

# Limited Response by Dan Lawty to a Mothers Concerns

Aug 3  
June 16, 2023

Dan Lawty,

There have been multiple allegations that you have engaged in consensual sexual relationships with several adult females while serving as a worker in Alaska and Washington. The status of these women varied from married, attending meetings and in the ministry. Although this behavior is not criminal in Alaska, it is a violation of biblical and ethical standards that are embraced across a variety of professions, including ministers and clergymen, and is illegal in many states. This is conduct unbecoming to a minister of God.

While serving as the overseer for the State of Alaska, you failed to adequately respond to several requests to address concerns regarding children being in a meeting with a known sex offender. There were multiple requests made by the family to be reassigned to a different Sunday morning meeting after this same convicted sex offender's conduct made them uncomfortable. You failed to reply in a timely manner and did not communicate regarding your negligence. You failed to respond when the convicted offender did not abide by your decision and still showed up at meeting. You did not truthfully communicate with affected persons about the status of the situation and did not truthfully communicate with the family regarding the magnitude of the opposition to this decision. You made multiple commitments to communicate openly regarding this situation and failed to do that in any capacity, resulting in the chaos that ensued.

While serving as the overseer for Alaska, you failed to adequately inform and protect attendees at the Wasilla convention in 2022. You had been previously informed of an individual whose past history of sexual misconduct involved multiple minors. This individual was assigned to night patrols during the convention in 2022 and attended a recreational co-ed overnight social gathering at a remote cabin after convention. Parents were not advised of the exposure to risk. Appropriate safety measures were not put in place and previous victims were not told of his attendance at Wasilla convention.

Your past history with Linda Borders and Richard Schober is altering your ability to make sound decisions that involve them.

Due to your inability to perform the necessary responsibilities of protecting women and children in your congregation, we are requesting that you be placed or willingly place yourself on administrative leave until these allegations can be investigated by professionals. It is not appropriate to continue preaching to a congregation until these allegations can be resolved.

With respect and concern for the flock,

Simon and Jennifer Ford

---

In the interest of clarity and completeness, I am compelled to write this in a complete story to hopefully avoid confusion. Many have asked specific questions or know part of the story and sometimes this leads to conclusions that are not accurate and assumptions due to not having the whole story. This was our experience with a convicted pedophile in meeting with our children.

Last fall, in September 2022, we were informed by our overseer, DL, that there were going to be some meeting changes. I expressed a mild level of sadness as we love our meeting, but said I was willing for a change knowing that our meeting is very large and quite often goes over the hour time frame. I have a large family and 6 of my children now take part so I understood the need to make the meeting smaller. I did not hear this from DL, but a friend told me that we were going to be put in a meeting with RS. I reached out to DL and told DL that I wanted to talk to my family about it because we had already, years earlier, decided to not be in Wednesday bible study with RS. DL let me know that it had been 40 years since he had been in jail and that he had not been a problem in the meetings. He also told me that there had already been two families in that meeting with small children and he was looking to put another family in that meetings. He explained that the small children were loud and it was interfering with feedback in some that wore hearing aids and that my children were all old enough to be quiet in the meeting. My husband and I told DL that we would like to meet with RS, as all I knew about RS at the time was that he had molested his daughter and gone to prison. My husband and I met with DL and RS on September 30, 2022. RS told us about his abuse of his daughter and spent much time telling us about the sex offender program that he completed and he felt that he was one of the 2% success rate. He told us that he comes to meeting early and leaves right after and does not participate in the socializing afterwards. I told him of my own CSA experience by my father and told him that I am very sensitive to this issue and that I "would be watching" him to which he replied, "And well you should." We told DL that we would be willing to try it, DL assured me that if I was uncomfortable, he would move us

out and RS said if I was uncomfortable that he would go to another meeting. I felt satisfied with those conditions. At the end of this meeting, as we were all standing to leave RS blurted out a whole string of additional information. He said he had molested more children than he could count, probably hundreds. He said he had hung out at parks and schools and molested kids that were off on their own and sometimes molested several in a day. My husband and I were shocked and horrified but we had been convinced that he had gone through the program and that he had been rehabilitated.

