



**THE PRESBYTERY OF SAN FRANCISCO**  
SYNOD OF THE PACIFIC PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.)

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July 7, 2005

To the Survivors, Board of Directors, Cameron House, Cameron House alumni, Presbyterian Church of Chinatown and the community of support around the Presbyterian mission in Chinatown:

The Presbytery of San Francisco acknowledges that youth and young adults, trusting in the ministry of the Rev. F. S. Dick Wichman as pastor and Executive Director of Cameron House, were the victims of sexual abuse, exploitation, broken trust, abuse of authority and neglect for thirty years and even after his retirement.

We are sorry that the Presbytery of San Francisco did not learn of the many abuses that occurred, and therefore was not able to intervene and stop the actions of Dick Wichman. We are sorry if some in the Presbytery of San Francisco were complicit in any way as youths in the Cameron House community suffered the loss of their innocence, the loss of their faith and trust in the people of faith and the loss of their opportunities to enjoy the fullness of life God intends for each of us.

We regret that, when the Special Disciplinary Committee was ready to bring charges against Dick Wichman, he renounced the jurisdiction of the Presbyterian Church (USA) thus losing his ordination and removing himself from any possible further action by the church. The Presbytery attempted to bring criminal charges against him, but was prevented by the statute of limitations. We are sorry that, at that time, we did not advocate more actively on your behalf, supplying pastoral care and support to those injured. We have raised our voices against injustice in the world around us, but we have too often been content to ignore or excuse the injustice and racism perpetrated by our own church leaders. To our shame, we have allowed you to bear the pain of this injustice without lifting our voice to support you in your struggle for justice.

We are sorry that our presbytery's inactivity over too many years has allowed hurt and harm to continue in the survivors' nuclear and extended families, friends and communities. We apologize that the presbytery did not do more to reach out to those who were victimized.

We grieve our part in the pain that you have carried alone for too long.

We now commit ourselves to pray for your healing, to advocate for justice on your behalf and to implement preventative measures so that this kind of tragedy will not happen again. We pledge to continue the funding of counseling resources and to work to increase them; and to support healing activities so that the victims and survivors may be restored to God's fullness of love. We commit to an ongoing dialogue with all survivors of clergy sexual abuse. We promise to treat respectfully those who have suffered and who report abuse. We will consider all accusations seriously, uphold the good of the person abused and deal promptly and appropriately with abusers. We understand that this is but a piece in the long process of healing and reconciliation.

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We also pledge to continue the mandatory training in clergy sexual harassment and abuse prevention. We promise to follow the policies, procedures, recommendations and actions from General Assembly, so that the shameful treatment victims of clergy sexual abuse have received in the past will not be repeated. We especially commit to protect children and youth so that the cycle of sexual abuse may be broken in our presbytery and beyond.

May God help us to be faithful in our promises to you.

And may God be with each of you as you move forward to new places of wholeness and healing in your lives.

The Presbytery of San Francisco

*Linda Ellen Rigby, Moderator*