

Addendum
to the
Report on the
Independent Investigation
of
Allegations of Sexual Abuse by a Staff Member of
The Falls Church between May 1990 and January 2002

Sensitive Material Advisory: This Addendum contains numerous references to sexually explicit conversations, unwanted physical touching, and activities that may be seen as sexual grooming. Those who may have experienced past trauma should proceed with care and caution, and parents should exercise care over the access of this Addendum to any of their minor children.

Edward Lee Isler
ISLER DARE, P.C.
1945 Old Gallows Rd.
Suite 650
Tysons, Virginia 22182

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Addendum to the Report on the Independent Investigation

Edward Lee Isler
ISLER DARE, P.C.

I. PURPOSE OF THE ADDENDUM

This Addendum supplements and, where necessary, clarifies or corrects information contained in the *Report on the Independent Investigation of Allegations of Sexual Abuse by a Staff Member of The Falls Church between May 1990 and January 2002* (the “Report”) issued on April 18, 2024. The Addendum assumes that the reader has reviewed the Report, and thus the Addendum will use terminology or reference events that were described in the Report.

The Addendum first addresses matters referenced in the Report that require some degree of clarification or correction.

The Addendum next addresses some matters that were not included in the Report, for reasons explained below.

The Addendum then addresses additional allegations that have been brought forth since the publication of the Report, along with the investigation of those allegations.

And lastly, the Addendum contains some final analysis and observations.

It is critical to note that since the publication of the Report, although some additional witnesses (or subsequent interviews of previously interviewed witnesses) confirmed additional incidents of covert sexual abuse described in the Report, no further victims or allegations have come forth of Taylor engaging in overt sexual abuse.

II. SCOPE OF THE POST-REPORT INVESTIGATION

Since the publication of the Report, we have conducted interviews of 13 additional witnesses (6 students, 3 parents, 4 staff members). In addition, we engaged in numerous follow-up interviews with witnesses with whom we had previously spoken. Cumulatively, since the first interview was conducted on September 30, 2023, the investigation has entailed approximately 120 interviews of 95 different witnesses.

In addition, the investigator was present for two of the three “listening sessions” held by TFCA on April 21, 2024 and June 2, 2024. (There was a third service/listening session on April 25, 2024 that was not attended by the investigator.)

As stated in the Report, the goal of this investigation has been and continues to be to report on the facts as we are able to develop them, neither understating them nor overstating them, in our search to determine, as best we can, the objective truth. As with the initial Report, I have sought as an independent investigator to pursue any and all relevant allegations, to report on those for which there was some level of corroboration (including even one person’s first-hand testimony), and to offer my perspective given all the information developed.

As before, drafts of the Addendum were not shared in advance with the Church. The conclusions reached at various points in the Addendum reflect my views based upon my lengthy experience as an attorney and investigator. I recognize that others may draw different conclusions based upon their own experiences or perceptions, and I can only offer my assurances that any conclusions I have reached are based upon my objective view of the evidence, and are not motivated in any way by a desire to protect any person or institution.

Finally, there is one thing of which I am absolutely, positively 100% certain: while I have performed the task at hand with all diligent effort and objectivity, I am confident that I have *not* done this job perfectly and flawlessly. Some of the corrections or clarifications below are the result of obtaining better evidence since the publication of the Report. There is one incident depicted below from 2014 that was left out of the initial Report through my own inadvertence. Delving into more than 30 years of history is a daunting task, and there are certainly those whose lives have been disrupted by this entire process. It is my sincere hope that I have not added to anyone’s burdens.

III. LAW ENFORCEMENT ACTIVITIES

A number of those involved in this process have expressed questions regarding the status of law enforcement activities. Prior to the publication of the Report, the investigator spoke with a Detective from the Falls Church City Police Department. In addition, per the Detective’s request, on the day the Report was published on the Church website (April 18, 2024), a copy of the Report was emailed directly to the Detective.

In addition, on that same day, at the direction of the Church, I emailed a copy of the Report directly to two FBI agents who have been assigned to investigate these allegations and with whom the investigator had been previously in contact.

Subsequently, I met with those FBI agents for approximately three hours. During this time, I was completely transparent in answering any and all questions posed by the agents.

I also indicated a willingness to provide the identities of those individuals referenced in the Report, but only after obtaining consent from those individuals. To date, the FBI has not requested this information.

In several of the conversations or interviews conducted since the publication of the Report, individuals have inquired as to whether and when Taylor will be “brought to justice”. Given the understandable confidentiality maintained in law enforcement investigations, no definitive answer can be provided. It may also be helpful to understand the process by which an FBI investigation results in the filing of criminal charges.

An excellent resource for developing an understanding of this process is found on the U.S. Department of Justice website: <https://www.justice.gov/usao/justice-101/steps-federal-criminal-process>. Here are some excerpts that may be helpful:

In the Federal Government, there are agencies that employ criminal investigators to collect and provide information to the United States Attorneys in the respective district. You may already know some of the agencies, such as:

- Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI)

...

The investigators at these agencies investigate the crime and obtain evidence, and help prosecutors understand the details of the case. The prosecutor may work with just one agency but, many times, several investigating agencies are involved.

....

A prosecutor evaluates a case, and uses all the statements and information they have to determine if the government should present the case to the Federal Grand Jury – one in which all the facts lead to a specific person or persons who committed the crime. However, before the prosecutor made that conclusion, they have to look at both direct and circumstantial evidence. Direct evidence is evidence that supports a fact without an inference. Testimony of an eyewitness to a crime would be considered direct evidence because the person actually saw the crime. Testimony related to something that happened before or after the crime would be considered circumstantial.

....

After the prosecutor studies the information from investigators and the information they gather from talking with the individuals involved, the prosecutor decides whether to present the case to the grand jury. When a person is indicted, they are given formal notice that it is believed that they committed a crime. The indictment contains the basic information that informs the person of the charges against them.

As noted, we do not presently know where the FBI or the Office of the U.S. Attorney is in this process. The Falls Church continues to strongly encourage anyone who has information relevant to the FBI’s investigation to reach out to the FBI through its tip line, <https://tips.fbi.gov/home>.

IV.
MATTERS FOR CORRECTION OR CLARIFICATION

Following the publication of the Report, the Church and the investigator received numerous comments about the Report, including a few suggestions of factual inaccuracy as to particular events.

Before addressing more substantive matters, there are two less significant corrections that need to be made in the Report, as pointed out by an eagle-eyed reviewer:

- (i) The reference to Orkney Springs, West Virginia on page 18 of the Report should have been a reference to Orkney Springs, Virginia.
- (ii) The reference to the Christ Church of Atlanta Personal Committee on page 49 of the report should have been a reference to the Personnel Committee.

