

**THEOLOGICAL RESPONSES TO SEX OFFENDERS:
HOW THE FAITH-BASED COMMUNITY CAN ASSIST IN THE REDUCTION
OF SEX OFFENDER RECIDIVISM**

**A professional project submitted to the Theological School of
Drew University in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree,
Doctor of Ministry**

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May 2019

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to give honor and thanks to my Pastor for allowing me the opportunity to utilize the First Baptist Church of South Orange as a case study and model for a future model for change toward theological responses to sex offenders.

I would like to thank the men and women who dared to tell their personal stories of sexual abuse and have added volumes of insight to this project.

I would like to pay special tribute to my Lay Advisory Committee who took time out of their busy schedules to meet with me on a bi-weekly basis providing written feedback and suggestions. Each of them displayed an enduring commitment to this particularly sensitive and not always welcomed topic.

With many thanks, I would like to acknowledge my Faculty Advisor whose dedication, support and expertise made this project expeditiously possible.

I would like to make special tribute to my Editor (JM) of whose contributions greatly benefited my project on a weekly basis.

Last but not least, I wish to give thanks to Jerrilyn and the faithful Deacons (Long and Nails) of the First Baptist Church of South Orange who were extremely instrumental in providing administrative support and assistance with gaining entrance to First Baptist from week to week.

GLOSSARY

1. Careful Grace –

Extending the sex offender a type of kindness that includes accountability with monitored and limited access to the faith based community, while at the same time reducing recidivism among this population. This includes but does not limit services, ministries, fellowships, events and facilities.

2. Circle of Supports –

In this unique restorative approach, professionally supported community members volunteer time to assist high risk, high need sex offenders as they attempt to integrate to society after release from prison.¹ These individuals will volunteer to oversee, provide spiritual counsel and encouragement to the recovering/registered sex offender, the sexually abused, and their families.

3. Conduct Disorder, Adolescent – Onset Type² -

A persistent refusal to comply with rules or expectations in the home, school, or community.

4. Cutting –

Cutting is a way some people try to cope with the pain of strong emotions, intense pressure, or upsetting relationship problems. They may be dealing with feelings that seem too difficult to bear or bad situations they think can't change. Some people cut because they feel desperate for relief from bad feelings.³

5. Deviant Stimuli –

Sexual arousal associated with: the exposure of the genitals to unsuspecting strangers (exhibitionism); the use of nonliving objects/items; touching/rubbing against nonconsenting people (frotteurism); sexual

¹ Robin J. Wilson and Andrew J. McWhinnie. *Circles of Support and Accountability: An Innovative Approach to Community-Based Risk Management for High-Risk Sexual Offender*, (Netherlands: Wolfe Legal Publishing, 2008), 241.

² Arthur E. Jongsma, Mark Peterson, and William P. McInnis, *The Adolescent Psychotherapy: Treatment Planner*. (Hoboken: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 2003), 99.

³ KidsHealth. "Cutting-KidsHealth." Kidshealth.org accessed April 2, 2017.

desire toward children (pedophilia); sexual masochism; sexual sadism; transvestic fetishism, etc.⁴

6. Faith Based Community –

Congregations; National Networks/Denominations; and freestanding religious organizations with an ultimate goal of bringing others to a relationship with Christ. It is the faith based community that I hope will act as a source of spiritual healing, *ministry of presence*, and added form of outpatient and *holistic support* for the recovering sex offender, the sexually abused, and their families.

7. Holistic Support –

Ensures that the offender's involvement will not pose a risk to the rest of the congregation, while at the same time protecting him/her against further allegations/suspensions (i.e. provide a designee/escort from FBCSO who will be aware of the offender's offense, will evaluate and monitor his/her access during services/activities, afford prayer and spiritual guidance).

8. Limited Access Agreement –

Pre-set congregational restrictions that encourage the recovering/registered sex offender to share in specified components of congregational life, while at the same time, establishing clear boundaries that incorporate what he/she will and must be exempted from (i.e. any type of child, youth, or vulnerable adult involvement).

9. Megan's Law –

Requires convicted sex offenders to register with local police. It establishes a three-tier notification process to provide information about sex offenders to law enforcement agencies and, when appropriate, to the public. The type of notification is based on an evaluation of the risk to the community from a particular sex offender.⁵

⁴ Rita Budrionis and Arthur E. Jongsma, Jr., *The Sexual Abuse Victim and Sexual Offender: Treatment Planner* (Hoboken: John Wiley & Sons, 2003), 137.

⁵ New Jersey Office of the Attorney General, Division of Criminal Justice in Conjunction with the 21 County Prosecutor's Offices. *Megan's Law: A Guide for Community Organizations, Schools and Daycare Centers* March 15, 2007. 3.

10. Ministry of Presence –

A form of servanthood characterized by suffering alongside of the hurt and the oppressed – a being, rather than a doing or a telling.⁶

11. Minor Attraction –

Sexual arousal associated with a desire for sexual activity with a prepubescent child (pedophilia).⁷

12. Molestation –

May involve touching, rubbing, disrobing, sucking, exposure to sexual materials, or penetrating behaviors.⁸

13. Rape –

May include any sexual act perpetrated with violence or force, although legal definitions often include penetration: oral, anal, or vaginal and digital, penile, objectile.⁹

14. Registered Sex Offender –

A registered sex offender has been previously convicted of a criminality that implicated a sexual undertaking where the law (federal, state or local) called for the aforesaid person's placement on the Sexual Offender Registry after having served a legal prison term(s) or has otherwise been released on Parole.¹⁰

15. Recovering Sex Offender –

An offender cannot claim to be 'recovered' but might be described as 'recovering'. As with the Alcoholics Anonymous Twelve Steps Program, a person needs ongoing awareness and ongoing support. It is important

⁶ Winnifred Fallers Sullivan. *A Ministry of Presence: Chaplaincy, Spiritual Care, and the Law* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2014), 178.

⁷ Budrionis and Jongmans. Sexual Abuse Victim, 137.

⁸ Gail Ryan, Tom Leversee, and Sandy Lane. *Juvenile Sexual Offending: Causes, Consequences, and Correction* (Hoboken: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 2010), 3.

⁹ Ibid. 3.

¹⁰ DMatson, n.d. *Sex Crime Criminal Defense: Criminal Defense Advice for Those Accused of Sex Crimes*. accessed March 21, 2017. <http://www.sexcrimineldefense.com/registered-sex-offender/>

that the offender's memory of what he did continues.¹¹ This individual has already served their prison sentence(s) and has completed the required *Sex Offender Specific Treatment*.

16. Restorative Justice –

Offers a third perspective, to make community whole again. It does not focus on punishment or rehabilitation merely of the offender... it seeks to restore those who offend to their communities, to restore the sense of community for those who have been victimized and to repair the damaged community fabric.¹²

17. Secondary Victims –

Includes family members (particularly a spouse), parents, children, co-workers, friends and others from the church community. They may be hurt in varying degrees. To be healed, they need help in working through the pain.¹³

18. Sex Offender –

A highly heterogeneous mixture of individuals who have committed violent sexual assaults on strangers, offenders who have had inappropriate sexual contact with family members, individuals who have molested children, and those who have engaged in a wide range of other inappropriate and criminal behaviors.¹⁴

19. Sex Offender Recidivism –

Lapses occur when an offender engages in thoughts, feelings, and behavior that move him closer to high-risk situations and he fails to use an adaptive coping response. Recidivism occurs when a person repeats an undesirable behavior after they had either experienced negative

¹¹ The Methodist Council. *The Church and Sex Offenders*. Special Report, Methodist Church Reports, 200010.

¹² Mark Yantzi, *Sexual Offending and Restoration* (Waterloo: Herald Press, 1998) 56.

¹³ Ibid 58.

¹⁴ The Center for Effective Public Policy and the American Probation and Parole Association. *Recidivism of Sex Offender*. Center for Sex Offender Management, (2001) 2.

consequences of that behavior, or had been trained to extinguish that behavior.¹⁵

20. Sex Offender Specific Treatment –

Therapy with sex offenders entails working through denial, guilt, depression and anger to arrive ultimately at acceptance of the crime... have to deal with their own multiple losses, and the usual human processes involved in grieving identities, missed opportunities and lost possibilities.¹⁶

21. Special Treatment Unit (STU) –

A medium security correction facility located in Avenel, NJ that holds individuals who are not considered inmates, but “residents”. They have been civilly committed, detained involuntarily for an indefinite period of time for carrying out sexually violent offenses.

22. Vulnerable Adults –

Individuals who are 18 years or older that require community care or services due to mental and other disability, age or illness, and are unable to care for or protect themselves against significant harm or exploitation.

23. Works of the Flesh –

Fornication, impurity, licentiousness, idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, anger, quarrels, dissensions, factions, envy, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these (Galatians 5:19 – 21).

¹⁵ Georgia F. Cumming and Robert J. McGrath, *Supervision of the Sex Offender: Community Management, Risk Assessment & Treatment* (Brandon: The Safer Society Press, 2005), 44.

¹⁶ Brendan Geary. “Resurrection Themes in the Care of Sex Offenders,” *Practical Theology* 3, no. 1 (2010):12.

ABSTRACT

Many faith based communities are being faced with the controversial issue of allowing the *recovering/registered sex offender*¹⁷ access to congregational membership at the risk of jeopardizing the welfare of the rest of the Body of Christ. As a result, this project was designed in response to the integration of sex offenders within the faith based community. However, realizing that there are two sides, the victim and the offender, I have discovered it even more advantageous to focus on the development of policies and procedures that would allow recovering/registered sex offenders access to faith based communities while simultaneously safeguarding the entire congregation through “*careful grace*”. Thus, this particular context of the inclusion of recovering/registered sex offenders within the faith based community resulted in the development of a manual made available to the leaders of First Baptist Church of South Orange. With this purpose in mind, I endeavored to implement training and, some day, to launch a new phase of ministry that will address the congregation’s hospitality towards this population. The manual recommends a type of collaborative and innovative approach to doing ministry while protecting the faith based community’s children, youth and vulnerable adults - simultaneously allowing those who had or were alleged to have committed a sexual offense to its services, activities, and facilities with limited access. The project specifically utilized the First Baptist Church of South Orange as its case study in partnership with other faith based communities, professionals and experts in the field that

¹⁷ All italicized terms will be found in the Glossary.

would also leave room for repentance, forgiveness and reconciliation in the face of justice over mercy.

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INTRODUCTION

This paper seeks to demonstrate that while sex offenders have previously committed heinous sexual crimes, they are still human beings created in the image of God. Like you and me, they also are in need of forgiveness and restoration. And, “if we are to work toward justice and healing, we need to understand the perspective of the offenders. We must separate the person from the wrongful acts if we are to be restorative.”¹⁸ Therefore, not only should the recovering/registered sex offender be allowed the opportunity to hear the Word of God, but such offenders should also be permitted to attend, worship and attain membership to the faith based community. This type of restoration would include a *Limited Access Agreement* of established safety and protective guidelines. For the Bible says that: “all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23). This is not to suggest that because God is a loving and merciful God that all will ultimately be reconciled to God. Quite the contrary. I believe that through the act of repentance (where one admits to their sin, is godly sorry and has chosen to turn away from that sin back to God) one can be saved. “For, ‘Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved’ (Romans 10:13).

Thus, this project was additionally designed in response to integrating sex offenders within the faith based community with a growing concern for addressing sexual harassment, misconduct and abuse in conjunction with the rejection and marginalization of the recovering/registered sex offender and his/her inclusion within the faith based community. It is

¹⁸ Yantzi, *Sexual Offending and Restoration*, 58.

hoped that this project will assist in the eventual reduction of *sex offender recidivism* as it researches and develops a case study of ministries for recovering/registered sex offenders. This will be accomplished through the use of my Lay Advisory Committee (LAC) a working party from my ministerial setting - the First Baptist Church of South Orange (hereafter: FBCSO). They will work alongside of other faith based communities, knowledgeable professionals and experts in the field.

Overall, it is my hope that this set of policies and procedures, produced as part of this project, will not only guide a ministry of support to the recovering/registered sex offender, but also act as a type of *restorative justice* to those who have been sexually abused and their families. Of course it is my hope that the project as a whole will contribute to the reduction of sex offender recidivism. To that end, a team of FBCSO members were trained utilizing the model developed in this project in the hope of creating a greater awareness of sexual harassment, misconduct and abuse, the dynamics of the sex offender, sex offender recidivism, the dynamics of the sexually abused (the victim) and their families (the *secondary victim*), the need for forgiveness and reconciliation, and how the faith based community can assist in the same. This, I trust, will allow the recovering/registered sex offender an opportunity to discover and yield their lives to Christ Jesus – to no longer feel estranged but instead attain a sense of belonging within the Body of Christ.

Through this type of exploration, enlightenment and awareness, I anticipate that the faith based community will become more supportive to those who are our recovering/registered sex offenders as we consider the theological aspects of repentance, forgiveness, and our call to service. And while I am not currently considering publishing the results of this project, the

project does make recommendations that I anticipate will be shared with other faith based communities in the future. I additionally want to note that this policies and procedures manual was designed for informational purposes only, and not to assign fault or guilt to the recovering/registered sex offender or the sexually abused. I am therefore looking forward to the recovering/registered sex offender becoming joined or integrated back into the community in a healthy and non-exploitive manner.

CHAPTER ONE:

THE SEX OFFENDER IN CONTEXT

The Theological Responses to Sex Offenders proposal was so named due to my experience and employment at the *Special Treatment Unit (STU)* where I work as a Social Worker with male adult sex offenders on a daily basis. It has been my observation that while most victims of sexual abuse do not become sex offenders, many sex offenders have themselves suffered various forms of trauma. For example, many were maltreated as children by way of neglect, physical, sexual and or psychological abuse, exposure to drugs/alcohol, and domestic violence. According to Cumming and McGrath:

Poor parent-child relationships are implicated in the development of sexual deviancy...Several studies of sex offenders indicate that their parents have high rates of criminality, are prone to use violence, and are likely to abuse alcohol or other drugs... One of the most common explanations for sexual offending is that the abuser himself experienced sexual abuse as a child... Physical and verbal abuse, along with neglect, appears frequently in the histories of sexual abusers... Some of the earliest explanations of sexual aggression posit that sex offenders condition themselves to develop and maintain their deviant sexual interests.¹⁹

The sex offenders I counsel often report feelings of being inadequately cared for, emotionally devalued, and physically or sexually abused by their parents, step-parents or caretakers, by someone they believed in or, in some cases, by someone they barely knew. “The majority of sexually abused children are victimized by someone well known to them and

¹⁹ Cumming and McGrath, *Supervision of the Sex Offender*, 150 – 151.

approximately 60% of offenses take place in the victim's home or the home of someone they know.”²⁰ It has been my experience in working with this population, that the connection between sex offending and sexual abuse is a combination of personal sexual victimization, poor parent-child relationships and general trauma that has been brought on by a variety of childhood maltreatment/experiences. Cumming and McGrath believe that:

When children feel unloved, fearful, and insecure, there is an increased likelihood that they will exhibit personality characteristics that damage adult relationships, such as being domineering, emotionally unexpressive, uncaring, or untrusting. Certainly, men who have these characteristics have difficulty forming healthy adult sexual relationships, predisposing them to seek out children or coercive sexual relationships.²¹

Thus, it seems that most offenders have grown up in search of something or someone to heal the wound and fulfill their unmet needs. Therefore, as I believe that an offender should be held totally accountable for his/her behavior in spite of his/her background, it is my desire to generate an awareness that childhood maltreatment can play a role in how an individual may view him/herself as well as others. For this reason, with the support of the faith based community as a type of *circle of supports*, it is my opinion that a recovering/registered sex offender should not only be supported in gaining emotion regulation, freedom from emotional turmoil/stress, and a sense of connectedness. It is my conviction that this could also reduce the need to sexually offend. The idea is that if the faith based community can provide the recovering/registered sex offender with a buffer that includes pastoral aftercare and collaborative parole or probation

²⁰ Association for the Treatment of Sexual Abusers-Public Policy Briefs. *Sex Offender Residence Restrictions* accessed June 19, 2018. <http://www.atsa.com>

²¹ Cumming and McGrath, *Supervision of the Sex Offender*, 150.

supervision that is aimed at a successful reintegration, then the opportunities for recidivism will be reduced. Wilson notes that:

Persons with problems tend to do better when they have others to help them deal with those problems... Many will argue that it is the sense of social-connectedness that we experience through being linked to others that assists us in being successful people... In doing so, safety is enhanced for the community, particularly where risk exists for women, children and other vulnerable persons... Circle of supports promotes safety for victims (past or potential) by validating their needs for healing and continued safety while holding ex-offenders accountable for behaving responsibly.²²

The Portrait and Dimensions of the Sex Offender

For the most part, the precise meaning of sexual abuse still requires greater clarification.

So one might start by asking what exactly sexual abuse is? For the purposes of this thesis:

Sexual abuse is unwanted sexual contact between two or more adults or two or more minors; any sexual contact between an adult and a minor; any unwanted sexual contact initiated by a youth toward an adult; or sexual contact between two minors with a significant age difference between them.²³

Historically, sexual harassment, misconduct and sexual abuse have been around for centuries and occur all over the world. It is happening everywhere today as well. According to the 2002 World Report on Violence and Health: “In some countries nearly, one in four women may experience sexual violence by an intimate partner, and up to one third of adolescent girls

²² Wilson and McWhinnie, *Circles of Support* 245-246.

²³ Leilah Gilligan ...21987-fact-sheet-what-you-need-to-know-about-sex-offenders. Center for Sex Offender Management. July 29. accessed March 22, 2017. <http://www.corrections.com>

report their first sexual experience as being forced.’’²⁴ However, there exists an extensive gamut of sexually motivated exploits that transpire in different contexts and venues. Some of them include: the sexual abuse of youth and children, the sexual abuse of vulnerable adults, date rape or rape within marriage, female genital mutilation, forced prostitution (male and female), the sexual violence against men and boys, and the list goes on and on. Any one of these instances can take place in the home, on the streets, in health care facilities, at work, school, in the military, prison, during police custody, and even in the faith based community.

Secondly, one might question what constitutes a sex offender and wonder if they are all alike? In a word – “no”. Sex offenders are either rapists or child molesters (pedophiles) who come from all walks of life. They can be male or female, young or old, educated, well-educated or have no education at all. They come from various social groups and categories, nationalities and religions. They may be married, single, separated, divorced, hetero-sexual or homosexual. Some have close familial ties and others may be estranged. A number of them have intimate connections in their communities and others have been alienated. Some possess prior criminal sex offenses, while others have shown no sexual misconduct at all. In fact, anybody can be a sex offender: a complete stranger, your best friend, your neighbor, relative, teacher, lawyer, doctor, coach and may even be your pastor or priest. Let’s face it, the idea that sex offenders are creepy old men with shifty eyeballs wearing trench coats and running around flashing themselves before little old ladies and children is a myth. The reality is that there is no noticeably visible profile for sex offenders. Many can be quite charming, talented and very unassuming in spite of what he or she has been through.

²⁴ Rachel Jewkes, Purna Sen, and Claudia Garcia-Moreno, *Sexual Violence. In World Report on Violence and Health*, edited by E. G. Krug, 149-181 (Geneva: World Health Organization, 2002), 149.

What about the “registered” sex offender? Simply put, when a sex offender has been registered, he or she is consequently listed on a registry based on his/her offense(s), the age of the victim(s) and likelihood of recidivism. The term for a federal law in the United State that obligates and has authorized the Division of State Police to make information available to the public over the internet pertaining to registered sex offenders is called *Megan’s Law*. This registry can be found in the New Jersey Code at 2C:7-12 Findings, declarations relative to sex offender central registry on the Internet.²⁵ Law enforcement will notify all appropriate community members, schools, organizations, residences and businesses of the same. According to the New Jersey Office of the Attorney General:

The offenses requiring registration include aggravated sexual assault, sexual assault, aggravated criminal sexual contact, criminal sexual contact if the victim is a minor, endangering the welfare of a child by engaging in a sexual conduct which would impair or debauch the morals of the child, endangering the welfare of a child through acts involving pornography featuring a child, promoting prostitution of a child, luring or enticing, kidnapping, criminal restraint, and false imprisonment if the victim is a minor and the offender is not a parent of the victim.²⁶

In addition, based on the offense, the New Jersey Office of the Attorney General has assigned the sex offender a tier by level:

- **Tier 1** - Low risk of repeat offense - **non-violent sexual crimes** (i.e. public lewdness, voyeurism/peeping on others involved in intimate activities, in possession of child/youth pornography, sexual contact w/o consent). An offender with a tier 1 status must register on the Sexual Offender Registry for at least 15 years plus an annual verification.

²⁵ <https://law.justia.com/codes/new-jersey/2017/title-2c/section-2c7-12/>

²⁶ New Jersey Office of the Attorney General, Division of Criminal Justice in Conjunction with the 21 County Prosecutor’s Office (2007) 4. <https://www.njpublicsafety.com/cdstatus17th-progrep-0508.pdf>

- **Tier 2 - Moderate risk of repeat offense - non-violent sexual crimes involving minors** (i.e. additional offenses committed by Tier 1 offender, marketing/transporting children or youth with intent of sexual interest, prompting sexual pursuits by coercion/enticement, sexual undertakings/exchanges with ages 12 – 15), offenses from positions of authority (i.e. parent/custodian, caretaker/teacher, pastor/priest, Sunday School Teacher) child/youth prostitution, manufacturing/dissemination of child/youth pornography, planning/attempting to commit the aforementioned offenses). An offender with a tier 2 status must register on the Sexual Offender Registry for a minimum of 25 years plus an annual verification.
- **Tier 3 - High risk of repeat offense and threat to public safety exists - violent/non-violent sexual crimes involving children, youth or adults** (i.e. additional offenses committed by a Tier 2 offender, forced sexual acts on victims or constraints, including victims who are unconscious/substance impaired, under aged, mentally impaired/disabled, physically disabled, non-consenting, or planning/attempting to commit the aforementioned offenses). An offender with a tier 3 status must register on the Sexual Offender Registry for life plus a quarterly verification.

The sex offender registry provides a means for law enforcement to remain in touch with the offender and to remain well-informed about the convicted sex offender's personal information (i.e. name, current address/whereabouts, snapshots, and offenses) all through an online database. In addition, there is what is referred to as "community notification". This announces to the prospective community that a convicted sex offender is or will be residing in the said neighborhood. Notifications can be done through a community meeting, flyer, the local newspaper, or a door to door announcement. According to Cumming and McGrath:

The Jacob Wetterling Crimes Against Children Act (Title XVII of the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994) requires sex offenders to register with their local law enforcement agencies upon release from prison or when placed on probation... In May 1996, the addition of Megan's Law required states to disclose information about sex offenders to the general public... In October 1996, the Pam Lychner Sexual Offender Tracking and Identification Act created criteria for mandatory lifetime registration of highly dangerous sex offenders and designated penalties for failing to register.²⁷

The Attorney General Guidelines for Law Enforcement for the Implementation of Sex Offender Registration can be obtained from the Division of Criminal Justice web site at www.state.nj.us/lps/dcj/megan

The Systemic Dimensions of the Sex Offender

So why are sex offenders being given the cold shoulder when it comes to the faith based community? My observation is that in spite of the pictogram that "all are welcomed," most people are afraid of sex offenders and would not dream of allowing them into their faith based communities – especially not to full-fledged membership. Based on the findings of Goode, Lewis, Jr., and Trulear:

The root of the fear about returning citizens is a fear of contamination. Many in the body of Christ are afraid the church will be soiled, stained, or dirtied by what we assume returning citizens might bring into the congregation. They worry that something dirty will invade the clean space that has been set aside for God. They are concerned about the congregation's purity.²⁸

Now considered modern day lepers (disdained and forbidden by others for ethical or social purposes) sex offenders are discovering it extremely difficult to attend services within the

²⁷ Cumming and McGrath, *Supervision of the Sex Offender*, 93.