The day after that conversation, RS called me to see if I was okay and said he knew it was traumatic to talk about. I was not comfortable with him calling me, but he did seem to be just reaching out in care and I wanted to be kind. He called a couple more times in the next few weeks and shared some poetry and thoughts he had. Again, I was uncomfortable but felt like I was overreacting and didn't want to make a big deal about it. The first meeting in the home was fine and RS did what he said he would do. A few weeks into the arrangement, I was gone on a trip and when I returned RS called me to ask if I had a problem with my children passing the emblems in meeting. I said that we didn't prohibit them and he proceeded to explain in great detail which of my boys passed the emblems past one of their siblings. He described the physical features and the shade of hair color so specifically that I knew exactly which boys he was describing. I assured him again that my husband and I do not have a hang up about our children passing the emblems, I said that I wasn't there and didn't know what he was talking about. After I hung up, it hit me. . . why was he watching my boys when the emblems were being passed?? He doesn't even sit by them. But, again, I didn't want to raise a fuss about a little thing so I didn't say anything. As the weeks went by he started pushing the boundaries more and more. My nine year old came up after meeting and said RS shook his hand after meeting. This happened a number of times with different children and I was noticing that he always shook the hands with the children that were with an older sibling or on the other side of the room from me. My children had been instructed to not leave the house until RS left, but when we saw him leave, we let the children go out to the car. RS started going out the door and then hanging around outside and speaking to the children. RS was also attempting to control the length of the meeting. He passed the microphone and said the meeting had already gone past time and then the next week he let us all know at the beginning of the meeting that he wasn't going to take part but was just going to listen. My large family, who is over half the meeting, felt like he was attempting to correct us. I have no problem with an elder or worker giving us correction about our testimony length, but it felt very out of line for him to assume that role. At this point I was uncomfortable enough that I wanted out. I asked if we could meet with DL again, he agreed and we met the day after I texted him on Monday, March 20th. DL heard my concerns, said he was sorry that it didn't work out, and expressed frustration at RS. I asked about changing meetings and he said, "Well, it is complicated" I assumed it was due to our family size, but he didn't say as much, but I reminded him that RS said he would move. Again DL, said it wasn't that easy. I asked if RS could be part of the call in meeting that Alaska has for remote individuals. DL said that, yes, that was a good idea. He would have RS call into meeting and not come in person. I

said, "No, I don't mean call into our meeting, I mean the remote bush Alaska meeting. I don't want to have him listening to my kids' testimonies." DL told me a bit forcefully, "I don't want to introduce him to another meeting!" I was realizing that this was not as easy of a decision as it had seemed to be when we met in September. DL asked us for more time to think about it as he didn't want to make a rash decision. We agreed to giving him some time. The Thursday that same week, was when one of my adult sons forwarded me the letter regarding Dean. Due to the understandable load put on DL after this news broke, DL asked for more time to make a decision regarding RS. I was trying to be patient and understanding but RS was becoming more and more assertive. He had asked my 21 year old daughter and her boyfriend out to dinner, helped my 17 year old daughter brush the snow off her car, and multiple times had followed my older children to the car attempting to talk to them. We have older children with their own cars and often times they let a sibling ride with them. RS consistently attempted to contact the younger children when they were with the older siblings. My family was on high alert and my younger children had been instructed to run away from him if they saw him, but we were getting really stressed out even when we noticed that he was often watching them intently. After much begging and pleading with DL he finally arranged for us to meet with RS. At my request, I wanted to meet with RS face to face and tell him why I was not comfortable. Just a few hours before we were supposed to get together, DL called and changed the time and location to a home of an elderly lady that is an advocate for RS. I was very uncomfortable with that arrangement but also wanted to get the conversation over as it had now been 4 weeks since we asked DL for a meeting change. I asked my husband if he would bring his audio recorder. I was expecting RS to apologize, agree to a meeting change and then turn around and say he didn't agree. I was not prepared for what happened at that meeting. I clearly stated the reasons that I was uncomfortable and RS never did address the issues I brought up but some of the things he said to my husband and I were:

"We can always look back... on decisions. ..the very first thing we need to do (pointing finger at me) we need to look at what part we played in it and go from there, forward.

