and hope for the good that exists in this church has caused him to be a passionate advocate for abuse survivors. As one FMC parishioner wisely noted, "Growth is painful but all of this solidifies my opinion that there isn't room for apathy in these kinds of situations." The Lord can use (and is using) the totality of this experience to transform this congregation. And the Lord can use this so that FMC can be a model for other congregations.

The bottom line is that churches that are vocal about the realities of abuse by addressing it transparently through education, sermons, support, and care for survivors are communicating a clear message: your pain is not too much for us to bear. You who have survived it will not be forced to survive it alone. Transforming our churches and faith communities into places of refuge for those who have been violated, judged, and marginalized is what the gospel is all about. If God is our refuge, then our churches must be the places where these precious souls find safety and rest.

As Paul writes in Ephesians 3, this is GRACE's prayer for FMC, "**14** For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, **15** from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named, **16** that according to the riches of his glory he may grant you to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in your inner being, **17** so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith—that you, being rooted and grounded in love, **18** may have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, **19** and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God. **20** Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, **21** to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen." May the love and peace of Christ our Lord surround each of you as you continue this important journey.

APPENDIX A: SUMMARY OUTLINE OF FINDINGS REGARDING MICHAEL COMBS, HIS SEXUAL CRIMES AND MISCONDUCT, AND OTHER VICTIMS

1945: Birth year
May 1967: Graduated with BA in Music Education from Northwest Missouri State
July 1967: Married first wife
1966-1971: Attended Christ Episcopal Church and taught at Bishop LeBlond, an all-girls school, in St. Joseph, MO
1970: Birth of son
May 1973 or 1974: Graduated with Masters degree in Guidance Counseling
1973 or 1974: Rector at Christ Episcopal Church told Michael Combs he was being inappropriate with a high school girl who had also been their babysitter
1975: Started attending St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Leavenworth, KS
May 1976: Combs told his first wife that he was being called to the priesthood
1977: Michael Combs and family moved to Austin, TX for Michael Combs to attend Seminary of the Southwest; attended First Presbyterian Church in Austin where he was employed as organist and choirmaster
1980: Ordained as an Episcopal priest
1980-1983: Employed at Grace Cathedral in Topeka; Michael Combs and first wife were youth leaders
1983-1986: Employed as Assistant Rector at St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Leavenworth, KS. Michael Combs confessed to Newton police that he sexually abused two teenage girls while he was a priest there. One was 15 and one was 18. Michael Combs also admitted to numerous affairs with married women while he was a married priest there. An active member of the church who was very close to the situation called Combs "a serial adulterer." Michael Combs also admitted that as a priest, he abused his role as counselor with counselees.
1986-1991: Michael Combs was Rector at St. Matthew's Episcopal Church in Newton, KS
1988-1989: Michael Combs' first wife and current wife were best friends and worked together; Michael Combs met his current wife through his first wife

