



Churchwide Statement on Sexual Abuse

For consideration by the Delegate Assembly at KC2015

Mennonite Church USA's vision statement calls us "... to grow as communities of grace, joy and peace." The 10-year Purposeful Plan (developed in 2011) defines seven priorities of a missional church, dedicated to following Jesus' way of love and nonviolence toward all.¹

These commitments call us to give attention to the tragedy of sexual abuse in our families, churches and communities. According to data collected from the *2006 Church Member Profile*, 21 percent of women in Mennonite Church USA congregations and 5.6 percent of men reported having experienced sexual abuse or violation. We lament that sexual abuse exists not only in our society but also within our own homes, congregations and institutions.

This is not what God intended. God created human beings in God's image and declared this very good. God's incarnation in Jesus also affirms that human bodies are good. Our sexuality is part of this good order, created to enable us to enjoy companionship and intimacy and to form families and build community. Our spirituality and our sexuality are not disconnected or competing aspects of our lives but express our longing for intimacy with God and with others.

When people violate others sexually, the church is called to be a place of healing. Yet we confess that we have often responded with denial, fear and self-preservation. We have tended to listen to voices who have positional power, rather than to those who have been violated and those who are most vulnerable. In this way, we have enabled sexual abuse to continue while silencing and disregarding the testimony of victims. We lament that our inaction permits abuse to continue and the ways we obstruct God's healing.

Abuse wounds the body of Christ. Whenever sexual boundaries are crossed, the wounds extend beyond the direct victims. Abuse also harms the friends and families of both victims and perpetrators, those called upon to bind up the wounds, and the church itself. We join our anguished cries with all who have been traumatized in this way.

We confess we are uncomfortable with the pain and anger of survivors as well as the behavior of perpetrators. In our discipline processes we struggle to find ways to support survivors as they reclaim their lives. We have often failed to focus first on their needs; we lament our tendency to give more attention to the perpetrator than to victims and survivors.

Finally, we have failed to focus on teaching and supporting healthy sexuality. We have failed to promote relationships that are truly committed, mutual and deeply respectful. In doing so, we have minimized and neglected the needs of those who suffer from sexual violence and abuse.

For all of this, we repent and seek to change our ways.

We resolve to tell the truth about sexual abuse; hold abusers accountable; acknowledge the seriousness of their sin; listen with care to those who have been wounded; protect vulnerable persons from injury; work restoratively for justice; and hold out hope that wounds will be healed, forgiveness offered, and relationships established or reestablished in healthy ways.

What we will do

(See Appendix A: Actions and commitments for more information on each action.)

As congregations:

1. Develop and teach healthy, wholesome sexuality.
2. Make sure that child protection policies and procedures are in place and followed, including compliance with state-mandated regulations or laws requiring training for volunteers and child care workers and the reporting of any violations.
3. Teach members the realities of sexualized violence, especially by church leaders or other trusted individuals.
4. Ensure that worship services and sermons are sensitive to the needs of victims/survivors.
5. Give attention to systems that create and sustain institutionalized sexual violence (ranging from the mainstream entertainment industry to pornography and prostitution) by feeding a climate that condones or excuses violence against women and children.
6. Make sure pastors' job descriptions are manageable and leaders are practicing self-care.

¹ The 2011 Purposeful Plan identifies these priorities: Christian Formation, Christian Community, Holistic Christian Witness, Stewardship, Leadership Development, Undoing Racism and Advancing Intercultural Transformation, and Church-to-Church Relationships.

As church institutions:

1. Require training in sexuality and professional ethics as part of the credentialing process as well as in continuing education for all ministers.
2. Require all agencies to develop and implement clear, accessible and public policies on sexual harassment and abuse.
3. Provide consultation and adequate supervision for all church leaders. Make sure job descriptions are manageable and employees are practicing self-care.
4. Give attention to systems that create and sustain institutionalized sexual violence (ranging from the mainstream entertainment industry to pornography and prostitution) by feeding a climate that condones or excuses violence against women and children.
5. Examine religious teachings that make it difficult for victims to protect themselves or speak up when they have been violated and hurt.
6. Teach and model mutuality between men and women and challenge the ongoing legacy of patriarchy in the church.