"If shaking hands with your children is inappropriate, then excuse me"

"Look back forty years to your behavior, your behavior, is there something back there? Forty years, that's forty years ago. And you do not believe that God has healed me and taken care of . . . "

"I said I would not touch them inappropriately. I have not done that."

"Okay, okay lets go, lets go to the Bible, ok? What is the word of God and it's the word of God, says if you have a problem with a brother, what are you supposed to do?"

I replied, "RS, we met with you in the fall" RS said, "okay, and you didn't express any concern about this and you went to DL. And you didn't come to me. You're guilty!" (Pointing finger again at me)

"I'm really sorry that you feel that way." (said to me)

"And it's about me. I'm the one on the cross here. Sunday afternoon... Sunday evening, after that meeting, and I have. ..and I got hopefully DL and Sean— will vouch for me on this— that I have always left. I have not included myself in your little circle of hugging and shaking hands with everybody. I exit. Always exit— right after meeting. Is that not true, DL?"

DL: That's. ..that's what I see.

SF: Did you come back into the breezeway after you. ..you went out to your car?

RS: I did. I was waiting for someone to give something to me. And you know what I saw when I came back in?

SF: My daughter?

RS: I saw Levi. I saw Levi out on the step, I saw Hannah out in the snow, playing in the snow, I did not see either one of you and if I had children...

JF: We are not the ones being called into correction right now.

RS: Don't you Interrupt me. Don't you interrupt me!

SF: (to JF) Oh, that's...

JF: (to SF) Just let it be.

RS: Okay, the thing was, if I would have had children then if I had such strong feelings about a child molester. . .

JF: (softly) You did have children, RS.

RS: ...in the meeting, they would have been by my side, so there would not ever have been a chance that he would even get close. I have, I walk, I have walked by and I have raised...

JF: (to DL) DL, can we be done, please? DL, can we please be done? I can't. . .can we be done?

SF: RS, you literally molested your children, and you're telling us we're not good parents?

JF: Hannah innocently ran out to pick me a DLdelion and you are chastising me. Yes, and we all have been...

SF: You went to prison for molesting your children and you're telling us that you would have protected them? Really?

JF: (to DL) DL can we just be done? Can we be done please?

RS: (to SF) Yes. Please leave. Please leave. You're accusing me of...

SF: Of something that's been proven beyond a reasonable doubt!

RS: ...and I have served my time. Do you know how long I've served?

SF: Yeah, you told me.

RS: And you have forgot, have you not... and you have forgot that God has forgiven me, healed me, (indistinguishable)

DL very passively asked RS if he would be willing to call in to the meeting. RS said, "NO, I have been outcast. I've been cut off. I've been kicked out of meeting. ..Not share in the emblems... not be in the presence of God".

This meeting with RS was extremely stressful and I was having triggers most of the time there. RS said some of the exact same things that my own father used to manipulate me. RS never did address his actions, but sought to find a way to blame and shame my husband and I. I was experiencing shortness of breath, shaking in my hands and feet, tightness in my chest, pounding headache, increased heart rate and was having flashbacks of my father's face when I looked up at RS. The voice inflection and the condescending tone and chastising in his voice made me feel like a little girl again being reprimanded by my abusive father. Fortunately, my years of counseling did enable me to have a voice and stand up to him even as I was actively being triggered by his aggressive behavior. DL did nothing to stand up for me during this whole conversation. My husband and I ended up leaving and DL said he would follow up, we waited for hours and no call from DL. We heard from another source that DL was intending to let RS call into the meeting on Sunday. I contacted DL, he agreed to come to supper so we could discuss this. I very clearly told him that I did not want RS to call in and hear my children's testimony. DL said he had already made the decision and he was only giving RS one more chance, but just

one off testimony and he was done. I made arrangements for my married daughter to take my minor children to her Sunday meeting as I did not want them to be in our meeting.

