

Overseer apology to Sacramento friends and elders

Aug 27

26 August 2023

Dear Sacramento friends and elders,

We have previously written to you about Gilbert Smith's participation in meetings. Today we feel moved to apologize for all of the pain we have caused through this whole process. We realize now that we erred in even discussing Gilbert's return to meetings when so many are still reeling from all that we have learned in the past five months. We understand that we put the elders in a difficult position by asking them to review all the information and come to a decision. We see how our actions appeared to care more about a perpetrator than for victims or survivors. Our mistakes are teaching us how much we have to learn about the far-reaching impacts of sexual abuse.

As we mentioned in the previous letter, only volunteers will meet with Gilbert and Sharon for fellowship, and he will not be attending any public meetings. We also want to let you know that we are putting an indefinite pause on any attempts to put perpetrators back into established fellowship or public meetings. We understand that there is still much to learn, and we want to proceed carefully. We recognize the need to increase our knowledge about sexual abuse and pledge to continue learning. Our future efforts in this arena will be centered on supporting victims, dealing with perpetrators transparently and doing our best as a staff to listen and respond from our hearts to the needs and questions of God's people.

This season is difficult, and we realize we have not always understood the impact of our efforts and the extent to which people are hurting. Thank you for your patience with us, and please hear our heartfelt apologies. We love you and appreciate your help as we all seek to ensure that meetings are safe and peaceful places for fellowship and worship with God.

With deep care,

Rob, Harold and Richard

WINGS Note: See previous reports at

[Concerning Decision Despite Opposition](#)

[Sacramento Decision Change](#)