²⁸ W. Wilson Goode, Sr., Charles E. Lewis, Jr. and Harold Dean Trulear, *Ministry with Prisoners and Families: The Way Forward* (Valley Forge: Judson Press Publishers, 2011), 142.

faith based community. It was reported that “a sheriff in one of North Carolina’s smallest counties told registered sex offenders they can’t go to church... He said he understands the Constitution gives everyone the right to religious freedom. But he said he’s standing by his take on North Carolina law blocking offenders from places where children are present.”²⁹ This same Sherriff (Danny Millsaps) wrote a letter from his office stating:

To all sex offenders, this is to let you know that as of this date 2/17/2015 you are not permitted to attend church services per the N.C. GS-14-208.18(a)(2) which prevents the offender from being within 300 feet of premises where minors are supervised.

To all sex offenders, this is to let you know as of this date 2/17/2015 per N.C. GS-14-2018.9A THE SHERRIF IS GIVEN SPECIFIC AUTHORITY TO VERIFY THE OFFENDERS STILL LIVE AT HIS REGISTERED ADDRESS.

This is an effort to protect the citizens and children of the community of Graham Co. I cannot let one sex offender go to church and not let all registered sex offenders go to church. That is why I am letting you know that if you want to go to a church service you are welcome to come to the Graham Co. Jail on Sunday’s to attend church services.

I know that this may upset some of you, if you have any questions I will be more than happy to talk to you about this matter and give you a copy of the N.C. G.S.

Graham Co. Sherriff’s Office
 Danny Millsaps Sherriff³⁰

As it turned out, there was a split opinion pertaining to the Sheriff’s decree to ban sex offenders from the church. “Clergy in the county of just 9,000 people were divided over shunning sex offending sinners”.³¹ One Pastor declared that everyone was welcomed

²⁹ Jon Ostendorff, “*Sheriff Bans Sex Offenders from Church*” USA Today, March 6, 2015
<https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation/2015/03/06/sex-offenders-church/2422381/>

³⁰ Ibid

³¹ “*Preachers Split Over NC Sheriff’s Church Ban for Sex Offenders*” USA Today, March 13, 2015.
<http://www.foxnews.com/us/2015/03/12/preachers-split-over-nc-sheriff-church-ban-for-sex-offenders.html>

at her house of worship. Another avowed that folks with those kind of concerns have sponsors and should not be allowed unsupervised with children.

Depending on the sexual offense, some sex offenders are prohibited from walking near schools, parks, playgrounds or child care centers. In some states, there are equally established regions where sex offenders are prohibited from residing or visiting for long periods of time. Sex offenders are already categorically ill-treated in prison by correction officers and fellow inmates, but their treatment becomes even worse after being released back into the neighborhood. Should this faith based community also treat sex offenders this way? What if each of us were treated as outcasts of society for the wrongs we have committed? I believe that the minority (the outcasts/marginalized and invisible) would then become the majority – leaving us all victims of our circumstances, idiosyncrasies, unconventional behaviors, and, worse, without hope.³² Such circumstances reflect wrongdoing in opposition to those we consider the “other”³³ in what is supposed to be a sacred yet public space. It is not up to us to play God, Judge and Prosecutor. Or does fear lead to a bad sense of entitlement, privilege and prejudice?

What about the woman caught in adultery in John 8:1-11? Berlin puts it like this:

Almost two thousand years ago, as an outraged crowd attempted to stone to death a woman whose sexual behavior they considered offensive, one man stepped forward to stop the retribution, speaking against revenge while espousing values such as compassion, understanding, forgiveness and reformation. He asked that

³² “Hope does not arise from the individual’s desire or wishes but from God, who is Himself the believer’s hope.” Herbert Lockyer, Sr. *Illustrated Dictionary of the Bible*. (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1986), 488.

³³ “The ‘Other’ is an individual or community who we think of as somehow intrinsically different from ourselves... that which is not us.” See F. Willis Johnson, *Holding Up Your Corner: Talking About Race in Your Community*. (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2017), 99.

persons be judged not simply by their behavior, but with some appreciation for their humanity.³⁴

Here Jesus provides a clear example of rehabilitation rather than punishment. There she was, according to the strict rules and regulations of the Scribes and Pharisees, guilty of a sin worthy of death by stoning. They, among others, were self-righteous and lacked forgiveness. They criticized and lacked love. They judged and lacked compassion. They dominated and lacked understanding - condemned and lacked sympathy. But most of all, they attempted to punish the woman without any consideration of rehabilitation, support or restoration – leaving no room for a second chance. They even attempted to use Scripture against her in support of their failure to “love your neighbor as yourself” (Lev. 19:18). Legally justified in their charge, Jesus gave them permission to stone the woman. However, not without limitation: “Let anyone among you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her” (John 8:7). In essence, casting the stone was based on moral goodness and perfection – of which no one has yet achieved.

The Cultural Dimensions of the Sex Offender

As some readers will know, sex offending can also involve mental health issues and psychiatric disorders with corresponding diagnoses attached (e.g. Other Specified Paraphilic Disorder (non-consent); Pedophilic Disorder, non-exclusive type, sexually attracted to females or males, not limited to incest; Sexual Sadism or Sexual Masochism) that often has an associated concurrent (coexisting) (i.e. Other Specified Personality Disorder (with antisocial features); Schizotypal Personality Disorder; Cannabis Use Disorder; Other Specified Depressive Disorder;

³⁴ F. S. Berlin, “*The Etiology and Treatment of Sexual Offending*” in Diane H. Fishbein (ed.), *The Science, Treatment and Prevention of antisocial Behaviors* (Kingston, NJ: Civic Research Institute, 2000), section 21, 13.

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, etc.) that can be coupled with the individual's sexually *deviant stimuli*. Should not such knowledge of the mental plight of sex offenders make us more forgiving, compassionate and less fearful? Although I do not equate the perpetrator with the victim, I have come to realize that sex offenders require about as much psychotherapy as the sexual abuse survivor. In fact, I believe that the two issues are actually interwoven, and as illustrated earlier, the perpetrator/offender was nine times out of ten a victim of sexual abuse themselves.

I believe that the motivating force for sexual compulsions is instinctive. And as seen above, the manner in which one's sexuality gets communicated or expressed is determined most often during an early childhood experience via physical abuse, sexual abuse, or neglect. For example, one of my clients (considered a Tier 2 sex offender) is diagnosed with "Other Specified Personality Disorder (with avoidant features)." This indicates that he suffers from a long-term maladaptive pattern of inner experience and behavior that deviates markedly from the expectations of his culture which has a detrimental influence on his life. The specified avoidant and antisocial features indicates that while he does not meet the full criteria for the diagnosis of Avoidant Personality Disorder, he does demonstrate many of the traits consistent with the disorder. As reported by my client's psychiatrist, his avoidant features are intimately linked to his sexual offending behavior, as his chronic feelings of inadequacy and social isolation lead to attempts to meet his needs with children, as opposed to with adults. This same client displays a lot of child-like features. This is believed to be his way of avoiding being treated as an adult and with the expected level of responsibility that being an adult entail. His sexual offense history includes two charges and convictions for sexual assaults on the 5-year old son of an acquaintance

and his 8-year old nephew. These sexual assaults included fondling, performing oral and anal sex, and having (or attempting to have) the victims perform oral sex on him.

Another example is a client (considered a Tier 3 sex offender) who was arrested and charged with Sexual Assault, 2nd degree for an assault he committed against a fellow (mentally impaired) resident at the North Princeton Developmental Center. He allegedly entered the room of this fellow resident who was lying down on the bed. My client was said to have placed both hands around the neck and throat of the victim, and began to choke him. He then proceeded to force the victim onto his stomach, pulled down his pants and underwear and forcibly performed anal intercourse. This same client is receiving Sex Offender Specific Treatment at our *Special Treatment Unit (STU)* for several mental abnormalities. One such abnormality is Sexual Sadism, which refers to recurrent, intense sexually arousing fantasies, sexual urges, or behaviors involving acts in which the psychological or physical suffering of the victim is sexually exciting to the person. My client is reported experiencing sexual arousal and urges to perform violent acts of rape with illusions that include killing his imagined victims. His childhood environment was characterized as being severely dysfunctional, with records that indicate his parent's substance abuse. He was also subjected to severe physical abuse and chronic neglect. It was further reported that he resided numerous years with his grandmother towards whom he harbors deep resentment for allegedly physically abusing him on a habitual basis. He is reported having been institutionalized since age 15.

What I take from the above is that abuse tends to beget abuse. It is therefore my aim that the faith based community develop an increased recognition that ostracizing the recovering/registered sex offender will only cause further victimization. It would clearly be

preferable to become a circle of supports, or a support-accountability group³⁵, which would allow the continued process of restoration and reconciliation God's way through encouragement and compassion to those who have taken responsibility³⁶ for their behaviors. While it would not be my goal to discriminate against those who have not "taken responsibility," it would be more advantageous to assist those who have repented and are seeking reconciliation. According to Yantzi,

Changed behavior comes after the individual acknowledges the abuse and accepts responsibility. It is the fruit of the commitment to go in a new healing direction built on a solid foundation. It means no further violations of sexual boundaries, and it means far more... a greater ability to be open and honest in relationships and in sharing feelings such as anger, frustration, happiness, and pleasure.³⁷

I believe that repentance must come before forgiveness on the part of the wrongdoer. The Scriptures tell us that "If we confess our sins, he who is faithful and just will forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (I John 1:9). In essence, I believe that God's forgiveness is made available to all who appeal to him for mercy. That appeal includes an acknowledgement of one's crime, with a desire and acceptance of God's forgiveness. Thus, repentance coupled with forgiveness is the shared work between God and humankind for moving forward and beyond the crime committed.

³⁵ See Yantzi, *Sexual Offending and Restoration*, 143. "Those who provide a safe and comfortable place for the individual to share what he has learned in treatment with a wider group of significant persons".

³⁶ Those who have served time within the penal system, undergone sex offender specific treatment, are now considered in recovery and willing to cooperate with the continued transformation of their healing process.

³⁷ Yantzi, *Sexual Offending and Restoration*, 102.

CHAPTER TWO:

THE LAMENT – A THEOLOGICAL STANCE

The Bible communicates the idea that when Jesus comes into an individual's life, not only can one's heart be changed but so can one's total attitude and condition from the inside out (mind, body and spirit). From what will be seen in the pages of this document, it seems clear that sexual abuse is closely connected to the issue of mental health and to early childhood experiences. As a result, I have examined Mark 5:1-20 in its totality, utilizing verses 15, 18 and 19 as my focal points:

They came to Jesus and saw the demoniac sitting there, clothed and in his right mind, the very man who had had the legion; and they were afraid. As he was getting into the boat, the man who had been possessed by demons begged him that he might be with him. But Jesus refused, and said to him, 'Go home to your friends, and tell them how much the Lord has done for you, and what mercy he has shown you' (Mark 5:15, 18-19).

What caught my attention most was that Jesus seemed to love, forgive, and show mercy towards the suffering man who seemingly had a mental disorder, while at the same time instructing him to share the good news of God's tender mercies. This is a powerful message for those who feel broken and despairing under the ravages of mental illness. I have witnessed this first hand in victims who struggle with the effects of sexual abuse. It is my hope that, perhaps, there is an ingredient in healing that is both faith-bound and that also transcends even mental health treatment. Identifying this ingredient, and integrating it with a ministry program that features "careful grace" is one of the aims of this project.

This story cited above, frequently called the saga of the Gerasene Demoniac, depicts one who is regarded as demon possessed. It is my intention to show that in terms of suffering and disposition, the recovering/registered sex offender (one who has previously embraced violence as a means to cope and is now in despair due to the treatment by his/her community) is in a similar condition (whether seeking membership or reentry as a former member) and is worthy of compassion and help from the faith based community.

The text opens up as a continuation of Mark chapter 4, where Jesus now invites his disciples to go across to the other side - symbolic of difference, dissimilarity and contrast – to unfamiliar ground. And for the sake of the Gospel, Jesus also invites you and me (coming to the table with our own preconceptions that are based on our culture, sexuality, gender, class and race) to the other side (which is to say, out of our comfort zones) that we might gain a fresh insight into the lives of those who have been denied, ignored, limited and disqualified by people who are believed to be “normal”, privileged, religious and right.

We are told that immediately after Jesus steps out of the boat, a man out of the tombs with an unclean spirit meets him. I believe that the unclean spirit represents what the First Century would consider mental illness – one that no modern drug could cure or tame. According to one psychologist, there are three common assumptions about the causes of mental illnesses. They are supernatural, somatogenetic and psychogenic. The supernatural assumption attributes the mental illness to being possessed by a demonic spirit and sin (as depicted here in our text). The somatogenetic assumption is recognized as a disturbance in physical functioning that is a result of an illness, a brain injury, imbalance, or a genetic inheritance. The psychogenic assumption focuses on what I am more inclined to believe about the sex offender, namely the behavior that stems from a traumatic, stressful experience, and as a result, has left one with

bizarre ways of thinking or seeing things. It is the view of Farreras, Biswas-Diener and Diener that:

While inhumane by today's standards, the view of insanity at the time likened the mentally ill to animals who did not have the capacity to reason, could not control themselves, were capable of violence without provocation, did not have the same physical sensitivity to pain or temperature, and could live in miserable conditions without complaint. As such, instilling fear was believed to be the best way to restore a disordered mind to reason.³⁸

As I see it, the text associates the demoniac with sinfulness and hopelessness – linked to the *works of the flesh* as found in Galatians 5:19-21. Mark 5:3 says that the man “lived among the tombs; and no one could restrain him anymore, even with a chain.” I suppose that the fact that the man is living among the tombs symbolizes his existence in exile and among the living dead. Currently unable to be restrained, even with a chain, he has been stigmatized and branded by those who knew him and perhaps once loved him. Used often to restrain the mentally ill, a chain is an emblem of oppression and confinement. It further suggests that the man has been confined and shackled to his afflictions and in compliance with the status quo “the other side” (the place of difference and apart from). The fact is, the man is no longer welcomed in his home or community and is now considered amongst the homeless and displaced of society. A common resolution for such an event is often for one to move to, the outskirts of society or away from their places of familiarity in order to find areas of support and a means for dealing with the maltreatment of their family and community. Coser, Nock, Steffan and Spain are of the belief that:

³⁸ Ingrid G. Farreras R. Biswas-Diener and E. Diener. *History of Mental Illness* (Champaign: DEF Publishers, 2018). 8. <http://nobaproject.com/modules/history-of-mental-illness>.

The homeless were found to suffer from severe disabilities that made ordinary social life impossible. One in four said they were physically unable to work, and one in three were drug addicts or alcoholics. More than four out of five (82 percent) of the homeless were disabled by poor health, mental illness, or alcohol or drug abuse... Most of the homeless were unwilling or unable to rely on friends or relatives for help... Very few wanted to return to their families, many would have liked to live with relatives but felt they were unwelcome.³⁹

The point that the man had been restrained with shackles and chains is representative of being locked out, contained and unwelcomed. How much different is that from the laws that restrict where registered sex offenders can visit or live? The most customary mode of limitation prohibits registered sex offenders from living within a particular distance of identified locations where children gather. The line of reasoning in defense of this is that the limitations reduce the rates of recidivism by way of guarding likely victims – keeping them protected and at a distance from offenders. However, at the same time, this policy of residence limitations can lead to serious complications including instability, destitution and even death. According to the Association for the Treatment of Sexual Abusers:

Offenders are often pushed to areas that are more rural... These conditions can lead to: diminished access to specialized treatment and probationary supervision, employment and housing disruption, and separation from supportive and/or dependent family members. These factors can hinder effective treatment and may interfere with the overall goal of reducing recidivism and re-victimization... Thus, residence restrictions, aimed at improving community safety, may inadvertently create an environment in which offenders are more at risk to reoffend.⁴⁰

³⁹ Lewis A. Coser, Steven L. Nock, Patricia A. Steffan and Daphne Spain. *Introduction to Sociology* (Orlando: Harcourt Bruce Jovanovich, 1983) 40.

⁴⁰ en. [Wikipedia.org/wiki/Association_for_the_Treatment_of_Sexual_Abuses](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Association_for_the_Treatment_of_Sexual_Abusers) 2008 2.

We are told (Mark 5:5) that “night and day among the tombs and on the mountains he was always howling and bruising himself with stones.” I believe that the howling was the lament, an expression from the soul of grief, wailing and hollering because something horrific had happened and he was now misunderstood. The man was attempting to deal with his feelings but knew no other means to do so. But what stands out for me is how Jesus communicates with the demoniac. His was more of a pastoral response than one of continued bondage and judgment. Jesus, having compassion, begins by asking the man to identify himself asking, ‘what is your name?’ This for me was a demonstration of interest that conveyed Jesus’ desire to not only speak the language⁴¹ of the man, but to further get to know, understand and engage the man.

The demons speaking through the man, identify themselves as “Legion” - a Roman term for 6,000 soldiers and an undertone of the oppressive system in which the man finds himself. He has not only been the focus of his community’s fear and hatred toward him, but likewise exposed to a type of vulnerability on a personal, social, political, and economic level. The man is now dependent on others. He has lost control over his mind and his conditions due to the stigmas that have been placed upon him. His community has identified him by his behaviors before identifying him as a human being in need of help (mind, body or spirit). He has thus been judged by his social location, his social construct, his lack of influence, and most of all by his past misconduct. He has been stereotyped and pigeon-holed as a maniac, fiend, nut case and characterized as a sociopath. Consequently, he is treated as an “other”, an unequal and less than. Therefore, just like Jesus, our first response should be to listen – that our listening may then lead to an intervention that is liberating and not oppressing.

⁴¹ See Johnson, *Holding Up Your Corner*, 98. “We must be intentional about the words we use... be willing to change our language as we continue to learn new things and move ourselves toward justice.”

It is my belief that it is the man's humanness and desperation that moved him to ask Jesus for help. At the same time, it is the demons that are subject and subordinate to Jesus, who realize that they must be embodied in some form of the system in order to function, and so they beg Him not to send them out of the country. Thus, seeing a great herd of swine (thought to be about 2,000 in all) feeding on the hillside, the unclean spirits begged to be sent into them. Jesus grants them permission, and the unclean spirits come out of the man and enter into the swine. They rushed down the steep bank into the sea, and were drowned.

As it turned out, the community could not handle it. So much so, that they ran off and told it in the city and in the country. Folks from all over came to see what had happened. They seemed to be more concerned about the pigs than the man, as it was seen as a huge financial loss. When they came to Jesus and saw the demoniac sitting there, clothed and in his right mind, having been a short time ago overwhelmed by a legion of demons, the Bible says that they were afraid. Seemingly, when the man was unclothed and bizarre, the towns people were irritated, but unafraid. But now that he is clothed and in his right mind, instead of being exceedingly glad, they want Jesus out of there. It was as if Jesus had become a trouble maker – for none had expected to see the man sitting with Jesus and speaking coherently.

What relevance has this Biblical passage for us today? I noticed that every time I mentioned assisting in the recovery of the recovering/registered sex offender and the reduction of sex offender recidivism, most “church folk” frowned upon the idea. Yes, we all agreed that the faith based community should be there for the sexually abused and their families. However, we forget, as I mentioned earlier, that the recovering/registered sex offender was nine times out of ten a victim of sexual abuse themselves. Do we as believers of Christ Jesus really see the sex offender as an unworthy soul or one who is incapable of being redeemed, regenerated and

restored back to his or her “right mind”? Does this story amplify the hardness of the hearts of the community, as well as ours?

Well, as one can see, Jesus did not allow the opinions of the people to deter him from commissioning the man. For as the story goes, we see him getting into the boat when the man who had been possessed by demons begged to go with him. But Jesus refused, and says, ‘Go home to your friends, and tell them how much the Lord has done for you, and what mercy he has shown you.’ In essence, Jesus sends the man back to his friends and family as a witness and preacher of the Good News. He has been commissioned to tell his story – to testify of the Lord’s power. The man has been brought from death (shambles) to life. Once filled with despair and destruction, he is now a “new creation in Christ Jesus... the old things have passed away and everything has become new” (2 Cor. 5:17). Now empowered by the Spirit of the Lord, the man goes away and begins to preach and testify in the Decapolis how much Jesus had done for him. And the Bible says that “everyone was amazed.”

Upon their release, persons who have committed sexual offenses return to their home communities or to new neighborhoods where their past is not known... Sometimes these individuals are drawn to religion and seek out cleansing for their past sins. It is important for pastors and other church leaders to hold in balance both the transforming power of God in the lives of all persons and the need for all of us to work out our individual faith with ‘fear and trembling.’⁴²

So where does that leave us who constitute the faith based community? It is my belief that Jesus’ trip to the other side was not an accident, but an intentional move that was performed not just for the man with the unclean spirit, but for us – who are the faith based community. Asking Jesus to leave was an indication that the people were satisfied with the way things were –

⁴² Yantzi, *Sexual Offending and Restoration*, 179.

that they did not see any need for change. The fact is that mental health diagnosis precedes treatment and is the essential first step in addressing mental illness. But it does not stop there. One's spirituality can play a helpful role when that role is understood. The objective for the faith based community is to be there for the sexually offended as well as for the recovering/registered sex offender, which is what the circles of supports and restorative justice model is all about.

I emphasize here what I suggested at the beginning of my thesis. That is to personally, as a faith based community, address the controversial issue of the inclusion of sex offenders. This means, among other things, to set up policies and procedures that will allow the recovering/registered sex offender access to your faith based community and, at the same time, safeguard the congregation as a whole through the use of careful grace and limited access.

How do we do this? First by collaborating with other agencies and consulting with experts in the field. The New Jersey Association for the Treatment of Sexual Abusers (NJATSA) is a great place to start. NJATSA specializes in sex offender treatment services and offers resources for sex offending and sex offender supervision. It additionally assists in understanding the risk of sexual offending, sexually abusive youth, prison ministry and community mentorship of sex offenders. NJATSA will provide assistance in the creation of a safe congregation policy, as well how best to best respond to sex offending and supporting sex offenders. This organization can be contacted via the website www.njatsa.org

Second, I believe that the faith based community should be willing to work hand-in-hand with the recovering/registered sex offender's Probation or Parole Officer. This can be an extremely helpful collaborative tool in ensuring the safety of both the offender and the abused.

Third, inclusion in the faith community is facilitated by setting up restrictions for physical safety for all, where the person who has sexually offended is provided guidelines (signing a Limited Access Agreement) designating services/activities in which he/she may or may not attend or be involved. This way, the faith based community can both support and protect all concerned. “Thereby the church models compassion toward those who have offended and sensitivity to those who have been victimized either by this individual or by someone else.”⁴³

⁴³ Yantzi, *Sexual Offending and Restoration*, 181.

CHAPTER THREE:

FRESH STARTS – THE PROJECT

The Theological Responses to Sex Offenders proposal was created in September, 2017 at the First Baptist Church of South Orange, New Jersey. FBCSO has existed since 1895, where it grew from a 35-member prayer band that met in the home of one of its faithful members, to the present, where it takes the lead in building and supplying wells, schools and libraries in third world nations. It now exists with an average of 300 members attending on any given Sunday under the leadership of the Reverend Doctor Terry L. Richardson, Senior Pastor.

We have as our mission to carry out the Great Commission and serve as witnesses to the world of God's saving grace in Christ through the presence and power of the Holy Spirit, as found in Matthew 28:19-20. As part of this mission, it is also FBCSO's goal to provide a safe environment for all of its congregants and visitors (i.e. children, youth and *vulnerable adults*). With this comes the additional responsibility of welcoming and protecting those who have a history of having committed, or have been alleged to have committed sexual offenses and desire to worship and fellowship within the FBCSO facilities. This safe environment strives to provide the protection of each individual's total well-being (physically, emotionally and spiritually) as it makes available an atmosphere that is free of exploitation, intimidation, false accusations, verbal, physical, sexual harassment, misconduct and abuse.

