



May 1, 2024

Dear Clerks of Presbytery, Clerks of Synod and Heads of Colleges,

In the New Testament, the church is likened to the body of Christ, a flock of sheep under Christ's guidance and a temple for God's dwelling. John Calvin compared the church to a mother who nurtures a child.

The church aspires to the highest expression of Christian fellowship implicit in these images and explicit in the teaching of Christ and the epistles. However, our lives and communities do not fully reflect God's intentions, with the result that the church falls short of its calling. Regretfully, bullying and harassment take place in congregations and in church's courts, committees and colleges. Preventing harm and responding promptly and appropriately to harassment of any kind, helps the church become more fully the body Christ called the church to be.

#### Where to find the safety policies and procedures

In 2023, the General Assembly approved changes to **Leading with Care** and the **Policy and Procedures for Addressing Harassment in the Church**. These two updated policies, as well as the Policy for Dealing with Sexual Abuse and Sexual Harassment (no recent changes) can be found on the Safety Policies webpage (<https://presbyterian.ca/safety-policies>).

#### Supports

Additionally, the Safety Policies webpage houses training videos, knowledge review tools and other supports for each safety policy. The learning tools may be used to equip new staff, volunteers, elders and ministers and to help fulfil the responsibility of the courts and committees of the church to regularly review these important policies.

Webinars on the three policies are provided throughout the year. And in-person workshops can be arranged by contacting me at [imcdonald@presbyterian.ca](mailto:imcdonald@presbyterian.ca).

Please contact me with any questions or suggestions you have on this or any matter that I can assist with.

And as always, thank you for the work that you do to support and facilitate so much of the church's work.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ian Ross-McDonald".

The Rev Ian Ross-McDonald  
General Secretary, The Life and Mission Agency  
Phone extension: 289  
[imcdonald@presbyterian.ca](mailto:imcdonald@presbyterian.ca)