In addition to these corrections, the following reflects several other corrections or clarifications to the Report.

A. The Identity of the Chancellor in 2007

On page 51, the Report reads in relevant part:

Rev. Yates called a special meeting of the Church's Executive Committee ("ExCom"), which is made up of the Rector, Executive Director, Senior Warden, Junior Warden, and the Chancellor, to notify them of Student 4's disclosure.

(Emphasis added.) The legal advisor who was part of that conversation was *not* at that time serving as the Chancellor of the Church. It was a role that he would eventually fill. However, during that period he was deeply involved in assisting the Church in various legal issues that had arisen as a result of the Church's departure from the Episcopal diocese, and likely because of that context, he was included in that conversation.

I should note that he made me aware of this distinction prior to the finalizing of the Report, and I, purely out of inadvertence, did not make that correction. I apologize, to both the actual Chancellor in 2007 and the future Chancellor, for not having made this clarification in the initial Report.

B. The Church's Child Protection Policies and Practices in the 1990's and early 2000's

The Report notes, on page 80, that the Church appeared to have sound policies and procedures in place during the relevant time period (1990 to 2002), and also concludes, on page 83, that Taylor was allowed to take actions that were inconsistent with the policies that had been adopted.

This statement in the Report engendered some response from those who served in the children's ministry during that time period. For example, in one of the TFCA listening sessions, an individual who had served in the children's ministry during this time period expressed concern that the Report gave the impression that the Church's ministry to children and youth was cavalier about child protection. He shared his experience that when he served in the children's ministry in the 1990s, the Church did regular training and prevention for all of the staff and many of the volunteers who worked within the children's ministry.

These comments prompted a deeper dive into the history of child protection policies and training within the Church. Although the Report noted that during the "relevant time frame" (1990-2002) the Church had child protection policies and practices in place, an in-depth conversation with the Children's Ministry Director who started on staff in April 1993 has confirmed that there actually was no child protection policy in place until later that year. After she read a book, When Child Abuse Comes to Church by Bill Anderson,¹ she concluded that she needed to focus on this area for the Church.

I do not remember how I got it, but I read it and it was really eye opening. It was an account of what happened at his church, and I don't even remember the details, but I remember thinking, "Oh, now I'm responsible for this. I need to be concerned."

Having a background in education, she decided to dig in to the topic and do some research. She remembered reading some information that was being put out by Church Law & Tax (<https://www.churchlawandtax.com/>). She also attended a training session on this topic with representatives of several other Episcopal churches at St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Bailey's Crossroads. After that gathering, she began to implement practices in the children's ministry that were advocated in a Draft Diocesan Policy that had been disseminated.

Certainly, with present day eyes, one can look back and find that the absence of such a policy prior to 1993 was both surprising and a failing of the Church, but the Falls Church was not alone in this regard. To the best recollection of the Children's

¹ When Abuse Comes to the Church, Bill Anderson, Published January 1, 1992 by Bethany House Publishing, ISBN 9781556612862 (ISBN10: 1556612869), ASIN 1556612869.

Ministry Director, in that timeframe (1993 or 1994), the Episcopal diocese itself was just coming up with child protection policies, the development of which were driven in part by the concerns of insurance companies providing coverage for the churches.

After beginning to implement the developing Diocesan Policy in 1993 or 1994, the Children's Ministry Director became equipped to do semiannual training in the child protection policy of the Virginia Diocese. Throughout her time in that role, which ended in 2003, she was very insistent on making sure that children's ministry and youth ministry staff received regular training and constant reminders of the importance of not creating even the appearance that some type of inappropriate conduct could be taking place.

She recalls Taylor being supportive of that training, and all of the Youth Ministry volunteers were expected to participate. (Taylor's own participation is reflected in part in Exhibits 23 and 24 to the initial Report.)

As regards the youth ministry, the Children's Ministry Director was aware that Taylor and some of the other leaders in the Cornerstone program were driving students alone, which was technically against the Diocesan Policy. However, she also heard Taylor explain to some of his leaders that, because the one-on-one discipleship model was so critical to their youth ministry, they did not need to worry about aspects of the policy which precluded being alone with a youth in a car. *See* Report, Exhibit 18 ("never be alone in a vehicle with a child other than their own when at all possible").

She also recalled Taylor remarking that he was going to run some errands and pick up one of the male Cornerstone participants to go along with him, and she remembers thinking that it made sense if the discipleship model was one-on-one that a student might accompany Taylor on running some errands.

Thus, to the extent that anyone may have read the Report to suggest that the Church or its children's ministry leaders were incautious about child protection policies, this Addendum should clarify the level of commitment, at least starting in 1993, demonstrated by those in the Falls Church children's ministry to maintaining sound policies and practices.

C. The Falls Church Anglican Had a Bishop in Summer/Fall 2007

The Report records Rev. Yates, following the disclosure of Student 4 in 2007, as having the following recollection:

Rev. Yates noted that, ordinarily, his first step would have been to inform the Bishop; however, because the Church left the Episcopal church nine months prior, he recalled that he had no Bishop to contact. Because of that, he “was pretty much on [his] own” to handle the situation.

Report, p. 50. Rev. Yates’s recollection was confirmed during the investigation process by another individual who was involved in the leadership of the Church at that time; however, this recollection was inaccurate.

As detailed below (with sincere thanks to several individuals who contributed information for this part of the Addendum), the following is a brief history of the departure of the Falls Church from the Episcopal Church and its affiliation with the Anglican Church.²

In or around June 2006, Martyn Minns, the Rector of Truro Church, was consecrated a Bishop in the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) for the missionary initiative of the Church of Nigeria called Convocation of Anglican Churches in North America (CANA).

In December 2006, the congregations of both Truro and the Falls Church voted overwhelmingly to leave the Episcopal Diocese of Virginia and seek membership in CANA.

By letter dated December 17, 2006, Bishop Minns, as the Missionary Bishop of CANA and the Ecclesiastical Authority of the Anglican District of Virginia, accepted the Falls Church’s Congregational Reception Application to register the Falls Church under the sole jurisdiction and episcopal oversight of CANA.

During the first several months of 2007, Bishop Minns was wearing two hats, both as the Rector of Truro Church and as a Bishop of CANA. A Washington Times article dated Friday, April 20, 2007, reported the following:

The fledgling Anglican District of Virginia, a group of 11 local churches that have broken with the Episcopal Diocese of Virginia over theological issues, will ordain its first three priests and a deacon today in Falls Church.