With this in mind, the Theological Responses to Sex Offenders proposal sought to develop policies and procedures that were geared toward making this possible. This document

was additionally designed to develop a model for faith-based ministry of care, hospitality, support and spiritual formation practices at the local church level that is aimed at reducing recidivism among the population of recovering/registered sex offenders that come to notice in the local church. It is also hoped that such a model will make provisions for the support of the families of recovering sex offenders, as well as the victims of sex offenses.

This project supplied research for a model and a set of guidelines for the issue at hand. The model employed a type of collaborative and innovative approach to protecting the faith based community's children, youth and vulnerable adults, while simultaneously allowing those who were alleged to have committed or have committed a sexual offense to its services, activities and facilities with limited access.

Research Methods – Part 1

Personal Interview Questionnaires:

The research specifically began with data collection via questionnaires and personal interviews that were utilized to carry out a sample survey based on attitudes toward sex offenders and sexual abuse. This was performed separate from the eventual selection of my Lay Advisory Committee. The pool of interviewees was selected based on their occupations and interest in the project and not on their personal direct or indirect experiences pertaining to sexual misconduct and sexual abuse, as in some cases was revealed during some of the interviews:

- 1) Interviewee 1 – An African American Female Associate Minister, in her early-seventies, as it turned out, a survivor of child incest and adult sexual abuse (will later become one of my LAC Collaborators)

- 2) Interviewee 2 – A Jewish American Female Psychologist, in her early-seventies, additionally discovered during the interview a survivor of child incest and sexual abuse (will later become one of my LAC Collaborators)
- 3) Interviewee 3 – An African American Male Hospital Chaplain, in his mid-seventies, has worked with sexual abuse victims (will later become one of my LAC Collaborators)
- 4) Interviewee 4 – An African American Male Substance Abuse Counselor, in his early-fifties, has female friends who have been sexually violated
- 5) Interviewee 5 – An African American Male Assistant Pastor of Essex County, in his late-fifties, has heard of stories of sexually abused women
- 6) Interviewee 6 – An African American Male Senior Pastor of Essex County, in his late-fifties, as discovered during the interview, was accused of sexual misconduct (allegations were never substantiated)

The interviewees were initially selected based on their expertise as clergy, psychologist, substance abuse counselor and work in the field. As it turned out there were disclosures made of their personal encounters with sexual misconduct, sexual abuse (directly or indirectly) as well as their work with those who were sexually abused or have sexually offended. The questions asked of them were different than those asked of my Lay Advisory Committee Collaborators (which you will see later). This questionnaire was fashioned as a means of gaining a better understanding of the sexual survivor's experience, the possible link between sex offender recidivism and the mental health problems, substance abuse, and the early signs of "minor attraction" (better known as adults attracted to minors) as observed in sex offenders themselves. It was also hoped that we would learn more about the dynamics of sexual misconduct and sexual abuse, the influences on recidivism, the theological responses and actual ministries of the faith

based community. The questionnaire was additionally created as a means of illuminating approaches that could be appropriated by the faith base community in support of the recovering/registered sex offender, the sexually abused and the reduction of sex offender recidivism.

Due to the anticipated sensitivity of the questionnaire and eventual personal sharing of some of the aforesaid participants, a “Consent for Participation in Interview Research” form was completed as a preliminary action toward the requirements of the Institutional Review Board (IRB) by each contributor prior to administering the questionnaire. All participation was voluntary, with the understanding that the participants: would not be paid for their contributions; could withdraw and discontinue their participation at any time without penalty; and that all information obtained prior to the survey would remain confidential. Each participant understood that he/she had the right to decline to answer any question or end the interview at any time; would undergo an interview by me – lasting approximately 45 – 60 minutes; would participate in a tape recorded interview with the aid of handwritten notes; and that he/she would be unable to participate in this survey should the audio taping of the interview be denied. It was further understood that the uses of all records and data would be subject to standard data use policies that would protect the anonymity of self and of institutions with which they were affiliated.

The questions asked on the questionnaire were as follows:

- A) What is your experience in relation to those who have either sexually offended or have been sexually abused?
- B) What are your initial reactions to those who sexually exploit or abuse others?

- C) What do you believe the early signs of “minor attraction” (or adults who are attracted to minors) play in relation to child molestation?
- D) What role do you believe that mental health plays in the act of sexual exploitation or abuse?
- E) What role can clergy or the faith based community play in reducing sexual exploitation or sexual abuse?

It was my nondisclosed educated hunch that:

- 1) There would be significant associations between childhood maltreatment and the act of sex offending.
- 2) There would be significant associations between the early experiences of offender childhood sexual exploitation and later sexual abuse and sex offending. According to Cashmore and Shackel:

While the vast majority of those who have been sexually abused do not go on to abuse others, retrospective self-report studies of child sex offenders indicate that possibly as many as 75% of offenders were sexually abused as children, with rates generally reported in the range of 41-43%. Overall, studies of offender populations indicate a higher rate of child sexual victimization amongst juvenile and adult offenders compared with the general population.⁴⁴

- 3) Recovering/registered sex offenders left without any type of pastoral aftercare, circle of support and positive spiritual connectedness, would more than likely be prone to persistent offensive acts and thus to recidivism.

⁴⁴ Judy Cashmore and Rita Shackel, “*The Long-Term Effects of Child Sexual Abuse*” Australian Institute of Family Studies (2013): 1-29 at P. 17, accessed July 15, 2018, <http://www.aifs.gov.au>

Personal Interviews and Responses:

With the responses to the questionnaire in hand to inform me, I began interviewing. During each individual interview, I attempted to get to know each of my participants a little better, to ascertain their personal experiences as it relates to sexual misconduct, sexual abuse and sex offenders. Thus, I began each interview with the following question: “What is your experience in relation to those who have sexually offended or have been sexually abused?” As seen from my list of interviewees, both of my female participants revealed that they had been *molested* as children and *raped* as adults. Interviewee 1 had been date raped and Interviewee 2 had been a continued victim of her brother-in-law/childhood molester well into her teenage years. Both interviewees had been equally familiar with their childhood molesters, as well as victims of incest.⁴⁵ Both Interviewee 3 and 4 denied having been personally affected by sex offenders per se, but had either been in intimate relationships with, or knew women who had been sexually exploited or abused by family members or others.

A significant dynamic affecting the probability of sex offender recidivism seems to be the degree of informed and unfailing support the individual offender receives when he/she arrives back in the community. With this in mind, I wanted to gain a better sense of how my interviewees primarily viewed sex offenders. Therefore, I asked the following question: “What are your initial reactions to those who sexually exploit or abuse others?” Most of my interviewees chose not to condemn the sex offender. They instead believed that the offender had

⁴⁵ Better known as sexual contact/exposure between family members - “Incest is one of the most destabilizing and destructive events to befall a family. When the offenses are finally disclosed, some families cut off the offending parent or perpetrator permanently, while others ostracize and isolate the victim.” ⁴⁵ See Cumming and McGrath, *Supervision of the Sex Offender*, 121.

a personal history of maltreatment and had themselves been hurt. Interviewee 4 shared that “Years ago, I would have wanted to put my hands around their neck. Now I realize and don’t like the dysfunctional life or sexual abuse that I understand that they themselves have endured.”⁴⁶

Interviewee 3 believed that: “There is a deficiency somewhere in their makeup. They are trying to make up for something they believe they don’t have. They have adopted the behavioral patterns of what they saw.”⁴⁷ Interviewee 2 responded with: “I feel they have been sexually abused themselves – that their mental state of mind makes them feel inferior, and that sexually offending was their way of connecting to life. I believe they feel unloved, unappreciated and unworthy - that their upbringing has made them feel low and hurt.”⁴⁸

In my exploration for early signs of concern pertaining to child molestation, I wanted to identify some of the behavior cues that may have occurred prior to the child becoming sexually victimized. Thus, I inquired about the following: “What do you believe the early signs of “*minor attraction*” plays in relation to child molestation?” According to the Methodist Council:

The majority of offences against children are committed by individuals known to the child and often by the family. Eighty percent of offences against children are committed in their home or in that of the perpetrator. Girls are more likely to be abused within the family, boys outside.⁴⁹

Interviewee 1 shared that her uncle was attracted to her at age 5. She remembered him tongue kissing her - how uncomfortable she felt, but would not tell anybody because “it wasn’t

⁴⁶ Interview with Interviewee 4 – Male Substance Abuse Counselor, by author, August 28, 2017.

⁴⁷ Interview with Interviewee 3 – Male Hospital Chaplain, by author, August 28, 2017.

⁴⁸ Interview with Interviewee 2 – Female Psychologist, by author, August 27, 2017.

⁴⁹ The Methodist Council, 2000. *The Church and Sex Offenders. Special Report, Methodist Church Reports*, 6.

something that you talk about”.⁵⁰ Interviewee 3 believed that one early sign of minor attraction occurs when “a male looks at a child and the child moves away – and the male is still looking – a light bulb should go off. Another example is when an adult constantly wants to hold the child – seemingly leading to a type of subtle fondling. These things should be questioned and not just taken for granted.”⁵¹ Interviewee 2 shared: “My sister’s husband offended me. He took over my personal space. It was normal for him to put his arms around me but his intent was to offend me.”⁵² During this segment of the interview, I noticed that my female participants became especially animated and stirred with emotion. It was as if they were experiencing a flashback and experiencing the offense all over again – as if it were yesterday. When asked if they “were okay and wanted to continue” – both said “yes”. It was as if they had been waiting for this very moment to exhale and share their stories. It was as if they had become empowered as survivors and wanted to speak against the savagery of rape, child molestation and the reduction of the same. Interviewee 1 described an account of a sex offender who attended her church and had “attempted to play the pastor just like he tried to play me for money”. Interviewee 2 provided therapeutic insights recalling her own personal experience of sexual victimization. “My family kept it a secret for 25 years which enabled him (her perpetrator) to continue. I attempted suicide, but did not succeed.”⁵³ Cumming and McGrath note that:

Many men who have sex with children to fulfill a need for emotional closeness probably feel more powerful and in control in their interactions with children than in their sexual interactions with adults. These child molesters, as well as many rapists and other types of sex offenders, perhaps as a result of insecurity, need to

⁵⁰ Interview with Interviewee 1 – Female Associate Minister, by author, August 21, 2017.

⁵¹ Interview with Interviewee 3 – Male Hospital Chaplain, by author, August 28, 2017.

⁵² Interview with Interviewee 2 – Female Psychologist, by author, August 27, 2017.

⁵³ Interview with Interviewee 2 - Female Psychologist, by author, August 27, 2017.

dominate others to feel in control of their own lives. They justify interpersonal aggression to meet their needs, taking advantage of others sexually when they have the opportunity to do so... They often feel entitled to sex, regardless of their victim's lack of consent.⁵⁴

Sexual offending behaviors are often maintained by distorted cognitive assumptions, attitudes and thinking patterns. When asking this next question, I purposely left it open for interpretation to see what I would get back, be it a mental health diagnosis as it pertained to in the case of the child or as it pertained to the perpetrator. The question was asked: "What role do you believe that mental health plays in the act of sexual exploitation or abuse? Interviewee 1 responded with "My older perpetrator definitely had some deep mental health issues. He strapped me to the chair with a cord and my hands behind my back. He was crazy. He said 'you are going to be mine' then took chicken blood and said 'you're going to be my queen' and smeared the blood on my face. What he saw was that he was allowed to do whatever he wanted to do without any boundaries."⁵⁵ This was an obvious response pertaining to the perpetrator. Interviewee 2 not only believed that the sex offender was "mentally damaged", but having been sexually abused, saw how it mentally affected her: "Being a minor, it fucks up your self-image. He (the sex offender) told me I was mentally ill – he isolated me from my family and I was seen as and became the villain to them (the family)."⁵⁶ Admittedly, while neither of my female interviewees physically exploded in tears, it was obvious that the interview was a sensitive

⁵⁴ Cumming and McGrath, *Supervision for Life*. 148.

⁵⁵ Interview with Interviewee 1 – Female Associate Minister, by author, August 21, 2017.

⁵⁶ Interview with Interviewee 2 – Female Psychologist, by author, August 27, 2017.

subject that brought anger and resentment to the surface as if it had been washed up uninhibitedly on the seashore for all to see.

At the heart of this study was the question of whether the faith based community could address the problems of the recovering/registered sex offender and those in recovery from it, while simultaneously showing understanding for those who have been sexually abused. After it appeared that the interviews with my participants had stirred up some old wounds, I wanted, with their permission, to go deeper. Thus, I desired to know what the faith based community could, if anything, do. So I went for it and asked: “What role can the faith based community play in reducing sexual exploitation or sexual abuse?” Attempting not to display too much emotion or distract from the moment, I held on to my Social Work skills and maintained a position of support and positive regard. I then received this response from Interviewee 2 without hesitation: “Clergy need to step out of the fucking church. Excuse my French.”⁵⁷ That’s okay. “They need to find the fucking community and make the sex offenders accountable for what they did. Clergy tend to be lost themselves. I find it annoying when I visit a church and he (the pastor) is made up in his clergy attire while the community is dying. Clergy needs to talk and be a listening board to the concerns of the people.”⁵⁸ That, needless to say, came from one who obviously remains very let down by the faith based community (or at the least, let down by her previous pastor). Interviewee 1 responded with: “When a person sees that you care – trust comes in. We (the faith based community) are hiding. We are captives of our own guilt and stories. We then oppress the oppressed. I know of a pastor who was aware of a sex offender at the church. She protected him

⁵⁷ Interview with Interviewee 2 – Female Psychologist, by author, August 27, 2017.

⁵⁸ Ibid

due to her own story of abuse.”⁵⁹ What she wanted to know was “why is the church not open to dealing with sex offenders?”⁶⁰ And answering her own question, “Because they are afraid of being vulnerable.”⁶¹ Vieth discovered that:

In learning details about an offender’s history of sexually abusing one or more children, the pastor may be repulsed to the point where he cannot effectively minister to the offender. This may be particularly true if the pastor is himself a victim of child abuse or has a close family member or friend impacted by this sin.⁶²

According to Interviewee 3, “Clergy should provide an alternative to whatever the behavior is. The Church has to say that this person wasn’t always like that and find the core person. I suggest that you consider as a thesis: The Lazarus Generation are those who have lost their identity. They have lost their core and haven’t been able to find their way home. These are the misdirected and everyone wants to escape from them vs. embrace them. They are waiting for someone to step up, and I believe that the Church can do this.”⁶³

The initial reactions of my interviewees seemed to point to the fact that they all deemed the sex offenders as victims themselves in one form or another. There appeared to be a consensus that something had occurred during the childhood of the offender that caused this type of dysfunction and domino effect, or as one interviewee put it: “an adopted behavior pattern of what

⁵⁹ Interview with Interviewee 1 – Female Associate Minister, by author, August 21, 2017.

⁶⁰ Ibid

⁶¹ Ibid

⁶² Victor I. Vieth. *Ministering to Adult Sex Offenders: Ten Lessons from Henry Gerecke* a Case Study, Gundersen National Child Protection Center, n.d. 5.

⁶³ Interview with Interviewee 3 – Male Hospital Chaplain, by author, August 27, 2017.

they perhaps had witnessed (i.e. spouse abuse/sexual abuse).” It was additionally believed in the case of male sex offender, that his “manhood had been previously questioned as a child (i.e. you’re running like a girl; you don’t sit like that; boys don’t play with dolls; you shouldn’t like the color pink). As a result, it is believed that as an adult the offender will seek to compensate for his feelings of inadequacy.” On the flip side, Interviewee 3 seemed to believe that some of the women he treated professionally had acquired a “learned passivity and “were not expected to have a voice or opinion of her own; as if the expectation was to be in a responsive mode vs. taking the lead in anything.”⁶⁴

When it came to “minor attraction” my interviewees believed that a majority of sex offenders seek out the “vulnerable” or those who are not getting the attention they need especially from their parents/caretakers. It was also agreed that sex offenders who are attracted to minors tend to display cues of inappropriate or constant touching, an improper show of affection, and a total disregard or respect for the minor’s personal space. Likewise, the sex offender with a minor attraction is also inclined to exhibit an extraordinary appeal, enthusiasm and interest that is abnormal for an appropriate adult-child relationship. Each participant established that even the opposite sex parent should be held suspect if his/her behaviors seem incongruous.

From a mental health perspective, it was agreed among my interviewees that most sex offenders suffer with some sort of mental health issue and have been mentally damaged in some way themselves. They are believed to have had parent-child relationship problems that brought on a sense of emotional dysfunction/distortion. Thus the individual is said to be confused to the

⁶⁴ Interview with Interviewee 3 – Male Hospital Chaplain, by author, August 27, 2017.

extent that he/she has not defined their own identity – perhaps growing up without a sense of boundaries, then taking on the attitude that they are allowed to do whatever they want (e.g. touch or behave) blind to any harm in what they are doing or saying.

It appeared to be widely believed by my interviewees that recidivism is affected by the individual's involvement in a set of circumstances that has not been altered (e.g. the return to the community with medications that are only geared towards quieting the symptoms, a prison record that will follow them all the days of their lives, and a constant reminder from all who ever knew them of his/her past misconduct).

The effect of sexual abuse is like a scarlet letter, worn not upon the breast, but in the countenance and carriage of offender and victim alike... It is a sense, a fear, that everyone knows what has happened, that your secret is written on your forehead... For offenders, that feeling may translate to degrading beliefs... These beliefs become dangerous when the behavior becomes the identity of the offender, when the offender perceived himself as beyond redemption, with no hope of attempting to change.⁶⁵

Thus, the recovering/registered sex offender is left to revert back to their previous habits and lifestyles of sexually offending. The missing link is the faith based community. Therefore, my interviewees and I agreed that the faith based community should be responsible for providing an alternative. Sex offenders have already been judged by the legal system (a statement I often hear personally from the sex offenders I work with) but in some cases when seeking help from the faith based community, they are penalized once more. The recovering/registered sex offender should be made to feel that he/she has paid the price for their offenses and not constantly condemned for the same. The faith based community should provide a space for new beginnings. It should be the voice and instrument toward a better life. It is essential that the faith based

⁶⁵ Yantzi, *Sexual Offending and Restoration*, 33.

community speak about such issues of sexual abuse and sexual offending from the pulpit. Not only do we have people who have been sexually abused, but also the recovering/registered sex offender who is sitting amongst our congregations in some cases lamenting as seen in the aforementioned saga of the Gerasene Demoniac.

Some of the data retrieved from my interviewees communicates that the faith based community has not played a strong enough role in supporting the recovering/registered sex offender. I believe that our role is to be ultimately responsible for everyone (the sexually violated and the recovering/registered sex offender alike). With additional research, it is my goal to reinforce my hunch that sex offender recidivism can be reduced if assisted by pastoral aftercare that is supported via acceptance and open discussions that are both held from the pulpit and the community at large.

In essence, I am confident that the recovering/registered sex offender should have a place within the faith based community wherein he/she can be provided an alternative to the previous lifestyle. I believe that guidance and pastoral counsel should be a part of an integrated holistic service that will allow both reconciliation and restoration with sensitivity to all.

Further, the results of this survey indicated that there were significant associations between childhood maltreatment and the act of sex offending as confirmed not only by my own clients at the Special Treatment Unit as noted in Chapter One “The Cultural Dimensions of the Sex Offender”, but also according to Cashmore and Shackel’s “The Long-Term Effects of Child Sexual Abuse”. In addition, while not a standalone, pastoral aftercare and a circle of supports are essential and the initial inpatient treatment of incarceration and sex offender specific treatment

must be followed-up by the faith based community. Without it, the recovering/registered sex offender regularly fails to hold things together on their own.

Preparing for The Institutional Review Board (IRB):

The aforementioned interviewees were instrumental in assisting me in research planning and preparation for prospectus approval by the IRB. Thereafter, we met as a group at FBCSO on a bi-monthly basis beginning October 12, 2017 to review and build upon the existing Preliminary Project Outline as it pertained to the preparation stages and development of my proposed “Theological Responses to Sex Offenders: How the Faith Based Community Can Assist in Reducing Sex Offender Recidivism”. Specifically, we wanted to narrow down and refine my project proposal in the light of the following considerations:

- Narrative of concern – to expand the recovering/registered sex offender’s social supports within the faith based community and assist in the reduction of sex offender recidivism
- Theological stance – to focus on themes of forgiveness and reconciliation that would bring to light the need for healing rather than condemnation
- Project purpose – to research and develop a case study of ministries for the registered/recovering sex offender and to develop a working policies and procedures manual for “Safeguarding Our Congregation in a World of Sexual Harassment, Misconduct and Abuse – While Ministering to the Recovering/Registered Sex Offender”
- Scope of project – limited to a case study of Essex County Programs (an area in which FBCSO resides) that have operated on behalf of the recovering/registered sex offender.
- Areas of research – a Lay Advisory Committee self-assessment tool; existing faith based community policies and procedures for safety from sexual abuse, sexual misconduct and

the reduction of sex offender recidivism; mandates for faith based community reporting of sexual abuse, sexual misconduct; and referrals for crisis intervention.

- Definition of Terms – that would make clear the specific use of terms utilized within the project (e. g. “careful grace”, “circles of supports”, and the “recovering/registered sex offender”)
- Methodology – the theological and sociological methods, data analysis and training modules that may be employed
- Evaluation Methods – LAC Assessments (to be utilized before and after the planning process), a comparison of the FBCSO safeguarding policies and procedures (before and after the planning process), levels of training (when, where and how), evaluation summaries and recommendations for further development.
- Time Line – for the proposed research, planning and professional project implementation phases

During a series of meetings, group presentations were made by myself and various members of the group pertaining to numerous topics (e.g. crisis interventions, adult sex offender statistics, The Wynona House, juvenile sex offender arrests and statistics, church models for congregational safety and ministering to the recovering sex offender). On Thursday, November 9, 2017, the Preliminary Project Outline was revised, updated and prepared for its first draft to the Colloquium Faculty Team on Monday, November 13, 2017.

After receiving the advisement and meeting the recommended suggestions of the Colloquium Faculty Team, the group and I met until our final draft was approved by the Colloquium Faculty Team, and thereafter the required Research Determination form was prepared and submitted on December 26, 2017 for IRB review. After which, the project was

approved by the IRB on January 22, 2018 and provisions for project implementation began with the official selection of my Lay Advisory Committee (LAC) Collaborators.

Research Methods – Part 2

The Selection of LAC Collaborators, Personal Interviews and Responses:

I officially selected each Collaborator of the Lay Advisory Committee based on his/her professional expertise, relationship to FBCSO and relevance in respect to the project. Overall, the LAC primarily consisted of FBCSO membership as its *case study* in collaboration with other members of the faith based community. We worked as a team to plan, execute and evaluate this professional project. The LAC (hereafter: LAC Collaborators or Collaborators) included the following individuals:

1. Collaborator 1 – An African American Male Crisis Intervention Provider, in his mid-fifties, a survivor of sexual abuse (as discovered during the interview) and member of FBCSO
2. Collaborator 2 – An African American Female Associate Minister, in her early seventies, as discovered during the initial interview a survivor of child/adult sexual abuse and incest (also known as interviewee 1 in Research Methods Part 1)
3. Collaborator 3 – An African American Male Senior Pastor of Essex County, in his mid-fifties (also known as interviewee 6 in Research Methods Part 1)

4. Collaborator 4 – An African American Male Senior Pastor of Essex County, in his early-seventies, has worked with the Criminal Justice System
5. Collaborator 5 – An African American Female Senior Pastor of Essex County, in her mid-sixties, as discovered during the interview has experience with a sex offender who wanted to join her church for the first time
6. Collaborator 6 – An African American Male Associate Minister and Director of Prison Ministry, in his mid-sixties, a member of the Criminal Justice System
7. Collaborator 7 – An African American Female Medical and Mental Health Crisis Intervention Provider, in her mid-forties, as discovered during the interview currently working with those who have sexually offended and sexually abused
8. Collaborator 8 – An African American Male Assistant Pastor of Essex County, in his late-fifties (also known as interviewee 5 in Research Methods Part 1)
9. Collaborator 9 – An African American Male Essex County Police Officer, in his early-forties, as discovered during the interview occasionally encounters sex offenders during calls of duty
10. Collaborator 10 – An African American Female member of FBCSO, in her mid-fifties, former law student, working with women and families

11. Collaborator 11 – An African American Male Hospital Chaplain, in his mid-seventies, as discovered during the initial interview worked with sexual abuse victims (also known as interviewee 3 in Research Methods Part 1)

After gaining permission from my Senior Pastor to hold the LAC meetings at FBCSO, I solidified the dates and times for the same through our Church Administrator. I then sent the newly developed LAC Collaborators a letter of thanks for their anticipated support, collaboration and hard work. My letter provided a synopsis of both the expectations of the project and members of the LAC, as well as and the project timeline. These Collaborators were then informed that a copy of my approved Project Outline would be forwarded under separate coverage for their review.

