



## Sexual Abuse Policy

### Statement of Principle

The Associated Gospel Churches accept that:

1. Sexual abuse is a sin. (Matthew 18:6; Ephesians 5:3; I Thessalonians 5:22)
2. Sexual abuse is a breach of trust and an abuse of power and authority by a person in a position of leadership.
3. Sexual abuse causes permanent physical, emotional and spiritual harm to the victim as well as the perpetrator.

Therefore, the Associated Gospel Churches will not tolerate sexual abuse, and is committed to urging its member churches to provide safe environments for worship, ministering, and fellowship for all members and adherents.

Since the structure of the Associated Gospel Churches views each church as being autonomous and responsible for the actions of those in a position of authority in the individual setting, the AGC only accepts the responsibility to provide information, guidance and support its member churches. Each AGC church has the responsibility to guard itself against the occurrence of sexual abuse and have a effective disciplinary statement in their constitution and/or bylaws.

### The Supporting Role of the Associated Gospel Churches

1. To encourage all AGC churches to formulate their own written abuse policy by providing information and suggested guidelines for such policy.
2. To require churches to report cases of suspected abuse involving staff members to the Regional Superintendent. This will allow for counselling or mentoring to take place. If cases are proved to be accurate, this information will be available to churches inquiring about pastoral candidates.

(10/02)