January 4, 1990: Michael Combs left his first wife and filed for divorce
June 13, 1990: Divorce from first wife finalized
December 24, 1990: Michael Combs publicly announced his engagement to current wife to members of St. Matthew's church
1991: While at St. Matthew's in Newton, the church in Leavenworth learned about Michael Combs' multiple affairs. They also learned that he had sexually abused two teenage girls, ages 15 and 18. The criminal statute of limitations had expired but they still initiated ecclesiastical proceedings against him and his credentials as priest were revoked. Due to "privacy concerns" the Episcopal church did not provide his first wife with any of this information. However Michael Combs did share this information with his current wife before they married.[80]
June 1991: Married current wife
Around 1991-1993: After leaving the priesthood, Michael Combs applied for a job at Methodist Youthville and was hired. A person from the Leavenworth parish called the personnel director and suggested they call the bishop at Leavenworth to find out specifically why Michael Combs left the Episcopal church. After learning the real reason Michael Combs left, he was terminated.
Around 1997: Michael Combs and current wife became active at FMC.
Around 2005: Michael Combs was confronted by the prior 18 year old victim from Leavenworth at a Victim Offender Reconciliation Program meeting. Michael Combs' current wife attended the proceeding. Combs apologized to the victim and her husband when he was confronted.
2006: FMC's Safe Sanctuaries policy was initially adopted. Michael Combs completed the Safe Sanctuaries training at some point after this policy was adopted.
2005-2007: Male neighborhood child reported that Combs sexually abused him during this timeframe when he was approximately 12 to 14 years old. This report of sexual abuse was raised in the Plea Agreement which indicated that the charge was being dismissed in exchange for Combs' plea of no contest to Rape.
2011-2014: Per neighborhood boy, Michael Combs sexually abused the boy's younger sister during this timeframe when she was between the ages of 12 and 15.
From 2013 to 2015: Michael Combs repeatedly touched the victim (approximately age 8-10) all over her body, including the victim's breasts on numerous occasions with his hands. Michael Combs also admitted touching the victim's genitals (under her clothes) with his hand on approximately two occasions while they were under the covers together in his bed. Michael Combs claimed that he could not remember a lot but affirmed that the victim would not lie or make these things up, and that "her memory is a whole lot better than mine."[81] During this timeframe, Michael Combs also assisted his wife in her work with disabled children (such as swimming at the Rec Center and outings to the zoo).[82]
Summer 2015: Michael Combs preached a sermon at FMC while the Pastor was away.
November 19, 2015: Michael Combs confessed a number of sexual crimes to the Newton police and was arrested and booked into jail for felony charges. Police then informed Pastor of his arrest. Pastor told Youth and Young Adults Pastor and the Worship and Visitation Pastor.
November 23, 2015: The felony Complaint outlining 4 felony counts of sexual crimes was filed in the District Court of Harvey County, Ninth Judicial District: 2 counts of Rape and 2 counts of Aggravated Indecent Liberties with a Child under the age of 14.
December 4, 2015: Local newspaper reports Michael Combs' arrest
February 2016: Court date was postponed.
March 22, 2016: Pled "no contest" in open court to one count of Rape (sexual intercourse with a person under the age of

[80] In his interview with Newton police, Michael Combs stated that before he married his current wife, he told her about his sexual abuse of the two teenage girls from St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Leavenworth.
[81] Michael Combs confessed to these crimes in a videotaped interview with the Newton police.
[82] No person has disclosed that Michael Combs abused them while at the Rec Center. However in speaking of the disabled children in her care, Michael Combs' wife admitted, "Those boys can't remember anything. They can't even remember what happened yesterday."

14).[83]

June 13, 2016: Michael Combs sentenced and taken into custody for a period of 93 months (7.75 years) in the Department of Corrections; other conditions include Lifetime Post-Release Supervision and Lifetime Sex Offender Registration

APPENDIX B: SUMMARY OUTLINE OF EVENTS RELATED TO FMC'S HANDLING OF MICHAEL COMBS' CRIMES

November 19, 2015: After Michael Combs confessed to a number of sexual crimes, he was arrested and booked into jail for felony charges. Police informed Pastor of his arrest. Pastor then told Youth and Young Adults Pastor and the Worship and Visitation Pastor.

November 23, 2015: The felony Complaint outlining 4 felony counts of sexual crimes was filed in the District Court of Harvey County, Ninth Judicial District: 2 counts of Rape and 2 counts of Aggravated Indecent Liberties with a Child under the age of 14.

December 4, 2015: Local newspaper reports Michael Combs' arrest

December 9, 2015: The Pastor emailed members of the Nurture Commission, Safe Sanctuaries Committee, Caregiving and Membership Commission Chair, and Church Board Chair regarding the arrest and asked for feedback about the wording of the announcement she planned to make to the church body on Sunday, December 13th.