² The intent of this Addendum is not to provide a detailed history of matters better known to those who lived through them, but rather merely to paint a picture of the status of the Anglican church hierarchy in 2007, when Student 4 brought forth his allegations in the summer to Rev. Yates.

Though the district is involved in lawsuits with the diocese, it is proceeding with creating its own clergy. Bishop Martyn Minns, the outgoing rector of Truro Church in Fairfax, will preside and the Rev. John Yates, rector of the Falls Church, will preach.

A few weeks following this event, in a service held at Hylton Chapel in Woodbridge, Virginia on May 5, 2007, Bishop Minns was formally installed as Bishop of CANA.

When the timing of these events were brought to the attention of Rev. Yates in a subsequent interview, it prompted him to revisit his earlier recollection and ultimately to explain why he had made the statement recorded in the Report. He recalled:

We were in a brand new, untested situation that none of us had ever experienced, and we were under the archbishop of Nigeria, and he was guiding us from afar and we'd never had a situation like this. A Nigerian diocese was being set up and we were just in the beginning stages of that. I suppose because of all that, I didn't even think of talking to [Bishop Minns]. We had known each other for such a long time and I wasn't used to thinking of him as a Bishop. I had thought of Peter Lee³ as the Bishop for so long that when we pulled away, it didn't feel like we had a Bishop. I think that is why I said it [that we had no Bishop at the time], because that was how I felt with Bishop Lee no longer being present. Recalling now that [Bishop Minns] was the Bishop back then, it would have made a lot of sense to talk to him. But I just didn't think of it at the time.

Subsequent to the publication of the Report, Bishop Minns was interviewed. He confirmed the factual history above, although he also noted that, in 2007, "protocols for dealing with matters like this were not yet fully developed; we were still in the process of building the boat." Still, he believes that Rev. Yates should have reached out to him.

In summary, added to the shortcomings of the Church in 2007 is the fact that Rev. Yates did not seek input and guidance from Anglican church hierarchy, which might have been helpful to him in processing this very difficult issue.

³ Peter Lee served as the Bishop of the Episcopal diocese of Virginia from 1985 until 2009. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Peter_Lee_\(bishop_of_Virginia\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Peter_Lee_(bishop_of_Virginia)). Thus, at the time that the Falls Church left the Episcopal diocese in December 2006, Bishop Lee had served as the Bishop over the Falls Church for the prior 21 years.

D. Additional Facts Regarding Taylor's Departure from Church of the Apostles

The initial Report provides a brief narrative regarding Taylor's years of ministry in Atlanta. The Report states, in relevant part, as follows:

During the course of the investigation, contact was made with current legal counsel for Church of the Apostles (regrettably, counsel at the time Taylor was employed is now deceased). Through counsel, Church of the Apostles would only state that certain allegations regarding Taylor's conduct resulted in his departure, but further stated that the allegations that led to his departure did not include any allegations of overt sexual abuse (physical touching of a sexual nature).

A witness who had previously been employed with Church of the Apostles had heard that when Church of the Apostles confronted Taylor with accusations of inappropriate conduct and informed him of their intent to separate his employment, he threatened the church with a defamation lawsuit. In order to resolve matters surrounding his departure, Church of the Apostles entered into an agreement in connection with Taylor's separation that contained a mutual nondisparagement clause.

Report, p. 47. This narrative was based upon the best information available at the time the Report was published. Subsequent to the publication of the Report, counsel for Church of the Apostles (COTA) was able to obtain a more complete file pertaining to Taylor's employment with and departure from COTA. The following reflects a revision based upon the additional information.

In or around the fall of 2003, a family at COTA lodged a complaint against Taylor for speaking to their son about topics that they thought were inappropriate, primarily masturbation. (This appears to have been the allegation of inappropriate conduct that led Student 37 to reach out to Rev. Yates in 2004, detailed and discussed below in Section VI(C).) After some discussion, the matter appeared to have been resolved, although the discord between Taylor and this family continued.

In or around the first quarter of 2004, COTA received credible evidence of pornography on a computer in Taylor's possession. As COTA maintained a zero-tolerance policy with respect to this type of material, Taylor's actions were under review by the church.

By letter dated April 13, 2004, Taylor informed COTA that he had accepted a position at Christ Church of Atlanta and was resigning his position from Church of the Apostles effective May 1, 2004. Contrary to the information contained in the

initial Report, there was no separation agreement and no nondisclosure or mutual nondisparagement agreement by and between COTA and Taylor.

Subsequently, in the fall of 2004, COTA received a letter from an attorney on behalf of Taylor asserting that the family who had made the allegations against Taylor in 2003 were continuing to speak poorly of Taylor. The attorney further asserted that personnel at COTA were spreading untruthful information about Taylor. The attorney's letter asked that the church, including its staff, honor a provision of the COTA handbook requiring that personnel information not be discussed with any unauthorized person either inside or outside of the church.

Sometime following the receipt of this letter, COTA held a staff wide meeting in which the then-current counsel for COTA advised the staff that Taylor was not asked to leave the church or fired, but rather resigned of his own volition. In addition, the staff members were instructed that if they were ever asked about Taylor, they were to respond simply, "it is our policy not to discuss former staff members."

Based upon this recently received information, the Report is amended to reflect the narrative above.

E. The Depiction of Dan Allender's Advice to Rev. Yates in 2021

Following the publication of the Report, a couple of parents suggested that the depiction of the advice that Rev. Yates received from noted psychologist Dr. Dan Allender, *see* Report pp. 55-56, may not have accurately reflected the advice given by Dr. Allender to Rev. Yates. As part of preparing this Addendum, I was able to speak with Dr. Allender, who previously had read the relevant portions of the Report. This following summary of that conversation has been reviewed and approved by Dr. Allender:

Dr. Allender recalled the conversation with Rev. Yates generally. He stated that the content of the Report as it related to the advice he had provided Rev. Yates was generally accurate, but likely incomplete.

Dr. Allender acknowledged that he would have told Rev. Yates that simply doing a serial letter to a wide group of individuals would not be likely to engender any response. In fact, he went on to note that he does not ever recall, when providing counsel to an institution in a similar situation, suggesting that simply sending out a letter would be an appropriate mechanism to induce responses. He explained that such a methodology generally does not work because there is inherent distrust in the institution that is sending out the communication (including when that institution is a church), and, just as critically, because those who may have been harmed are

not typically in a place emotionally where they are able to respond to such a communication.