Sponsors: Mennonite Church USA Discernment Group on sexual abuse and the church

Appendix A: Actions and commitments

For congregations:

1. Develop and teach healthy, wholesome sexuality. Create space for conversation and education and remove the secrecy and shame attached to sexuality. Work to dispel the idea that sexuality is “private,” and teach that it is part of our life together as followers of Jesus.
 - a. Offer Sunday school or other classes for all ages. Use resources such as the *Circle of Grace* curriculum (available from DovesNest.net) and [Body and Soul: Healthy Sexuality and the People of God](#) (Faith & Life Resources, 2010).
 - b. Teach sexual literacy. For example, teach children correct names for body parts and their right to say “No!” when something feels wrong or uncomfortable.
 - c. Place written resources in the church library and equip parents for teaching and modeling healthy sexuality at home.
2. Make sure child protection policies and procedures are in place and followed. These should include:
 - a. Safe meeting places with windows in all interior doors.
 - b. Two adults present when meeting with children and youth.
 - c. Screening for all staff and volunteers.
 - d. Regular training for parents, teachers and youth workers about sexual harassment and abuse.
 - e. Procedures for reporting disclosures or allegations of abuse. These should include clear guidance about when police and/or child protection offices should be notified.
 - f. Compliance with all state-mandated laws/regulations for reporting and training.
 - g. Guidelines for relating to a known sex offender in the congregation.
3. Teach members the realities of sexualized violence, especially by church leaders or other trusted individuals.
 - a. Teach everyone about consent and who can ethically/legally consent to sexual activity. Identify power dynamics that render consent impossible (underage, student and/or employee, disabled, etc.)
 - b. Use correct language to speak about sexual abuse; it is not adultery or an affair but a misuse of power, and when committed by a pastor or church leader, a serious violation of one’s professional role.
 - c. Make available in public places (such as restrooms) information about how to report sexual abuse or pastoral sexual misconduct.
4. Ensure that worship services and sermons are sensitive to the needs of victims/survivors.
 - a. Name the sin of abuse in public prayers and laments.
 - b. In teaching about anger, forgiveness, loving enemies and obedience, be aware of how abuse victims and survivors may hear these instructions. Make sure they will hear good news and an invitation to healing and wholeness.
5. Give attention to systems that create and sustain institutionalized sexual violence (ranging from the mainstream entertainment industry to pornography and prostitution) by feeding a climate that condones or excuses violence against women and children.
6. Make sure pastors’ job descriptions are manageable and leaders are practicing self-care.
 - a. Create clear job descriptions and regular performance evaluations. Ensure that workload and stress are manageable.
 - b. Provide generous leave policies, including opportunities for education and sabbaticals, as well as supports such as accountability, consultation and supervision.
 - c. Share leadership between pastors and lay members and cultivate relationships that are healthy and transparent. Support pastors in tending their family relationships.

For church institutions:

1. Require training in sexuality and professional ethics as part of the credentialing process, as well as in continuing education, for all ministers. Training should include an understanding of ethical guidelines regarding boundaries, power and authority, and sexual conduct, so that ministers are able to:
 - a. Understand healthy interpersonal boundaries as essential to establishing and maintaining trust.
 - b. Recognize the issues of power in our sexual ethics.

