

## Bruce Murdoch

After 115 years of family history with the meetings, 6 decades of actively professing and 15 years of active work on CSA as a board member of WINGS, I would like to share my final communication with local and regional leadership as an insider.

To all:

The events since March of 2023 have revealed the profound depth of the problems of CSA and other abuses within our church group. With nearly 1,000 alleged and proven CSA perpetrators identified, current and historic, along with a multiple number of survivors, this is beyond sufficient evidence that an appropriate action plan is essential. The data suggests that these abuses have occurred at a much higher rate in our group than any other known longstanding group, and in particular, any other established church group.

The principles of the appropriate response are simple, while putting it into action is complex and hard work. The principles are remarkably similar to the process of repentance:

1. Acknowledgement and admission of the wrongs and that we all share the burden of guilt. Develop a deep understanding of what abuse is and its effects on victims.
2. Truly feeling the pain of victims and experiencing genuine sorrow for our own blindness or even peripheral participation in allowing these crimes to perpetuate.
3. Vowing to change.
4. Identifying where we went wrong and seeking ways to make it right.
5. Reaching out to abuse survivors. Offer support in any way that we can.
6. Asking for forgiveness for our failure to protect those around us.
7. Appropriately dealing with those who have credible allegations against them.
8. Ensure that all members become educated on abuse and are made aware that abuse can happen anywhere, anytime and from anyone.
9. Develop and act upon a sound safety plan for all communal events.

The above is simple, but not easy. We have largely failed in most of it. Some effort has been made to remove offenders, which is good, but far from everything that needs to be done. I am at a loss to understand why. I do understand that there is a reluctance to appear like an organization (which we are, very much so) but doing what is right, just and compassionate is exponentially more important than appearance. We have all failed, including myself, and the time is long past to make things right for the future safety of children and adults.

I have worked long hours on the CSA issue as a board member of "WINGS for Truth" since 2009. <https://wingsfortruth.info/> Our goals include education, raising awareness, supporting survivors and advocating for safety plans. The last 15 years have yielded some small successes. For instance, it was our group that initiated the Ministry Safe course participation through advocacy with the Texas overseer. Our Code of Conduct produced in 2013 became the primary reference source of some good work on CSA Guidelines in Australia/NZ in 2018 among some of

the overseers in which one of our members was an active participant. However, we have not seen the change that needs to occur and in some ways, safety has degraded. No safety plan in action means no safety.

As a result of this, I can no longer be a participant in meetings. My participation signals tacit approval of a grave error that is not being corrected. It is unfortunate as there are good aspects to the fellowship meetings but my participation is no longer tenable for me.

Wishing you all the best. My door and lines of communication will always be open as I have no malevolence, quite the opposite really.

(worker), this may have implications for Kimberley as driving to Kimberley may not be an option for (my wife).