



IF YOUR CHURCH OR A WOMAN MINISTER IS TARGETED ONLINE

In light of the constitutional amendment being proposed to the SBC for the 4th year in a row, increased attention is placed on women ministering and pastoring among Baptists. In the last few weeks, BWIM has found “target lists” of churches and women that are being posted on social media and various websites. Sometimes the churches are affiliated with the SBC, and other times they are not. Therefore, it would be wise for all Baptist churches that affirm, endorse, or appoint women to pastoral or ministerial roles to increase awareness, especially during this season.

You can find information on steps you can take to set up Google Alerts so that you can know if your church is being mentioned [HERE](#).

If you do find that your church or women on your church staff are being targeted, here are some important steps you can take to safeguard your ministers and your church.

1. Document what you find through screenshots and saved links. Posts can be removed so having screenshots in addition to links ensures you have evidence of what has been said.
2. Inform the affected minister and other church leadership. This might include the senior pastor, any communications staff of the church, and lay leadership such as the chair of deacons, elders, or church councils. Anyone who might need to respond quickly needs to be aware of what is being said.
3. Review privacy settings on social media accounts so that those targeting your church do not have access to private information of your staff or members (such as the personal address of the pastor being listed for a Christmas party posted in the church newsletter), to ensure images of minors are properly protected, and that private church information is not made public.
4. Consider temporarily removing direct contact information for staff (i.e. email addresses, direct phone lines, etc.) from your websites if that information is publicly accessible. You can have a “Contact Us” form instead or direct all inquiries to one email address which can filter any negatively motivated communication.

5. Review your church email lists to make sure any people who might be targeting your church have not quietly added themselves to your listserv.
6. Consider formulating a plan for media or public inquiries.
 - a. This might include designating a church spokesperson, preparing a statement that can be shared if requested, and educating your congregation about any interaction with the media that might be requested of them.
7. Assess whether those targeting your church have already publicly shared any personal information. This is called “doxxing.” If personal addresses, phone numbers, family information, or other private details are published online:
 - a. Document the material immediately.
 - b. Report it to the platform hosting it.
 - c. Consider consulting local law enforcement if there are threats, stalking behavior, or concerns about personal safety.

Not every criticism requires a response, and engaging in online debates is often unhelpful.

If your church is targeted, it is better to focus on supporting the affected minister, communicating clearly with your congregation, and responding thoughtfully if a public statement becomes necessary.

Above all, remember that no minister should navigate online harassment alone—churches have a responsibility to stand with and care for those they have called to serve.

Check out BWIM's webinar with Jay Kieve, Director for Leadership Development, Abuse Prevention & Church Safety at the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship:

[Securing the Pulpit: Guarding Against Ideological Violence](#)