December 10, 2015: Michael Combs' wife was the Chair of the Nurture Commission and a member of the Church Board. The minutes reflect her attendance on this date for this monthly meeting of the Church Board.[84]

December 12, 2015: Pastor informed email group above that she spoke to Michael Combs' defense attorney and he opposed her making any public announcement until after the case was finalized. Pastor emailed group asking for feedback about whether waiting a week to make the announcement would be wise. During this time, there were a number of back and forth emails between the individuals above. Some advised the Pastor to wait a week to make the announcement and some advised it was better to go ahead and make the announcement. The primary concerns were about what Michael Combs and his wife wanted, reassuring the congregation that the church is safe and that child safety is a priority, and concerns about telling parishioners to avoid gossip. Pastor stated that she would meet with Combs and his wife and then make a decision.

December 17, 2015: Pastor meets with Michael Combs and his wife about making an announcement regarding his arrest to the congregation.

December 18, 2015: Pastor recommends to the email group after meeting with Michael Combs and wife that no public statement be made to congregation until after a plea has been made.[85] The group affirmed that it was her decision to make and they trusted her in doing whatever was the appropriate thing.

February 2016: Michael Combs' court date was postponed.

March 21, 2016: Michael Combs' Sunday School class held a prayer meeting at FMC for Michael Combs. They also prayed for the victim of his crime.

March 22, 2016: Michael Combs pled "no contest" in open court to one count of Rape (sexual intercourse with a person under the age of 14).

April 3, 2016: Email from elder to Safe Sanctuaries Committee, Caregiving Commission, Nurture Commission, Church

[83] As previously noted, the Plea Agreement states that in exchange for Combs' plea of "no contest" to Count 1, Rape, the State of Kansas would dismiss "Counts 2, 3, and 4, and not to file charges related to an investigation/reports involving [name] as a possible victim of the Defendant."

[84] The Nurture Commission is charged with overseeing children and youth activities and programs such as the Safe Sanctuaries Committee, Sunday School, Vacation Bible School, Church Family Night, and more. Michael Combs' wife's term on the Nurture Commission expired at the end of 2015 after six years of service, however she was invited to return to the Nurture Commission in April 2016.

[85] Pastor emails the group on 12/18/16, "I recommend to you that we not make a public statement until after a plea has been entered in February. A new element has come into the situation, and I guess it tipped the balance for me. I did tell [Michael Combs, his wife and the lawyer] that I thought it would be healthier the whole way around if we were able to make a statement, and they understood that. On the advice of their lawyer, I do have a signed document from them that says that they would not approve of anything that we would say. I do not want to cause more pain in an already incredibly-painful situation."

Board Chair, and Pastors. Elder asked group to publicly acknowledge Combs' arrest. Church Board Chair and others tell elder they will wait to do anything until the Pastor returned from her Israel trip on April 13. During this email exchange, one of the Church Board members acknowledged not knowing that Michael Combs had already pled "no contest" to the felony crime in court.

April 14, 2016: Michael Combs' wife was permitted to return to the Nurture Commission as a "full participant" on the Commission.[86]

April 20, 2016: The elder told the Pastor he was considering making his own announcement to the church.

April 24, 2016: Annual Congregational Meeting Report. During this meeting, the Pastor made the public announcement regarding Michael Combs' charges.[87]

April 26, 2016: Pastor sent letter to congregation concerning Michael Combs' arrest. This letter was also accompanied by Michael Combs' letter regarding his case to the congregation.

April 30, 2016: A series of articles about Michael Combs' case was published in "The Kansan" newspaper.

May 1, 2016: Pastor gave sermon on lament. A survivor was invited to speak publically from the pulpit about impact of child abuse during the worship service as a part of the sermon time.

May 24, 2016: Minutes from Caregiving Commission reflect that an offer of an "Abuse Group with facilitator" had been made but noted, "No one has come forward asking for a group or help."

June 5, 2016: "Prayer of Remembering and Healing for the victim and her family" was held during the Sunday morning worship service. Flowers and candle were placed on the organ.

June 10-11, 2016: Vacation Bible School at FMC was led by Michael Combs' wife.

June 13, 2016: Michael Combs sentenced and taken into custody for a period of 93 months in the Department of Corrections; other conditions include Lifetime Post-Release Supervision and Lifetime Sex Offender Registration. Pastor attended the final sentencing hearing.