- c. Understand the importance of professional ethics, including the denomination's policies and expectations.
 - d. Be knowledgeable about human sexuality, one's own sexual self and how to deal with sexual feelings that may arise for congregants and vice versa.
 - e. Be familiar with resources for sexual abuse prevention and the denomination's policies for reporting and responding to sexual violation.
 - f. Appreciate the connection between sexual integrity and spiritual wholeness.
 - g. Be conversant with scriptural and theological resources for all of the above.²
2. Require agencies to develop and implement clear, accessible and public guidelines and policies on sexual harassment and abuse.
 - a. Provide training and assistance on prevention as well as procedures for responding to sexual violation.
 - b. Maintain a list of trusted professionals who have experience in dealing with sexual violation by church leaders and require agencies to use their expertise when responding to allegations of abuse.
 - c. Develop ways to hold agencies accountable for implementing these policies.
 3. Provide consultation and adequate supervision for all church leaders. Provide ongoing training on best practices of ministry in areas such as cyber safety, healthy communication, clergy self-care, life-long sexuality education, and ministry with sex offenders.³
 4. Seek to undo systems that create and sustain institutionalized sexual violence (ranging from the mainstream entertainment industry to pornography and prostitution) by feeding a climate that condones or excuses violence against women and children. Provide training and resources for congregations to use in addressing issues such as date rape, pornography, prostitution and sexual slavery.
 5. Examine religious teachings that make it difficult for victims to protect themselves or speak up when they have been violated and hurt.
 - a. Be especially alert to teachings that advocate:
 - i. Physical punishment of children.
 - ii. Unquestioning obedience to those in authority or leadership.
 - iii. Suffering and bearing the cross as signs of discipleship.
 - iv. Submission of women to their husbands.
 - v. Forgiveness and reconciliation without sufficient attention to justice.
 - b. Provide alternative teachings that are nonviolent and life-giving to all, such as:
 - i. Promoting restorative discipline practices.
 - ii. Encouraging questions and the ability to trust one's instincts and speak up when something feels wrong.
 - iii. Stressing God's concern for life, healing and wholeness and that Jesus' death resulted from his care for those who were suffering and willingness to challenge the forces that excluded and oppressed people.
 - iv. Promoting deep respect and mutuality (mutual submission) between marriage partners.
 - v. Practicing restorative justice as part of the movement toward forgiveness and reconciliation.
 6. Teach and model mutuality between men and women and challenge the ongoing legacy of patriarchy in the church. This should include:
 - a. Attention to complementary teams of male and female leadership.
 - b. Respectful language in all relationships.
 - c. Listening to all voices in making decisions.
 - d. Using healthy conflict resolution skills.
 - e. Recognizing that those in authority need to earn their trust and that their positions are not divinely ordained.
 - f. Stressing God's concern for life, healing and wholeness, especially for those being oppressed or victimized.⁴

² Adapted from UM (United Methodist) Sexual Ethics, at <http://umsexualethics.org/Education/SeminaryCurriculumDevelopment.aspx>

³ Adapted from UM Sexual Ethics, at <http://umsexualethics.org/Education/SeminaryCurriculumDevelopment.aspx>

⁴ Adapted from *Abuse: Response and Prevention*, Mennonite Central Committee booklet, at <http://mcc.org/learn/what/categories/abuse-prevention>.

Appendix B: Lenses for understanding sexual abuse

1. Viewing sexual abuse through a biblical lens

Christians affirm that God created the world and declared it good. This includes human beings and their bodies. The *Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective* declares:

We believe that human beings were created good, in the image of God (Genesis 1:26-27, Romans 8:29). ... Because both Adam and Eve were equally and wonderfully made in the divine image, God's will from the beginning has been for women and men to live in loving and mutually helpful relationships with each other.⁵

In addition, human sexuality is one of the good ways in which people express and receive love. The Song of Solomon provides a wonderful example of sexual desire expressed in a joyfully mutual, respectful and committed relationship. Both individuals share their delight in and yearning to please the other without any need to control, misuse or dominate.

Yet the Bible is also painfully honest and shares heartbreaking accounts of people violating others and using them for their own sexual gratification. 2 Samuel 13 details how David's son Amnon plotted to rape his half-sister, Tamar. Remarkably, there is no suggestion that she is to blame. Rather, responsibility lies with the men: Amnon, of course; but also his friend Jonadab, who encouraged Amnon to get what he wanted; and King David, who participated in the scheme. Although David became angry when he learned what happened, he did nothing to support his daughter or hold his son accountable.