On Sunday, April 16<sup>th</sup> 2023 RS was allowed to call in to Sunday morning meeting. He started his testimony by saying, "When I was in prison, when I was in prison for being a sex offender..." and then proceeded to share a very disturbing story about an experience while he was in prison. In this experience, he was asked to leave the room and when he returned his fellow inmates were sitting in a circle with arms linked. He then likened that to our gathering there on Sunday around the emblems. Then, he went on to say that his job was to break into the circle. He looked for and identified the weak spot and he said he "went for it" and tried to break into the circle. He tried 3 or 4 times and was not able to break the circle, then he just asked and they let him in. He said he wished he had realized that all he had to do was ask. Then he finished by saying, "that is where I find myself today." DL was sitting in that meeting right next to the speaker and did nothing to stop or correct RS.

Again, I was sitting there in meeting, in panic mode... racing heart, tightening in my chest, right foot and hand shaking, and flashbacks of my dad's face flooding my vision. He was not in the room, but his presence filled the room. When we went home, my daughter expressed that she felt like we were the weak link that he was trying to use to get back in the circle. It was a very emotional and stressful meeting, not hardly conducive to feeding on Christ. My husband texted DL and let him know that we were all disturbed by that testimony, to which DL replied that he was "thinking of a plan". I told my husband that DL already had a plan, he didn't need to think about it anymore. I also told my husband that I could no longer go to that meeting, if DL wouldn't move us then I just wouldn't go there anymore. I called our former elder and asked if we could come back there next week as I wasn't going to go back to the other meeting. He asked me if I had spoken to DL and I broke down and started crying and said that DL wasn't listening to me and told him what had just happened in the meeting. He said we could come back and told me that he would talk to DL.

I was in full panic mode regarding RS and his grooming, stalking and intently watching my children. DL had already asked him to not come to meeting, to only call in and he did not do as DL said. I was afraid of him coming to gospel meeting and harming one of my children. I was also very afraid of the upcoming convention. I started the process of filing for a protective order against RS. I consulted with a local CSA advocate and she pointed out grooming patterns and was also alerted to the troubling attitudes, that RS expressed. I did receive a court date and it was a horribly traumatic experience. RS had some of the friends come and testify regarding his character and lied under oath about his contact with my children. I was not awarded a protective order and was very troubled that none of the friends that testified for him ever once called me to ask me what he had done to my children. It disturbed me that they would not want to gather as much information as they could before going to court and advocating for a man that had this kind of deviant past.



The following week, we went to our former meeting and RS showed up to his meeting like nothing had happened. The homeowner, who is not the elder, asked him to leave. RS said he didn't understand and the homeowner told him to leave his property and not come back. The homeowner also told DL that he was no longer willing to have the call in option. The homeowner was the one that removed RS, not DL. The week after this, a conflict arose between the homeowner and one of the men that testified against me in court. The homeowner told this man that, "God put it in the heart of a mother to protect her children from a child molester, but God never put it in the heart of a man to molest a child" The result of this contention was that the meeting was taken out of the homeowner's home and put into a home that is in full support of RS and advocates for him.

In the process of preparing for the court hearing, I contacted AFTT and requested a notification to be sent out asking for more info about RS. I was not able to use these documents in court as I was not aware of witnesses needing to be there in person and I had obtained written statements. But, I have since learned some very disturbing information about RS and have also learned that DL knew about this before he put our family in the meeting. Because of the hotline and the avenue of social media, I have become very aware of his past. A friend reached out to me and shared a letter that he had written to Gary Paul in 2005 regarding RS and his behaviour.

