



May 25, 2022

Dear SBC Family,

We are deeply grieved at the findings of the independent investigation of the SBC Executive Committee commissioned by Guidepost Solutions, and especially at the credible allegation of abuse involving one of our former employees. We must acknowledge, with grief, that we believe the report is well-documented and verified with a high level of professionalism and due process. We are heartbroken, especially for the survivor, her husband and the others mentioned in the report. We are deeply grateful for their courage and sacrifice in speaking up.

We recognize that, with this reality, comes a cascade of facts we must consider, including the possibility of other victims or allegations of which we are unaware, and the need to ensure we have done everything possible to prevent abuse. To that end, we have consulted with outside experts, including Rachael Denhollander, and we are announcing today that the North American Mission Board (NAMB) Board of Trustees is immediately beginning the processes outlined below and on the newly created [NAMB Abuse Prevention and Response](#) section of our website.

During times like this, it is easy to be tempted to look the other way, to minimize what has taken place, or to find reasons why the situation we are facing is “different” than other abuse crises. Grievously, as we have seen again just this week, far too often these responses are even cloaked in Scriptural sounding ideas — protecting our mission, our base, our resources.

We want to encourage our SBC community to stand against this temptation. Our God is sovereign and powerful, and He does not need our protection — He requires our obedience. He has commanded us to bring light into darkness, to speak for the oppressed, and to act with justice. We are to grieve at sin and brokenness, to weep with those who weep. Surely this includes survivors of sexual abuse, recognizing the incredible damage that is created when such deep betrayal and violation is experienced.

We understand that the steps we have outlined will require time and resources, and we encourage our SBC community to remember that caring for the vulnerable is not a distraction from our mission — it is an integral part of it.

In John 21, Christ asks Peter, “Do you love me?” Three times, Peter replies affirming His love for Christ. And three times Jesus responds, “*then feed my sheep.*” A love for Christ — true, gospel-centered faith — is demonstrated by feeding Christ’s sheep. By tending, protecting, caring for and nurturing the flock of God.

The goal and vision of NAMB is to serve SBC churches to bring the gospel to North America through supporting and equipping pastors and missionaries in church planting, compassion ministry and evangelism. By very definition, we exist to follow Christ’s call to “feed my sheep.” This means an integral part of our mission is to protect, care for and nurture God’s flock. We cannot do this unless we are doing everything in our power to prevent abuse and care well for survivors. This will require time and resources, but it is not a distraction from our mission, it is a foundational part of it.

We recognize that we are on a journey of learning and growth, but we commit today to these action steps, by God’s grace and for His glory, out of love for those who bear His image.

WE COMMIT TO:

Investigate Any Alleged Abuse

Guidepost Solutions is maintaining a sexual abuse tip line through the SBC Executive Committee where allegations of sexual abuse can be made in confidence to their trauma-trained, investigative team. NAMB is requesting that Guidepost Solutions expand the availability of the tip line to include submission of sexual abuse allegations against current or former NAMB staff.

These allegations may be submitted to Guidepost Solutions in the following ways:

- **By Email:** SBChotline@guidepostsolutions.com
- **By Phone:** 202-864-5578

It is critically important to us that survivors have a trusted, safe, and confidential place to report abuse, and truth and transparency are immediately pursued. NAMB will be taking steps to empower Guidepost Solutions to investigate any allegations of abuse which they receive against a current or former employee of NAMB. If allegations of abuse are received and verified against any current or former employee, we will make this public while protecting survivor confidentiality.

Establish an Abuse Prevention and Response Committee

Today, the NAMB Board of Trustees formed an Abuse Prevention and Response Committee comprised of NAMB Trustees, to help us spearhead assessments, training, and reform, guided by trusted outside expertise and counsel.

We will publish a list of members of this committee, and they will be tasked with providing periodic updates on our abuse response and training to our SBC family, through the NAMB Board of Trustees.

This committee will also ensure accountability and monitor progress as actions are implemented.

Assess Policies and Procedures

We understand NAMB policies, processes, and structure may need improvement.

Our Abuse Prevention and Response Committee will be considering mechanisms to draw upon outside expertise to help us assess our current structure and policies and provide training and recommendations for strengthening those processes.

As we identify those processes and experts, the Board will publicly report on the steps being taken.

Provide Staff, Missionary, and Chaplain Training

We understand that NAMB trustees and staff, as well as missionaries and chaplains in the field, encounter sexual and domestic abuse in the communities they serve. We understand that as a Convention, and as an entity of the SBC, we have a very long way to go in properly equipping our ministry leaders in abuse prevention and response, as well as survivor care.

Our committee will be consulting with experts in the field, including Rachael Denhollander, to begin the process of properly supporting and resourcing NAMB staff and ministry leaders in the field in abuse prevention and response, as well as faithfully shepherding those who have been wounded. We will share those steps as they are identified and implemented.

Support Convention Reforms

We strongly encourage our SBC family to support the implementation of reforms and recommendations like those outlined by the task force.

Updates

We will publish related updates on the NAMB Abuse Prevention and Response section of our website.

Serving together,



Eric Thomas
Chairman, NAMB Board of Trustees



Kevin Ezell
President, NAMB