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June 5, 2017

Barry and Jennifer Pendergast
9203 – 29th Street SW
Calgary, Alberta T2V 4V1

Dear Barry and Jennifer,

This letter is to inform you of our final decision regarding your allegation of having experienced spiritual abuse by Ron Buschman, leader of the Marriage Ministry at First Alliance Church. We had hoped to speak to you about this in person, but you declined our invitation for a final meeting. As we feel it is important for you to hear our decision, we are instead sending you this letter. We do also acknowledge your email dated May 13, 2017 where you have requested further information. However, after consulting with our legal counsel, we are going to respectfully decline to provide the information you have requested. We do not feel it is appropriate for you to demand such information.

Initially, we want to acknowledge the hurt and the pain you have experienced over the time that the allegations took place, and the courage that it took to bring these allegations forward to us. We recognize that bringing forward allegations of this kind can be a very difficult thing to do. We also recognize that due to various reasons, the process of investigating these allegations has taken more time than we had hoped. We do apologize for the delays in relation to the situation, to timing factors, and other challenges involved in working through this process.

From the beginning of the time when the First Alliance Church Board of Elders became involved in this process, our main goal had been to hear from both sides of this dispute in a fair and unbiased manner, where the truth could become known. Ultimately, we had hoped that the end of this process would lead to some sort of reconciliation between both parties of the dispute.

Be assured that the allegations of spiritual abuse are considered to be very serious by this Board. Thus, we have done our best to be as thorough as possible in our investigation in order to satisfy ourselves, and to be fully comfortable in our decision.

We see the issue of spiritual abuse as being one where a leader in the church who is in a position of authority over others would intentionally misuse that position to bring harm on one who is serving under their authority. They may also misuse their authority to further their own interests through the harm of others.

After a thorough investigation into this matter, we do not feel that spiritual abuse has occurred. Specifically, we do not believe that there has been any intent on Ron Buschman's part to cause you harm. Rather, we believe that the issues in this situation were due to various breakdowns in communication, such that an atmosphere of uncertainty developed, that created further levels of

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