

Caring Well Challenge



How to share the Caring Well Challenge with your church

Churches cannot remain silent on the topic of abuse. If you are a church leader, you need to speak openly about abuse in order to care for survivors in your midst, to educate your congregation on abuse, and to ward off potential predators. It's tempting to shy away from this topic for various reasons, but communicating up front about abuse can help survivors know that your church is a place where they can disclose their abuse and be cared for.

One way to go about this is to walk your congregation through your church's policies and procedures. Let them know that you are regularly evaluating and updating the policies and that you invite feedback. If a member sees a gap in the policy or even suspects something going on, they should know that you welcome them speaking up. Every person in the church should feel they are an active participant in helping the church be safe for survivors and safe from abuse.

As you seek ways to share about these things in your church, here is an email that one pastor recently sent to his congregation to discuss the issue and to announce their participation in the [Caring Well Challenge](#).

Pastoral announcement of the Caring Well Challenge

"Coming out of the Southern Baptist Convention's annual meeting in Birmingham, there is one particular action step I wanted to share with you, as well as a few resources from our time at the SBC annual meeting that those who attended the convention thought would be good to point you toward as well.

The action step that we wanted to share is the consensus of our leadership to participate in the [Caring Well Challenge](#) that was presented at the SBC. The Caring Well Challenge is a unified call to action on the sexual abuse crisis in the Southern Baptist Convention. It provides churches with a simple, adaptable, and attainable pathway to immediately strengthening their efforts to prevent abuse and care for abuse survivors. Leading up to and throughout the SBC annual meeting, the ERLC (Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission), led by Russell Moore, the Sexual Abuse Advisory Group (SAAG) of the SBC, and J.D. Greear, the current president of the SBC, urged all Southern Baptist churches to commit to taking the Caring Well Challenge over the next year.

As a church, we've already begun taking many of the steps outlined in the challenge. Yet committing ourselves to being a part of this initiative provides our church an opportunity to link hearts and arms with, and to continue to learn from, other churches as we strive to be vigilant in caring for one another, and particularly those who have been or are being abused in our church. We'll talk more about the Caring Well Challenge in the days ahead, but we wanted to let you know that committing ourselves to being a part of this initiative is another

way, in addition to our other partnerships and efforts, we want to strive to be vigilant and faithful in this area.

In terms of resources we wanted to share with you from the annual meeting, we would encourage you to watch and read the following:

- Video: [ERLC Panel- Sexual Abuse and the SBC](#)
- Video: [Pastor JD Greear's Presidential Address](#)
- Resolution: ["On the Evil of Sexual Abuse"](#)
- Article: [Key Changes to SBC Governing Documents Regarding Sexual Abuse and Racism](#)

Let's commit to work and pray together as we embark on this challenge. And let's depend upon the power of the Holy Spirit to make our church a place that's safe for survivors and safe from abuse."



As you lead these conversations with your church, know that when you bring up the issue, survivors will likely feel safe and come forward to disclose abuse they have experienced. This is a good thing. If you would like material to be better prepared to care for survivors who share with you, check out the free curriculum [Becoming a Church that Cares Well for the Abused](#). The whole curriculum will help you in this important effort, but lesson five is specifically designed to help you care well for the abused as they are disclosing to you.