

Christian Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses



2821 Route 22, Patterson, NY 12563-2237 Phone: (845) 306-1100

SDO:SST April 23, 2007

BODY OF ELDERS
CONGREGATION OF
JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES, MA

Dear Brothers:

We have in hand your letter dated March 12, 2007, wherein you provide details on the circumstances of Brother . If we understand matters correctly, Brother has been accused by Sister of sexually molesting her when she was a child. The alleged abuse would have occurred in 1978 when Brother was 13 or 14 years old – prior to his baptism – and Sister was six or seven years old. You state that Brother has been extended certain privileges in the congregation, including handling microphones and reading and representing the group in prayer at the Congregation Book Study. You inquire as to how Brother should be viewed by the congregation, and whether it is appropriate to extend such privileges in view of the allegation of child molestation. We offer the following comments.

In your letter you state that when Brothers and confronted Brother with the allegation in 2002, “he did not deny it.” Furthermore, when asked if he wished to face his accuser he refused. Does Sister still reside in the area? If so, would she be willing to face Brother ? If not in person, she could do so by means of a letter or a telephone conference call. Such a meeting should include two elders from the Congregation. If Sister does not want to face Brother , he should still be given opportunity to go on record before Jehovah as denying or confessing to her allegation. We will need to be apprised of the results of your meeting with Brother , clearly stating his response to the charge.

In addition to the above, we will need answers to the following questions. How is Brother viewed in the community and by the authorities? Has he lived down any notoriety in the community? Are members of the congregation aware of what took place? How do they and/or his victim(s) view him? Has he ever been disfellowshipped, reprovved, counseled, or otherwise dealt with? Your letter makes reference to the fact that Brother was disfellowshipped at some point in the past. We have no indication of such congregation action in our files. Please provide complete information including, if it is available, a copy of the stamped letter or form apprising the branch office of the disfellowshipping action. When and why was Brother disfellowshipped? When was he reinstated? Your answers to these questions will assist us in determining how Brother can be used in the congregation. We anticipate your prompt response to this inquiry. Your correspondence should make reference to this letter by the date and desk symbols indicated above.

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We take advantage of this opportunity to convey our warm Christian love and greetings. Please be assured that your conscientious labor in shepherding that portion of God's flock entrusted to your care is deeply appreciated. We count it a privilege to be working alongside you in serving Jehovah and our brothers during these momentous times.—Zephaniah 1:14; Acts 20:28.

Your brothers,

*Christian Congregation
of Jehovah's Witnesses*