The initial meeting of the LAC was held on Thursday, February 1, 2018. The meeting began with an opening prayer, a Scripture reading as taken from Matthew 25:34-36, and was followed by the meeting purpose and Collaborator introductions. Each member was asked to officially introduce themselves and their anticipated contribution to the project. After which, I provided a slide presentation as an introduction of why I found this project particularly essential. The Project Outline was then reviewed and discussed as I solicited each Collaborator's feedback (i.e. suggestions, questions, personal concerns and applicable materials).

Afterwards, the LAC participated in responding to a questionnaire designed to gauge their knowledge pertaining to sexual misconduct, sexual abuse and their views on the responsibility of the faith based community. They, like the initial group of interviewees were presented with a "Consent for Participation in Interview Research" form and informed of the same information pertaining to the details and rights of their participation. The questionnaire included the following points:

- A) On a scale from 1-10 (10 being the most knowledgeable and 1 the least) how knowledgeable are you on the subject of sexual misconduct/abuse?
- B) On a scale from 1-10 (10 being the most knowledgeable and 1 the least) how knowledgeable are you on the subject of sex offenders?
- C) Please describe how you have been directly affected by sexual misconduct or sexual abuse. What need did you have at the time? Did you receive counseling?
- D) Please describe how you have been indirectly affected by sexual misconduct or sexual abuse? What need did you have at that time? Did you receive counseling?
- E) Did you or have you ever been accused of a sexual offense? What need did you have at that time? Did you receive counseling?
- F) As a member of the LAC, how are you being affected by our discussion on the matter of sexual misconduct and sexual abuse?
- G) Are you aware of your personal triggers (people, places or things) that might set you off or cause you to become emotionally upset pertaining to the matter of sexual misconduct and sexual abuse?
- H) How do you view the issue of sexual misconduct and sexual abuse in relationship to the faith based community?
- I) How do you view the issue of sexual misconduct and sexual abuse on a personal level?
- J) In your opinion, what is the responsibility of the faith based community pertaining to sexual misconduct or sexual abuse?
- K) What policies and procedures should the faith based community have in place pertaining to sexual misconduct and sexual abuse?

- L) How will you find support on a personal level if or when you need it as we move through this process of exploring “Theological Responses to Sex Offenders: How the Faith Based Community Can Assist in the Reduction of Sex Offender Recidivism?”
- M) Please provide any questions or concerns that you may have but have not brought to the attention of the LAC.

While I did not have any research hypotheses at the outset of this project, I did begin to develop some undisclosed hunches as I went along. And, as with the questionnaire responses gathered from my initial interviewees in Research Methods Part 1, I had already derived the following hunches based on their feedback, my work as a Social Worker to women who have been sexually abused and the male adult sex offenders I work with on a daily basis who have histories of personal sexual victimization:

- 1) There is probably a significant lack of knowledge among the LAC Collaborators pertaining to the subject of sexual misconduct and sexual abuse outside of their personal experiences.
- 2) There is probably a significant lack of knowledge pertaining to the subject of sex offenders among my LAC Collaborators outside of their personal experiences.
- 3) One out of three of my LAC Collaborators (male or female) have probably been sexually violated in one way or the other.
- 4) The faith based community has an obligation and responsibility to address sexual misconduct and sexual abuse, but probably has no clue as to how to begin. This hunch comes from the theological basis as referred to in I Corinthians 12:26 “If one member suffers, all suffer together with it; if one member is honored, all rejoice together with it.”

In essence, it is my belief that the pain suffered by the victims of sexual misconduct and sexual abuse should also be our (the faith based community's) pain as we grow in the gift and understanding of compassion, justice, prevention and restoration.

Realizing the importance of additionally getting to know my LAC Collaborators, and the hunch that one out of every three of them had probably experienced sexual misconduct or sexual abuse first hand, I wanted to place us all at ease. Thus, after obtaining their signature on the "Consent for Participation in Interview Research" form and prior to administering the questionnaire, we, as a group made an agreement. We decided that our focus would only be to contribute information and experiences to the project, and would not come together for any therapeutic purposes. However, if it became necessary, one could make mention of their personal concerns but then seek outside counseling. The LAC then agreed on rules of confidentiality and the expectations of the group as a whole.

After this, the questionnaire was administered to each Collaborator individually with the LAC's overall responses leading to the following observations:

I found that while there was more of a sense of awareness from a professional and criminality aspect as Medical, Mental Health and Criminal Justice Providers, most of my Collaborators were not very knowledgeable on the subject matters of sexual misconduct and sexual abuse with the exception of three. Collaborator 1 shared that he had been sexually abused by a woman at an early age, was now working with "abused and neglected children for fifteen years, and has dealt with sexual abuse in my family".⁶⁶ Collaborator 7 reported: "What I am aware of is women,

⁶⁶ Interview with Collaborator 1 - male survivor of sexual abuse, by author, February 1, 2018.

children and those that have some type of special needs are more likely to be victims... most sexual misconduct is not reported and the victims suffer psychologically.”⁶⁷ There was an additional mention by Collaborator 8 of the recent media attention that the subject matter was receiving, while at the same time it seemed “kind of hazy”.⁶⁸ I was also aware of the lack of honesty in the disclosure of personal experiences where it pertained to sexual misconduct and sexual abuse. Collaborator 2, in particular, had previously shared her story of childhood sexual abuse and incest with me. But when it came to filling out the questionnaire, she barely completed it and made no mention of the same. As Yantzi notes, “We often avoid making ourselves vulnerable to others because we fear rejection or disapproval. Because of fear, we also fail to examine our unresolved pasts... we tend to hide our real selves.”⁶⁹ Could it have been that she feared her story would be shared with the group? The truth is, I never asked, nor did I push the issue.

When it came to being knowledgeable about sex offenders, most of my Collaborators admitted to being limited. Again, it was the victims of sexual misconduct and sexual abuse that professed to having some knowledge in this area due to their personal victimization. Outside of this, I got these responses from Collaborators 9 and 7: “When it comes to sex offenders, I typically know that there are procedures/programs put in motion for convicted offenders who return to the civilian life and attempt to live a normal lifestyle.”⁷⁰ “I’m aware that sex offenders

⁶⁷ Interview with Collaborator 7 - female Mental Health and Crisis Intervention Provider, by author, February 1, 2018.

⁶⁸ Interview with Collaborator 3 – male Assistant Pastor of Essex County, by author, February 1, 2018.

⁶⁹ Yantzi, *Sexual Offending and Restoration*, 121.

⁷⁰ Interview with Collaborator 9 – male Essex County Police Officer, by author, February 1, 2018.

are a population that society does not want to deal with. There is a lack of resources for offenders to reintegrate back into the community and probably ten times harder for sex offenders.”⁷¹

Overall, on a scale from 1 – 10, most of my Collaborators professed to be at a 3 and had very little knowledge about sex offenders.

When it came to being affected by sexual misconduct or sexual abuse, there was a consensus that they all of my Collaborators had been indirectly, but not necessarily directly affected by sexual misconduct/abuse, but instead had been at the least acquainted with someone who had. On the other hand, Collaborator 1 was very open in his response. He noted how having been sexually abused had caused him to “become very sexual at an early age... had a very difficult time saying no to women... and a need to fill the emotional disconnect that was experienced during my abuse.”⁷² This immediately reminded me of my findings in Chapter One pertaining to “The Sex Offender in Context”.⁷³

Now, Collaborator 1 did not disclose having sexually offended anyone, but noted that: “I have a strong need to be wanted... and am currently seeing a therapist for the past six years.”⁷⁴

Needless to say, it appears that all of my Collaborators have been indirectly affected by sexual misconduct and sexual abuse. This is true whether it be through the testimonies of their family members or friends. Collaborator 9 stated: “My job consistently puts me in a position to

⁷¹ Interview with Collaborator 7 – female Crisis Intervention Provider, by author, February 1, 2018.

⁷² Interview with Collaborator 1 – male survivor of sexual abuse, by author, February 1, 2018.

⁷³ See above, p. 5.

⁷⁴ Interview with Collaborator 1 – male survivor of sexual abuse, by author, February 1, 2018.

possibly deal with sexual abuse – offenders or victims... It takes an emotional toll on me at times and I have to suppress my feelings for the greater cause of my duty.”⁷⁵ This same Collaborator eventually stopped attending our meetings “due to a conflicting work schedule”. None of my Collaborators admitted to receiving outside counseling with the exception of the male survivor of sexual abuse who had already been receiving therapeutic assistance.

With the exception of one of the male Pastors of Essex County, all other Collaborators denied having ever been accused of a sexual offense. Providing no further elaboration and sensing it was not open for discussion, he commented that there was no counseling sought as “the allegation was proven to be false”.

When it came to disclosing how each of my Collaborators were being affected by our discussions, they, for the most part seemed to be doing okay on the surface. Collaborator 4 said that he was “processing information as we received it”.⁷⁶ Collaborator 10 confessed to learning and being enlightened to “the internal scars that must be relevant to victims... the stigmas both negative and personal for victims and perpetrators”.⁷⁷ Collaborator 7 responded: “The subject matter definitely hit home... not just because of personal reasons”⁷⁸. Overall, while my Collaborators initially seemed to be doing okay, I began to see a gradual falling away (to be discussed in more detail later).

⁷⁵ Interview with Collaborator 9 – male Essex County Police Officer, by author, February 1, 2018.

⁷⁶ Interview with Collaborator 4 – male Pastor of Essex County, by author, February 1, 2018.

⁷⁷ Interview with Collaborator 10 – female member of FBCSO with background in law, by author, February 1, 2018.

⁷⁸ Interview with Collaborator 7 – female Mental Health and Crisis Intervention Provider, by author, February 1, 2018.

When asked about the awareness of personal triggers (people, places or things) that might set one off or cause one to become emotionally upset pertaining to the matters of sexual misconduct and sexual abuse, I found that some of my Collaborators were aware of their triggers and others were not. Collaborator 8 shared that he was not “aware of any personal triggers that would set me off”.⁷⁹ And while others just gave a simple response of “yes”, some specifically mentioned becoming emotionally upset over seeing or hearing about domestic violence, seeing others bruised, placed within the intensive care unit, or even the thought of their own child being harmed in such a manner.

When it came to the issue of sexual misconduct and sexual abuse in relationship to the faith based community, I found that most of my Collaborators believed the faith based community had an obligation to address and provide safety planning for matters pertaining to sexual abuse and sexual misconduct. The general consensus was that while this topic was seen as “taboo,” it should not be. Collaborator 9 felt that it was the duty of the faith based community to provide “a sense of comfort and security that many other rehabilitation organizations cannot provide.”⁸⁰

On the flip side, this question seemed to strike an interesting response from those who were Senior Pastors. It was almost as if the question was meant to suggest that possible allegations of sexual abuse or sexual misconduct had occurred in their church. Collaborator 3 responded with: “Not sure what you mean here... It’s an issue that shows up in many areas including faith based

⁷⁹ Interview with Collaborator 8 – male Assistant Pastor of FBCSO, by author, February 1, 2018.

⁸⁰ Interview with Collaborator 9 – male Essex County Police Officer, by author, February 1, 2018.

institutions.”⁸¹ Further, Collaborator 4 pointed out: “It is wrong in any relationship or community.”⁸² As Yantzi has written,

The impact of sexual abuse by a church leader goes beyond the victim of the particular violation. Every member of the congregation is affected somewhat by the pastor’s action and the process of coping with it. A church community needs corporate healing as well as an investigative team to guide the process. Most churches have found that clergy misconduct brings to the surface other internal conflicts that were in the church and typically are present in every congregation, to some degree.⁸³

Clearly, the Senior Pastors were even more sensitive to matters of sexual misconduct or sexual abuse when it came to the faith based community than were the other Collaborators for one reason or another.

When it came to how the Collaborators viewed the issue of sexual misconduct and sexual abuse on a personal level, the question was either left blank, or there was a general admittance of it being “wrong”. According to Collaborator 11, “Sexual abuse is a violation of the greatest level... an act of control and the need for power over someone who cannot fight back.”⁸⁴

Overall, the Collaborators felt that it was the responsibility of the faith based community to address and provide safety, to welcome all (both the offender and the offended), and to guide and teach on the matters pertaining to sexual misconduct or sexual abuse. Collaborator 11 specifically felt that “there can be no deliverance from any affliction without full healing. We (the Church) need to be the place where they (the sex offender) is not labeled or branded.

⁸¹ Interview with Collaborator 3 – male Senior Pastor of Essex County, by author, February 1, 2018.

⁸² Interview with Collaborator 4 – male Senior Pastor of Essex County, by author, February 1, 2018.

⁸³ Yantzi, *Sexual Offending and Restoration*, 91.

⁸⁴ Interview with Collaborator 11 – male Hospital Chaplain, by author, February 1, 2018.

However, we must take the necessary precaution to ensure the safety of others.”⁸⁵ It was additionally believed that the faith based community should live up to the often advertised phrase that “all are welcomed”.

Where it came to the kinds of policies and procedures that the faith based community should have in place pertaining to sexual misconduct and sexual abuse, there was a consensus that education should be made available to all faith based attendees (to both the offended and the offender). It was suggested that those especially working with children should be fingerprinted; that a written and adopted policy or code of conduct should be identified and adhered to pertaining to the expected and appropriate behaviors of those working with children, the opposite sex, and overall conduct pertaining to sexual misconduct and sexual abuse.

Finding support on a personal level if needed while moving through this process of exploring “Theological Responses to Sex Offenders and How the Faith Based Community Can Assist in the Reduction of Sex Offender Recidivism” was addressed obviously on a very individual level for all. Here, as in most cases when it comes to seeking therapeutic assistance, most professionals tend to want to avoid the very thought. One of my Collaborators felt that speaking to peers and the use of literature review would help in dealing with this topic. Another Collaborator shared that he would pray and ask God for guidance, do research and speak to people he trusts. The Collaborator who was already in counselling shared that he would continue doing so. Three of my Collaborators left this question blank. And no one outside of the aforementioned Collaborator spoke of seeking professional help. For me, this is where the Collaboration between Church and Mental/Medical Health providers must come together –

⁸⁵ Interview with Collaborator 11 – male Hospital Chaplain, by author, February 1, 2018.

where they work hand in hand and become the circle of supports, not only for the sexually abused, the sexual abuser, but also for themselves.

When asked about any further questions or concerns that one might have that have not been brought to the attention of the LAC, Collaborator 9 wanted to know how the doors would be open to receive both the sexual offender and the sexually offended?⁸⁶ The answer to this question was about careful grace – that which extends kindness to the recovering/registered sex offender that would include accountability with limited and monitored access. Collaborator 3 had concerns for the privacy of victims and offenders, concerns for labeling, and concerns for creating fear among people.⁸⁷

The LAC Collaborators - Research and Development:

While the research for this project drew primarily on my experience in caring for sex offenders as a Social Worker for the Special Treatment Unit, the LAC assisted me with gathering information about programs, ministries, and professional efforts that have sought to reach these individuals. I would also note that while I have referenced some of my clients within this document, all of their names have been kept private – with no face-to-face contact made with them, their victims or their families outside of my normal day-to-day interactions. Thus, the LAC proceeded to research and develop a model for faith-based ministry of care, hospitality, and spiritual formation practices at the local church level. They assisted me with establishing safeguarding procedures, strategies and additional factors required to structure a program that

⁸⁶ Interview with Collaborator 9 – Male Essex County Police Officer, by author, February 1, 2018.

⁸⁷ Interview with Collaborator 3 – Male, Senior Pastor of Essex County, by author, February 1, 2018.

will eventually minister to and support the recovering/registered sex offender, the sexually abused and both of their families.

It is my desire that our findings will ultimately lead to the creation of an additional ministry of FBCSO to the recovering/registered sex offender, and contribute to the reduction of sex offender recidivism. To that end, and as a result of the aforesaid questionnaire/survey, the LAC (many of whom have already been involved in like ministries) were trained in understanding:

- The dynamics of sexual misconduct (as defined by law and mental health diagnoses)
- The portrait and dimensions of the sex offender and sex offender recidivism
- The dynamics of the sexually abused and their families and how the faith based community can help

It is hoped that such a program would create a greater awareness of the increasing challenges of sexual violence – while at the same time, allowing the recovering/registered sex offender to no longer feel estranged, but instead attain a sense of belonging.

The LAC was instrumental in furthering the articulation of the narrative of concern, fine tuning the defined scope of project and developing a plan for its execution. Together we formed a collaborative learning that made possible creative and innovative approaches to ministering in the 21st Century.

The LAC Collaborators - Meeting Process:

The LAC Collaborators and I set out with an overall goal not to treat persons from a mental health perspective, but to develop and create policies and procedures pertaining to sexual

misconduct and sexual abuse that would ultimately guide the faith based community, provide an identified pool of resources that could be called upon on a case by case basis, and assist in the reduction of sex offender recidivism.

During our initial discussions, there was a need to classify the relationship between the members of FBCSO and those amongst us who were mandated to report cases of self-disclosure or exposure to sexual misconduct or sexual abuse. The findings of such information will be incorporated within our policies and procedures manual.

The LAC felt it important to examine the existing FBCSO bylaws and constitution for governing itself pertaining to sexual misconduct and sexual abuse. At that time, it was decided that this particular phase of the project would end once the policies and procedures manual had been developed and had received a final stamp of approval from the Advisory Faculty of the Drew University Theological School. After this a program development model, known as phase 2, would be designed to allow the recovering/registered sex offender an opportunity to engage in worship without being ostracized. This program would later be identified as the “Fresh Starts – Pastoral Aftercare Program”.

The LAC and I agreed that our policies and procedures manual would be designed to protect the offender, the sexually abused and the family members of both parties. We further agreed that no poll/census would be taken of FBCSO’s members for the purpose of obtaining one’s sexual offense history but instead, policies and procedures would be put in place to respond to situations or incidents if and when allegations of sexual misconduct or sexual abuse should arise.

The process for pastoral reporting of sexual misconduct, sexual abuse, and how to safeguard the pastor and or congregation against legal liabilities was explored.

The existing FBCSO bylaws, policies and procedures for safeguarding against sexual misconduct and sexual abuse within the constitution and liability coverage was reviewed. At which time it was discovered that FBCSO's bylaws, policies and procedures only covered the concerns for ministries involving children, but did not address vulnerable adults and or the possibility of recovering/registered sex offenders who are members or wish to join FBCSO.

A "Congregational Self-Assessment" form was used to assess FBCSO's current policies and procedures contained within its existing "Safeguarding Our Children and Youth Policy". This assessment examined how well FBCSO met the best practice criteria for a safer congregation.

The LAC Collaborators instantaneously agreed that there should be training pertaining to the following: sexual misconduct and sexual abuse preventions and awareness for children, youth, parents/guardians and other congregants; background checks for staff/volunteers especially those working with children, youth and vulnerable adults; written policies for addressing persons with a history of sexual offense(s) as it pertains to what services or fellowships one can participate in or not; how to include a child who has sexually abused another child; teen dating; policies on the use of church computers by all congregants, and the like.

The LAC proposed that the FBCSO's bylaws, policies and procedures be broadened to include adults. It additionally proposed that policies and procedures pertaining to the supervision or escort of children under nine years old when needing to use the restrooms be posted

displaying the who's, what's and how's. The LAC also suggested that the pre-volunteer training and CPR certification be added.

The LAC determined that pastors should always have another member present when speaking to the alleged victim of sexual misconduct, sexual abuse, the alleged sex offender, or either of their family member(s).

The LAC proposed that all reporting of suspected child abuse be made consistent with other designed and approved LAC policies and procedures.

The LAC proposed that the training pertaining to the Portrait and Dimensions of the Sex Offender and Sex Offender Recidivism should be broken down and presented during a congregational orientation session. This in turn would be followed up with a Leader's Retreat for the purpose of training FBCSO's Ministry Leaders during a more intensive study on this vital subject matter.

The LAC recommended that trauma informed care be included in the policies and procedures manual – highlighting what trauma looks like and how to respond to it accordingly.

After gathering the assisted insights, information and literary documentation from my LAC Collaborators and other methods of research, I began to design a written proposal for a "Safeguarding Our Congregation in A World of Sexual Harassment, Misconduct and Abuse: Policies and Procedures Manual". After which, this same manual was presented to the LAC and FBCSO's pastor for review and approval. The LAC and I then made preparations for our upcoming Doctor of Ministry Site Visit and Project Evaluation which gained its stamp of approval on May 17, 2018.

The end of this project resulted in the aforementioned manual that is intended to:

- Provide a safe environment for all of FBCSO's congregants and visitors (i.e. children, youth, and vulnerable adults) as well as,
- Welcome and protect those who have a history of or have been alleged of committing a sexual offense and desire to worship or fellowship within FBCSO's facilities (with limited access and a designated Risk Management designee and escort).