Why was David so oblivious to this tragedy and so unable to confront his son? Tellingly, just two chapters earlier, David had done something similar with Bathsheba. He had used his power as king to demand that she be brought to him and then arranged to have her husband killed. Sadly, we know nothing of what Bathsheba felt or what life was like for her in David's house.

Indeed, Bathsheba is often blamed for David's sin, as if she had provoked or invited his attention. Unfortunately, blaming women for introducing immorality is as old as our oldest religious traditions, including the biblical narratives. Particular interpretations of the creation of humans as well as the "fall" of humanity designate the woman as a poor imitation of the first human creature—and therefore subjected to him—and as the conduit through which human sin entered the world. Woman's nature, according to many interpretations of the "fall" narrative, is duplicitous, ignorant, willful, evil and seductive.

As Phyllis Trible has noted in *God and the Rhetoric of Sexuality*, conversations between the Bible and American ideology illuminate narratives that influence both the concept of manifest destiny and the liberation motif of those who champion human and civil rights. Trible notes that traditional interpretations of the narrative in Genesis 2:7–3:24 proclaim male superiority and female inferiority as the will of God. Woman is the temptress and troublemaker, dependent upon and dominated by her husband. The biblical creation narrative, Trible asserts, is a love story gone awry. Yet it is not the only word in Scripture. As such, there is room within the biblical narrative to craft a foundation for liberation. Trible reads Song of Songs as a liberating text, where the voices of the lovers "extol and enhance" the creation of sexuality in Genesis 2.

A constant thread running through all of Scripture is the directive for God's people to care for the most marginalized: the widows, the fatherless (or children in general), the strangers and the poor. The community is to care for and protect these vulnerable populations.

The narratives of Jesus' encounters with women, including foreign women and women who were estranged from their communities because of illness or allegations of immoral behavior, indicate a reframing of notions that render women as secondary humans. In the gospels, women are persons in their own right with agency and gifts. Jesus holds persons accountable for their actions, including actions that violate the body integrity of another person. Marie Fortune notes that Jesus' teaching on lust (Matthew 5:28) can be interpreted to mean that men are responsible not to violate women through any thoughts or actions and

⁵ *Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective*, Article 6, "The Creation and Calling of Human Beings," Herald Press, 1995, 28.

that for a man to desire to possess and dominate a woman is an offense against *her*. Applied to the experience of sexual violence, the passage does not emphasize promiscuity—it cautions against the potential for sexual coercion in thought, word and deed (Fortune, *Sexual Violence: The Sin Revisited*, 103).

Leaders in the early church continued to emphasize respect and mutual submission, and to reject self-indulgence or selfishness.⁶ Indeed, Paul urged believers not to use their “... freedom as an opportunity for self-indulgence. ... For the whole law is summed up in a single commandment, ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself’” (Galatians 5:13-14).

Today, all baptized disciples of Jesus—men and women—are responsible to pull back the veils of silence, secrecy and shame that hide the sin of sexual exploitation and male privilege in our communities. With this document, we renew our resolve to walk in the light, “until all of us come ... to maturity, to the measure of the full stature of Christ” (Ephesians 4:13).

2. Viewing sexual abuse through a cultural lens

For centuries, western Christians have lived in a context where sexual abuse, including abuse by priests, pastors and other church leaders, has been largely ignored, and the wounds of those who have suffered abuse have been largely unattended. We as Mennonite congregations have participated in this sin, at least minimizing the abuse and blaming or discrediting the victims. Recognizing and dealing openly with this sin is painful. Nevertheless, we are grateful to God and the leading of the Spirit that we live in a time and place in which the injury caused by sexualized violence is becoming widely known and condemned. We believe this opens the door to the possibility of healthier and more genuinely Christian relationships between women and men.

