

15 reasons why the routine (convention/special meeting/gospel meeting) of the ministry should take a pause:

- A pause is the easiest way to remove perpetrators from larger group gatherings. Perpetrators have not been turning themselves in, and overseers haven't been rooting them out. A pause would effectively remove perpetrators from larger group events. It is the safest option for all.

- This CSA/SA crisis deserves all of our attention. This is not a time for business as usual. A pause would be an action that shows the ministry and church will prioritize survivors and take a stand against these evil actions of abusers. Survivor-centered action and compassion must come first.

- A pause would give everyone time to take a breathe. Trying to solve the crisis while continuing to speed forward on the "hamster wheel" will only cause people to fly off the wheel, mentally exhausted and broken.

- Abuse that continues to be covered up and handled improperly (not to mention likely criminally) effectually abuses and traumatizes survivors all over again. A pause would give everyone time to properly educate themselves on ways to engage with survivors, to develop respectful boundaries to support them, and ensure these matters are dealt with legally.

- It would give time for many workers and friends to understand the full scope of this crisis and become informed and better educated on how to handle these matters morally, ethically, and legally.

- With the routine on pause, all money that would go towards these events and gatherings can get donated to AFTT to fund survivor's needs. AFTT already has multiple ways for donations to be made through their website. AFTT is best equipped to handle the oversight of distributing funds for survivor's care (counseling, therapy, etc.), which would help ensure a survivor receives funding for the entire duration of their care.

- People need to be able to think for themselves outside of the system and structure of this church, much of which is driven by the ministry, to truly discern that CSA/SA is criminal and has no place in this fellowship unadulterated by the constant stream of meetings guided by the ministry. (I understand there are workers wanting change and are trying to make change. But, the structure of the ministry hinders those voices.)

- A pause would give people time to learn how abusers manipulate and groom people to gain trust to get to the vulnerable among us.

- There is a mental health crisis in the ministry. Continuing to juggle both the CSA/SA crisis and preaching the gospel does neither the full justice they deserve. Workers need a pause for their own mental health and so they can evaluate the crisis outside of the bonds of the system of the

ministry. All workers need to be able to individually find where they stand on these matters and have time to develop those convictions without influence of the authority of those in positions of power in the ministry.

- A pause would help reduce the authority and over-site that is preventing much of the ministry from working with AFTT to root out perpetrators.

- A pause would help establish a better system for handling perpetrators in this CSA/SA crisis. Regional teams of people more morally and professionally trained to handle these matters can ensure a much more positive, proactive response to permanently removing perpetrators from all meetings.

- A pause allows analysis of the root causes of CSA/SA within a church that prides itself of being Spirit, God/Jesus, and Bible led, including a deep dive into the culture, system, doctrine, and historical factors of this church that have protected perpetrators and slandered survivors.

- A pause would give time for more meaningful reflection on foundational, systematic changes that would make this church a safer, healthier environment.

- A pause would protect younger workers from becoming complicit to or supportive of the actions of elder workers and workers in places of authority who have had immoral and criminal responses in the past to handling CSA/SA matters.

- A pause would allow time for a thorough, church-wide zero tolerance policy to be established, taught, and enforced.

The entire church needs to acknowledge the severity of this crisis and make true, unprovoked repentance for how these issues were handled in the past. Many, if not all, current and former members are affected and deeply wounded by the church's failure to properly stand behind survivors. Only continued survivor-centered actions and advocacy will prove to all that there is a true care for survivors and their needs. Time needs to be given to properly handle these serious crimes, show care and compassion, and to implement survivor-centered policies so that everyone can begin to heal.

- Kaitlyn Larson