On this latter point, Dr. Allender explained that victims of abuse – as difficult as it is even for the victim to understand – often develop both a strange sense of loyalty to their abuser and a sense of shame that arises out of a feeling that they were somehow complicit in the abuse. And because most individuals, even 20 or 30 years after the abuse, have never addressed these two critically interrelated characteristics of their mental and emotional makeup, they are not going to respond to a letter or other communication that comes to them cold.

Consequently, Dr. Allender believes that he would have told Rev. Yates that some type of mass communication would not be effective. But he also affirmed that he would have suggested that other means of trying to reach out to the affected community should be explored, whether through small group gatherings or through the creation of the video, as referenced in the Report.

However, while he does not recall all of the details of the precise conversation with Rev. Yates, what Rev. Yates' notes did not capture, from Dr. Allender's perspective, was that Dr. Allender also would discussed the importance of the church taking steps to create an environment where victims might be more inclined to open up and share their stories. This might have included using the pulpit, not only to raise the issue of abuse, but also to help those present understand the methodology of grooming so that if a victim were listening, he or she would begin to recognize how they may have been groomed. This recognition by the victims would then allow them to begin to understand their internally conflicting feelings of loyalty and shame, and would, in turn, allow them to come forward.

In other words, from Dr. Allender's perspective, when a church is faced with this type of dilemma, developing a better understanding of how to create an environment where victims might truly be encouraged to come forward is a prerequisite to any type of mass communication. He believes that his suggestions to Rev. Yates that the church begin to pursue getting small groups of parents together or helping to create a video that can be shared amongst groups of parents was designed to begin to build this platform of trust.

To the extent that the Report failed to fully reflect Dr. Allender's thoughts on this matter, I have expressed my apologies to Dr. Allender for not having reached out to him prior to publishing the initial Report to confirm Rev. Yates's characterization of their conversation.

V.
**PREVIOUSLY GATHERED INFORMATION
NOT CONTAINED IN THE REPORT**

The incident below was discussed during the initial interviews, but was not included in the Report out of inadvertence, and not for any purposeful reason. Notes from interviews with these two students (Student 2 and Student 18) did not reflect that any additional allegations of abuse were shared in the conversation described below.⁴ Additional information has now been recorded, and this incident is being included as part of the overall narrative.

A. **In 2014-15, Two Former Cornerstone Participants Encouraged Rev. Yates to Do More to Investigate the Allegations Against Taylor**

At the end of 2014 or beginning of 2015, two former Cornerstone participants (Student 2 and Student 18) had come back to Northern Virginia for the holidays and had gotten together to reconnect. The subject of Student 4's disclosure in 2007 came up (both had heard of it years earlier), and, in the words of Student 18, they "felt like it was crazy that nothing had happened" and "that there hadn't been any sort of call for victims to come out." They decided to reach out to Rev. Yates to discuss with him.

They met with Rev. Yates at his home. Student 2 recalled pressing Rev. Yates on why he had not done an investigation and telling him that "the odds that Taylor had not abused other kids was very low." He told Rev. Yates that the Church needed to reach out and find other families who might have been affected. He also recalled mentioning the Jeff Nielsen situation to Rev. Yates.

Student 18 also recalled the meeting with Rev. Yates. He remembered asking Rev. Yates if he had been in touch with Taylor's other employers in an attempt to prevent further victims. He recalled that the meeting seemed a bit confrontational, and the two of them walked away feeling like they still did not understand why nothing was happening.

Notes from the initial interview with Student 2 did not reflect that any additional information or stories had been shared with Rev. Yates in this meeting. However, as this was one of the earlier interviews conducted in the investigation, there was

⁴ In this regard, it is important to note that when Student 2 was interviewed, I had not yet brought on one of my colleagues to serve as a notetaker (which occurred shortly thereafter, starting with Student 3). Thus, while I was talking with Student 2 and asking follow-up questions, I was also taking my own notes, which are not nearly as thorough as those of my colleague, who is an exceptional notetaker. I sincerely regret if my failure to accurately capture Student 2's recitation of his conversation with Rev. Yates in 2014-15 caused Student 2 to feel as if his story was not heard.

no separate notetaker and, consequently, the notes of the investigator's interview with Student 2 are not as complete as the interviews that followed. In further communications, Student 2 indicated that he and Student 18 also shared some of their experiences with Taylor, such as those reflected in the Report (pp. 20, 22, 23, and 26). As he noted in an email, "[Student 18] and I told him about our experiences with Jeff Taylor. We weren't there to talk about [Student 4]. We were there to talk about us."

Rev. Yates did not recall any further discussion beyond the situation with Student 4 and the Jeff Nielsen situation (Report, pp. 60-62). He recalled being saddened that there seemed to be a lot of anger and frustration being communicated in that meeting, but he also remembered feeling that he had already done what he thought he could do with regard to Student 4's disclosure seven years earlier.

In dealing with the large volume of information that we gathered during the months that we conducted the investigation, this event did not stand out as a threshold moment, particularly in light of the fact that the Report was already going to reflect that the Church had fallen short when it failed in 2007 to conduct an investigation following the disclosure by Student 4. However, I recognize that some have viewed this 2014 meeting as another point when the Church should have considered undertaking an investigation but failed to do so. In that regard, it deserved inclusion in the initial Report as another moment in time when issues regarding Taylor and concerns for those who might have been harmed were raised, and I regret that it was not included in the initial Report.

B. Other Allegations that Could Not Be Investigated or Included in the Report

In the course of conducting this investigation, there were some additional allegations that were voiced that were not included in the initial Report either because (i) insufficient facts were provided to support further investigation; (ii) they were inconsistent with known facts; or (iii) they could not be disclosed accurately without identifying the speaker.

As an example of the first of these (insufficient facts provided to support an investigation), one parent of a former Cornerstone participant asked whether the investigation would include allegations of abuse by Cornerstone staff or volunteers other than Taylor. That parent was explicitly informed that any abuse allegations arising from the Cornerstone ministry, whether allegedly perpetrated by Taylor or some other person, would be reviewed and investigated if credible allegations were provided.

The Cornerstone parent then shared that his teenager had been abused or groomed by two Cornerstone volunteers, one male and one female, at differing times.

However, the parent could not provide the names of the volunteers, and (according to the parent) neither could the former Cornerstone participant. The parent was expressly asked to encourage the former Cornerstone participant to reach out to the investigator, but the Cornerstone participant never did so. Consequently, the parent was told that without having the names of the volunteers who allegedly engaged in the conduct, or having the willingness of the participant to provide any specific details regarding the alleged abuse or grooming, no such investigation was possible.

