

“...EMPOWERING PASTORS & LEADERS OF CHURCHES WITH MOSTLY NEW AMERICANS, WHO ARE REACHING THE WORLD!”

NEW ROOTS MINISTRY

DO WE AVOID SUBJECTS LIKE PROVIDING A SAFE CHURCH AND FINANCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY?

Those subjects are sometimes avoided, for several reasons.

But first, what is a safe church? It is a church which is free from abuse (*physical, verbal, sexual, emotional, spiritual*) for any people who attend the church.



Why do we sometimes avoid discussing Providing a Safe Church?

- We like to focus on positive things, like worship, children’s ministries, conferences, and outreach. These subjects give us energy and excitement. In comparison, Providing

a Safe Church can seem like a depressing, negative subject.

- We cannot imagine that abuse could happen in our church, possibly by a person of our church, so we avoid this subject.

Unfortunately, abusers understand that—that the people of the church trust each other, that no one will suspect anything—so abuse sometimes occurs at the hands of someone within the church.

Pastors, the reason we need to focus some attention on providing a safe church is so we can then focus more on positive subjects—church growth, worship, and a good children’s ministry. The Roman Catholic Church is an example to consider for

We offer Driver Training for new American adults, so they can get their driver’s license. If somebody needs this, please inform them.

We offer “Strategic Planning for Achieving Goals.” If young adults in your church may want this, please let them know.

We continually offer Timothy Leadership Training. If people in your church may be interested in this good program for becoming equipped as Christian leaders, please let me know.

getting distracted from that. When cases of abuse by priests started to become public, much of the Church’s attention and funds had →

to go toward helping those who were hurt. There was then much less energy and funds for positive things, like outreach.

As well, of course, we never want to see abuse occur anywhere, and definitely not in the church. Abuse can end a ministry.

Here are a few tips for providing a safe church: 1) Have background checks done for all adult volunteers. 2) Cut small windows in all doors of rooms where children could be alone with adults. 3) If you are a male pastor, establish a policy where you do not meet alone with a woman. 4) Have at least 2 adults ministering to children, and if you can only provide one adult, this person should be a woman.

If you would like resources about providing a safe church, please let me know as I have a more complete list available.

Another subject we sometimes avoid is Financial Accountability. What do I mean by financial accountability? It is being sure that the funds of the church are used only for the purposes that are approved by the church council and/or the congregation.

Why might we avoid this

subject?

- Often we don't like to discuss a subject about trust, especially if it is about us.
- Maybe a church leader has much authority over the money of a church. To talk about accountability can make that leader feel like he or she is not trusted.
- Financial Accountability is a subject that does not feel positive, and we like talking about positive subjects.

We understand that Financial Accountability is an important subject, and it comes across most positively when the people in charge of the money bring it up as important, and when they ask for advice and accountability.



Here are a few tips for having financial accountability: 1) Have at least 2 people, who seem

trustworthy, and who are of different families, count the money. 2) A good practice may be to have the person who brings the money to the bank give the bank deposit slip to other leaders, and one of the people who counts the money can provide the accounting-ledger to other leaders. 3) A special committee, which includes people beyond the church leaders or council, can be part of building the church's budget.

I am not an expert on church finances, so the list above is incomplete. Please let me know if you want more resources on Financial Accountability, and I am happy to find those for you.

How exciting to have entered a new year—2023! God means to bless us, and to grow His Church and His family through us in great ways. Hang on for the ride!

If you ever want to meet with me for coffee/tea and food, please let me know. This is always my privilege!

---Fred Wilgenburg