

## **SAFE CHURCH**

Since 2022, parishes across the diocese have been working diligently to complete Safe Church training and to collect the necessary criminal records checks for clergy, employees, and volunteers. Safe Church training is a requirement of our insurers but is more importantly an essential tool for our people to increase awareness and understanding of ways in which we can live out our baptismal vows in a safe and respectful community.

Synod staff assisted parishes in identifying who was required to complete Safe Church and followed up regularly to encourage completion of the work. The following were the four conditions that required Safe Church training.

1. If a parishioner is in a leadership role.
2. If a parishioner works directly with vulnerable children or adults.
3. If the parishioner has a key to the church and therefore, unlimited access.
4. If a parishioner is handling money or has access to financial information.

The following is the timeline of the work that has been accomplished in the past 16 months:

### **January 2022**

Parishes were reminded that we needed to know who their Safe Church Liaison was for training purposes.

### **May 2022**

Four one-hour training sessions were supplied over Zoom and a PDF of the PowerPoint was sent out to everyone after. All liaisons were told they had 30 days to complete their Safe Church training if they needed to update and submit for a Police Information Check (PIC).

### **June 30, 2022**

The deadline for all Safe Church Liaisons to submit a list of parishioners who needed to update either their PIC, Safe Church training or both. Once the links were sent out, everyone was told they had 30 days to complete their training and submit for a PIC.

### **August 31, 2022**

The first general deadline put in place when the 30-day completion period was not successful.

## **September 30, 2022**

The second general deadline given as an extension since most parishes hadn't completed the updates needed by that time.

## **October 2022- February 2023**

Synod staff continued to encourage completion, and many parishes moved forward with Safe Church and PICs. In some parishes where individuals were having difficulties, a group was gathered to complete the training together.

There have been some challenges in completing the process, and parish administrators, parish councils, wardens and incumbents continue to try to address these challenges.

### **Challenges:**

- A lack of computers or computer skills in parishioners to complete online training.
- A lack of computer and communication skills amongst the Safe Church Liaisons.
- A dislike of online training in general that is self-driven (preference for in-person workshops).
- A much longer completion period in general. Some reported 5-10 hours to complete 4-8 modules. Fifteen modules should take approx. 3-4 hours to complete.
- A mindset that Safe Church is nuisance and not necessary.
- A general hesitancy to adopt a new program or process.
- Missing records from 2018-onwards for Safe Church training workshops.
- Missing Police Information Checks (PICs) from previous years.
- Many parishioners were out-of-date, as the Safe Church program was largely on-hold during the height of the pandemic, so this year is a massive update for many parishes.
- Since travel is now possible, many people were away this summer or unwilling to do training during the summer months.
- Training not very accessible being only online—no book format or oral training for those who are visually impaired.
- Deadlines being ignored or changed without asking.
- Exemptions being requested fairly frequently.

But, even with these challenges, there have been many successes.

### **Successes:**

- Tracking through the Praesidium program is very simple. You can see who has accessed their account and when they completed the different modules.
- The hard copy form for PIC updates from the CRRP appears easy for everyone to use.
- Providing 4 sessions of zoom training allowed everyone to choose their preferred time and attend at their convenience. Everyone reported back that the training was excellent except one person who finds learning online very difficult.

### **Problems or Requests to consider:**

- Most parishes hire someone to clean or do maintenance who is not a parishioner but also not from a company (no insurance for their business and no license) – do we continue to ask them to do PICs and Safe Church training for us? Is there a standard that needs to be met here?
- There are third party criminal record check businesses like MyCRC, Insta Record and the Commissionaires. Research by synod staff has shown that none of these options check the same databases as the police and CRRP. In the coming year, will we only accept a PIC/CRC acquired from the police or CRRP or are third party companies acceptable?
- Following instructions on the website, PowerPoint presentation and through email were all online and electronic, which proved challenging for many. Would it be possible to create a handbook of how to update Safe church training (even just 3-4 pages) that could be printed and handed out to parishioners?
- Many liaisons reported back that training over the summer was challenging and progress was eventually made in September.

### **Potential new timeline suggestion:**

1. **April-August** – Safe Church training reminders to all parish incumbents, administrators, and liaisons. Potential campaigning to promote the necessity of Safe Church training.
2. Training/Review sessions for liaisons and incumbents offered over **July and August** online. All instructions for training materials and forms handed out to parishes.
3. An **August 30<sup>th</sup>** deadline for lists of parishioners that need their training updated and the deadline for any in-person workshops needed at the parish level to be organized for the month of September with links for group accounts sent by September 1<sup>st</sup>.
4. **September 1-15** - Praesidium links and training material sent from the synod office to all individual parishioners who need to update.
5. **October 15<sup>th</sup> deadline** for training completion.
6. **October 31<sup>st</sup> final report** submitted to Bishop Anna.

The Completion Rate by Parish (as of February 2023) can be found on the following pages.

Respectfully submitted,

The Ven Eric Partridge  
Safe Church Program Supervisor

## Completion Rates by Parish (as of February 2023)

### Mid-North Island:

| Parish                                    | Completion Rate: |
|---|------------------|
| St Anne & St Edmund, Parksville           | 90%              |
| St Columba, Tofino                        | 0%               |
| Christ Church, Alert Bay                  | 66%              |
| St Peter, Campbell River                  | 88%              |
| St John the Divine, Courtenay             | 66%              |
| St John Gualbert, Port McNeill            | 79%              |
| St Peter, Comox                           | 83%              |
| St Columba, Port Hardy                    | 100%             |
| Trinity Anglican + Lutheran, Port Alberni | 100%             |
| St Mark, Qualicum                         | 88%              |

### Cowichan Mid-Vancouver Island:

| Parish                              | Completion Rate: |
|-------------------------------------|------------------|
| Christ Church Gabriola              | 0%               |
| St Michaels & All Angels, Chemainus | 78%              |
| St John the Baptist Duncan          | 83%              |
| St John the Baptist Cobble Hill     | 93%              |
| St Paul Nanaimo                     | 88%              |
| St Mary, Nanoose Bay                | 98%              |
| St Philip, Cedar                    | 91%              |
| St Peter, Quamichan                 | 96%              |
| St Philip by-the-Sea, Lantzville    | 98%              |

### Western, Peninsula and Gulf Islands:

| Parish                                  | Completion Rate: |
|---|------------------|
| Holy Trinity, Sooke                     | 98%              |
| Parish of Central Saanich               | 83%              |
| Parish of Pender & Saturna              | 85%              |
| Holy Trinity, North Saanich             | 94%              |
| Church of the Advent                    | 81%              |
| St Margaret of Scotland, Galiano Island | 50%              |
| St Mary Magdalene, Mayne Island         | 50%              |
| Parish of Salt Spring Island            | 87%              |
| St Andrew, Sidney                       | 90%              |
| St Mary of the Incarnation, Metchosin   | 52%              |
| St Michaels & All Angels, Royal Oak     | 93%              |

### Greater Victoria:

| Parish                        | Completion Rate: |
|-------------------------------|------------------|
| Christ Church Cathedral       | 88%              |
| St Dunstan, Saanich           | 85%              |
| St George, Cadboro Bay        | 94%              |
| St Mary the Virgin, Oak Bay   | 87%              |
| St Matthias, Victoria         | 88%              |
| St John the Divine            | 95%              |
| St Barnabas, Victoria         | 73%              |
| St Luke, Cedar Hill           | 98%              |
| St Peter & St Paul, Esquimalt | 98%              |
| St Philip, Oak Bay            | 94%              |
| Two Saints Ministry           | 98%              |