



SEMINARY INTENSIVE

A 5 DAY 32 HOUR MODULE

[Safe Church](#) is a dynamic and interactive process designed to take an ecumenical “Cluster” of congregations through a one year program for protection of children and youth from sexual abuse. The goal is to shift congregational culture to one in which adults are equipped and inspired to be proactive in preventing child sexual abuse—not only in the church, but in the broader community. While various forms of child abuse are included in the training, the focus is on sexual abuse because of its persistent prevalence in our culture, the reluctance of child victims to disclose, its long term psychological, medical and spiritual consequences, and the stigma and shame carried by many adult survivors with invisible wounds that haunt them for decades of life.

Developed by the [Samaritan Counseling Center](#) in Lancaster, Pennsylvania and funded by the *Ms. Foundation for Women*, Safe Church is part of a groundbreaking effort to end child sexual abuse across the United States by building an inclusive, strategic and sustainable movement encompassing diverse secular and faith-based organizations.

What is the Seminary Intensive?

The Seminary intensive is a 5 day, 32 hour adult education module that expands our 3 day Safe Church Facilitator training to incorporate time for theological discussion, dynamic role play to simulate the multiple points of view and dynamics that arise when focusing on child sexual abuse in a church setting, and development of an awareness raising worship service. The ecumenical module is designed for ordained and non-ordained leaders, and equips them to facilitate the one year Samaritan Safe Church program in a “cluster” of 5-7 churches in their community/judicatory; or in their own congregation.

Participants will be provided with material valued at more than \$450.00 for their use in leading a one-year Safe Church process, including a flash drive with training material to lead a group of congregations (or a single church) through the one year process; Samaritan’s Safe Church DVD; and a child and youth healthy boundaries curriculum. The training and material¹ will include mandated reporting requirements for child abuse in the state of PA; participants from other states will need to determine the reporting specifics in their state and modify the material for their use accordingly.

¹ Samaritan’s material is copyrighted; however, participants are free to modify the facilitation material related to their state reporting laws; administrative information about meeting dates, guest speakers, congregational participants, facilities, etc.; and may include additional scripture references their constituencies would find helpful. Any substantive revisions to content or process may only be with written permission of Samaritan.

Participants must have at least two years of congregational experience as a clergy or lay leader; be committed to developing programs in congregations; be willing to identify and utilize secular resources in their communities when working with congregations in the Safe Church process; and have basic understanding of congregations as emotional systems. Participants should bring a notebook/laptop capable of reading/editing word documents and power points.

Each Intensive is hosted and sponsored by a Seminary committed to offering continuing education on religious response to sexual violence as part of ethical best practices in ministry; and willing to engage with local secular community organizations such as Child Protection agencies, Survivor organizations, and counselors. The Seminary is responsible for organizing the training, recruiting participants, collecting training fees, providing training space, and reimbursing the Samaritan Safe Church facilitator for travel and lodging expenses. An individual associated with the Seminary is required to be present with the Samaritan facilitator during the entire training, and will assist with leading discussions, theological reflection, and supporting participant design of a worship service.

For a complete description of responsibilities and cost, see [Seminary Sponsor Responsibilities](#).

Samaritan will provide participants with material valued at more than \$450.00 for their use in leading a one-year Safe Church process in their community or judicatory, including a **flash drive with training material to lead a group of congregations (or a single church) through the process, and a child and youth healthy boundaries curriculum**. The material will include mandated reporting requirements for all types of child abuse in the state of PA; participants from other states will need to determine the reporting specifics in their state and change the material for their use accordingly. Participants will access material during the training directly from the flash drives provided, not hard copies, and should bring a notebook/laptop capable of reading/editing word documents and power points to the training.

Participants completing the Seminary intensive will be able to:

- Facilitate a one-year Safe Church process in a congregation or a group of congregations.
- Utilize an interactive policy template to develop a comprehensive child & youth protection policy, or to revise an existing policy with best practices, by using the policy template and other material provided in the training.
- Write a theological framework grounded in their own tradition articulating why protecting children from sexual abuse is a core part of their mission and identity.
- Discuss the prevalence and impacts of child sexual abuse, including the primary spiritual wounds common in victims and the influence on one's understanding of God.
- Differentiate the 5 phases of the "grooming" process offenders use to engage children.
- Discuss how to use the power of story to effect social change in Christian communities by drawing on Biblical themes and the prophetic tradition.
- Explain how congregations can safely incorporate known sexual offenders.
- Identify common sources of resistance in a congregation when engaging in sustained conversation about child sexual abuse, and design strategies to meet these challenges, including provision of pastoral care to victims and offender
- Design a worship resource for use in raising congregational awareness about child sexual abuse and call people of faith to specific action to prevent it.

Material provided to participants:

Flash drive contains: 6 PowerPoint presentations for Safe Church core team training and policy development; the policy template and appendix forms; agendas for each team meeting; two power point presentations for adult education in churches; power point for use in training staff and volunteers when policies are completed; survivor retreat format; administrative material for project management.

Safe Church DVD: Protecting Children & Youth from Sexual Abuse (a 2-hour DVD produced by Samaritan for use in training staff and volunteers).

Circle of Grace: Christian Safe Environment curriculum – Kindergarten – Grade 12.

<http://www.archomaha.org>

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