June 14, 2016: Article posted in "The Kansan" about Michael Combs' sentencing.

July 3, 2016: "Prayer of Remembering" was held for Michael Combs and reading of Affirmation of Faith during the Sunday morning worship service. Flowers and candle were placed on the organ.

July 10, 2016: Abuse survivor shared in Life Sharing Sunday School Class about sexual abuse.

September 4, 2016: "Prayer for Healing for Victims of All Kinds of Abuse" (from US Conference of Catholic Bishops) during the Sunday morning worship service. Flowers and candle were placed on the organ.

October 2, 2016: "Prayer of Remembering for Our Church and Our Healing Journey" during the Sunday morning worship service. Reading of a prayer poem entitled "All Desires Known." Flowers and candle were placed on the organ.

November 9, 2016: Meeting with Pastor and elder along with two witnesses regarding events of past year and how this situation was handled.

November 13, 2016: Annual Congregational Meeting; Pastor apologized to congregation regarding her handling of this situation.[88]

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[86] Church Board minutes from 4/14/16.

[87] On 4/24/16, the Pastor gave a Congregational Meeting Report following the Sunday morning service in which a number of items were discussed. Regarding this specific matter, the Pastor stated, "Finally, there has been one other thing that we've been working with since last November. As you may have seen in the newspaper or heard from other people, Michael Combs was arrested in November for aggravated indecency with a child. He has been out under certain restrictions as the legal process has unfolded. That legal process is coming to a close, and next week (hopefully) each household of the church will receive a letter from Michael and [his wife] telling about the situation and what comes next. The victim is not from our congregation and we continue to stand by and adhere to our Safe Sanctuary policies as a way of showing love and care for our children. In these months, however, I did not understand the complex of reactions to this situation by people who have themselves been victims of abuse. Sometimes this is called triggering, and it's a painful response of vulnerability when there are situations that recall the original abuse. I am sorry that I did not tend to these people who are also victims. The Caregiving and Membership Commission wants to offer the possibility of support in any way that feels like support- if that is a group of people coming together, they/we are committed to providing a professional facilitator for that group. If there are other ways, please let me or any of the Pastors or Caregiving Commission members know. I hope that we do not have this kind of situation again. But if we do, I hope that I have learned from this one."

[88] During the Annual Congregational Meeting on 11/13/16, the Pastor stated, "There have also been some rocky places and thorns along the way this year. Just about exactly a year ago, Michael Combs was arrested for sexual abuse of a child. Just about exactly a year ago. He's now in prison. I delayed in notifying the congregation publicly about his arrest until after his hearing in March, and in doing so, I have learned that I failed to follow our Safe Sanctuary Guidelines, and so today I apologize to you for this failure. Michael's transgression has also triggered the pain that some have

November 2016: Michael Combs' wife was elected to another term on the Nurture Commission. She continues to plan and carry out activities within the children's ministry including Vacation Bible School.
December 1, 2016: Nurture Commission meeting addressing Safe Sanctuaries policy violation concerns raised by elder. Minutes from this meeting indicate "Safe Sanctuary guidelines say that we notify the congregation prior to it coming out in the newspaper. We didn't do it."
December 2, 2016: Letter from Pastor to Church Board acknowledging errors in handling this matter.[89]
December 8, 2016: Church Board meeting and report from Nurture Commission regarding this matter.[90]
December 20, 2016: Caregiving and Membership Commission meeting to consider how to address the "hurts and fears present in the congregation as a result of Michael Combs' crime, arrest and incarceration."
January 5, 2017: Nurture Commission meeting discussing the update of the Safe Sanctuaries policy.[91]
January 6, 2017: Letter to Church Board from the Pastor[92]
January 12, 2017: Letter from Church Board Chair to Church Board regarding leading the healing process in the congregation
February 2, 2017: Church Board meeting; Nurture Commission representative indicated that they are "reviewing the Safe Sanctuaries policies of the church and considering changes to these policies."[93]
March 2, 2017: Nurture Commission meeting and discussion of revisions to the Safe Sanctuaries policy
April 6, 2017: Nurture Commission meeting and discussion of revisions to the Safe Sanctuaries policy
April 7-June 30, 2017: GRACE survey available
May 8-10, 2017: GRACE in Newton for in-person interviews
June 2-4, 2017: Vacation Bible School at FMC, led by Michael Combs' wife
July 24, 2017: GRACE presentation to Church Board regarding this Assessment
July 25, 2017: GRACE presentation to congregation regarding this Assessment