The LAC Collaborators – Timetable:

1. February 1, 2018 – LAC Collaborator's Initial Meeting

- The LAC Collaborator Self-Questionnaire was administered on an individual basis as each Collaborator entered the meeting and was taken silently around the table.
- The LAC Collaborator greetings and introductions
- The project outline was reviewed - goals and objectives were discussed
- The LAC Collaborators were assigned follow-up tasks to: explore current strategies for safeguarding against sexual misconduct and sexual abuse; explore the legal responsibility of a pastor when the sex offender has self-disclosed a new or current offense when what was said was said in confidence; obtain current FBCSO bylaws and policies and procedures for safeguarding against sexual misconduct and sexual abuse; explore the portrait and dimensions of the sex offender; explore sex offender recidivism statistics

2. February 15, 2018 – LAC Collaborator's Meeting

- The LAC Collaborator greetings and introductions

- The LAC reviewed and discussed personal thoughts and feelings pertaining to the “LAC Collaborator’s Self-Questionnaire” while maintaining self-disclosure, unless otherwise desired to share
- I developed and facilitated a PowerPoint presentation for training purposes pertaining to the Portrait and Dimensions of the Sex Offender and Sex Offender Recidivism
- The LAC explored questions to be considered for our future policy and procedures manual
- The LAC Collaborators were assigned follow-up tasks to: explore the dynamics of the sexually abused and their families; obtain Wynona House Crisis Intervention contact information; obtain East Orange General Hospital Crisis Intervention contact information

3. March 8, 2018 – LAC Collaborator’s Meeting

- The LAC Collaborator greetings and introductions
- The LAC shared follow-up information as mentioned above

4. March 22, 2018 – LAC Collaborator’s Meeting

- The LAC Collaborator greetings and introductions
- The LAC discussed the community notification requirements of sex offenders by tier level
- The LAC discussed a means for developing policies and procedures to address managing recovering/registered sex offenders currently attending FBCSO services/fellowships
- The LAC discussed a means for FBCSO’s ultimate collaboration with the Wynona’s House as a source of referral via its local police department

- The LAC reviewed handouts pertaining to the NJ Sex Offender Internet Registry concerning frequently asked questions relating to registration, registration requirements and community notification
- The LAC reviewed and discussed a “Congregational Self-Assessment” form
- The LAC questioned the mechanism for accountability pertaining to staff and volunteers concerning the adherence of policies and procedures
- The LAC discussed touching (i.e. “good touch vs. bad touch”)
- The LAC reviewed Megan’s Law offense prohibitions in conjunction with those serving on child/youth ministries
- I developed and presented a PowerPoint pertaining to “Understanding the Dynamics of the Sexually Abused, Their Families and How the Faith Based Community Can Help”

5. April 1 – May 1, 2018

- I analyzed FBCSO’s existing “Safeguarding Our Children and Youth Policy”
- I developed and wrote a policies and procedures manual (“Safeguarding Our Congregation in A World of Sexual Harassment, Misconduct and Abuse: Policies and Procedures Manual”) proposal for FBCSO that will include children, youth and vulnerable adults as it relates to safeguarding congregations against sexual misconduct and sexual abuse in conjunction with reducing sex offender recidivism
- I called on the LAC Collaborators to determine the best meeting date for our upcoming Doctor of Ministry Site Visit and Project Evaluation

6. May 3, 2018 – LAC Collaborator’s Meeting

- The LAC analyzed and discussed my proposed “Safeguarding Our Congregation in A World of Sexual Harassment, Misconduct and Abuse: Policies and Procedures Manual”
- The LAC prepared for our upcoming Doctor of Ministry Site Visit and Project Evaluation to be held on May 17, 2018 at FBCSO

7. May 17, 2018 – Doctor of Ministry – Site Visit and Project Evaluation

- The Doctor of Ministry Faculty Advisor received a tour of FBCSO by the Senior Pastor
- The LAC Collaborators, FBCSO Senior Pastor and Faculty Advisor greetings and introductions
- I presented the “Safeguarding Our Congregation in A World of Sexual Harassment, Misconduct and Abuse: Policies and Procedures Manual”, project setbacks, gains and implications for future ministry
- A Faculty led Self-Assessment was taken by the LAC and I, with an approval to proceed with the Writing Phase

CHAPTER FOUR:

PROJECT EVALUATION

Project Setbacks

As time went on and the project continued to take shape, I identified some setbacks involving unanticipated conflicts in schedules, and more importantly involving the Collaborators' comfort level with the issue addressed. I began to notice that some of my Collaborators were struggling with addressing the subject matter of sexual abuse as a result of their own direct or indirect encounters with the same (as seen from the sudden drop in meeting attendance). In any case, I was pressed to develop the project in phases alone: (1) the initial developmental phase, (2) the training, assessment and exploratory phase which afterwards resulted in (3) the development of the "Safeguarding Our Congregation in A World of Sexual Harassment, Misconduct and Abuse: Policies and Procedures Manual".

In addition to the above, there were occasions where inclement weather hampered our progress. As a result, I, as the Project Leader, had to switch gears and become creative. I solicited the assistance of other experts in the field (as seen in phase 2), considered videoconferencing our meetings in cases of inclement weather, and obtained the written or verbal feedback in cases where the LAC was unable to physically come together.

Project Gains

Fortunately, those involved in the developmental phase were extremely very helpful in assisting in the formation of the Topic Outline; while those of the training, assessment and exploration phase partook in the educational portion of the project and were thus able to bring increased insight to their feedback as it pertained to my proposed policies and procedures manual.

Overall, the project was able to withstand the many challenges it had to endure and the LAC was instrumental in its efforts. Hence, the end of this project resulted in the establishment of the recently developed “Safeguarding Our Congregation in A World of Sexual Harassment, Misconduct and Abuse – While Ministering to The Recovering/Registered Sex Offender: Policies and Procedures Manual”. This, again, was designed to safeguard FBCSO’s children, youth, vulnerable adults, as well as the sexually abused, the recovering/registered sex offender and their families – with an ultimate aim toward reducing sex offender recidivism.

Implications for Further Ministry

After closely examining the above, it became obvious that a Risk Management Team (RMT) would be required for the execution of a future ministry entitled: The Fresh Starts – Pastoral Aftercare Program. The RMT will consist of members of FBCSO who are especially engaged in the child/youth serving ministries and the Fresh Starts – Adult Prison Ministry – to be governed at the approval of the Senior Pastor and under my direction as the existing Fresh Starts – Adult Prison Ministry Director. The RMT would then be responsible for writing any additional policies and procedures needed to the proposed “Safeguarding Our Congregation in A World of

Sexual Harassment, Misconduct and Abuse – While Ministering to The Recovering/Registered Sex Offender: Policies and Procedures Manual”. They will meet no less than annually to:

1. Develop or update what would then be the existing policies and procedures manual.
2. Provide ongoing outreach to the FBCSO faith leaders/directors, staff, volunteers and congregants via the preached and taught Word, as well as, sponsor workshops, conferences and educational programs that are centered around (but not limited to):
 - Understanding the dynamics of sexual harassment, misconduct and abuse
 - Understanding the dynamics of the sex offender and sex offender recidivism
 - Understanding how the dynamics of sexual crime, incarceration and community re-entry effect our faith based community and how we can minister to and support the same
 - Understanding the dynamics of the sexually abused survivor, their families and how the faith based community, in collaboration with other professionals, can be of help
 - Understanding the state laws of reporting concerns about sexual harassment, misconduct and abuse
 - Understanding the dynamics of children, youth and vulnerable adult sexual abuse prevention
 - Maintaining a list of resources (that will be reserved in FBCSO’s Administrative Office) that aid in assisting individuals and families that have been affected by sexual abuse (to include names of recommended counselors, websites, books, and other forms/materials) that will be helpful to the congregation as a whole, and especially victims of sexual harassment, misconduct and abuse, and the offender

- Being the go-to-persons for any and all allegations/incidents of sexual harassment, misconduct or abuse – who will then take careful note of and report the same to the local police
- Being the personal designee/escort of the recovering/registered sex offender – monitoring and confirming his/her adherence of the Limited Access Agreement as described in the policies and procedures manual

Again, this model of ministry will not provide psycho-therapy, but will provide names of psycho-therapy providers, and only act to aid as a support and sacred space for ministerial counseling.

Discerning Transformation

I believe that the Holy Spirit was active during the process of this project in that the Spirit was able to assist each member of the LAC to work together as a team. There were no big “I’s” and little “you’s”. In addition, it was my observation that the Holy Spirit allowed each of us to face the difficult questions and challenges that came up as a result of project deliberation (i.e. how to look beyond the faults, see the needs and serve those who have sexually offended in spite of their crimes) especially when, in some cases, we ourselves had experienced sexual abuse.

I observed a transformation in attitude, passion and hope for the future of this ministry while working with the LAC via what appeared to be the softening of their hearts. Prior to the projects’ conception, it seemed as though many of my collaborators had very little sympathy toward sex offenders. The transformation appeared to have emerged by way of examination and discovery of the perspective and life history of the sex offender. Moreover, transformation came in realizing how the faith based community could achieve an awareness and growth in the

expression of grace, forgiveness and reconciliation – where all can benefit from this ministry from the inside out. Otherwise, there seemed to be a state of affirmation as the need for “healing” was recognized not only for the sexually abused, but also for the offender.

It appeared that the companionship and guidance of God was felt during the process of this project as it was formed and refined. It brought to the fore the importance of loving our neighbors as ourselves, of reaching out to the least of these, and how we are to love one another as Christ has loved us.

Based on the feedback from the LAC, my leadership was experienced in a way that kept the project on track. They described my supervision as being open to suggestions, extremely instrumental in communicating information that then led to candid discussions on sexual misconduct, sexual abuse, the sexually abused, the sex offender and their families. I felt it imperative to communicate the significance of careful grace, the benefit of being aware of our personal preconceived notions that could hinder the project, as well as the necessity of taking into account the humanness and brokenness of the offender. As a result, there seemed to be a new and increased understanding of the problem (Theological Responses to Sex Offenders: How The Faith Based Community Can Assist in The Reduction of Sex Offender Recidivism) through an awareness that all humankind deserves an opportunity to worship within the faith based community – even if it means through the structures of careful grace. The registered/recovering sex offender’s attempts to reenter society can be very difficult and can result in additional marginalization and vulnerability to falling farther out of, and away from society and faith. To prevent this requires the assistance of a circle of supports.

I observed that new realizations about the spiritual significance of this type of ministry came by way of the consciousness that the faith based community is charged with serving the spiritual needs of all people and that prejudice and favoritism have no place in ministry. It is not up to us to pick and choose who gets in and who does not. Therefore, it is hoped that this ministry will bring about a type of awareness that will enable the recovering/registered sex offender an opportunity to obtain ministerial guidance in returning to the fold, to connect/reconnect, and ultimately to find their God-given place within the Kingdom of God.

Conclusion

I began this study with the conviction that there must be something more that could be developed as a ministry that could cut into the suffering of registered recovering sex offenders, their families and victims who are related to local churches. After the thorough study presented above, I am convinced that the extra healing ingredients in faith based ministry programs that reach out to registered recovering sex offenders, their families, and victims, are as follows:

- 1) Acceptance and inclusion of registered recovering sex offenders in a community of love that understands what the participants in a sexual offense have gone through and that embraces them without judgment.
- 2) Continuing contact with the Spirit of love in Christ Jesus, embodied in the informed, motivated Christian community.
- 3) The freedom to be normal with normal people who care.

It is my hope that with the policy and procedure guidelines and training now in place, FBCSO is now in a better position to launch an effective, intelligent, and compassionate ministry that furthers the mission of God to which our congregation is called.

APPENDIX A

Lay Advisory Committee Letter

September 28, 2017

Greetings Beloveds,

You are receiving this letter as one who has expressed an interest in supporting me in the phases of my professional project and thesis as I work through and towards my Doctor of Ministry Program at the Drew University Theological School in Madison, NJ.

I am currently in the project development phase (DM990) where I am expected to conceptualize and frame my project **“Theological Responses to Sex Offenders: How Clergy Can Assist in the Decrease of Sex Offender Recidivism”** through the development of a Topic Outline⁸⁸, a Project Prospectus⁸⁹, and an Annotated Bibliography. I am expected to accomplish the aforementioned via a collaborative learning⁹⁰ process with professional peers, faculty advisors, and you, my proposed Lay Advisory Committee⁹¹.

⁸⁸ Topic Outline – A clear and specific outline of what the project will entail.

⁸⁹ Project Prospectus – A body of work specially designed to enhance and contribute to my ministerial setting that will be planned, executed and evaluated within a specified time period.

⁹⁰ Collaborative Learning – A form of reflective learning that will develop creative and innovative approaches to ministering in the 21st Century.

⁹¹ Lay Advisory Committee – You, a group of individuals that I have hand selected that are or indirectly associated with my ministry context who will work as a team to assist me in the planning, execution and evaluation of my professional project. It is anticipated that each of you will be instrumental in the further articulation of my narrative of concern, in fine tuning my defined scope of project and development plan for the aforementioned project’s execution.

As it stands today:

1. The first draft of the project outline is due by Monday, November 13, 2017
2. The final draft will be submitted for a final review and approval in December 2017 to the Project Colloquium Faculty Team - and
3. The preparation for implementation of the project will begin in January – April 2018 to include:
 - Continued meetings with the Lay Advisory Committee
 - Check-ins as scheduled with the Project Colloquium Faculty Team
 - Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval
 - Course of action for project implementation to begin in April – May 2018
 - Site visit from the Project Colloquium Faculty Team to my ministerial setting/place of project implementation – where a Site Visit Evaluation Form will be completed
4. Project Implementation will begin and then the:
 - First draft of Thesis will commence in January 2019
 - First complete draft of Thesis will be due February 2019
 - Final draft of Thesis to be presented to the Project Colloquium Faculty for evaluation – March 15, 2019
 - Exit interviews will be conducted by Project Colloquium Faculty – April 2019
 - Library copy of Thesis due 2-weeks before commencement – May 2019
 - Commencement – May 2019

Our initial meeting will be held on Thursday, October 12, 2017 for approximately 1½ - 2 hours from 6:00 – 8:00 PM at the First Baptist Church – 103 Valley Street - South Orange, NJ.

All meetings after that will be held every other Thursday unless otherwise noted. Please see below for the anticipated meeting dates as it stands today:

- October 26th
- November 9th
- Tuesday, November 21st
- December 7th
- December 21st
- January 4th
- January 18
- February 1st

As you can see our calendar begins on Thursday October 12, 2017 with dates through February 1, 2018. However, the total project will take us into the middle of 2019. If you already foresee this as a problem for you, please inform me of the same as soon as possible by phone (908) 380-3522, or via email.

I will be forwarding you all a copy of my preliminary Project Outline shortly for your review. I am asking that each of you would take the time to carefully analyze the same as it pertains to your specific discipline and come prepared with working feedback accordingly. It is my hope that each meeting would be a productive one where all will feel welcomed, valued and inspired to achieve an exceptional work for the Lord.

Thanks again for your anticipated time and diligence toward this important endeavor that is set to bring about hope, healing, forgiveness, restitution and support to those who have sexually offended amongst us.

Blessings,

Min. Valerie D. Pyles, MDiv., MSW, LSW (Drew University Theological School – Doctoral Candidate 2019)

APPENDIX B

Consent for Participation in Interview Research

Title of Project: “Theological Responses to Sex Offenders: How Clergy Can Assist in the Reduction of Sex Offender Recidivism”

Name of Researcher: Min. Valerie D. Pyles, MDiv., MSW, LSW (Drew University Theological School – Doctoral Candidate 2019)

- 1) I have read and understood the provided DM990 Preliminary Project Outline details.
- 2) I have had an opportunity to ask the aforementioned researcher any questions that I had about the project and my anticipated involvement in it, and therefore understand my expected role in the project.
- 3) My decision to consent is entirely voluntary and I understand that I am free to withdraw upon notice to the aforesaid researcher at any time without giving a reason and will suffer no adverse consequences from withdrawing from involvement.
- 4) I understand that data gathered in this project will form the basis of a report or other form of publication and presentation.
- 5) I understand that my name will not be used in any report, publication or presentation, and that every effort will be made to protect my confidentiality.

Participant’s Signature: _____ Date: _____

Participant’s Printed Name: _____ Date: _____

Researcher’s Signature: _____ Date: _____

Researcher’s Printed Name: _____ Date: _____

APPENDIX C

Personal Interview Questionnaire

- A) What is your experience in relation to those who have either sexually offended or have been sexually abused?
- B) What are your initial reactions to those who sexually exploit or abuse others?
- C) What do you believe the early signs of “minor attraction” (or adults who are attracted to minors) play in relation to child molestation?
- D) What role do you believe that mental health plays in the act of sexual exploitation or abuse?
- E) What role can clergy or the faith based community play in reducing sexual exploitation or sexual abuse?

APPENDIX D

Lay Advisory Committee – Self-Assessment Questionnaire

Note: It is not necessary to put your name on this questionnaire unless you want to, but it will be collected prior to the end of this meeting and held confidential.

- 1) On a scale from 1 – 10 how knowledgeable are you on the subject of sexual misconduct/abuse?
- 2) On a scale from 1 – 10 how knowledgeable are you on the subject pertaining to sex offenders?
- 3) Please describe how you have been directly affected by sexual misconduct/abuse. What need did you have at that time? Did you receive counseling?
- 4) Please describe how you have been indirectly affected by sexual misconduct/abuse. What need did you have at that time? Did you receive counseling?
- 5) Did you or have you ever been accused of a sexual offense? What need did you have at that time? Did you receive counseling?

- 6) As a member of the LAC, how are you being affected by our discussions on the matter of sexual misconduct/abuse?
- 7) Are you aware of your personal triggers (people, places or things that might set you off or cause you to become emotionally upset) pertaining to the matter of sexual misconduct/abuse?
- 8) How do you view the issue of sexual misconduct/abuse in relationship to the faith based community?
- 9) How do you view the issue of sexual misconduct/abuse on a personal level?
- 10) In your opinion, what is the responsibility of the faith based community pertaining to sexual misconduct/abuse?
- 11) What policies and procedures should the faith based community have in place as it pertains to sexual misconduct/abuse?
- 12) How will you find support on a personal level if or when you need it as we move through this process of exploring “Theological Responses to Sex Offenders: How the Faith Based Community Can Assist in the Reduction of Sex Offender Recidivism?”
- 13) Please provide any questions or concerns that you may have but have not brought to the attention of the LAC.

Thank you for your cooperation and assistance in this most sensitive matter. Your input is deeply appreciated.

Sincerely,

Min. Valerie D. Pyles, MDiv., MSW, LSW – Drew University Theological School Doctoral
Candidate (2019)

APPENDIX E

Congregational Assessment

Name of Congregation: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Website: _____

Congregation is lay led ____ (Check if yes)

Congregation has fewer than 101 members ____ (Check if yes)

Congregation does not have children/youth/religious education program ____ (Check if yes)

Complete this form to assess how your congregation meets the best practice criteria for a safer congregation. ** items are considered best practice for all congregations. Items that do not have ** may not apply to lay led, congregations with fewer than 101 members, and/or congregations that do not have children and youth in the congregation. (Notes for these congregations on meeting the criteria are included.) Congregations must meet 75% of the applicable criteria to receive the best practice seal. For congregations that have professional staff, more than 101 members, and religious education programs for children and youth, this will require having policies or procedures on at least 14 of the 18 best practices.

Criteria

1. Clergy commitment to a sexually safer congregation.
2. Designated committee, with responsibility for sexual safety policies and implementation.

3. Written policies and procedures for a sexually safer congregation that is well publicized to congregation and reviewed/updated at least every other year.
4. Sexual harassment, misconduct and abuse policies for employees, volunteers, congregants, and youth.
5. Code of conduct related to sexual/romantic relationships for religious professionals known, including how to address concerns about professional sexual harassment, misconduct and abuse to appropriate bodies.
6. Clergy and other professional staff have had training on sexual harassment, misconduct and abuse prevention, handling sexual attractions and appropriate boundaries for their profession, and how to offer pastoral responses to disclosure of past and present sexual harassment, misconduct and abuse.
7. Education on sexual harassment, misconduct and abuse prevention awareness in context of positive sexuality education for children, youth, vulnerable adults, and parents/caregivers at least every other year.
8. Screening forms, references, background checks for all staff and volunteers who are engaged in ministries involving children, youth and/or vulnerable adults.
9. All staff and volunteers who are engaged in ministries involving children, youth, and/or vulnerable adults receive training on signs of sexual harassment, misconduct and abuse, prevention and reporting procedures.

10. Requirement for two unrelated adults to be present for all activities with children, youth and vulnerable adults (i.e. religious education, Bible Studies, and other ministerial activities).
11. All counselling and education sessions with children/youth or vulnerable adults are easily observable by others.
12. Safety guidelines are provided for overnight activities, mission trips, conferences involving children/youth or vulnerable adults – to include rules and regulations for sleeping conditions and expectations related to sexual behaviors.
13. Written policies and procedures for the use of church computers and social media.
14. Written policies and procedures addressing persons with history or allegation of sexual harassment, misconduct, abuse who desire to attend church services/activities.

APPENDIX F

Understanding the Dynamics of Sexual Harassment, Misconduct and Abuse Training

Understanding the Dynamics of Sexual Harassment, Misconduct and Abuse,

The Sex Offender & Sex Offender Recidivism

By: Minister Valerie D. Pyles, MDiv., MSW, LSW - Doctoral Candidate 2019

- **PRESENTATION OBJECTIVES:**

- To understand the dynamics of sexual misconduct/Abuse
- To understand the dynamics of the sex offender
- To understand the dynamics of sex offender recidivism

APPENDIX G

Understanding the Dynamics of the Sexually Abused and Their Families Training

***Understanding the Dynamics of the Sexually Abused,
Their Families, and How You As The Faith Based
Community In Collaboration With Other Professionals
Can Be Of Help***

By: Minister Valerie D. Pyles, MDiv., MSW, LSW - Doctoral Candidate 2019

- **PRESENTATION OBJECTIVES:**

- To understand the dynamics of child sexual abuse
- To understand the dynamics of adult sexual abuse
- To understand the dynamics of families of the sexually abused
- To understand how you as the faith based community in collaboration with other health care/judicial professionals can assist in aiding the sexually abused and their families

APPENDIX H

FBCSO's Existing – Safeguarding Our Children & Youth Policy

SAFEGUARDING OUR CHILDREN AND YOUTH POLICY

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF SOUTH ORANGE

Adopted 2013

Introduction

The First Baptist Church of South Orange has as its purposes:

- a. Winning souls over to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ
- b. Promulgation and teaching of the gospel of Jesus Christ
- c. Promoting and furthering the moral and spiritual welfare of its members and others attendant upon its ministry
- d. Bettering the communities in which it labors and serves
- e. Extending the Kingdom of God at home and abroad.

As such, it is one of the goals of First Baptist Church to ensure that all attending ministry activities, especially children and youth, are protected from danger and harm. This policy is covered under the beliefs we hold about Christian Life and Scriptural Conduct.

Personal Ethics. “All things are lawful unto me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any.” (I Cor.6:12) “All the ways of a man are clean in his own eyes; but the LORD weigheth the spirits...” (Proverbs 16:2)

This policy will delineate the procedures and policies that children and youth serving ministries are required to implement to ensure the safety of children and youth while participating in First Baptist Church of South Orange ministry programs.

For purposes of this document, the following definitions shall apply:

“child/children” are ages 11 and younger, youth” are ages 12-17.

“Abuse” is the physical, sexual or emotional harm or risk of harm to a child under the age of 18 caused by a parent or other person who acts as a caregiver for the child.

“Neglect “occurs when a parent or caregiver fails to provide proper supervision for a child or adequate food, clothing, shelter, education or medical care although financially able or assisted to do so.

SUPERVISION OF CHILDREN

Children eleven (11) and younger should be supervised while on FBSCO property. FBSCO reserves the right to deny room usage requests if a concern arises regarding the safety and/or adequate supervision of children. If children are found unattended in the church, they shall immediately be returned to the parent.

Children nine (9) and younger shall be escorted to the bathroom during services or other ministry activities. Parents, guardians or other responsible adults will escort the child. If the escort is not the parent or legal guardian of the child, the person shall be an approved volunteer and will be required to be so identified with an official FBSCO identification. The escort shall stand outside

the bathroom door unless the child requires assistance. In that case, the escort shall remain in the bathroom with the stall door open.

Children and youth participating in FBCSO ministry activities may not leave the FBCSO premises without written permission of the parent or legal guardian. The permission may cover activities within the FBCSO neighborhood in the event of a walking activity or be specifically given for activities that are off-site.

Release of a child to a parent may not be restricted unless signed court documents are produced by the custodial parent, verifying custodial and visitation arrangements. Ministry leaders shall hold these documents. Individual ministries shall determine safe practices for the release of children into an adult's care once a ministry event/activity has concluded. The procedure for releasing children or youth will be provided to the appropriate Ministry director prior to approval of the ministry activity. Children eleven or under will not be released to persons under the age of 16. Under no circumstances will children eleven or under be left alone to wait for pick-up by a parent, guardian or responsible adult.

SUPERVISION OF CHILDREN BY NON-FBCSO MINISTRY PROGRAMS

Organizations that are affiliated with FBCSO or other non-FBCSO organizations using FBCSO property are responsible for the reasonable assurance of safety for children and youth involved with that organization. FBCSO will receive a hold-harmless agreement from these organizations prior to the start of any program or activity. FBCSO may deny usage of the facilities to any organization that is not upholding these standards.

NURSERY

At least one Nursery attendant and one additional adult shall be present at all times the nursery is used, thus eliminating the possibility of an attendant being alone and unsupervised with young children. The nursery may be used for the supervision of children 3 years or younger on Sunday mornings during service.

Parents of nursery-aged children will be required to complete a registration card when using Nursery care. They shall indicate any allergies their child may have as well as provide emergency contact information.

Qualifications for Nursery attendants: The minimum age for the Nursery attendant is 16 years. Each Nursery attendant who is also a high school student must attend and successfully complete a pre-volunteer training session.

YOUTH CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

The Youth Christian education ministry will employ the following volunteer/staff ratios:

Children age 2-4 ½:	2 adults per 10 children
Children age 4-9:	2 adults per 12-14 children
Children/Youth age 10-14	1 adult per 15 children
Youth age 15-17	1 adult per 18 children

In addition, there will be a supervising adult or ministry lead person on-site. At all times, the 2 adult and/or 2 child/youth rule will apply.

