



Safe Church

Congregations and Community Ministries

February 26, 2026

Dear Colleagues in Ministry

Safe Church

The Presbyterian Church in Canada (PCC) aspires to be and is committed to fostering a safe church environment, free from harm and harassment. Creating a safe church involves both preventing and responding to harm through policies, through training, police record checks, transparency, clear reporting and investigating procedures for misconduct, as well as providing pathways to justice, redress and healing when harm occurs.

“Safe Church” is now a featured heading on the PCC’s website. Clicking on “Safe Church” in the banner across the top of each PCC web page will lead to information about the church’s safety policies. Additionally, the link provides information on how to raise concerns about bullying, sexual harassment and other forms of harassment based on race, national or ethnic origin, skin colour, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, marital status, family status, ancestry, disability, etc.

The ‘Safe Church’ website will continue to expand over the next few months to include more resources about the church’s policies and the process of raising concerns and making complaints for people seeking information. Visit presbyterian.ca/safe-church to find the ‘Safe Church’ information.

Advice about Websites

Below is advice for ministries of the church about transparency that comes from the church’s legal counsel and from an equity review of the denomination’s policies and procedures conducted by consultants.

It is advisable that ministries of the church make readily available information about the church’s safety policies and who to contact when concerns arise. One of the best ways to do that is to add a clearly marked and easily found section on their websites that contains at least the following information in some format:

NAME OF MINISTRY... is a congregation/ministry of The Presbyterian Church in Canada and adheres to the church’s policies. NAME OF MINISTRY is committed to fulfilling the church’s three safety policies:

- [Leading with Care Policy \(link to the Policy\)](#)
- [Policy and Procedures Addressing for Harassment in the Church \(link to the Policy\)](#)
- [Policy for Dealing with Sexual Abuse and Sexual Harassment \(link to the Policy\)](#)

All staff, volunteers, elders, ministers and anyone who participates in church's programs must follow these policies. Elders, volunteers and ministers are trained on these policies regularly.

For more information about the church's safety policies, visit the [Presbyterian Church in Canada Safety Policies](#).

To raise a concern or make a complaint, email NAME AND TITLE at email@address.ca, or NAME AND TITLE at email@address.com, or contact the clerk of the local presbytery for advice on the procedure. Contact information for clerks of presbyteries and synods can be found [here](#).

Alternatively, ministries may decide to simply provide a link from their website to presbyterian.ca/safe-church/.

Note that in some jurisdictions, labour standards require employers to be specific about who is responsible for managing complaints and how to contact them, making the display of the information above obligatory. Presbyteries in the province of Quebec should take extra care to ensure that their websites are clear and current in this regard.

Advice about Addressing a Complaint

Ministries are encouraged to consult the appropriate persons at the denominational offices to arrange for a review of the policies with investigative bodies prior to proceeding with action on a complaint.

Annual Review of the *Policy and Procedures for Addressing Harassment in The Church*

Because congregations, Sessions and ministries are workplaces and the *Policy and Procedures for Addressing Harassment in The Church* covers harassment and bullying in the workplace, ministries are required to review the Policy once a year. Reviews could include forms of the following:

- the members engaging in the two-step learning modules found at presbyterian.ca/safe-church that individuals can complete on their own
- participating in a webinar or an in-person workshop on the Policy led by a member of the staff of the Life and Mission Agency, etc.
- participating in a group study/discussion of the Policy as a court

The *Leading with Care* policy also requires that courts and ministries regularly review the Policy and submit or receive reports on the policy's implementation. Periodic reviews of the denomination's policy for addressing sexual abuse and harassment are also advised.

Equipping

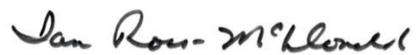
Staff of the denomination's offices routinely offer guidance on the review, implementation and interpretation of policies and are available to provide in-person training and webinars. Contact me any time to schedule a training event in any policy.

The next online **training webinar for the safety policies** will be on **April 9 at 2:00 p.m. ET**. To register for this webinar, visit this [page](#). Other webinars and training components on various topics, including the safety policies, are available on both the Safety Policy page and [here](#).

Subscribing to PCCconnect by completing the form found [here](#) will provide you with notice of upcoming webinars and other denominational information.

Thank you for including this letter in the list of official correspondence received by the Session or boards of your ministries and for forwarding the information, as appropriate.

With gratitude for your ministry and leadership in the church,



The Rev. Ian Ross-McDonald
General Secretary, Life and Mission Agency
416-441-1113 or 1-800-619-7301 ext. 289

The national office of The Presbyterian Church in Canada is on the traditional territory of the Wendat, the Anishinaabeg and the Haudenosaunee nations. These lands are part of Treaty 13 (the 1805 Toronto Purchase Agreement held by the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation) and part of the Dish with One Spoon Wampum.