



Safe Church News

www.crcna.org/safechurch

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It's 2016! So...



What will this New Year, 2016, mean for Safe Church Ministry? What will this New Year mean for you? What goals do we have together for safe church ministry in 2016?

This newsletter will attempt to provide a very partial answer, from only one vantage point, which is mine, from here in Grand Rapids. Carol and I are only two people. What can we do regarding abuse awareness, prevention, and response for the entire CRCNA bi-national denomination? The answer is precious little. We are dependent on all of you for the work of safe church ministry, and we see our role as staff primarily as equipping others. And since so much depends on all of us together, our prayer is that each of us will take a little time to reflect, to ponder, and to pray. What do we hope to see in safe church ministry in 2016? What will be our own involvement, with God's help, in making it happen?

Hopefully this newsletter will give you some ideas to consider. It's not too soon to begin planning now for 2016. And don't forget to **save the date for our bi-annual conference on Nov. 4-5!**

Beyond Prevention Policies

Our tagline, which is *abuse awareness, prevention and response*, leaves room for various kinds of ministry. Ensuring that each congregation has safe church policies that protect children, youth and vulnerable populations is so important; it's a great place to start. But there is so much more. In our next several newsletters we will focus on different aspects of safe church ministry that deserve our consideration, such as the following article about emotional abuse.

A few other ideas to consider in 2016:

Prayer Team – A prayer guide goes out monthly to those who are committed to praying for Safe Church Ministry. I know that's not everyone, but **let us know** if you are interested in being part of this team and we will make sure you receive the guide.

Team Meetings – Maybe you need to make a commitment to attend or host a meeting if that's needed and not happening. We may be able to help you connect with other safe church team folks in your area. We can also help with ideas. **Contact us**. Perhaps just meeting regularly with one other person could give you extra encouragement and support.

Safe Church Training – Do you need more training yourself? Are there others that need to know what you know? We may be able to help with finding a venue and with ideas. Maybe you want to take advantage of the Mini-Grant initiative! **Contact us, we can help.**

A Webinar Opportunity - The Emotionally Destructive Person

This webinar opportunity, *Effective Strategies in Counseling the Emotionally Destructive Person*, has “come across my desk” and I’m hoping that many of you will be able to take advantage of it. The webinar is designed for pastors – perhaps you want to let your pastor, council members, or other ministry leaders also know about it. You can find out more about it **here**:

(http://app.webinarjam.net/register/12460/dfaa28add?inf_contact_key=7b4ed6a5a8de3df6b336cf695b6a81bdf24723eeebb39814b8bb0ac322f4a2a3)

Abuse will never end unless those who abuse stop doing it. Therefore, we must consider our response to those who perpetrate abuse. This webinar will offer some insight about that, as well as dynamics of abuse in general. Emotional abuse is still abuse, even though it’s harder to define. Many of the situations we deal with involve emotional abuse. It’s also true that emotional abuse, unchallenged, can escalate into physical, sexual, or other kinds of abuse that can cause additional harm. A booklet that’s helpful in understanding emotional abuse is available on the Safe Church website. It can be downloaded or ordered from Faith Alive. You can find it **here** listed along with other safe church resources.

(<https://www.crcna.org/SafeChurch/what-safe-church-ministry>)

Mini-Grants for Safe Church Training and Educational Events

Time is running out to take advantage of the Safe Church Mini-Grant opportunity. We must hear from you by the end of January! Safe Church mini-grants can help to defray some of the costs of hosting a spring training or educational event. Though we can’t pay you a salary to plan an event, through this mini-grant opportunity you can receive an honorarium of up to \$500 for your planning efforts. And an additional \$1500 is available for speaker fees or travel costs for presenters. We can even help with ideas and potential presenters for planning. **Contact Safe Church Ministry for details.**

Say Goodbye to Last Monday Conference Calls

We’ve enjoyed and learned from our 6-month experiment with *Last Monday Conference Calls*. As important as networking and learning from one another is; we’re convinced that there are better ways to make this happen. Stay tuned for future networking opportunities.

"They will live in safety and no one will make them afraid." Ezekiel 34:28