



Safe Church Basics:

Five Steps to a Safer Church

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Christian Reformed Church
**Safe Church
Ministry**

Do you feel overwhelmed by the task of making your church safe and resistant to abuse? Are you struggling with identifying what more your church can do to prevent and respond to abuse? Follow the five steps below to become a safer church.

- ☐ **Assess Risk:** Using our new Safe Church Assessment tool, consider conducting a risk assessment that determines how your church can do better in preventing abuse.
- ☐ **Make/Revise Policy:** Every church should have a safe church policy that is updated every 3-5 years and that outlines principles for abuse prevention and response.
- ☐ **Screen and Train Leaders and Volunteers:** All church leaders and volunteers should know what constitutes abuse, how to spot it, and what is expected of them to prevent and respond to abuse well.
- ☐ **Practice Being Restorative:** In restorative congregations, all in the church interact with empathy and respect, listening with one another as they go forward as the body of Christ even amidst conflict.
- ☐ **Respond to Abuse with Justice and Compassion:** In safe churches, leaders take allegations of abuse seriously and follow the church's policy to ensure a just and compassionate response.

<https://bit.ly/SaferChurch2022>

The artwork pictured is a textile piece titled "With the Wind #1" by Lorraine Roy, an artist from Dundas, Ontario, who draws inspiration from the vital connections found throughout nature (visit lroyart.com). We invite you to envision along with us the steps toward congregational health and safety like a tree planted by living water.



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