We also acknowledge that some teaching about sexuality contribute to sexualized violence, including a distorted notion that our bodies are shameful and bad. Other distortions include beliefs, endorsed and supported throughout history, that some bodies are more valued—the primary example or standard for humanity—while others are less valued. Violence toward the latter is often overlooked or even condoned. We see this demonstrated in the violence (e.g., lynching, sexual assault, murder) experienced by people of color throughout our history. These patterns are also evident in the disparities between the ways in which people of different racial/ethnic backgrounds are charged and sentenced for crimes. White men who are charged and convicted of sexualized violence against women of color routinely receive less harsh sentencing than men of color who are convicted of sexualized violence against white women.

According to ethicist Kelly Brown Douglas, Christianity that is deeply influenced by platonic thought has emphasized the spirit and disparaged the body, thereby giving rise to Christian participation in attacks against Black bodies. This teaching lays the false foundation for belief that certain bodies may be easily disregarded and allows for the dehumanization—or even demonization—of those who are defined only by their sexuality. This foundation has allowed for the participation of Christian people in the lynching and sexual abuse of the bodies of both Black men and women.

Additionally, some persons have used Scripture to uphold the belief/practice that women and children are the property of men for their service and pleasure. These distortions of Scripture add fuel to the economic and cultural conditions that feed the sex trade, prostitution, pornography, advertising, the fashion industry, etc. This distortion also leads to shaming girls and women for their sexuality while at the same time ignoring or excusing boys and men who engage in abusive sexual behavior.

These distorted notions also create conditions for some who have institutional power to create rules and regulations that benefit them and to disregard or ignore rules and regulations that might hold them accountable and protect those who are vulnerable. This enables those with power to overlook and abuse less valued persons, such as those who are poor, LGBTQ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer), disabled or female.

⁶ Ephesians 5:21, 25-33.

3. Viewing sexual abuse through a justice lens

“Justice” has a variety of meanings in our context and English language. In American society, “justice” often means following legally prescribed procedures (e.g., “justice has been done” when courts make a decision where the rules have been followed properly) or retribution (e.g., one who has stolen from another should “pay” for that injustice by spending time in prison). There are also other meanings.

As Mennonite Christians, we understand “justice” to mean “restorative justice.”⁷ This understanding of justice is intimately connected to the biblical term *shalom*, which refers to the well-being of the community.⁸ When there is *shalom*, things are the way they should be, and relationships are right. When anyone in the community impoverishes, injures or abuses another, they sin. Things are not OK. Restorative justice refers to processes through which we work to restore relationships and well-being. Restorative justice is especially attentive to the poor, weak and oppressed since they are typically the main victims when *shalom* is absent.

A number of elements are needed for right relationships to be restored. We list some of them here, noting especially how they apply when we seek to restore *shalom* when it has been broken by sexual abuse.⁹ In tending to these elements, congregations can be part of a network of support for individuals and families.

- a. **Truth-telling.** The sin of sexual abuse must not remain hidden or minimized if relationships are to be righted within the community that is affected by it. This does not mean demonizing offenders, but it does mean naming abuse as sin that disrupts *shalom*. This may include working with those who have been violated to contact the appropriate local governing authorities to report the abuse, which is required by law in cases involving children. Congregations can still provide support and resources for a restorative justice process when the legal system is involved.
- b. **Acknowledgement.** Giving the victims space to tell their story and stating clearly that what was done to them was wrong.
- c. **Compassion.** Listening with loving care to those who have been wounded, taking seriously their accounts of their experiences and being willing to suffer with them. This has often been lacking in our dealings with sexual abuse in the past. It also means treating the one accused of abuse with care and fairness in the midst of the difficult process of confronting him or her with evidence of abuse.
- d. **Protecting vulnerable ones from further injury.** We should surround those who have been abused with support and seek to make sure that they and other potential victims are safe from any further abuse.
- e. **Accountability.** Holding abusers accountable for their actions, refusing to blame victims and refusing to accept excuses or minimize abusive behavior.
- f. **Restitution.** In order to make things right, efforts must be made to find ways of making restitution to the victims; restoring to them what has been taken, insofar as and in whatever ways are possible.
- g. **Validation of the victims/survivors.** Stating clearly that they were wronged, setting them free from shame and restoring them to the community.
- h. **Repentance.** For right relationships to be fully restored, abusers need to own up to their guilt. They need to confess, take responsibility for the abuse, make long-term changes in beliefs and behavior and make restitution. According to Ezekiel 18:30-32, “... repentance involves getting a ‘new heart.’”¹⁰
- i. **Forgiveness.** This, like other elements listed here, cannot be forced, demanded or rushed. In fact, if the victim forgives too quickly, forgiveness can seem to make things right before there is a chance to understand the serious harm done and what repentance and restoration really entail. Yet the vision of *shalom*, the Christian gospel, holds out the hope that, over time, forgiveness can lead to further well-being.

