

## THE CHURCH IN HOUSTON

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P.O. Box 570307, Houston, Texas 77257-0307 • Phone & Fax: 713.781.1682  
Meeting at 6355 & 6357 Windswept Lane, Houston, Texas 77057

September 10, 2019

On behalf of the church in Houston, we are compelled to correct factual errors and misrepresentations in a recent public account that criticized the church's handling of a complaint against a church member that was made about 15 years ago. We do not desire to embarrass the author of the erroneous account (Author); however, we do have to clear up the false accusations against Mr. Allen Bayes, which are also being used to implicate the eldership in the church and the local churches in the Lord's recovery. The account alleges that Allen Bayes, an elder in the church, asked the Author to cover up a case of egregious sexual abuse. This is untrue as are many of the account's details. Following are the facts we can attest to:

1. A church member in his second or third year of college who had been meeting with the church for about a year came to two of the elders in the church, including Allen, to make a complaint against an older church member.
2. The older member has been in the church now for over 45 years and has never been the subject of any other complaint before or since.
3. When the younger member spoke to the elders in the church he did not seem at all distressed.
4. The younger member alleged inappropriate physical contact, not by the older member, but by one of the older member's secular colleagues who they encountered while travelling; when introduced to the younger member, this colleague adjusted the younger member's shirt collar and rubbed his shoulder in a way that the younger member found offensive.
5. The younger member also claimed that the older member later said something inappropriate to him of a sexual nature; however, the older member denied saying any such thing and there was no third party present to bear witness one way or the other.
6. Although the younger member's story was not consistent from one telling to the next, none of his accounts claimed that the older member touched him inappropriately, something the Author alleges.
7. All of the elders considered the matter and, since there were no witnesses and no corroborating evidence, it was impossible to make a definitive finding concerning whether something inappropriate was said.
8. The younger member was not a minor, so it was his decision whether to involve the police and whether to seek professional counseling.
9. The elders asked the older member who, contrary to the recent public account, has never served in the church's work with college students, young people, or children, not to be involved with those age groups or to attend any of their meetings; he has faithfully honored our request to this day.
10. When the Author spoke with Allen Bayes about the alleged incident, the elders had already met with the younger member and, separately, with the older member and dealt with the situation based on the constraints described above.
11. Allen's advice to not talk about the matter to others was not to "cover up" an offense or to protect an alleged offender, but to protect the younger member from public embarrassment for the sake of his continuing on in the fellowship of the church and to avoid the spread of rumors favoring or accusing either member.

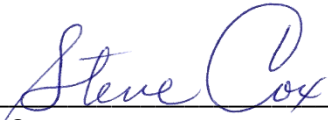
12. The younger member recently expressed his gratitude for the way the elders handled the matter, saying they handled the matter really well and the whole situation was respectfully kept private.

Allen Bayes is a professional who runs a private school and mental health facility that employs mental health professionals. He is a widely-respected expert and resource in dealing with cases of abuse of minors. He is 100% committed to reporting incidents that involve minors to the appropriate authorities and has consistently done so when abuses of minors have come to light. The Author also claims that the local churches oppose psychological counseling yet, since she previously worked for Allen, she should be aware of his commitment to providing professional mental health services to clients when needed.


As Allen's fellow elders in the church in Houston, we have on occasion availed ourselves of his expertise to help church members or their families arrange professional care.

To publicly name Allen Bayes based on a distortion of facts is a serious matter. Corrective action on the part of the author of this account would be appropriate.

On behalf of the church in Houston:

  
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Steve Cox

  
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Clem Rogers

  
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Bill Salassi