

## **CHURCH REPORTING OF CLERGY SEXUAL MISCONDUCT**

The Baptist General Convention of Texas maintains a confidential file of church incidents related to sexual misconduct of clergy. The Convention relies on local churches to provide information about such cases. A case is put into the file only when a minister confesses to the abuse of sexual misconduct; there is a legal conviction; or there is substantial evidence that the abuse took place. The issue of whether substantial evidence is present is always reviewed by Convention attorneys. The purpose of this file is fourfold:

1. To encourage churches where the misconduct has occurred to provide all possible support for victims. Victims include those directly affected by the abuse, the extended family of the abused, the church itself, and the family of the perpetrator.
2. To secure help and counseling for the abuser to enable restoration to health and family.
3. To provide a source of information to other Baptist General Convention of Texas churches for their protection against sexual predators. See [Request For Information on Clergy Sexual Misconduct](#).
4. To offer a form of protection for churches where the misconduct has occurred from liability derived from having kept the abuse secret.

Information concerning instances of Clergy Sexual Misconduct/Abuse should be sent to the office of Minister/Church Relations of the Baptist General Convention of Texas. Information of this nature will only be received from an elected officer of the church, including but not limited to the Chair of Deacons, Chairs of Personnel Committees, and the church's legal Trustees. Information will also be received from the officers of Baptist institutions and organizations.

Information related to sexual misconduct of clergy should include such items as: statements of confession by offending clergy; documentation of legal conviction; testimonies or depositions of victims and accounts of church action when confession or conviction are not forthcoming. Testimonies and/or depositions will aid legal counsel for the Baptist General Convention of Texas to make determination of substantial evidence.

Churches are strongly encouraged to share their experiences of clergy sexual misconduct for the protection of sister churches, future innocents, and their own congregations.