As just a few examples of the latter (allegations that were inconsistent with known facts), one witness asserted that after Taylor left the church in Georgia, he went to a boys' ranch in Texas where he abused several boys. Another witness testified that Taylor left the Falls Church to take a job with a church in Virginia Beach. Another witness stated that Taylor had taken Student 4 out of the area to attend a funeral and that they stayed in a hotel. Yet another witness stated that when the Falls Church flew Taylor up in September 2007 to confront him about the Student 4 disclosure (Report, p. 52), Rev. Yates had two attorneys present with him in his office. None of these were factually accurate and, therefore, none were included in the Report.

Finally, there were some allegations shared with the investigator that might have been included in the Report, however, to do so would necessarily disclose the identity of the witness providing the information. Because the witness did not wish to be identified at that time, the Report did not contain those allegations.

VI.

NEW ALLEGATIONS SINCE THE PUBLICATION OF THE REPORT

As noted, since the release of the Report, no further incidents of overt abuse have been brought forward. However, there has been some new information gathered since the Report was released, which is described in the section.

A. Additional Cornerstone Participant Interviews

Interviews with additional Cornerstone participants provided further examples of the type of covert sexual abuse described in pages 19-29 of the Report.

Student 39. Student 39 was very involved with Cornerstone. Having read the Report and looking back now, he perceives that Taylor groomed not only certain students in Cornerstone, but also Rev. Yates and many parents. He recalled being subjected to the physicality that Taylor encouraged amongst the guys in Cornerstone, especially Taylor giving wedgies to guys. He described the wedgies as being physically brutal, to the point where Taylor's goal was to pull up the underwear so

far that he ripped off the waistband. Student 39 remembered that in Taylor's office, he had displayed like trophies some waistbands from the underwear of guys to whom he had given wedgies. He also remembered Taylor bringing a three pack of boxer underwear one week to replace some of the underwear that had been destroyed.

Also confirmed by Student 39 were many of the other aspects of physical contact depicted on pages 27-29 of the Report, such as Taylor subjecting them to "titty twisters" or "oil checks", which he said began with Taylor poking guys in the butt with a golf club and eventually turned into sticking his finger in guys' butts (over their clothing).

Student 39 also recalled the frequent conversations about masturbation, and a couple of instances where Taylor asked him whether he was concerned with the size of his penis. (He recalled Taylor saying that if you could wrap your penis around your wrist, you were the right size). The topic of masturbation, which Taylor called the "Big M", was routinely included in their conversations. He also remembered Taylor telling him the trucker/hitchhiking story depicted in the Report (pp. 20-21, 49), but did not specifically recall whether Taylor put a hand on his leg.

There was one particular encounter with Taylor that Student 39 remembers keenly. He was in the church building and Taylor began chasing him around the furniture. Taylor eventually caught up with him and slammed him into the wall and got right into his face. He did not remember exactly what was said but remembered feeling threatened enough that he actually kneed Taylor in the private area as hard as he could. In response, Taylor collapsed in pain and looked at him in rage.

Student 39 also recalled going with Taylor on one-on-one trips, including Taylor taking him on a college road trip. He did not recall any overt sexual abuse taking place, but did recall feeling tired on the college road trip and not being able to remember certain portions of it.

Student 40. Student 40 recounted feeling like Taylor was very effective at making certain students, including him, feel like Taylor was a special confidant, which he now looks back on and understands to be a facet of grooming. This became especially apparent reading the Report, when he realized that many of the seemingly personal things that Taylor spoke to him about or shared with him were being shared with other Cornerstone participants as well.

Student 40 also confirmed numerous one-on-one "Coke dates" with Taylor, which would typically take place while they were parked in an isolated area of a public park. He recalled Taylor asking him about the size of his penis and whether he had ever measured it, and Taylor asking him if he struggled with masturbation and

telling him that God could help him overcome that issue. Looking back, Student 40 feels that there were a number of those in the Church leadership and the community who should have focused more on this one-on-one model that Taylor was not only employing himself, but encouraging other youth leaders to follow. His feeling now, in hindsight, is that the community turned a blind eye to what was happening because the ministry was so successful.

There were also several post-Report interviews with former female Cornerstone participants. For example, Student 41 confirmed the depiction in the Report of the female participants feeling that they were less important in Taylor's eyes.

In addition to these interviews with additional Cornerstone participants, subsequent to the release of the Report, there have been reports of some specific incidents focusing on what the Church or Rev. Yates might have known about Taylor's sexual abuse prior to the 2007 disclosure by Student 4.

B. A Meeting with Two Parents in 1993

Several weeks after the publication of the Report, a former Cornerstone student informed the investigator that there were rumors circulating of a couple having spoken with Rev. Yates in 1997 regarding something that happened to a male friend whom their daughter had brought to Cornerstone. The allegation was that Taylor had taken the young man to his office purportedly to get to know him better and something had happened, like Taylor had placed his hand on the young man's thigh. According to the story circulating, this prompted the young man's parents to contact the parents of the female participant, and those parents then called Rev. Yates to report the allegation.

The student who shared this story also indicated that he would attempt to speak directly with the female participant to see if she would speak with the investigator. Subsequently, and before the investigator was able to learn the identity of the former female Cornerstone participant or her parents, at one of the listening sessions, a Cornerstone parent alleged that in 1993, a couple whose child was involved in Cornerstone reported to Rev. Yates that Taylor had made "an inappropriate advance" when he was driving a young man home from Cornerstone, and that Rev. Yates failed to investigate.

Following the mention of this allegation in a listening session, the investigator was able to speak with the parents of the former female Cornerstone participant (Parents 25 & 26), as well as the participant herself (Student 41). To ensure that this critical story was shared accurately, following their interview, Parents 25 & 26 carefully reviewed and affirmed the following statement, drawn from their oral interview:

Statement of Parents 25 & 26

We started attending the Falls Church around 1991 or 1992. Our daughter was about 14 at the time. We had heard about this wonderful youth program and wanted her to be involved with other kids in that type of program. My wife worked in a local preschool and became friends with some of the other staff there. One of the staff members had a son and daughter, and they got connected with Cornerstone either through us or through another mutual friend. Our daughter thinks that they probably went there a few times. This was probably sometime in 1993.

My wife had heard either directly from the mother or through the mutual friend that the son had had a concerning experience with Jeff Taylor and would not ever go back to the youth group. What we recall hearing is that Jeff was giving the young man a ride home and something happened, but we are not sure what – no one's ever told us anything specific – but it was troubling enough that that young man never went back to Cornerstone. Again, we do not recall whether we learned about this directly from his mother or from our mutual friend.