The Supervising adult or ministry lead will develop procedures for dropping off and picking up children as well as how parents or guardians will be contacted in case of emergencies in the event Christian education occurs simultaneously with Worship services.

All volunteers above the age of 17 will undergo a NJ State Police Criminal History background (FEDERAL) check. All volunteers between the ages of 16-17 will submit two letters of recommendation noting their good conduct and behavior. Letters of recommendation may not be submitted by a parent, relative or guardian. **THE CARI CHECK MUST BE IMPLEMENTED.**

Each volunteer will successfully complete a pre-service volunteer training session.

DISCIPLINE

The goal of discipline is to help children and youth learn responsible behavior and to encourage positive social interactions.

- a. Children and youth should always be treated with respect.
- b. Appropriate behavior should be modeled and praised.
- c. Alternatives to inappropriate behavior should be suggested. Refrain from telling children and youth what not to do but instead tell them what should be done.
- d. If unacceptable behavior persists, the child/youth's parent may be contacted to assist in bringing about a resolution.
- e. Physical punishment may never be used.
- f. Children/youth may not be left unsupervised.

- g. For children 11 & under: Time outs should rarely be used. In the event, that a time out is given, the time shall not exceed one minute per year of age of the child. At the end of the time-out, the child shall be welcomed back to the activity.

MEGAN'S LAW OFFENSES

While we as Christians recognize the power of forgiveness and the belief that those who confess their sins are saved, we are also bound to uphold the laws of the state of New Jersey. Therefore, those persons who are required to register as a result of offenses against Megan's law or those persons whom are identified to the Church as having been convicted of Megan's law offenses are prohibited from volunteering to serve in youth ministry.

The offenses requiring registration include aggravated sexual assault, sexual assault, aggravated criminal sexual contact, criminal sexual contact if the victim is minor, endangering the welfare of a child by engaging in sexual conduct which would impair or debauch the morals of the child, endangering the welfare of a child through acts involving pornography featuring a child, promoting prostitution of a child, luring or enticing, kidnapping, criminal restraint, and false imprisonment if the victim is a minor and the offender is not a parent of the victim.

FBCSO will take every reasonable effort to ensure that such persons are not participating in youth serving ministries. In the event, an individual with this background is discovered to be participating in a youth serving ministry, that individual will be immediately removed from service.

HUGGING AND TOUCHING OF CHILDREN

Appropriate physical contact is important in the emotional development of all children and children at different developmental levels will need differing degrees of physical contact. It is therefore, recommended that FBSCO ministry leaders and volunteers not perform frontal hugs of children—hugs should be on the side. The volunteer should get down to the child's physical level whenever possible. Children should not be allowed to sit on laps and picking up children should be limited both to reduce potential for abuse allegations and physical injury.

ON/OFF CAMPUS FBSCO CHILD/YOUTH MINISTRY GUIDELINES

- a. The two-adult and two-child/youth rule should be followed. The goal is to have an adult/student ratio of no less than one adult to eight children/youth.
- b. Prior to finalizing plans for an off-campus or overnight child/youth ministry activity, written permission must be provided and an event form submitted that is approved by the appropriate Ministry director.
- c. Signed parent permission slips (including emergency numbers, release of liability, medical emergency authorization) will be secured for a sleepover activity.
- d. If the activity is an away or overnight event, as long as any children/youth are awake, one adult should also be awake.
- e. Separate sleeping quarters should be designated for males and females and should be properly supervised with same-gender adults. (Once again, the two adult and/or two-child/youth rule applies).
- f. Adults should use good judgment regarding PG or PG13 movies. NO R-rated movies shall be permitted without the explicit and written permission of the Ministry director.

PRIVATE TRANSPORTATION

Drivers who routinely drive children and youth voluntarily to and from church-sponsored events as part of the ministry activity must complete a NJ Request for Driving Record and Driving Information form. These forms certify that the driver has a valid driver's license, liability insurance, that the car is mechanically safe and authorizes FBCSO and/or its insurance company to obtain a copy of a driving report used for rating and underwriting purposes. Every effort should be taken to ensure that one adult is not alone with one child/youth during transporting to and from a ministry activity.

ONE ON ONE MEETING OF YOUTH LEADER AND STUDENT

A youth leader may meet individually with a youth age 12 and older; however, the leader should discuss this with the parent before meeting off-campus one-on-one. The nature and location of the meeting should be shared with the parent and the parent's written permission given. Youth leaders may not schedule individual meetings with children under the age of eleven.

PROCEDURE IN CASE OF ALLEGATION

FBCSO will perform an investigation following any allegation of child abuse in a youth serving ministry by a staff member, volunteer. FBCSO will notify the appropriate agency or insurance company to interview staff, witnesses and/or children.

Any FBCSO volunteer or ministry leader who is alleged to have abused a child will be suspended pending the outcome of the investigation by the appropriate authorities. If the allegation is substantiated, the volunteer or ministry leader will be removed from serving in youth ministry.

VOLUNTEER SERVICE APPLICATION

Each individual who is seeking involvement in a ministry with children and youth shall complete a Volunteer Service Application and a Criminal History background check through the New Jersey State Police (PL 199, Ch. 432 (C. 15A:3A-1). Additionally, those individuals who will have more than casual contact with children and youth must complete the Criminal History background check.

The individual must be a FBCSO member of 6 months or more in good standing before consideration to participate as a volunteer in a child/youth serving ministry or allowed to have casual contact with children/youth on a regular basis.

WORKER IDENTIFICATION

Volunteers who are engaged in ministries with children and youth shall wear identification badges. Identification badges are the property of FBCSO and as such, can be recalled at the request of FBCSO. Each volunteer is responsible for maintaining his or her identification badge. Volunteers may wear the same badge for more than one ministry with children and youth. The identification badge should be carefully secured when not in use. A fee may be assessed to cover the cost to replace lost/missing badges.

PROCESS FOR BECOMING A VOLUNTEER

- a. Complete volunteer application. Appendix A
- b. Once application is approved and references checked, then submit the criminal background information and be fingerprinted. The current fee for fingerprinting is \$26.00 and will be collected by credit card at the time of scheduling the fingerprinting.

Applicants may pay by money order at the site. Payment by money order must be indicated at the time of scheduling. (PL 1999, Ch. 432)

- c. Employees of FBCSO participating in youth ministries or having casual contact with children/youth may be requested to submit to criminal background checks. The cost for fingerprinting of employees is \$57.50 payable in the same manner as described in #2.
EVERYONE SHOULD GO THROUGH THE \$57.50
- d. Once the individual is fingerprinted, the prospective volunteer will receive a receipt and a Process Control Number (PCN). The PCN will be recorded on the NJAPS2 form. A copy of the receipt and the form with the PCN number will be provided to FBCSO. FBCSO will submit the Request for Criminal History Record Information Release Form to the NJ State Police Volunteer Review Operation.
- e. The decision to use the volunteer or not is solely up to FBCSO. The Volunteer Review Operation (NJ VRO) will make a recommendation and advise FBCSO of the prospective volunteer's eligibility under the law. The VRO will not qualify or disqualify a prospective volunteer.

APPENDIX I

My Proposed FBCSO Policies and Procedures Manual

SAFEGUARDING OUR CONGREGATION IN A WORLD OF

SEXUAL HARASSMENT, MISCONDUCT AND ABUSE

While Ministering to and Supporting the Recovering/Registered Sex Offender

Policies and Procedures Manual

First Baptist Church

South Orange, NJ

Adopted: 2018

Dr. William Presnell - Colloquium Faculty Leader

By:

Candidate: Min. Valerie Pyles, M.Div. MSW, LSW

DMin-992 - Spring, 2018 Colloquium

Date: May 17, 2018

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**First Baptist Church
South Orange, NJ**

They came to Jesus and saw the demoniac sitting there, clothed and in his right mind, the very man who had had the legion; and they were afraid. As He was getting into the boat, the man who had been possessed by demons begged him that he might be with him. But Jesus refused, and said to him, 'Go home to your friends, and tell them how much the Lord has done for you, and what mercy he has shown you.' (Mark 5:15, 18–19).

First Baptist Church of South Orange (FBCSO) Mission Statement

We have as our mission to carry out the Great Commission and serve as witnesses to the world of God's saving grace in Christ through the presence and power of the Holy Spirit, as found in Matthew 28:19-20. As part of this mission, it is also FBCSO's goal to provide a safe environment for all of its congregants and visitors (i.e. children, youth, and vulnerable adults). With this comes the additional responsibility of welcoming and protecting those who have a history of having committed, or have been alleged to have committed sexual offenses and desire to worship and fellowship within the FBCSO facilities. This safe environment strives to provide the protection of each individual's total well-being (physically, emotionally and spiritually) as it makes available an atmosphere that is free of exploitation, intimidation, false accusations, verbal, physical, sexual harassment, misconduct and abuse.

With this in mind, the theological responses to sex offenders proposal sought to develop policies and procedures that were geared toward making this possible. This document is additionally designed to develop a model for faith-based ministry of care, hospitality, support and spiritual formation practices at the local church level that is aimed at reducing recidivism among the population of recovering/registered sex offenders that come to notice in the local

church. It is also hoped that such a model will make provisions for the support of the families of recovering sex offenders, as well as the victims of sex offenses.

This project supplied research for a model and a set of guidelines for the issue at hand. The model employed a type of collaborative and innovative approach to protecting the faith based community's children, youth and vulnerable adults, while simultaneously allowing those who were alleged to have committed or have committed a sexual offense to its services, activities and facilities with limited access.

Fresh Starts – Pastoral Aftercare Lay Advisory Committee

Purpose:

The Fresh Starts – Pastoral Aftercare LAC was formed in 2017 for the purpose of establishing a Safeguarding our Congregation in A World of Sexual Harassment, Misconduct and Abuse – While Ministering to and Supporting the Recovering Sex Offender: Policies and Procedures Manual. This manual is designed to address the broader need to protect its children, youth and vulnerable adults, but additionally to provide support for its victims of sexual harassment, misconduct and abuse, and if need be, protect the rights of those who have a history of or are alleged of committing sexual crimes/offenses with an aim at reducing recidivism among the population of recovering sex offenders that come to notice in the local church.

The LAC Collaborators were selected based on his/her professional expertise, relationship to FBCSO and relevance in respect to the project. Overall, the LAC primarily consisted of FBCSO membership as its case study in collaboration with other members of the faith based community, working together as a team to plan, execute and evaluate this professional project.

The LAC will not be responsible for any therapeutic treatment of the abused or the alleged offender, nor will it investigate any allegations of sexual harassment, misconduct and abuse. However, it will act as a response team who will report, refer and notify the local police who will in turn be responsible for alerting the necessary and appropriate administrations (i.e. Criminal Justice System, Mental and Medical Health Providers, and Child Protective Services) on behalf of the sexually violated.

The current LAC will dissolve after the formal policies and procedures have been implemented; but will be maintained and continued via an approved Risk Management Team that will consist of members of FBCSO who are especially engaged in the Child/Youth Serving Ministries and Fresh Starts – Adult Prison Ministry, governed at the approval of the Senior Pastor and under the direction of the existing Fresh Starts – Pastoral Aftercare Program Director.

Training:

It is the Fresh Starts – Pastoral Aftercare Risk Management Team (RMT) who will be responsible for writing any additional policies and procedures needed. They will meet no less than annually to:

1. Develop or update the existing policies and procedures manual
2. Balance justice with mercy by providing ongoing outreach to FBCSO's faith leaders/directors, staff, volunteers and congregants via the preached and taught Word, as well as, sponsored workshops, conferences and educational programs that are centered around (but not limited to):
 - Understanding the Dynamics of Sexual Harassment, Misconduct and Abuse
 - Understanding the Dynamics of the Sex Offender and Sex Offender Recidivism
 - Understanding How the Dynamics of Sexual Crime, Incarceration and Community Re-entry Effect Our Faith-Based Community and How We Can Minister to and Support the same
 - Understanding the Dynamics of the Sexually Abused Survivor, Their Families & How the Faith Based Community in Collaboration with Other Professionals Can Be of Help

- Understanding the State Laws for Reporting Concerns About Sexual Harassment, Misconduct and Abuse
 - Understanding the Dynamics of Children, Youth and Vulnerable Adult Sexual Abuse Prevention
3. The RMT will also maintain a list of resources that will aid in assisting individuals and families that have been affected by sexual abuse (to include names of recommended counselors, websites, books, and other forms/materials) that will be helpful to the congregation as a whole, and especially victims of sexual harassment, misconduct and abuse, and the offender.

Confidentiality:

- All personal information regarding a child/youth or vulnerable adult will be kept confidential.
- All written records will be kept in a secure area for a specific time. Documents will only evidence details required in the initial contact form.
- All reports will be turned over to the local police.
- If a child/youth or adult confides in a member of the RMT and requests that the information is kept secret, the member of the RMT will inform that individual that he or she has a responsibility to report/refer cases of alleged abuse to the local police. Within that context, the child/youth or adult will be assured that the matter will be disclosed only to the necessary parties.
- Where a disclosure has been made, the member of the RMT will inform the child/youth or vulnerable adult of their position pertaining to the role and action that will need to occur. Thus, all disclosures will be reported to the local police, and it is the local police who will be responsible for guiding the direction of what will happen next and what to expect (i.e.

especially in cases where a criminal proceeding is originated and the involvement of other entities are required – Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS), Probation/Parole, the District Attorney’s Office, other registry or civil commitment agencies that have specific process/protocol for guiding victims).

Safeguarding Our Congregation Against Sexual Harassment, Misconduct and Abuse –

While Ministering to and Supporting the Recovering/Registered Sex Offender

As quiet as it is kept, there are those in every congregation who have either sexually harassed, been guilty of sexual misconduct or abuse, been victims of sexual abuse or exposed to sexual violence as a bystander. In spite of this, there remain the questions of congregational liability and safety: How does the faith-based community appropriately handle threats and allegations of sexual harassment, misconduct and abuse; and, further, how does it respond to a known registered sex offender who desires to attend and become a member of the congregation? Unfortunately, many congregations have not even considered the matter. If they have, the congregation has either been unprepared (only heightening the risk of recidivism or a repeated sexual offense within or without the congregation) or has totally excluded or prohibited the individual from the opportunity to worship and be further led to Christ Jesus.

FBCSO believes in the dignity and worth of every human being which then includes the abuser within limits. Therefore, in its efforts to balance the safety and protection of our children, youth and vulnerable adults, the continued recovery of sexual survivors, as well as those who have a history of or have been alleged sex offenders, FBCSO has taken on the responsibility to:

- Ensure that it's children, youth and vulnerable adults will be safe from sexual misconduct and abuse, even when it is not obvious that a sexual perpetrator is present.
- Treat all persons with worth and dignity – providing a congregational environment with the understanding that in the case of an individual with a history of sexual offenses, there must be limited congregational involvement. Only in rare cases will one be denied access to worship and fellowship.
- Provide educational trainings on sexual harassment, misconduct and abuse that will assist in making sound decisions pertaining to the actions FBCSO may be called to take.

Scope of Policies and Procedures:

The policies and procedures included in this manual will apply:

- to any and all activities that occur within the edifice and properties of FBCSO
- during any and all services, programs, activities/events that are scheduled as part of the FBCSO ministry and take place elsewhere
- to all FBCSO's members (active/inactive) friends, staff or volunteers who find themselves within its edifice, properties or care
- to all persons who are accused of or known as pedophiles, rapists or recovering sex offenders and want to be a part of FBCSO in any capacity
- to an existing FBCSO member who has a history of or has been alleged to have been engaged in sexual harassment, misconduct or abuse

Location of Policies and Procedures:

Copies of the Safeguarding Our Congregation in A World of Sexual Harassment, Misconduct and Abuse – While Ministering to and Supporting the Recovering/Registered Sex Offender:

Policies and Procedures Manual can be found in the following locations:

1. The Church Office
2. The Church website
3. The Church library – located in FBCSO's Administrative Office

Sexual Harassment, Misconduct and Abuse

Sexual Harassment Defined:

According to the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) sexual harassment is:

unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature... when this conduct explicitly or implicitly affects an individual's employment, unreasonably interferes with an individual's work performance, or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment.⁹²

Sexual Harassment can occur amongst students, teachers, staff, co-workers, clergy, parishioners and strangers. It can be direct (consisting of touching or the use of straightforward language or conduct) or indirect (entailing inappropriate joking, comments, suggestions, displays of offensive materials, motions or facial expressions).

Sexual Misconduct and Abuse Defined:

According to Juvenile Sexual Offending experts, sexual misconduct and abuse is:

Any sexual interaction with person(s) of any age that is perpetrated against the victim's will, without consent, or in an aggressive, exploitive, manipulative, or threatening manner. It may involve one or more of a wide array of behaviors, and multiple paraphilia/type of sexual deviancy, may be exhibited by a single individual.⁹³

⁹² GuideOne, Insurance. Sexual Harassment. N.d. <https://www.guideone.com/safety-resources/sexual-harassment>

⁹³ Ryan, Leversee and Lane. *Juvenile Sexual Offending: Causes, Consequences, and Correction*, 3.

Types of Sexual Misconduct and Abuse

Bestiality:

People (male/female) who have sex with animals; or allow and encourage animals to have sex with them (i.e. dogs, horses, donkeys, sheep, camels and chickens are often animals of choice).

Coercion:

Pressures that deny the victim free choice (i.e. the threat of force, harm or overt violence).⁹⁴

Incest:

Attempted marriage or intercourse between persons closely related to each other (i.e. a brother and sister, nephew and aunt, a son who has mated with his father's wife, or a father-in-law with his son's wife, etc.).⁹⁵

Minor Attraction:

Sexual arousal associated with a desire for sexual activity with a prepubescent child (pedophilia).⁹⁶

Molestation:

May involve touching, rubbing, disrobing, sucking, exposure to sexual materials, or penetrating behaviors.⁹⁷

⁹⁴ Ryan, Leversee, and Lane. *Juvenile Sexual Offending: Causes, Consequences, and Correction*, 3.

⁹⁵ Merrill C. Tenney and Steven Barabas. *The Zondervan Pictorial Bible Encyclopedia of the Bible*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House. 1976. 1034.

⁹⁶ Budrionis and Jongsma. *The Sexual Abuse Victim and Sexual Offender: Treatment Planner*, 137.

⁹⁷ Ryan, Leversee and Lane. *Juvenile Sexual Offending: Causes, Consequences, and Correction*, 3.

Rape:

May include any sexual act perpetrated with violence or force, although legal definitions often include penetration: oral, anal, or vaginal and digital, penile, or anal.⁹⁸

Statutory Rape:

Statutory rape occurs when a person of a specified age joins in sexual intercourse with an individual who is under the age of consent. While the age of consent varies from state to state (between age 14 to 18), the age of consent in NJ is 16 – with the ages of 15 or younger considered legally unable to provide consent to sexual activity. Thus, the accused can be prosecuted for statutory rape. In addition, NJ has a close-in-age exemption known as the “Romeo and Juliet law” which is designated to prevent the prosecution of underage couples who engage in consensual sex when both participants are significantly close in age to each other, and one or both are below the age of consent.

Sexual Activity and the Law of Consent Pertaining to Vulnerable Adults:

The law related to vulnerable adults is considered non-punishable pertaining to cases where there is:

- Comprehension by the individual of the character and consequence of the activity (i.e. physically, emotionally, morally, and ethically)
- Intelligence of the individual – having demonstrated the ability to process the benefits and risks of the activity

⁹⁸ Ibid. 3.

- Voluntariness – where the individual is free to make a decision without coercion of choice

Thus, it is considered a sexual offense when physical force or coercion is used against an individual (male or female) who is considered to have diminished mental capacity, or one who the perpetrator realizes is:

- Physically helpless
- Mentally incapacitated or had a mental illness/deficiency leaving the individual temporarily or permanently incapable of comprehending the conduct or granting consent

This would include persons who are intoxicated, drugged, unconscious or have a developmental disability.

A Word About Sex Offenders

Sex Offenders:

A highly heterogeneous mixture of individuals who have committed violent sexual assaults on strangers, offenders who have had inappropriate sexual contact with family members, individuals who have molested children, and those who have engaged in a wide range of other inappropriate and criminal behaviors.⁹⁹

Recovering Sex Offenders:

An offender cannot claim to be ‘recovered’ but might be described as ‘recovering’. As with the Alcoholics Anonymous Twelve Steps Program, a person needs ongoing awareness and ongoing support. It is important that the offender’s memory of what he did continues.¹⁰⁰

Registered Sex Offenders:

A registered sex offender has been previously convicted of a criminality that implicated a sexual undertaking where the law (federal, state or local) called for the aforesaid person’s placement on the Sexual Offender Registry after having served a legal prison term(s) or has otherwise been released on Parole.¹⁰¹

Megan’s Law:

Requires convicted sex offenders to register with local police. It establishes a three-tier notification process to provide information about sex offenders to law enforcement agencies and, when appropriate, to the public. The type of

⁹⁹ The Center for Effective Public Policy and the American Probation and Parole Association. *Recidivism of Sex Offender*. Center for Sex Offender Management, 2001.2.

¹⁰⁰ The Methodist Council. The Church and Sex Offenders. Special Report, Methodist Church Reports, 2000.10.

¹⁰¹ DMatson, n.d. Sex Crime Criminal Defense: Criminal Defense Advice for Those Accused of Sex Crimes. Accessed March 21, 2017. [http://www.sexcrimemcriminaldefense.com/registered-sex-offender/\(accessed](http://www.sexcrimemcriminaldefense.com/registered-sex-offender/(accessed) March 21, 2017).

notification is based on an evaluation of the risk to the community from a particular sex offender.¹⁰²

Megan's Law Offenses:

While we as Christians recognize the power of forgiveness and the belief that those who confess their sins are saved, we are also bound to uphold the laws of the state of New Jersey. Therefore, those persons who are required to register as a result of offenses against Megan's law or those persons whom are identified to FBCSO as having been convicted of Megan's law offenses are prohibited from volunteering to serve in child/youth serving ministries or involved with any vulnerable adults.

The offenses requiring registration include aggravated sexual assault, sexual assault, aggravated criminal sexual contact, criminal sexual contact if the victim is a minor, endangering the welfare of a child or youth by engaging in a sexual manner which would impair or debauch the morals of the child or youth, endangering the welfare of a child or youth through acts involving pornography featuring a child or youth, promoting prostitution of a child or youth, luring or enticing, kidnapping, criminal restraint, and false imprisonment if the victim is a minor and the offender is not a parent or caretaker of the victim.

FBCSO will take every reasonable effort to ensure that such persons are not participating in child/youth serving ministries or involved with any vulnerable adults. In the event, an individual with this background is discovered to be participating in a child/youth serving

¹⁰² New Jersey Office of the Attorney General, Division of Criminal Justice in Conjunction with the 21 County Prosecutor's Offices. Megan's Law: A Guide for Community Organizations, Schools and Daycare Centers. March 15, 2007. 3.

ministry or otherwise involved with a vulnerable adult, that individual will be immediately removed from service.

Sex Offender Recidivism:

Lapses occur when an offender engages in thoughts, feelings, and behavior that move him closer to high-risk situations and he fails to use an adaptive coping response. Recidivism occurs when a person repeats an undesirable behavior after they had either experienced negative consequences of that behavior, or had been trained to extinguish that behavior.¹⁰³

Accountability for Recovering Registered Sex Offenders Within the Congregation

Many congregations are confronted with the predicament of what to do when a sex offender desires to show up or become a part of the congregational community. It is the belief of FBCSO that we, as a faith-based community, can provide compassion, support and reconciliation to those who have indicated that they have truly repented and “taken responsibility for their actions” (i.e. having already served time and complied with their punishments according to the penal system, undergone sex offender specific treatment, and are now considered in recovery and willing to cooperate with the perpetual process of transformation and healing).

