suspicion of anonymity is correct.
- Letters determined to be anonymous will be shredded immediately.

This policy extends to all employees, councils, committees, and other work groups within the Church.

POLICY APPROVED BY SESSION: March 8, 2010