Because my wife had spent her career in education, she had been trained that when you hear about something like this, you should report it, and so we scheduled a meeting with John Yates. We did not give John any specific allegations because we did not know any specific allegations. We just told him that the young man had had a bad experience and that something might have happened between Jeff Taylor and the young man that caused the young man to not want to go back to Cornerstone. We definitely did not tell John that there had been any allegation of touching, because we did not know what had happened. We wanted to make sure that we were being careful to not make it like more than it was, but we both felt that it was a red flag and we needed to let John know about it.

Our recollection is that John was not dismissive nor was he defensive about it. He just listened. We are not sure what John did with that information. We just assumed when we didn't hear anything back from John that he did check it out and there was not anything to warrant going further.

We did not tell our daughter at the time because she was enjoying the youth group, and she had a high view of Jeff and we had no real evidence of wrongdoing.

We didn't think about it much until we heard about the current investigation. When we were visiting our daughter, we mentioned that we had talked with John about this incident with the young man.

I read some remarks from the recent listening session and I was somewhat disturbed. It made it sound like we told John that Jeff was engaging in sexual abuse of kids, and that's just not true. We were concerned, but we did not know then, and do not know to this day, what happened between

Jeff Taylor and that young man. We do not know whether it was something that Jeff said or something that Jeff did. We really just do not know, and we couldn't have told John anything because we did not know anything.

According to these parents, there was no specific allegation that Taylor made an "inappropriate advance" towards the young man, only that something had happened between them that caused the young man to not want to return to Cornerstone.

Efforts to contact the young man and his sister have not been successful.

Following the receipt of this information, Rev. Yates was interviewed again for this investigation. He could not specifically remember following up with Taylor about this event, but stated that "likely I would have attempted to speak with the mother and certainly would have spoken with Jeff asking what happened." However, he cannot recall what follow-up took place following this meeting with Parents 25 & 26. Rev. Yates did note that he is confident that Parents 25 & 26 had not presented him with any allegations of physical sexual abuse on the part of Taylor. As evidence of that conviction, Rev. Yates stated that in the years subsequent to this 1993 meeting, some of his children went on vacation with the Taylor family, and Taylor played a role in the weddings of some of his children.

C. A Former Cornerstone Participant Speaks with Rev. Yates in 2004

Another incident that surfaced subsequent to the publication of the Report involved a former Cornerstone participant who was working with Taylor in Atlanta. The story that was circulating was that this individual came up to Northern Virginia in 2004 and told Rev. Yates that there had been allegations that Taylor been inappropriate with some male students and, in response, Rev. Yates had told her to "assume the best about Jeff."

Student 37 was the student who is involved in the situation. Her statement about that meeting with Rev. Yates is as follows:

I was working at Church of the Apostles in Atlanta in the youth ministry with Jeff Taylor when I became aware of allegations that Jeff had engaged in inappropriate conduct with one or more students in the youth group. Because I had always viewed him as a mentor, I spoke to Jeff about the allegations, and he insisted to me that he was innocent of the allegations. I felt understandably conflicted. I wanted to believe Jeff, but I also was dealing with several colleagues at Church of the Apostles who believed the family who had come forward with the allegations. As I had always trusted in Rev. Yates's wisdom, I came up to see him. When we

met, I do not recall providing John with any specific details about any sexual misconduct on the part of Jeff. Rather, I just shared something to the effect of that Jeff had been accused of being inappropriate with one or more male students.

And then I recall asking John directly to tell me if there was anything concerning that I should know about Jeff from his time at the Falls Church.

I recall John listening very patiently and thoughtfully, as he often did. And then his only response to me was to the effect of: “there is nothing, just stay the path, just keep going.” I was 24 years old at the time, and from my perspective, I was receiving his blessing to keep moving forward and to keep supporting Jeff. I do remember feeling somewhat confused and conflicted because I was afraid I was going to lose my job and the support and friendship of my colleagues because I was standing up for Jeff.

Student 37 continued to support Taylor, and even invited him to perform her wedding the following year (2005). Eventually the relationship between Student 37 and Taylor faded, and when Student 37 became aware of the later allegations against Taylor, she sought to reconcile with those fellow staff members at COTA whom she had not believed.

The testimony of Student 37 – that she did not share any specific allegations of overt sexual abuse on the part of Taylor with Rev. Yates – is bolstered by information received from COTA. Subsequent to the publication of the Report, a representative of COTA stated that the allegations against Taylor at that church involved an assertion that Taylor had engaged in “nut-smacking” with one young man after a basketball game (which the young man and his parents denied) and that Taylor had spoken with another young man about his masturbation habits, which was very upsetting to the parents and led to a complaint against Taylor.

D. Allegations of Covert Abuse by a Cornerstone Adult Volunteer

Early in the investigation, the investigator was told that there had been an adult male volunteer leader who had formerly served in the military and who had become involved in leading a discipleship group of male Cornerstone participants. This volunteer, who will be referred to in this Addendum as “Adult Volunteer,” regularly had a small group of boys over to his apartment for breakfast before school. The investigator was told by this witness that they had heard that Adult Volunteer would occasionally appear in front of the boys in his underwear or even naked.

Having been alerted to this possible issue, the investigator asked numerous male Cornerstone participants if they had been a participant in the small group led by Adult Volunteer, and if so, what they experienced. Several students recalled Adult Volunteer, but only a couple of the students who reached out to be interviewed for

the initial Report reported any ongoing interactions with Adult Volunteer. One of those students could not recall Adult Volunteer ever talking with him about masturbation or walking around in his underwear. He did recall Adult Volunteer, as a former military guy, occasionally getting physical in the sense that he would “punch you in the arm or a bear hug kind of thing but nothing that was below the belt or anything like that.”

Because no corroborating testimony was ever provided regarding Adult Volunteer, allegations of inappropriate conduct regarding Adult Volunteer were not included in the Report.

After the Report was published, two students came forward with some additional information about Adult Volunteer.

At one of the listening sessions held by the Falls Church, a former student stated that he had been in the small group led by Adult Volunteer, and that Adult Volunteer would sometimes appear in his underwear, one time showing him some military medals while he was in his underwear. The student also stated that Adult Volunteer would ask him about his masturbation habits. Although this student was encouraged to do so, he did not contact the investigator and, therefore, no additional specific information could be gathered from this witness.

Another male student who did reach out and participate in an interview (Student 42) shared one story about Adult Volunteer. Student 42 was involved in leadership at Cornerstone, and was invited to attend a conference in Canada (with the somewhat unusual name, Toronto Airport Christian Fellowship⁵) with two adult leaders who were helping out in Cornerstone, along with 5 to 10 other male participants. Adult Volunteer was one of those leaders and in order to get to know Student 42 better, Adult Volunteer invited him to meet one-on-one over a meal at a fast food restaurant.

