

# Safe Church News

[www.crcna.org/safechurch](http://www.crcna.org/safechurch)

November 2015



## Exciting Network Webinar

I'm delighted to have this opportunity to present a webinar with Linda Crockett, a player on the national stage of a movement to end child sexual abuse. You won't want to miss this webinar on **November 11, at noon Eastern Time**. But if you must miss it, no worries; it will be archived, so that you can listen to it online anytime! One in four girls and one in six boys experience sexual abuse. This webinar will take a look at how sexual abuse happens, what some of the impacts are, and then explore how churches can play a key role in ending this epidemic. Register for the webinar, *The Church's Role in Ending Child Sexual Abuse*, [here](#). You can also find out more about Linda Crockett and the organization she founded, Samaritan SafeChurch, [here](#). We are very excited to offer this!

## Training and Equipping

One topic discussed in the October *Last Monday Conference Call* was how to develop and maintain well-equipped safe church teams for congregations and in each classis. It was agreed that much of the "real work" of safe church ministry happens at the congregational level. That's where policies for prevention are formed, where walk-alongside support happens best, as well as education for children, youth, and adults. A classis coordinator or coordinating team can be valuable in offering support, expertise and encouragement. We need to keep thinking about how to increase awareness in our congregations and how to engage others, especially those in leadership. It takes more than just an office in Grand Rapids, and more than a few safe church team members. It takes all of us working together to *build communities where the value of each person is honored; where people are free to worship and grow free from abuse; and where abuse has occurred, the response is compassion and justice that foster healing*. We each have our part to play in realizing this vision.

As we said in the last newsletter, **a decision has been made to change our bi-annual conference from the spring to the fall!** The tentative dates are Nov. 4-5 2016. That means that **spring is a good time to think about planning a classis or regional training event**. In order to help facilitate spring training events, we have developed a plan to offer mini-grants to classis team members that could help to defray some of the costs of hosting an event, up to \$2000. **If you are interested in applying for a safe church mini-grant; please feel free to contact Safe Church Ministry for details.**

## Thanksgiving

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As we approach Thanksgiving in the U.S. and reflect on the holiday that has recently taken place in Canada, there is much to be thankful for in Safe Church ministry. A busy travel schedule in October meant fruitful meetings in Minnesota, Ontario, and California. Please thank the Lord for these opportunities to meet with others who care about increasing awareness about abuse and making our congregations safer places for everyone.



I was encouraged to hear about an event in Classis Toronto, a workshop led by “Plan to Protect” with over 40 people in attendance and another 20 registered for online training.

In British Columbia a comprehensive safe church assessment process is underway, which involves interviews with congregational ministry leaders to determine safe church needs. We hope to learn more when this assessment process is completed; in the meantime, we’re glad that it’s happening.

I’m always thankful for new connections. A report to the Canadian Ministries Team is leading to fruitful new dialogue with Mennonite folks who have been researching and working to make worship more sensitive to those who have experienced abuse. I look forward to learning together with them.

## Last Monday Conference Call

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**November 30 – Last Monday Conference Call** – Calling all safe church team members! Have you ever wondered what’s on the Safe Church website, but you can’t find time to look? Take this time to explore it together with others – have your computer, laptop, or tablet open during the call to take full advantage. Or, even if you can’t do that, you’ll still hear about the great resources on our website. Which are most helpful to you? Carol Vander Ark-Champion, our administrative specialist, will be facilitating the call. To join the call at **8pm Eastern time, dial: 800.503.2899, then enter access code #4319590.**

## Your News Here

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Let us know what’s happening with YOU. Feel free to send us information about events, an article of interest, or whatever is happening regarding safe church ministry in your area.

*They will live in safety and no one will make them afraid*  
*--Ezekiel 34:28*