⁷ See *Changing Lenses: A New Focus for Crime and Justice* by Howard Zehr and *Beyond Retribution: A New Testament Vision for Justice, Crime and Punishment* by Christopher Marshall.

⁸ Perry Yoder, *Shalom: The Bible’s Word for Salvation, Justice and Peace*. Evangel Publishing House, 1998.

⁹ Points a–g are adapted from Marie Fortune, *Is Nothing Sacred?* Cleveland, OH: United Church Press, 1999.

¹⁰ *Understanding sexual abuse by a church leader or caregiver*, 2nd edition. Mennonite Central Committee, 2011, 20.

Survivors may choose forgiveness as a gift to themselves so they can move on and live their lives with joy and peace. Ultimately, forgiveness is a process she or he "... experiences by the grace of God, so that the abuse does not dominate her or his life anymore. It is a process of letting go and moving on in healthy ways."¹¹

For the offender, receiving forgiveness can mean gaining freedom from debilitating guilt and accepting his or her need for accountability. Seeking forgiveness means acknowledging the seriousness of the sin and releasing any anger or bitterness toward those who reported the abuse and are holding him or her accountable. It also means doing the hard psychological, emotional and spiritual work of making sure he or she will not abuse again.

For all, including the whole community affected by the abuse, forgiveness can mean naming both the grievous sin with its impact on others and the unmerited grace that cannot be earned but only received.

- j. **Restoration of *shalom*: reconciliation.** The ultimate hope of restorative justice is to establish or reestablish right relations in the community. In situations of sexual violence, reestablishing personal relationships between victims and their offenders may not be possible or wise. At the same time, the larger community can promote healing and safety for those who have been harmed; protect those who are vulnerable; and insist on learning, accountability and support for those who have violated others. In this way, all can move toward the vision of God's *shalom* for all.

4. Definitions

Sexual abuse refers to sexualized behavior that occurs in a relationship where one party has more power than the other and meaningful consent is difficult, if not impossible. Sexual abuse takes advantage of another in order to use, control or intimidate him or her for one's own purposes. It is violence that has been sexualized.¹² It can include actual physical contact of a sexual nature, such as hugs, kisses, touching, assault and intercourse. Sexual abuse can also involve more covert acts such as using sexual innuendo or pornography in the relationship, emotional and spiritual manipulation, or inappropriate disclosures of a personal nature regarding sexual matters.

Sexual harassment is any unwanted and unwelcome behavior of a sexual or gender-specific nature. It can interfere with a person's ability to work, get an education or engage in ministry, among other things. It often takes two forms:

- *Quid pro quo* harassment occurs when someone is pressured to trade sexual favors in return for a job, promotion or grade.
- Environmental harassment refers to unwelcome sexual behavior that creates a hostile environment. It can include sexually suggestive remarks, jokes or gestures, displaying degrading pictures or objects, unwelcome propositions and unwanted physical contact such as touching, hugging, pinching, patting or other sexual demands.

