

## ECA Clergy Penitent – Privilege Policy

As ECA Ministers are to be committed to the highest ethical standards, any communications to them are to be used exclusively for the purposes for which they were intended.

All communications made to a licensed or ordained minister of the ECA while acting as a spiritual advisor shall be considered privileged provided there is no presence of a third person. However, a third person may be present if one is required legally, or to be in compliance with the policies of the minister's employer or immediate governing authority.

The ECA Clergy – Penitent Privilege Policy does not excuse ministers from appearing in court. Rather, it exempts them from disclosing a privileged communication in court against their will.

It is imperative that ECA members maintain familiarity with their own government's clergy-penitent privilege laws; particularly in the areas of child, elder or domestic abuse, and seek legal counsel prior to agreement or refusal to divulge any information given under the circumstances considered to be Clergy – Penitent privilege.

In the case of ECA members holding multiple ministerial credentials, this policy shall take precedence.