He was in the work and abused children at convention and in private homes of the friends. He has molested hundreds of children and was the most prolific offender in WA state when he was convicted. He refused to complete the sex offender program and was hospitalized in Medical Lake as being criminally insane. He agreed to be chemically castrated in lieu of prison time. He is currently on medication to control his "urges" and if he goes off the medication, the "urges" come back.

My biggest concern at this point, is how the situation was handled when I clearly requested to be taken out of the meeting. This was before DB and I did not ask for RS to be removed from the fellowship, but I did not want my family in meeting with him. As RS became increasingly assertive toward my children, I was growing increasingly fearful that he was going to molest one of my children. He was following them out of gospel meeting and one time even waited at the door for my adult daughter to come out so he could talk to her about the dinner invite. I have text records of me begging DL to take care of the situation, I reached out to Darryl Doland, Wayne Bechtol, Julie Raab, and even Lyle Schober (a relative) to try to get help. They all referred me back to DL and assured me that he would take care of it. DL was very empathetic for RS and began to avoid my husband and me. As convention season approached and I did not get the restraining order, I was very concerned about convention. I had by this time heard many other ladies tell me about times he had pushed the boundaries in previous years and that RS had been multiple times reprimanded about contacting children. I also was contacted by a number of individuals that shared with me their concerns and conversations with DL regarding his choice to put us in that meeting. I was unaware of any other concerns regarding that and



felt like DL should have expressed those concerns to us. Because of how passive DL was in asking RS to not come to meeting, I was in NO way confident that DL had the stamina to enforce any violations.

What I have become very clear about is that DL is not able to make firm decisions about protecting women and children. He has not been honest in his dealing with us and has intentionally hidden information from us to further his agenda. DL had also been involved in other situations regarding CSA in previous years that we were not satisfied with how they were handled. These and the immoral relationships while he was in the work have caused us to just feel like DL is not in a position to be leading a flock. We had a conversation with him after gospel meeting asking him if he would step down and stating the reasons why.

I do not believe that every worker that mis-handles a situation should be removed. There has been an outcry lately that the workers have not been willing to listen to victims. I know there have been times when victims did not want the authorities involved or the decision was made to not press charges because the victim did not want to, but when my children were being actively pursued and I was very clearly asking to just be taken out of the meeting, it is beyond my comprehension why this wasn't an easy choice. I have a hard time following anyone in the ministry that cannot make choices when we are begging for help. I have a difficult time understanding why Darryl would not step in when DL was not dealing with the situation.

DL and DD did not seem to be listening to me with the intent to resolve the problem. I felt like they were trying to avoid me as much as possible. They kept putting me off, ignoring my texts and calls or giving me vague answers that didn't give me any definitive answers. I was a terrified mother trying to protect her children from a known very prolific and assertive pedophile and was asked to wait for weeks while DL tried to figure out what to do.

I have a great concern for where our ministry is right now. We have been harboring pedophiles in the work and the workers have been harboring them amongst the friends. This is a grave, serious concern and is not being taken very seriously by a large majority of the ministry. Trust is a big issue, and not easily re-built when it is something this serious. A worker doesn't have to know all about CSA, Ministry Safe or reporting laws to listen to the cries of a sheep and step in and protect them. It seems to me that love would prompt anyone with any amount of empathy to step in and protect a child. If someone does not have the basic desire to help a mother protect her children, I can't reconcile in my heart how they should be preaching the gospel of love and be teaching about how to be childlike. I see the only way forward that results in healing and restoration is for any workers that were not willing to listen to the cries of the victims to recognize that they do not have the heart of a shepherd and willingly step down. There are many younger workers in positions where they are stifled and unable to much, but they have reached out

to victims with love and concern. These are true shepherds. I believe there are many still in the work that are faithful and have a genuine love for the sheep. I love so much about our fellowship and I believe the ministry is scriptural, but wolves have gotten in and we do not have a process to remove them.