According to Student 42, at one point during the meal, Adult Volunteer’s voice became somewhat quiet and he told Student 42 words to the effect of, “I want to talk to you about something, I want to talk about masturbation. I just want you to know that it’s okay.” He conveyed that Student 42 should not feel ashamed if that was an issue for him. Student 42 was embarrassed by the subject and did not want to talk about it, and that part of the conversation ended. Student 42 ended up going on the trip and said that nothing inappropriate or peculiar happened.

Another parent (Parent 7), who also served as an adult volunteer leader, recalled Adult Volunteer well from having traveled with him on trips. When asked whether it was possible that Adult Volunteer would walk around in front of some of the

⁵ This ministry was the site of a revival known as the Toronto Blessing, and it still exists, although it has changed its name to Catch The Fire. <https://ctftoronto.com/about>.

boys in his underwear while in his apartment, Parent 7 indicated that he would not be surprised, as Adult Volunteer had served a lifetime in the military and probably would not think much of that. He stated that he never heard Adult Volunteer talk to any boys about masturbation, but acknowledged that in the 1990s, it was a frequent topic in male Christian circles. He also stated that he never saw Adult Volunteer act inappropriately towards or with any of the Cornerstone participants.

Adult Volunteer passed away in early December 2023, and was not able to be interviewed for this Report. (In addition, he reportedly had significant memory loss in the months leading up to his passing.)

Based on the information gathered, it is likely that Adult Volunteer, perhaps not having previously been involved in youth ministry, patterned aspects of leading his discipleship group on Taylor's ministry practices, including speaking to participants regularly about the subject of masturbation. Moreover, it is certainly possible that Adult Volunteer, having reached a level of familiarity in having the discipleship group in his home for breakfast on a regular basis, felt comfortable appearing in front of the male participants in his underwear. These are actions that, in today's world, would be looked upon as concerning (as likely would having a group of teenagers go to the apartment of a single male leader early in the morning). Further, these are actions (discussions about masturbation, speaking with boys while wearing only underwear) that *could* fit within the definition of "covert sexual abuse" extensively detailed in the Report.

However, as also noted in the Report, sexual abuse generally contains some level of intent. For example the definition of sexual abuse quoted from Diane Langberg (on page 8 of the Report) notes that "[s]exual abuse of a child occurs whenever a child is sexually exploited by an older person for the satisfaction of the abuser's needs." (Emphasis added). The definition of covert sexual abuse utilized in the Report (p. 10), which was reviewed and affirmed by an experienced licensed psychologist, is as follows

"Covert sexual abuse," as used herein, means conduct that may involve some physical contact of areas other than private areas, but is primarily verbal or visual in nature, such as discussions about sexual practices, comments about the victim's body or the perpetrator's body, depictions of sex acts, inquiries about sex organs, etc., which is explicitly intended by the perpetrator, or that reasonably may be inferred from the actions of the perpetrator to be designed, to arouse or satisfy sexual desire of the perpetrator or the victim.

(Emphasis added.)⁶ Without further information that would lead one to believe that the actions of Adult Volunteer were motivated in some part by sexual desire, there is no basis to conclude that Adult Volunteer – from an objective standpoint – engaged in covert sexual abuse.

This finding is not designed or intended to diminish the subjective feelings or perceptions of those who look back now on their time with Adult Volunteer and feel that some of his actions were inappropriate to the point of being, in their eyes, a form of sexual abuse; indeed, even actions done without any nefarious intent may cause harm to another. However, without knowing his intent (which might be inferred from his other actions), I am unable to conclude objectively that Adult Volunteer engaged in sexual abuse.

E. Additional Reflections of Cornerstone Participants

Since the publication of the Report, a number of Cornerstone Participants or their families have come to view their past interactions with Taylor in a different light. Some of them have expressed that prior to reading the Report, they looked back upon some of Taylor's actions – e.g., the physicality between Taylor and many of the boys, the focus on lust and masturbation, the conversations with young men in cars on Coke dates in isolated locations, the apparent fixation on male anatomy – as simply being some of Taylor's peculiarities. Having now read the Report (and perhaps some other literature surrounding what the Report refers to as covert sexual abuse and grooming), a number of these participants and their families have now come to the conclusion that some of Taylor's conduct was not just “Jeff being weird” or “Jeff being Jeff”, but actually reflected various stages of potential grooming.

Thus, in some of our discussions with Cornerstone participants or their families since the publication of the Report, it has not necessarily been that additional facts or memories were shared. Rather, what has been shared in many instances has been this realization that they may indeed have been harmed by some of these interactions in ways that they had not fully comprehended prior to this investigation and the Report.

Up until the last 20 years or so, the concept of sexual abuse was predominately limited to the type of conduct identified in the Report's definition of overt sexual abuse. (Report, p. 10). With the realization that sexual abuse can come in more forms than sexual touching, a number of participants have communicated, either in subsequent interviews or in the listening sessions that the Church has held, that

⁶ The criminal definition of sexual abuse in Virginia also requires some level of intent: “ ‘Sexual abuse’ means an act committed with the intent to sexually molest, arouse, or gratify any person” Va. Code § 18.2-67.10(6).

they are just now coming to grips with the reality of the abuse they may have suffered.

As one example, Student 3, who was asked by a church staff member in 2007 whether he had been subjected to sexual abuse by Taylor, answered that question in the negative, likely reflecting on “overt sexual abuse.” However, he also now believes he shared with that staff member that Taylor had related to him the hitchhiking/trucker story (described in the Report on page 20-21) and had asked him (when Student 3 was probably only about age 12), whether he had concerns about the size of his penis (described in the Report on page 24). Student 3 recognizes that he was recounting conduct that he now sees as covert sexual abuse and/or sexual grooming, even if he could not have put those words to his description of the conduct 17 years ago.

For his part, the staff member does not recall the specifics of what Student 3 shared, but recalls his sense of relief when he learned that Student 3 had not been subjected to the type of overt sexual abuse that had been reported by Student 4. The staff member, who previously served in the youth ministry, recalls observing Taylor talk with other Cornerstone participants about topics like masturbation. Thus, to the extent that Student 3 spoke with him about that aspect of Student 3’s interactions with Taylor, he would not have been surprised. And, just as with Student 3 himself, some of these behaviors seemed to the staff member as peculiar or weird. But, for this staff member, they did not trigger the same type of concern in 2007 that they would trigger in today’s world, which has a much greater awareness of various forms of abuse beyond physical sexual abuse. As one witness stated, “we knew about some of the behavior, but we didn’t know it was grooming.”