Sexual immorality: While all sexual abuse is immoral and sinful, not all sexual immorality is abusive. Sexually immoral behavior can occur when individuals of relatively equal power voluntarily engage in intimate, sexual acts outside of a committed, monogamous relationship and/or violate their marriage covenant by engaging in such acts with someone other than their spouse.

Professional power and responsibility: It is important for all professionals to recognize the power they hold by virtue of their training and position in the community. This includes pastors, teachers, counselors, administrators or anyone in a position of trust or leadership. Even when they may not feel powerful, it is important for leaders to recognize that others see them as strong and authoritative and often defer to them. Understanding this dynamic helps guard against misusing power or overstepping appropriate boundaries. Because they have greater power, leaders always bear primary responsibility to protect the boundaries of the relationship. It is also their responsibility to act in the best interests of the person with lesser power, rather than to use the person or exploit any of his or her vulnerabilities.

¹¹ Ibid, 20.

¹² Some use the term "sexualized violence" to address the fact that great violence has been done to the person.

Appendix C: Resources

Sermons

- [Untold Stories \(2 Samuel 13:1-21\)](#)—Meghan Larissa Good, Albany (Ore.) Mennonite Church

Books and pamphlets

- *Body and Soul, Healthy Sexuality and the People of God*. Faith & Life Resources, 2010.
- Cooper-White, Pamela. *The Cry of Tamar, Violence against Women and the Church's Response*, 2nd edition. Fortress Press, 2012.
- Fortune, Marie M. *Sexual Violence, The Sin Revisited*. The Pilgrim Press, 2005.
- Gaede, Beth Ann, editor. *When a Congregation is Betrayed: Responding to Clergy Misconduct*. The Alban Institute, 2006.
- Heggen, Carolyn Holderread. *Sexual Abuse in Christian Homes and Churches*. Herald Press, 1993. Reprinted Wipf & Stock, 2006.
- Jung, Patricia Beattie and Darryl W. Stephens, eds. *Professional Sexual Ethics: A Holistic Ministry Approach*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2013.
- McClintock, Karen A. *Preventing sexual abuse in congregations: A resource for leaders*. The Alban Institute, 2004.
- Melton, Joy Thornburg. *Safe Sanctuaries for Ministers: Reducing the Risk of Abuse in the Church*. Discipleship Resources, 2009.
- Melton, Joy Thornburg. *Safe Sanctuaries: Reducing the risk of abuse in the church for children and youth*. Discipleship Resources, 2008.
- *Mennonite Quarterly Review*, January 2015.
- Smith, Andrea. *Sexual Violence and American Indian Genocide*. South End Press, 2005.
- *Understanding sexual abuse by a church leader or caregiver*, 2nd edition. Mennonite Central Committee, 2011: <http://mcc.org/learn/what/categories/abuse-prevention>
- West, Traci C. *Disruptive Christian Ethics: When Racism and Women's Lives Matter*. Westminster John Knox Press, 2006.
- Yoder, Carolyn. *The Little Book of Trauma Healing: When Violence Strikes and Community Security is Threatened*. Good Books, 2005.

Websites

- Clergy Sexual Misconduct Awareness and Prevention, Baylor University: <http://www.baylor.edu/clergysexualmisconduct>
- Dove's Nest, Faith Communities Keeping Children and Youth Safe: <http://DovesNest.net/>
- Godly Response to Abuse in the Christian Environment (GRACE): <http://netgrace.org/>
- The Hope of Survivors: <http://www.thehopeofsurvivors.com/>
- Safe Church Project, Samaritan Counseling Center: <http://scclanc.org/clergy-congregation-care/safe-church/>
- Our Stories Untold: <http://www.ourstoriesuntold.com>
- Survivors Network of Persons Abused by Priests: <http://www.snapnetwork.org>
- Andrea Smith blog: <https://andrea366.wordpress.com>
- United Methodist Sexual Ethics: <http://umsexualethics.org>