

# **SOUTHWEST EVANGELICAL MINISTRIES**

## **CODE OF ETHICS**

Southwest Evangelical Ministries is a religious organization whose ministers are dedicated to the enhancement of each person's spiritual growth and development and thus to the worth, dignity, well-being, and unique potential of each individual.

As the Code of Ethics of the Church, this document establishes principles that define the ethical behavior of all ordained ministers of the Church. A violation of the Code of Ethics constitutes ministerial misconduct and may result in withdrawal of ordination.

### **Ethical Standards**

**Responsibility:** Ministers are fully responsible for their ministerial decisions and actions. Ministers have an essential responsibility to do no harm. The well-being of those served is paramount.

**Competence:** Ministers must recognize the limits of their competence and must practice within the scope of their background, training, knowledge, and experience. They are urged to maintain competence in their areas of practice through continuing education and experience.

**Moral and Legal Standards:** Ministers' moral, ethical, and legal standards of behavior as they pertain to their ministerial duties must serve to enhance the spiritual growth and development of those they serve and reflect positively on the Church. In their service role, ministers must not engage in any action that will violate or diminish the legal or civil rights of anyone they serve. Being found guilty in a court of law of an offense that compromises a minister's suitability to serve in a ministerial role is misconduct. When ministers are confronted with conflict among moral, ethical, and/or legal standards of conduct, the ministers must search their own conscience and consult their Spiritual Source, then confer in confidence with a clerical colleague and/or the Church, and seek legal advice when necessary, in order that they may resolve the dilemma in favor of the Highest Good of all concerned.

**Public Statements:** In public statements regarding their ministry, including advertising, ministers must represent themselves as members of the clergy, using an appropriate title such as Reverend, Minister or Pastor. Ministers'

public statements must not contain false or misleading information regarding their credentials or the ministerial services which they offer. All public statements must be consistent with the Code of Ethics. Other than to indicate they are ordained by Southwest Evangelical Ministries, ministers shall make no public statements using the name of the Church without prior approval in writing by an officer of the Church.