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who have experienced abuse in their own lives and that pain continues. There have also been relational effects within our congregation and this has been a difficult time for many folks."

[89] The Pastor's letter to the Church Board on 12/2/16 regarding this issue stated, "In this month, I had another conversation with [elder] in regard to my handling of the situation with Michael Combs. As I told you last month orally, he pointed out to me (correctly) that I did not follow Safe Sanctuary guidelines by not publicly notifying the congregation right away of his arrest and of the charges against him. He has some focused requests for how to follow up. Since that initial conversation there have been a number of other ones. The Caregiving and Membership Commission is, as you've heard, suggesting that we bring in outside help us to process this situation. The Nurture Commission, in their December meeting, had good discussion about both process and revision of the Safe Sanctuary guidelines. I have been in contact with Dr. Melissa Hofstetter, who was the resource person for Western District Conference's Pastor resourcing on sexual abuse in the congregation. Ryan Koehn, as incoming Church Board Chair, has also had some conversations. I have certainly learned much this year in all kinds of ways (including error) about process, about myself, and about the congregation. I have some hope for what is possible going forward."

[90] The Church Board meeting minutes on 12/8/16 regarding Nurture Commission reflect, "Besides our usual business, we spend [sic] considerable time talking about Safe Sanctuaries in regard to Michael Combs' arrest. We discussed the current policy and the parts we did not follow regarding notification of the congregation, and also talked about reviewing the policy and updating it as needed. There was discussion about finding ways to allow the congregation to process and grieve, and also discussion about reviewing 'Safe Touch' with the children, and doing more education with the congregation, possibly with guest speakers on a Sunday morning. We hope to be in coordination with Caregiving/Membership in these things."

[91] The minutes from this meeting regarding this issue reflect, "The Safe Sanctuary Policy is to be reviewed and revised. [Committee members' names] will work on revising the policy, the changes of which will need to be approved by the Board. [The Church Board Chair] would like an update to the Board from the Nurture Commission at the February Board meeting about the process for following up on the conversation from last month's meeting. The Caregiving and Membership Commission is tending to some parts of the suggestions that were made (evaluating last year's process and assisting the congregation in processing those events). The Nurture Commission will focus on 1) updating the Safe Sanctuary guidelines; 2) doing another "safe touch" teaching for the children; and 3) planning for a general education piece for the whole congregation, perhaps with a resource person from Dove's Nest."

[92] The letter from the Pastor to the Church Board regarding this matter on 1/ 6/17 states, "As I write this report, I do so with deep gratitude for the people who have assumed responsibility for helping with the concerns that are present in regard to the congregational processing of Michael Combs' arrest for sexual abuse of a child. I am grateful to have the help that I should have asked for much earlier. December was a difficult month in that the conflict between [elder] and me intensified. During one particular week, I found it difficult to function well (or maybe at all). Throughout the month, however, [various individuals from various commissions] were all at work in listening and discerning possible ways forward. You will hear more about these intentions during this board meeting. These people/groups of the congregation are providing the help that, again, I should have asked for earlier. As well, I received unexpected words of encouragement from person who had no idea that that was what they were offering to me. So- again- I am grateful."

[93] The Church Board minutes reflect that the Nurture Commission representative indicated that they are "reviewing the Safe Sanctuaries policies of the church and considering changes to these policies. Three of the commission members are working on the policies and they are waiting to see what the board decides before making their decisions."