Thus, while many of the factual aspects of the information that has been shared *since* the publication of the Report are not significantly different than the facts gathered and contained in the Report, what is different – and what is noteworthy – is the realization amongst some of the Cornerstone participants and their families of the possible intent underlying Taylor’s actions and the possible effects of Taylor’s conduct upon them.

VII. CONCLUSION

The additional information gathered over the past three months, while useful to clarify and correct aspects of the Report, did not change the two key fundamental findings of the Report – first, that no one in leadership of the Church was aware of Taylor’s abuse while he was employed and second, that once the Church did receive credible allegations of overt sexual abuse by Taylor in 2007, both at that time and in the years following, it should have taken additional steps to investigate and address the situation.

First, no additional evidence surfaced to establish that anyone in leadership at the Church, or, for that matter, anyone else intimately tied to the Cornerstone community outside of the participants, such as other Church or Cornerstone staff, Cornerstone volunteers, or Cornerstone parents, were aware of Taylor's overt sexual abuse or covert sexual abuse. The former remained unknown while Taylor was employed with the Church because, as is commonplace in abuse situations, the victims of overt abuse were not able to share their stories until some years later. The latter – covert sexual abuse or sexual grooming – was not recognized while Taylor was employed because although certain aspects of Taylor's conduct (Coke dates, questions about masturbation) were known to some in the broader Cornerstone community, the frequency, the severity, and most critically, the apparent intent of such conduct, did not become known until a more complete picture emerged in the course of this investigation. As discussed above, in some instances, those affected were not able until this year to put a name to conduct that had perhaps troubled them for years.

Likewise, the information gathered in the last three months has not fundamentally changed the conclusion of the Report that the Church, following Student 4's disclosure in 2007, had opportunities (e.g., 2014, 2021) to do more to dig into Taylor's actions during the years that followed. As noted in the Report, after that disclosure, there were a number of steps that Rev. Yates and the Church took that were laudable. And yet, as the Report also makes clear, the steps taken then, and in the years following, were simply not enough, as a fuller effort and investigation should have been undertaken to ascertain the comprehensive effects of the dark and evil side of Taylor's ministry upon other Cornerstone participants. While such an investigation would not have changed the heinous acts that already had taken place, it would have allowed the healing process to begin many years earlier.

Throughout a number of the interviews, there has been an undercurrent of guilt and remorse on the part of those who were closest to Taylor, whether supervising him, working alongside or sharing office space with him, vacationing or sharing holidays with his family, or just “doing life” together. A theme that emerged in many interviews with members of the Cornerstone community (outside of the participants themselves) was to the effect of, “how could we not have known?”

The answer to that question, I believe, lies first in understanding the deceptive and subtle ways of sin. As was written in the initial Report, Taylor did have a positive impact upon many lives, and there were many who were interviewed who expressed their appreciation for the ways in which he encouraged them to pursue their faith in Jesus Christ. To be clear, none of that offsets or balances out the darkness and evil of his other actions, but it does help explain why there were so many who were seemingly close to Taylor and who yet remained unaware of the darker side of his actions.

In addition, as Dr. Allender affirmed in our recent conversation, the world's perception of these matters has changed dramatically (and for the better) over the past 30 years. Incidents such as the 1993 conversation or the 2004 conversation would likely in today's world be seen as potential early warning signs, worthy of further review. But, while not seeking to use the observation as an excuse, the world had a different perspective even three decades ago. (I could also note that, to the extent there was awareness in the Christian ministry setting about potential abuse and rules designed to protect students, almost all of that focus was on cross-sex situations, especially male leaders not being alone with female students. There was very little focus on or concern about same-sex situations).

I believe this is worth recounting because there are many who, following the 2007 disclosure and again during this investigation process, have felt the deep weight of guilt and remorse that they did not see more clearly some of the darkness that was taking place amidst the successes of the Cornerstone ministry. For some, the guilt has matured into anger, perhaps anger at themselves, but also anger at the Church and its leadership for not having been more aware of what was going on in the dark recesses of an otherwise successful ministry.

In his letter to Galatians, Paul encourages the Galatians as follows:

For you were called to freedom, brothers. Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. For the whole law is fulfilled in one word: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." But if you bite and devour one another, watch out that you are not consumed by one another.

Galatians 5:13-15. That same admonition remains apt today. Over the past nine months, I have seen firsthand how a former community that once looked back with a sense of accomplishment and appreciation for the positive impacts of the ministry during that season of the Church's life has become divided. Perhaps this is a necessary and healthy and expected journey that the Cornerstone community must traverse. But, as the investigation concludes and the investigator exits the arena, the question that remains for the Cornerstone community is whether they will persist in a season of anger and resentment that this darkness was visited upon them, or whether they will move through this season towards healing and reconciliation.

None of this is to suggest that anything should be swept under the rug or buried and forgotten. Indeed, my hope would be that the lessons that can be discerned from these events (*see* Report, pp. 80-85) would reverberate and not be forgotten for decades to come, not just within the Falls Church, but for all churches.

Still, as I have observed many of the reactions of those who were closest to these events, my sincere hope is that in the coming months and years, those whose worlds have been

turned upside down by events in the past or in the present will continue to find healing and, in doing so, extend grace to others. For those who have concluded that the Gospel of Jesus Christ carries no present meaning for them, this may be a hard threshold to pass over. But for those who continue to pursue a relationship with God through faith in Christ, not based upon their own goodness or their own righteousness, my hope and my prayer is that we might all embrace the grace that is offered in this Gospel so fully and completely that we are able to understand the depths of forgiveness that has been extended to us and, in so doing, extend that forgiveness to one another.

As I wrote at the outset of the initial Report, I encountered some skepticism in this process that the Falls Church Anglican was really interested in doing the right thing and pessimism that hiring a lawyer to conduct the investigation was designed to truly ferret out, rather than cover up, the truth. For some, that skepticism and pessimism remains, and they may never change their perspective. However, as this process concludes for me, I hope and believe that I can stand before the One whose judgment really matters with the confidence of knowing that I have, as undeniably flawed and fallible as I am, sought to tell the story of Cornerstone and Taylor truthfully and forthrightly, neither understating any of the facts, nor overstating any of the facts.

Throughout this process, I have been driven to pray persistently for the Cornerstone participants, for their families, for the leadership of the Church, and for Taylor and his own family. We will not know this side of heaven why the Creator of this – at times wondrous and at times dark – world allows evil to persist. But my sincere belief is that it is only in His kindness and goodness that we will find healing from such darkness. And for that, I will continue to pray.

Edward Lee Isler
August 28, 2024