Thus, this particular section of our manual has been especially designed to guide FBCSO through its effort in what manner to receive the recovering/registered sex offender into the congregation with compassion, awareness and vigilance so that all feel welcomed and safe. These instructions are based on policies and procedures that are geared toward an informed knowledge and understanding of sexual offending behaviors and the effects of the same on their

¹⁰³ Cumming and McGrath, *Supervision of the Sex Offender: Community Management, Risk Assessment & Treatment*, 44.

victims and families. Therefore, FBCSO begins with the priority of protecting its children, youth and vulnerable adults at the forefront, and then takes into account the idea of **careful grace**/extending the recovering/registered sex offender a type of **kindness that includes accountability with monitored and limited access** to its congregational community, simultaneously reducing recidivism among this population (to include but not limited to its services, ministries, fellowships, events and facilities).

Hence, it is believed that the individual with a history or allegation of committing a sexual offense has comparable needs to that of anyone else for a congregational home. In this manner, it is also believed that he or she requires additional support in assuring that his or her involvement will not pose a risk to the rest of the congregation while at the same time protecting the individual against any further allegations or suspicions. Such a requirement then comprises of aid in managing his or her behaviors and the ability to steer clear of seemingly unimportant decisions that may have led to former offense(s). Therefore, it is the belief of FBCSO, that the individual who sincerely desires to participate in or become a member of the congregation, will:

- be open to meet with the Senior Pastor and member of the RMT to address the concern, with the understanding that only the Pastor and the RMT will be informed of his/her history unless otherwise necessary to get others involved
- realize the extent of his or her crime and the sensitivity of those who are amongst the congregation who may have been directly/indirectly affected by sexual harassment, misconduct or abuse
- be committed to a fresh start in life - having the understanding and acceptance of FBCSO's requirement to enforce specific restrictions of imposition

- be in covenant with FBCSO and held to a Limited Access Agreement¹⁰⁴ which complies with the requirements under state law and indicates the conditions that will welcome and permit one to participate in adult worship, social or educational activities within FBCSO. This agreement will be noted in “I” statements and thereafter signed by the recovering/registered sex offender, pastor and a member of the RMT.
- be expected to adhere to the conditions and parameters as set forth by Probation or Parole
- be prohibited from contact with children, youth or vulnerable adults
- be prohibited from working or socializing with children, youth or vulnerable adults
- be prohibited from transporting children, youth or vulnerable adults
- be prohibited from participating in any religious education or child/youth serving ministries or activities involving vulnerable adults
- be asked to leave the congregation for a period of time, with reasons and conditions made clear should there be a disruption, incident or allegation as such
- be expected to meet with the RMT on a quarterly basis to review the conditions of the Limited Access Agreement and address any concerns

¹⁰⁴ Limited Access Agreement – Pre-set congregational restrictions developed by the LAC that encourage the recovering/registered sex offender to share in specified components of congregational life, while at the same time, establishing clear boundaries that incorporate what he/she will and must be exempted from (i.e. any type of child, youth, or vulnerable adult involvement).

In Cases of Allegations/Reports of Sexual Harassment, Misconduct or Abuse

In cases where there is an allegation or report of sexual harassment, misconduct, abuse, or likewise, when an individual has been newly identified as having a history of sexual harassment, misconduct or abuse, FBCSO will respond promptly by utilizing the following measures:

- After the Senior Pastor has first checked with the local sex offender registry, the accused will be asked to meet with the Senior Pastor and a member of the RMT (as the Pastor should never be left to meet or take the report alone due to possible implications of privileged/confidential clergy communications) as soon as possible to discuss the alleged concerns.
- If allegations are confirmed (where the accused is listed on the sex offender registry, has already served time in the penal system and received a certificate of discharge as a result of completing Sex Offender Specific Treatment) further discussion and determination of continued access to FBCSO's congregational services and facilities will be had.
- The accused will be asked to sign a release of information form so that the Senior Pastor/RMT has permission to contact the accused's Sex Offender Treatment Provider, current Therapist and Parole or Probation Officer (if applicable) for the purpose of gaining an assessment and insight of the likelihood that the accused is at high-risk of recidivism, and whether additional restrictions beyond FBCSO's standard Limited Access Agreement is required.
- If the aforementioned assessment indicates that the accused has completed or is successfully participating in treatment and is not at high-risk of recidivism, then the Limited Access Agreement will be put in action.

- If the aforementioned assessment forewarns that the accused is at high-risk of recidivism, it will be deemed that the individual is not appropriate for any type of involvement within FBCSO until he or she has taken the necessary steps toward treatment and has been successful at reducing the risk.
- After which and upon re-entry, the Senior Pastor and RMT will be happy to meet with the accused and members of the accused's support team (i.e. family, therapist, Probation or Parole Officer) for the purpose of holding the accused accountable. At that point the Limited Access Agreement will be developed accordingly, reviewed and signed by the accused.
- Should the accused refuse to sign the aforesaid Limited Access Agreement and attempts to enter the facilities of FBCSO, he or she will be considered trespassing and therefore asked to leave. Should the accused further refuse, the local police will be called in for assistance.

Safeguarding Our Children and Youth

Mission Statement:

The goal of First Baptist Church of South Orange (FBCSO) is to ensure that all attending ministry activities, especially children (any person that is 11 years of age or younger) and youth (any person between the age of 12 and 17), are protected from danger and harm. This policy is covered under the beliefs we hold about Christian Life and Scriptural Conduct. In addition, it will delineate the policies and procedures that child/youth serving ministries are required to implement to ensure the safety of children and youth while participating in FBCSO's ministry programs.

Children and Youth Protection Definitions:

Abuse:

The physical, sexual or emotional harm or risk to a child/youth under the age of 18 caused by a parent/caregiver, other adult, child or youth.

Child/Youth Sexual Abuse or Exploitation:

Any sexual pursuit with a child/youth where permission is not or cannot be offered. This pursuit includes dealings that are accomplished by force or a threat of force, in spite of the age of the partakers, and all sexual contact amongst an adult and a child/youth, irrespective of whether there is deception or the child/youth comprehends the sexual nature of the pursuit. The State of New Jersey identifies 16 as the age of consent and presumes anyone age 15 or younger unable to

provide the same. Therefore, any sexual contact between an adult and a minor under the age of consent is deemed illegal.

The sexually abusive undertakings may include (but are not limited to):

- sexual penetration, touching, or non-contact acts such as exposure or voyeurism
- the service, use, persuasion, bribe, lure or coercion of a child/youth to participate in or assist another to engage in sexually explicit conduct
- to engage in simulated sexually explicit behavior for the intent of producing visual illustration, consisting of photographing, videotaping, filming
- any other offenses perpetrated against a child/youth (i.e. rape, sexual assault, aggravated indecent assault, molestation, incest, indecent exposure or prostitution).

Endangering Welfare of Children/Youth:

A failure to act by the person responsible for which establishes an imminent probability of severe physical injury to or the sexual abuse or exploitation of a child/youth. An adult (parent/guardian or otherwise) overseeing the well-being of a child/youth less than 18 years old, commits an offense if he or she consciously compromises the welfare of the child/youth by violating a duty of care, protection or support.

Neglect:

When a parent/caregiver fails to provide proper supervision for a child/youth or adequate food, clothing, shelter, education or medical care although financially able to assisted to do so.

Children and Youth Protection – Policies and Procedures

Supervision of Children and Youth:

- Children 11-years and younger should be supervised while on FBCSO property. FBSCO reserves the right to deny room usage requests if a concern arises regarding the safety and/or adequate supervision of children. If children are found unattended in the church, they shall immediately be returned to the parent/guardian.
- Children 9-years and younger shall be escorted to the bathroom during services or other ministry activities. Parents/guardians or other responsible adults will escort the child. If the escort is not the parent or legal guardian of the child, the person shall be an approved volunteer and will be required to be so identified with an official FBCSO identification. The escort shall stand outside the bathroom door unless the child requires assistance. In that case, the escort shall remain in the bathroom with the stall door open.
- Children and youth participating in FBCSO ministry activities may not leave the FBCSO premises without written permission of the parent or legal guardian. The permission may cover activities within the FBCSO neighborhood in the event of a walking activity or be specifically given for activities that are off-site.
- Release of a child/youth to a parent may not be restricted unless signed court documents are produced by the custodial parent, verifying custodial and visitation arrangements. Ministry leaders shall hold these documents. Individual ministries shall determine safe practices for the release of children and youth into an adult's care once a ministry event/activity has concluded. The procedure for releasing children or youth will be provided to the appropriate ministry director prior to approval of the ministry activity. Children eleven or under will not

be released to persons under the age of 16. Under no circumstances will children eleven or under be left alone to wait for pick-up by a parent, guardian or responsible adult.

Supervision of Children and Youth by Non-FBCSO Ministry Programs:

- Organizations that are affiliated with FBCSO or other non-FBCSO organizations using FBCSO property are responsible for the reasonable assurance of safety for children and youth involved with that organization.
- FBCSO will receive a Hold-Harmless Agreement¹⁰⁵ from these organizations prior to the start of any program or activity.
- FBCSO may deny usage of the facilities to any organization that is not upholding these standards.

Supervision of Nursery:

- At least one Nursery attendant and one additional adult shall be present at all times the nursery is used, thus eliminating the possibility of an attendant being alone and unsupervised with young children. The nursery may be used for the supervision of children 3 years or younger on Sunday mornings during service.
- Parents of nursery-aged children will be required to complete a registration card when using Nursery care. They shall indicate any allergies their child may have as well as provide emergency contact information.

¹⁰⁵ Hold Harmless Agreement – A contract between two parties designed to release one or both parties from legal claims. Most often, one party agrees not to sue the other party for any expenses, damages, or losses arising from a transaction or activity between the two parties.

- The minimum age for the Nursery attendant is 16 years. Each Nursery attendant who is also a high school student must attend and successfully complete a pre-volunteer training session.

Supervision of Children and Youth Christian Education:

- The Child/Youth Christian Education Ministry will employ the following volunteer/staff ratios:

Children age 2-4 ½: 2 adults per 10 children

Children age 4-9: 2 adults per 12-14 children

Children/Youth age 10-14 1 adult per 15 children

Youth age 15-17 1 adult per 18 children

- In addition, there will be a supervising adult or ministry lead person on-site. At all times, the 2 adult and/or 2 child/youth rule will apply.
- The Supervising adult or ministry lead will develop procedures for dropping off and picking up children as well as how parents or guardians will be contacted in case of emergencies in the event Christian education occurs simultaneously with Worship services.
- All volunteers above the age of 17 will undergo a NJ State Police Criminal History background check. All volunteers between the ages of 16-17 will submit two letters of recommendation noting their good conduct and behavior. Letters of recommendation may not be submitted by a parent/guardian or relative.

- The Child Abuse Record Information (CARI)¹⁰⁶ consent form must be completed.
- Each volunteer will successfully complete a pre-service volunteer training session.

On/Off Campus FBCSO Child and Youth Ministry Guidelines:

- The two-adult and two-child/youth rule should be followed. The goal is to have an adult/student ratio of no less than one adult to eight children/youth.
- Prior to finalizing plans for an off-campus or overnight child/youth ministry activity, written permission must be provided and an event form submitted that is approved by the appropriate Ministry director.
- Signed parent permission slips (including emergency numbers, release of liability, medical emergency authorization) will be secured for a sleepover activity.
- If the activity is an away or overnight event, as long as any children/youth are awake, one adult should also be awake.
- Separate sleeping quarters should be designated for males and females and should be properly supervised with same-gender adults. (Once again, the two adult and/or two-child/youth rule applies).
- Adults should use good judgment regarding PG or PG13 movies. No R-rated movies shall be permitted without the explicit and written permission of the Ministry director.

¹⁰⁶ The Child Abuse Record Information (CARI) – Unit performs the background checks for child abuse/neglect for the New Jersey Department and Families (DCF)

Private Transportation:

- Drivers who routinely drive children and youth voluntarily to and from church-sponsored events as part of the ministry activity must complete a NJ Request for Driving Record and Driving Information form. These forms certify that the driver has a valid driver's license, liability insurance, that the car is mechanically safe and authorizes FBCSO and/or its insurance company to obtain a copy of a driving report used for rating and underwriting purposes.
- Every effort should be taken to ensure that one adult is not alone with one child/youth during transporting to and from a ministry activity.

One-On-One Meeting of Youth Leader and Student:

- A youth leader may meet individually with a youth age 12 and older; however, the leader should discuss this with the parent/guardian before meeting off-campus one-on-one.
- The nature and location of the meeting should be shared with the parent/guardian and the parent/guardian's written permission given.
- Youth leaders may not schedule individual meetings with children under the age of eleven.

In Cases of Allegation:

- The RMT will make a written report following any allegation of child/youth abuse in a child/youth serving ministry by a staff member or volunteer.
- The RMT will notify the local police and insurance company to interview staff, volunteers, witnesses and/or children/youth.

- Any FBCSO volunteer or ministry leader who is alleged to have abused a child/youth will be suspended pending the outcome of the investigation by the appropriate authorities.
- If the allegation is substantiated, the volunteer or ministry leader will be removed from serving in child/youth ministry.

Confidentiality:

- All personal information regarding a child/youth will be kept confidential.
- All written records will be kept in a secure area for a specific time. Documents will only evidence details required in the initial contact form.
- All reports will be turned over to the local police.
- If a child/youth confides in a member of the RMT and requests that the information is kept secret, the member of the RMT will inform the individual that he or she has a responsibility to report/refer cases of alleged abuse to the local police. Within that context, the child/youth will be assured that the matter will be disclosed only to the necessary parties.
- Where a disclosure has been made, the member of the RMT should inform the child/youth of their position pertaining to the role and action that will need to take place (i.e. all disclosures will be noted by the member of the RMT and reported directly to the local Police – who will in turn be responsible for all next steps).

The Role of the Police:

After the member of the RMT has taken down all pertinent information and thus notified the local police department, it then becomes the responsibility of the local police to investigate

all allegations of crime. They will take the lead and direct all investigations in line with legal and other procedural protocols.

Volunteer Service Application:

- Each individual seeking involvement in a ministry with children and youth shall complete a Volunteer Service Application and a Criminal History Background Check through the New Jersey State Police (PL 199, Ch. 432 (C. 15A:3A-1). Additionally, those individuals who will have more than casual contact with children and youth must complete the Criminal History Background Check.
- The individual must be a FBCSO member for 6 months or more in good standing before consideration to participate as a volunteer in a child/youth serving ministry or allowed to have casual contact with children/youth on a regular basis.

Worker Identification:

- Volunteers engaged in ministries with children and youth shall wear identification badges. Identification badges are the property of FBCSO and as such, can be recalled at the request of FBCSO.
- Each volunteer is responsible for maintaining his or her identification badge.
- Volunteers may wear the same badge for more than one ministry with children and youth.
- The identification badge should be carefully secured when not in use.
- A fee may be assessed to cover the cost to replace lost/missing badges.

Process for Becoming a Volunteer:

- Complete Volunteer Application
- Once application is approved and references checked, then submit the criminal background information and be fingerprinted. The current fee for fingerprinting is \$26.00 and will be collected by credit card at the time of scheduling the fingerprinting. Applicants may pay by money order at the site. Payment by money order must be indicated at the time of scheduling. (PL 1999, Ch. 432)
- Employees of FBCSO participating in child/youth serving ministries or having casual contact with children/youth may be requested to submit to criminal background checks. The cost for fingerprinting of employees is \$57.50 payable in the same manner as mentioned above. It is recommended that everyone be fingerprinted under the \$57.50.
- Once the individual is fingerprinted, the prospective volunteer will receive a receipt and a Process Control Number (PCN). The PCN will be recorded on the NJAPS2 form. A copy of the receipt and the form with the PCN number will be provided to FBCSO.
- FBCSO will submit the Request for Criminal History Record Information Release Form to the NJ State Police Volunteer Review Operation. The decision to use the volunteer or not is solely up to FBCSO.
- The Volunteer Review Operation (NJ VRO) will make a recommendation and advise FBCSO of the prospective volunteer's eligibility under the law. The VRO will not qualify or disqualify a prospective volunteer.

Safeguarding Our Vulnerable Adults

As mentioned in the previous sections of this manual, FBCSO is also committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of vulnerable adults engaged in the breadth of its activities. Separate from the Safeguarding policies and procedures pertaining to its children and youth, the purpose of this section is to outline the duty and responsibility of FBCSO's staff and volunteers working on behalf of the congregation in protection of its vulnerable adults.

Procedures in the Event of a Disclosure:

It is FBCSO's belief that all adults have the right to be safe from harm and be able to live free from fear of abuse, neglect and exploitation. Thus, all complaints, allegations or suspicions of sexual harassment, misconduct or abuse must be taken seriously. With this in mind, the following procedures should be adhered to:

- Promises of confidentiality will not be given so as not to conflict with the need to ensure the safety and welfare of the individual.
- A full record shall be made as soon as possible of the nature of the allegation and any other relevant information. This information should include the: date, time, place where the alleged abuse happened, the member of the RMT's name and the names of others present, the complainant's name and, where different, the allegedly abuse d's name, the nature of the alleged abuse, a description of any injuries observed, the account which has been given of the allegation.

Responding to an Allegation:

- Any suspicion, allegation or incident of abuse must be reported to the Senior Pastor and member of the RMT as soon as possible.
- The RMT shall report the matter to the local police, who in turn may notify the appropriate local Adult Protective Services (APS)¹⁰⁷.
- A written record of the date and time of the report shall be made and the report must include the name and position of the person to whom the matter is reported.

In the Event of an Incident/Disclosure:

- The person identifying the incident/disclosure should immediately notify the Senior Pastor or member of the RMT
- The RMT will make sure the individual is safe from the standpoint of immediate care
- Offer support and reassurance - immediately assess whether emergency services are required and, if needed, will make the call
- Explain areas of confidentiality as outlined below and explain the procedure to the individual making the allegation
- The RMT will listen for details, determine the facts and make careful notes
- The RMT will ensure notation of dates, time and names of the people present are correct and agreed
- The RMT will notify the local police department

¹⁰⁷ Adult Protective Services (APS) – Will perform a thorough assessment of a potential at-risk adult who may be the subject of abuse, neglect/exploitation. All information generated by the investigation is confidential.

Do Not:

- Confront the alleged abuser
- Be dismissive of the concern
- Investigate or interview beyond that which is necessary to establish the basic facts
- Consult with persons not directly involved with the situation
- Ask leading questions or assume information
- Make promises
- Ignore the allegation
- Elaborate in your notes (e.g. all notes will be turned over to the local Police and utilized at the Department's discretion)
- Panic

It is important to remember that the individual who initially encounters the case of alleged abuse is not responsible for determining whether the abuse occurred. This is the undertaking of the local police department/Adult Protection Agency, following a referral from the RMT.

Confidentiality:

- All personal information regarding a vulnerable adult will be kept confidential.
- All written records will be kept in a secure area for a specific time. Documents will only evidence details required in the initial contact form (with all interviewer notes being turned over to the local police).
- If an adult confides in a member of the RMT and requests that the information be kept secret, the member of the RMT will inform the individual that he or she has a responsibility to

report/refer cases of alleged abuse to the local police. Within that context, the adult should be assured that the matter will be disclosed only to the necessary parties.

- Where a disclosure has been made, the member of the RMT should inform the adult of their position pertaining to the role and action that will need to take place (i.e. all disclosures will be noted by the member of the RMT and reported directly to the local Police – who will in turn be responsible for all next steps).

The Role of the Police:

It becomes the responsibility of the local police to investigate all allegations of crime. They will take the lead and direct all investigations in line with legal and other procedural protocols.

Policy for Those Convicted of Sexual Offenses Against a Minor and Attendance Agreement

FBCSO Church is an abode for introducing Jesus Christ to those who do not know him. We desire FBCSO to be a safe place for all to come to know about Christ and the gospel. In order for FBCSO to be a safe place for all to attend, it is our belief that it is necessary to adopt official policies and procedures pertaining to those on the registered list of sexual offenders and desire to attend or join our fellowship.

Definition of Terms:

- Service(s): includes any gathered event of FBCSO, whether held at a facility owned by, a rented campus, or at an offsite location
- Activities: includes services, small groups, events, retreats, conferences, or any other function sponsored by FBCSO, regardless of the event location
- Risk Management Team (RMT): Member of the Fresh Starts - Pastoral Aftercare Program designated to oversee the fulfillment of this contract with a given offender in fellowship with FBCSO
- Escort: an approved designee of the RMT who signs in and signs out with an offender attending a service or activity, and who monitors the offender's restroom use while onsite
- Children or Youth: any person under the age of 18 years old.
- Vulnerable Adult: those 18 years or older requiring community care/services due to mental and other disability, age or illness, and are unable to care for or protect themselves against significant harm or exploitation.

Policies and Procedures:

- Any registered offender is expected to self-disclose his or her status as a registered offender (including his/her tier designation) to the Senior Pastor or member of the RMT prior to attending any FBCSO services or activities. Whether through disclosure or discovery, as soon as the registered status of an offender is realized the protocols of this policy will be expected to be honored or the offender may not attend any FBCSO services or activities.
- **A Tier One offender** may not attend any FBCSO services or activities until signing the “Limited Access Agreement.”
- Offenders are prohibited from attending FBCSO services and or activities under any of the following circumstances:
 1. If any victim of the offender is a member of FBCSO or known to regularly attend any FBCSO activities
 2. If the offender has a history of not following established contract agreements at other faith-based communities.
 3. If the offender does not agree to the conditions for fellowship at FBCSO.
 4. If the offender does not comply with the conditions for fellowship at FBCSO
- **A Tier Two offender** is considered to have a moderate to high risk of re-offending. Given this heightened risk, tier two offenders are prohibited from attending FBCSO services, fellowships, or activities. Individuals with these designations are encouraged to attend a smaller faith-based community where they can be known and supervised.
 5. Any individual that has at any time registered as an offender is prohibited from entering into FBCSO’s child/youth serving ministry areas or participating as part of

- FBCSO's child/youth serving ministry. This prohibition continues to exist regardless of whether the offender status is removed. This prohibition is non-negotiable.
6. An offender may not attend any child/youth-oriented services or activities. However, the offender is allowed to attend services and activities where children may be present, such as worship services, and is allowed to be in the church foyer or auditorium, so long as five or more adults are present including their assigned escort.
 7. At such time as an individual ceases to be a registered offender, a copy of the "Certificate and Order of Discharge"¹⁰⁸, or a similarly equivalent Court document, must be submitted to the individual's designated escort to be included in the offender's file. At that time, an evaluation will be conducted to determine if and what continuing restrictions will remain in place.

¹⁰⁸ Certificate and Order of Discharge – When an offender has completed all requirements of the sentence, including any/all legal financial obligations, and while under the custody and supervision of the department, the secretary/secretary's designee shall notify the sentencing court, which shall discharge the offender and provide the offender with a certificate of discharge.

APPENDIX J

Limited Access Agreement

Tier One offenders must commit to the following conditions for fellowship at FBCSO. Tier Two offenders may not attend FBCSO services or activities under any conditions. I agree to the following conditions:

- I will be assigned a FBCSO escort who will evaluate and monitor my access to FBCSO services and activities. I will meet regularly with my designated RMT member to evaluate and monitor my access to FBCSO services and activities.
- I will meet with the court ordered Parole or Probation Officer, or other similar officer, as prescribed.
- I will meet with a certified sex offender treatment therapist, if required by my Parole/Probation Officer or RMT designee without complaint.
- I will provide the treatment therapist's name and phone number and the Parole/Probation Officer's name and phone number to my RMT designee.
- I will get approval by the court ordered Parole/Probation Officer, therapist, social worker, and FBCSO RMT designee to attend FBCSO. A copy of a signed authorization from each of these providers must be provided to your RMT designee.
- I agree to have my picture, name, offense level, and a copy of this signed contract emailed to all FBCSO pastors, RMT members and staff before attending a FBCSO service or activity.
- I agree to have my picture, name, offense level, and a copy of this signed contract included in the records of the security teams at all FBCSO locations, accessible to all staff and volunteer security workers.

