

From the team who brought you GIFTS OUTSIDE THE BOX
SAFEGUARDING CONFERENCE

Theology of Safeguarding

Tim Carter
 Director of Safeguarding
 1/2/22



15/02/2022


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All are welcome



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The way in

Safety first
 Initial reactions to the subject
 What are the desired outcomes?



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The areas we are going to consider


Where has this report come from?
 Why now?
 What is in it?
 What is coming next?

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Where has this report come from?

More than thirty years of hearing stories from survivors
 A church responding to working with (sex) offenders
 Research, reports, child deaths
 Growing public awareness and expectations of safety



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Why now?

Methodist Past Cases Review

Independent Inquiry into
Child Sexual Abuse –
the Truth Commission



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Ten lessons

'It's a pastoral issue not a governance issue'

1. **Recognising possible abuse**
 - Behaviour which might be of concern is still not recognised
 - In particular, behaviour which is potentially grooming behaviour, is not recognised.
 - Patterns of worrying behaviour are not recognised
2. **The impact of abuse on those who have been harmed is huge.**
It is deep and lasting.....and there are people in church congregations who have been harmed in the past, whom we won't know about
3. **Abuse which has occurred in the church setting is even more distressing and a devastating breach of trust**
4. **There is a need for the further development of listening skills**

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5. **People in the Church are still not responding effectively to serious situations**
6. **People find it difficult to put respectful uncertainty into practice**
It is difficult to recognise that those who are colleagues and friends, and who have done good things, can also do harm
7. **Responding well to the church congregation in difficult safeguarding situations continues to be a challenge**
8. **Recording - practice has improved but record keeping is still not consistent enough**
9. **Referrals - effective working with other agencies still requires development**
10. **There has been, and remains, insufficient understanding of the significance of safeguarding concerns about those who hold leadership roles in the Methodist Church**

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The Methodist Church



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1. This hearing – 38 religious organisations
2. Six areas of consideration:
 - CSA and religious organisations
 - Barriers to reporting abuse
 - CP policies and procedures (including training)
 - Responding to allegations of abuse
 - Supplementary schools and out of school settings
 - Inspection and oversight
3. Two recommendations/ requirements:
 - All religious organisations to have a CP policy and procedures and report back to the Inquiry in 6 months
 - Government to look at regulation of out sup schools and Ofsted inspection of settings that are a primary place of education
4. Final overall report this year will include recommendations on:
 - Mandatory reporting
 - Vetting and barring – DBS
 - Regulation of religious organisations
 - Legislation to meet minimum CP standards

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So what does this mean for the church ?

- **Opportunity** – an opportunity to get on the front foot. To study and assess the six areas of the report to see how we are shaping up and what needs to be improved
The gospel according to IICSA or an approach according to our faith and basic principles and values? Going beyond
- **Public perception** – are we perceived as a safe place for children to be?
Managing the media and communications strategy
- **Safe recruitment / Training / Policy** – the three components of a comprehensive approach to safeguarding (including vulnerable adults)

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The Theology report
What is in it?



1. Theological roots
2. Abuse and the human condition
3. Theological thinking and how it is used
4. Failure to challenge inappropriate and unacceptable behavior and maintain appropriate interpersonal boundaries
5. Welcoming people who have experienced abuse
6. Grappling with power (Wed)
7. Forgiveness and change (Thurs)

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All are welcome?

Failure to challenge inappropriate and unacceptable behavior and maintain appropriate interpersonal boundaries & Welcoming people who have experienced abuse

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All are welcome – into safety

Anti-bullying policy
DA policy and awareness raising
Focus on vulnerable adults – dementia friendly churches and financial abuse
Spiritual abuse training

Theology as a tool for mission:
Discussion guides for churches
Input for Local Preachers and ministers in training
Further reflections on forgiveness



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Questions for discussion

1. Immediate reactions to what I have heard
2. Do I feel clear about the direction the church is taking in relation to welcoming everyone?
3. What are these implications for me in the role(s) I play in the church?
4. If we were meeting together again in five years time, what will have changed?

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How does safeguarding influence who we are as God's people?
Three sessions reflecting on the theology of safeguarding:

ALL ARE WELCOME	POWER IN THE CHURCH	FORGIVENESS
Tues 1st Feb 2022 10-11:30am	Wed 2nd Feb 2022 7-8:30pm	Thurs 3rd Feb 2022 1.30-3pm



Book online:
bit.ly/safeguardingcont2022

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