- I will not attend any FBCSO services or activities (nor be present on the property of FBCSO or off-property gathering location) without my RMT designee or approved escort. If my RMT designee or approved escort are not available, I will not attend any FBCSO services or activities (nor will I be present on the property of FBCSO or off-property gathering location) at any time.
- Immediately upon my arrival at a FBCSO service, I will sign in at the location designated by the RMT designee) with my escort. I will wait there until my RMT designee or escort is able to sign in with me, acknowledging that I am on location. If my RMT designee or escort cannot be located, I will sign out, indicating the time of my departure, and promptly leave FBCSO premises.
- I will not serve in any role in a FBCSO ministry without prior approval from my RMT designee.
- I acknowledge and agree that all child/youth serving ministries areas are off limits at all times, even if my own children are attending FBCSO and are present and participating in FBCSO's child/youth serving ministries or activities. In that case, I will not walk my own children back into FBCSO's child/youth ministry area, but will make other arrangements for them, such as having a child/youth ministry leader walk them to and from the child/youth ministry area for me. I will not supervise any child/youth activities nor enter a designated child/youth area. I will not serve in FBCSO's child/youth serving ministries.
- I will not attend a FBCSO ministry where children are present, regardless of the location of the ministry meeting.

- I will not visit the home of a FBCSO family where children/youth are present, without the parent/guardian knowing my history and offense level and giving permission for my entry into their home.
- I will promptly leave any area on FBCSO property where children/youth are present with the exception of a populated church foyer, auditorium, or area where five or more adults are present.
- I will not have any physical contact with a child/youth at FBCSO, including, without limitation, sitting next to a child/youth other than my own, holding a child/youth on my lap, or being hugged or kissed by a child/youth at FBCSO. If a child/youth other than my own approaches me to talk, I will acknowledge him or her and promptly leave the area. I will report this to my RMT designee or escort before leaving FBCSO premises.
- I will only use the bathrooms after my RMT designee or approved escort has entered and found no child/youth in the bathroom. My RMT designee or escort will monitor the door while I use the facility. “Regularly” but is not limited to: checking in and out each time he/she is at a FBCSO service or activity; providing an account of having attended each Parole/Probation Officer, social worker, or therapist session; and a monthly meeting to discuss spiritual growth and how he/she is resisting temptation.
- I understand that my RMT designee will retain records of our meetings, which will be available to the offender’s therapist, Parole/Probation Officer, and court at their request.
- I understand the above conditions. I submit to these conditions and wish to attend FBCSO. I submit to my RMT designee at FBCSO. I accept that if I break any of the above conditions, I will no longer be allowed to be present at any FBCSO location or activity. FBCSO pastors, deacons, employees, program directors, and FBCSO members are released from any legal

responsibility or liability for disclosure of the above information to the extent indicated and authorized herein.

APPENDIX K

Child Abuse Record Information (CARI)

The Child Abuse Record Information (CARI) Unit performs the background checks for child abuse/neglect for the New Jersey Department of Children and Families (DCF).

New Jersey CARI Requests

Those who are subject to Child Abuse Record Information (CARI) checks include:

- Child Care Center Employees – N.J.S.A. 30:5B-6.2
- Resource Parent applications – N.J.S.A. 30:4C-27.7
- Kinship Legal Guardians – N.J.S.A. 30:4C-86
- DCF/Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD) Residential Center Employees – N.J.S.A. 30:4C-27.22
- Registered Family Child Care providers – N.J.S.A. 30:5B-25.3
- Division of Family Development (DFD) Approved Homes – N.J.S.A. 30:5B-32
- Professional Guardians for the Elderly – N.J.S.A. 9:6-8.10e
- Persons assuming care for children of incarcerated parents – N.J.S.A. 9:6-8-10c
- Adoption Agency Employees – N.J.S.A. – 9:3-40.8
- Prospective Court-Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) volunteers – N.J.S.A. – 2A:4A-92(d)(2).
- Adoptive parent applicants (private or DCF) are checked – N.J.S.A. 9:3-54.2.
- DCF employees are checked.

- Juvenile Justice Commission employees – Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) – 42 U.S.C. 15601; 28 CFR 115.317; N.J.S.A. 9:6-8.10a (b) (20)

All NJ DCF information and records are considered confidential pursuant to N.J.S.A. 9:6-8.10a Records of child abuse reports; confidentiality; disclosure. If you are a New Jersey resident in need of a child abuse/neglect background check and you are not in the list above, please contact the CARI unit at 855-744-4913 and ask to speak with a supervisor.

Out of State CARI Requests

Requests for CARI checks are based on the Adam Walsh Child Protection and Safety Act, The Hague Convention requirements, the Universal Accreditation Act (UAA) of 2012, or a law/statute/regulation from your state that requires the NJ DCF CARI Unit to run the CARI request.

A State Law

Please forward us a copy of your state law that affirms that your state is authorized to request background checks/child abuse clearances for a specific purpose from other states. Keep in mind that your statute must contain language similar to “authorized in other states” in order to process a background check. Provide us a copy of the statute with that portion highlighted.

To obtain an Out-of-State CARI Background Check:

- Click on the Out-of-State hyperlink to obtain a copy of the OOS CARI Form.
- No faxed requests are accepted (unless it is an emergency). Please cite the statute that requires you to obtain the child abuse/neglect background check(s) and identify the reason

for the background check(s) (i.e. employment, domestic/international adoption for resource (foster) care.

- The information that the CARI Unit requires on the individual must include all aliases (married, maiden names, nicknames), race, date of birth, and all addresses where the person(s) resided while living in the State of New Jersey. Please include timeframe (months/years) when the individual lived in New Jersey. If the exact address is not known by the individual, the city or county that he/she lived in during the timeframe will suffice. Social security number is optional.
- Identify the individual making the request, job title and phone number.
- If applicable, include a copy of the State agency license or certification for your agency or facility.
- If other than an Adam Walsh, Hague Convention, or UAA of 2012 request, include a copy of the state statute which compels the disclosure of CARI information.
- Please include a pre-paid return envelope with each request that is submitted since there is no fee charged for the background check. Please note if a CARI is incomplete, it will be returned. Completed CARIs will be processed accordingly and returned to the requesting entity.

Please submit requests to:

State of New Jersey
 Department of Children and Families
 Office of Legal Affairs – CARI Unit
 PO Box 717-4th Floor
 Trenton, NJ 08625-0717
 Requests will be processed within 45 business days.

If you have any additional questions, please contact the CARI Unit at 855-744-4913.

Out-of-State CARI Request Form

Please submit requests to:

Outofstate.cari@dcf.state.nj.us

Or mail to:

State of New Jersey

Department of Children and Families

Office of Legal Affairs – CARI Unit

PO Box 717-4th Floor

Trenton, NJ 08625-0717

APPENDIX L

CARI Consent Form

CHILD ABUSE RECORD INFORMATION (CARI) FORM

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN & FAMILIES

OUT-OF-STATE BACKGROUND CHECK REQUEST

PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY IN INK. COMPLETE THIS FORM AND RETURN IT TO THE ADDRESS AT THE BOTTOM OF THE FORM. ATTACH ADDITIONAL SHEETS IF MORE SPACE IS NEEDED. SEPARATE COPIES OF THIS FORM MUST BE COMPLETED BY EACH REQUIRED APPLICANT. IF THE APPLICATION IS INCOMPLETE, IT WILL BE RETURNED.

Requesting Agency Name: _____

Contact Phone Number: _____ Print Staff Name: _____

Staff signature: _____ Date: _____

Agency Address: _____

***IF YOUR AGENCY OR FACILITY IS LICENSED BY THE STATE, PLEASE ATTACH A COPY OF THE LICENSE. ***

Print your full name (first, middle, last): _____

Previous name, maiden name or nicknames: _____

Date of name change or date of marriage: _____

Home Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Date of Birth: _____ Race: _____

Social Security Number: _____ Sex: _____

NOTE: Pursuant to the Federal Privacy Act of 1974 (P.L. 93-579), the disclosure of your Social Security number is voluntary.

Your Social Security number, race, date of birth, and sex will only be used for the purpose of conducting a Child Abuse Record

Information background check as authorized by the New Jersey State Law (P.L. 2003, C.186)

Full names and birth dates of your child(ren) including, if any, whether living with you or not:

NOTE: If none, check this

box ☐

Child's First Name	Middle Name	Last Name	Date of Birth

Your previous New Jersey addresses and the dates you lived at each address:

1) _____

From: _____ To: _____

(month)
(year)

(year)

(month)

From: _____ To: _____
 (month) (year) (month)
 (year)

From: _____ To: _____

(month) (year) (month)

(year)

Please check applicant type:

_____ **Adoptive Parent** _____ **Foster Parent** _____ **Household Member** _____
Other _____

(explanation)

Please check guidelines for request:

_____ Adam Walsh Child Protection and Safety Act of 2006 (Foster/Adoptive Applicants)

_____ Hague Adoption Convention or Universal Accreditation Act (International Adoptive Applicants)

_____ Other Law or Statute. Please explain.

A COPY OF THE APPLICABLE LAW OR STATUTE MUST BE PROVIDED WITH THIS APPLICATION

All applicants completing this form must read the following and sign below:

I consent to have the DCF-CARI Unit conduct a Child Abuse Record Information check to determine whether an allegation of child abuse or neglect has been substantiated against me. I hereby request and give informed consent for New Jersey Department of Children and Families to release the results of this CARI check to my agency. I release DCF, the Office of Legal Affairs, and the State of New Jersey from any liability for any adverse impact resulting from the release of the CARI check results to the agency.

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

All requests should be mailed to the following address:

Department of Children and Families-Office of Legal Affairs

CARI Unit

P.O. Box 717

Trenton, NJ 08625-0717

(855)-744-4913

FOR CARI Unit USE ONLY

CARI Staff Initials _____

APPENDIX M

Release of Information Form

First Baptist Release of Information

Consent to contact Family Member / Friend / or Organization

Last Name:	First Name:	MI:
Person or Organization to be contacted		
Name:		
Relationship		
Address		
Home Phone #		
Work Phone #		

I give permission to have my family, or above named individual or organization be contacted by a member of the First Baptist Church Risk Management Team.

Signature of The Accused

Date

Signature of Pastor

Date

Signature of Risk Management Representative

Date

APPENDIX N

NJ Request for Driving Record and Driving Information Form



APPLICATION FOR DRIVER HISTORY ABSTRACT

A separate form must be completed for each record requested. You may photocopy this form for your convenience; however, each request must bear an original signature of the requestor. No other form of request will be accepted. The proper fee(s) must accompany each request in the form of a check or money order payable to the New Jersey Motor Vehicle Commission. If you are mailing this form, send to: New Jersey Motor Vehicle Commission, Business & Government Services Unit, P.O. Box 142, Trenton, N.J. 08666-0142. (DO NOT SEND CASH) If you have any questions or if you need to obtain the status of a request sent by mail, please call 609-292-6100.

ALL APPLICANTS MUST COMPLETE SECTIONS A, B & D OF THIS FORM. (Please print clearly)

FEE: \$15 PER RECORD SEARCH

SECTION A - Requestor Information

Applicant's Name:

Business Name (if applicable):

Phone #:

Your File or Claim #:

Street Address:

City:

State:

Zip Code

Applicant's Driver License Number (Photocopy of Your Driver License Must Be Included):

DO-21 (R2/17)

SECTION B - Information Requested (must include complete driver license number or complete driver name, address and date of birth)

I am requesting information on: My own record Another's record**

New Jersey Driver License Number:

Name: Date Of Birth MALE FEMALE

Street Address: City: State: Zip Code:

CHECK ONE: Certified Complete Record (Court / Bar Exam) \$15 PER SEARCH
 Certified 5 Year Record (Insurance / Employment) 15 PER SEARCH

Supporting Documents Requested (Include the specific date you want covered for each document)

Please submit separate checks – One for the Driver Abstract and one for each Supporting Document

Order of Suspension \$15 Date: Schedule of Suspension \$15 Date:

Restoration Notice \$15 Date: Mailing List \$15 Date:

Summons \$15 Date: Accident Report \$5 Date:

**** IF YOU ARE REQUESTING A RECORD THAT IS NOT YOUR OWN, YOU MUST COMPLETE SECTION "C".**

All Applicants Must Read Section "D" and Sign The Application on Page 3

DO-21 (R2/17)

SECTION C – PURPOSE FOR THE REQUEST (required ONLY when requesting another's record)

Please read the below section of the New Jersey Driver Privacy Protection Act, initial next to the permitted use(s) that apply to your specific use of the MVC records.. Then provide a written explanation of the reason for your request and intended use of the information.

USES PERMITTED BY N.J.S.A. 39:2-3.4(c)

_____ For use by any government agency including any court or law enforcement agency carrying out its functions, or any private

person or entity acting on behalf of a federal, State or local agency in carrying out its functions.

_____ For use in connection with matters of motor vehicle or driver safety and theft; motor vehicle emissions; motor vehicle product

alterations, recalls or advisories; performance monitoring of motor vehicles; motor vehicle parts and dealers; motor vehicle

market research activities, including survey research; and the removal of non-owner records from the original owner records of

motor vehicle manufacturers.

_____ For use in the normal course of business by a legitimate business or its agents, employees or contractors, but only;

1. to verify the accuracy of personal information submitted by the individual to the business or agents, employees or contractors; and
2. if such information as so submitted is not correct or is no longer correct, to obtain the correct information, but only for the purposes of preventing fraud by pursuing legal remedies against, or recovering on a debt or security interest against the individual.

_____ For use in connection with any civil, criminal, administrative or arbitral proceeding in any federal, State or local court or agency or before any self-regulating body, including service of process, investigation in anticipation of litigation, and the execution or enforcement of judgments and orders, or pursuant to an order of a federal, State or local court.

_____ For use in educational initiatives, research activities, and for use in producing statistical reports, so long as the personal information is not published, redisclosed, or used to contact individuals and, in the case of educational initiatives, only to organ procurement organizations as aggregated, non-identifying information.

_____ For use by any insurer or insurance support organization, or by a self-insured entity, or its agents, employees, or contractors, in connection with claims investigation activities, antifraud activities, rating or underwriting.

_____ For use in providing notice to the owners of towed or impounded vehicles.

_____ For use by an employer or its agent or insurer to obtain or verify information relating to a holder of a commercial driver's license that is required under the "Commercial Motor Vehicle Safety Act, " 49 U.S.C. App. §2710 et seq.

_____ For use in connection with the operation of private toll transportation facilities.

_____ For use by any requestor, if the requestor demonstrates it has obtained the notarized written consent of the individual to whom the information pertains.

_____ For use by an organ procurement organization designated pursuant to 42 U.S.C. §1320b-8 to serve in the State of New Jersey, or any donor registry established by any such organization, exclusively for the purposes of determining, verifying, and recording organ and tissue donor designation and identity.

(Please explain in detail your reason for requesting the information and how you plan to use it.)

Explanation of reason:

If involving a lawsuit, please state the type of lawsuit and your relationship to the case:

SECTION D – TERMS AND CONDITIONS

The disclosure and use of the personal information¹ contained in the record you have requested is governed by the “New Jersey Drivers’ Privacy Protection Act” (“NJDPPIA”), N.J.S.A. 39:2-3.3 et seq. The NJDPPIA provides that a person who knowingly obtains or discloses information from a motor vehicle record for any use not permitted by the Act is guilty of a crime of the fourth degree and can be held liable, in a civil action in the Superior Court, to the individual to whom the information pertains, including an award of actual damages, punitive damages, and reasonable attorney’s fees and litigation costs.

¹ “Personal Information” means information that identifies an individual, including an individual's photograph; social security number; driver identification number; name; address other than the five-digit zip code; telephone number; and medical or disability information, but does not include information on vehicular accidents, driving violations, and driver's status.

I hereby certify that the foregoing statements and submitted supporting documents are true. I understand that if any of the statements or submitted supporting documents are willfully false, I am subject to punishment. I have read N.J.S.A. 39:2-3.3, et seq. (“NJDPPIA”) and I have initialed all the permitted purposes that apply to my request for online access. I will only use any personal information contained in records I have requested as permitted by the NJDPPIA.

I agree to hold the New Jersey Motor Vehicle Commission (NJMVC) harmless in the event of any errors or omissions in the record and document(s) furnished under this application.

If I am requesting another’s record, I certify that:

- 1) Use of the information provided by the NJMVC pursuant to this Application will only be for the purposes explicitly set forth in this Application;

- 2) The information provided by the NJMVC pursuant to this Application will not be used for the purpose of commercial solicitation or marketing, political canvassing or campaigning or any similar purpose or objective, and I shall not provide such information to any person or entity that seeks to use such information for any of these purposes;
- 3) The information provided by the NJMVC will not be used to conduct surveillance or to investigate or locate an individual for reasons not specifically related to motor vehicle activity, including but not limited to, divorce disputes and matchmaking services;
- 4) In the event of a breach of any of the security obligations or other event requiring notification under applicable law, I shall comply with all applicable State and federal laws that require notification of individuals in the event of unauthorized release of Personal Information, or other event requiring notification, and assume responsibility for informing the NJMVC within twenty four (24) hours and all such appropriate individuals, including the customer whose information is the subject of the release, in accordance with applicable law and to indemnify, hold harmless and defend the State of New Jersey from, and against any claims, damages, or other harm related to such breach or event. All communications must be coordinated with the State of New Jersey by contacting the NJMVC at 609-341-5777.

Signature of Applicant (original signature only - signature stamps are unacceptable)

Date

APPENDIX O

Volunteer Service Application and Criminal History Background

Thank you for volunteering to serve at FBCSO. All applicants must complete this form for any position involving regular unsupervised access to children. The Safeguarding process helps our Church provide a safe and secure environment for children/youth who participate in our programs and use our facilities. It also serves to provide for your protection against any allegations of sexual harassment, misconduct or abuse.

Personal Information

Name (First Middle Last/Maiden:

Name you wish to be printed on your Identification Tag:

Social Security # _____ Date of Birth (MM/DD/YYYY) _____

Current address: _____

City, state, zip _____

Home telephone: _____ cell number _____

Email address _____

Preference for contact: _____ Home phone _____ cell phone _____ email _____

Church Membership

Are you a member of First Baptist Church of South Orange? _____ Yes _____ No

When did you receive right hand of fellowship? Month _____ year _____

If a member at First Baptist for less than 6 months, please identify your previous house of worship

Church name _____ location _____

Phone number _____

CRIMINAL HISTORY AND BACKGROUND CHECK

Note: Information gathered from the Criminal History Records Check will be held in confidence.

Have you been fingerprinted/had a criminal history records check within the past year? Y N

Have you ever been indicted, convicted or pleaded guilty to abuse of a child/youth, or any other crime involving a minor? Y N

Have you ever been indicted, convicted or pleaded guilty to a felony? Y N

References:

Whom may we contact about your character and work ethic? (If 16 and under, submit 2 letters of recommendation)

1. _____

2. _____

APPENDIX P

Certificate and Order of Discharge

**Superior Court of Washington
County of**

State of Washington, Plaintiff,

vs.

Defendant.

SID:

If no SID, use DOB:

Criminal Case No.: _____

Civil Case No.: _____

**Certificate and Order of Discharge
(CRORD)**

**[] and Order re Issuance of Separate
No-Contact Order (CRORDN)**

Clerks action required.

This matter came before the Court pursuant to RCW 9.94A.637. The court considered the petition and any supporting material submitted, and reviewed the relevant court records.

The court received notification from the county clerk that the defendant has paid all ordered legal financial obligations and finds that the defendant has provided adequate verification of completion of the requirements of the sentence, and there appears to be no reason why the court should not discharge the defendant. Therefore,

The court orders that this document be considered a satisfaction of judgment entered under this cause number and that the defendant be **discharged** from the confinement and supervision of the Secretary of the Department of Corrections.

The court orders that this discharge restores the defendant's civil rights not already restored by RCW 29A.08.520. This certificate of discharge:

- is not based on a finding of rehabilitation and does not restore the right to ship, transport, possess or receive firearms or ammunition.
- does not terminate any obligation to register as a sex or kidnapping offender.
- does not terminate any obligation to comply with a no-contact order that excludes or prohibits the defendant from having contact with a specified person or coming within a set distance of any specified location. Any no-contact order filed separately from the judgment and sentence remains in effect.

[] The defendant is subject to a no-contact order that was imposed as a part of the judgment and sentence in this case and was not filed separately. This certificate of discharge is valid and effective only upon entry of a separate civil no-contact order with terms and conditions identical to those imposed in the judgment and sentence in this case. The court orders the defendant to comply with the separate no-contact order reissued under a new cause number on this date or dated _____.

Dated: _____

Judge/Print Name

Presented by:

Approved for entry without further notice:

Defendant/Attorney for Defendant/WSBA No. _____

Deputy Prosecuting Attorney/WSBA No. _____

Cert. and Ord. of Discharge (CRORD, CRORDN) - Page 1 of 1
WPF CR 08.0650 (7/2009) RCW 9.94A.637



**APPENDIX: Q****Vol.** M h Iwww.bioapplicant.com/nj**App.**

ormerry age orpl O DC

(1) Originating Agency Number (ORI #) NJ920610Z		(2) Category YSB		(3) Statute Number 15A:3A-1	
(4) Reason for Fingerprinting YOUTH SERVING ORGANIZATION VOLUNTEER				(5) Fee VB1 \$26.00	
(7) Contributor's Case # (Unique Identifier) G13002				(8) Miscellaneous	
(9) First Name		(10) MI	(11) Last Name		
(12) Daytime Phone Number () .		(13) Social Security Number	(14) Date of Birth	(15) Height	(16) Weight
(17) Maiden Name (if married female)		(18) Place of Birth (U.S. State -for US Citizen; Country for all others)		(19) Country of Citizenship	
(20) Home Address Address City State Zip					
(21) Gender (Select one) Male () Female () Both ()	(22) Hair Color (Indicate most predominant color, one only)	(23) Eye Color	(24) Race (Select One) A Asian! Pacific Islander (includes Asian Indian) B Black w White (Includes Hispanic! Spanish Origin) U Unknown I American Indian! Alaska Native		
(25) Occupation	(26) Employer (Name) Employer Address				

APPLICANT INFORMATION- READ THIS FORM CAREFULLY AND FOLLOW ALL INSTRUCTIONS TO COMPLETE THE FINGERPRINT PROCESS. You MUST present this completed form at your appointment to be FINGERPRINTED. NO EXCEPTIONS ALLOWED. Applicants without forms or with incomplete forms will not be printed.

Identification IS REQUIRED- ACCEPTABLE ID REQUIREMENTS -ID MUST include Photo, Name, Address (Home/ Employer) and Date of Birth. Acceptable ID **MUST** be issued by a Federal, State, County or Municipal entity for Identification purposes. Examples of acceptable ID are: 1) Valid Photo Driver's License or Valid Photo ID issued by any State DMV or NJ MVC, 2) Passport. Acceptable ID **MUST** meet all of the underlined requirements above and **MUST** be present on one (1) ID. Combinations of documents are **NOT** acceptable. If acceptable ID is not presented you will not be fingerprinted. For applicants who are required to pay for their own fingerprinting fees, payment is required at the time of scheduling. Payment may be made with a credit card or electronic debit from a checking account. Remember your account will automatically be debited. An \$11 fee is charged to cover the cost of a scheduled appointment for applicants who do not cancel/reschedule by noon on the business day prior to your scheduled appointment (Saturday noon for Monday appointments). All appointments can be canceled/rescheduled via the web without penalty if cancellation requirements are met. The \$11 fee will also apply for applicants who are turned away from the printing sites due to the inability to present proper ID, who fail to present this completed Universal Fingerprint Form provided to you by your requesting agency or employer, or who are turned away because information on this form does not match the information provided during the scheduling process. You will be refunded State and F.

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- Collaborator, Interview by Valerie Pyles. Crisis Intervention Provider (February 1). 2018.
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