

Palmer Congregation Of Jehovah's Witnesses

131 Old Palmer Road
Brimfield Massachusetts 01010

413 [REDACTED]

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Warehouse Point Ct. Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses
To the Body of Elders

Dear Brothers:

We hope this letter finds you and your congregation well. We are writing with regards to brother [REDACTED] whom has decided to start attending your congregation. It seems that [REDACTED] already knows some of you from years ago and so likely you may already know him.

Brother [REDACTED] is a gregarious person. He loves to be in company with others and loves to socialize. He readily accepts assignments on the Theocratic Ministry School and loves to research his topics fully. He loves to discuss the finer details of matters with anyone.

[REDACTED] has been in our congregation for about eight years now. He and his wife [REDACTED] moved here from the Enfield Connecticut congregation late in 1994. This past year has been quite difficult on [REDACTED]. Earlier in the year he lost one of his brothers in death, and afterwards also his wife passed away. This has left brother [REDACTED] stressed emotionally. Added to this there has been some family strife with regards to their mothers' will. There have been some accusations that [REDACTED] had the will changed while their mother was not aware. This has led to some family arguments over money. Therefore with his family at odds with him, along with the loss of loved ones, [REDACTED] has been feeling quite alone.

Brother [REDACTED] does not have any privileges assigned to him in the congregation currently. In the past brother [REDACTED] had served as an Elder in a congregation in Maine for a short period. Also in our congregation he served as a Ministerial Servant for most of his time with us. In November of 1999 we had recommended him for appointment as an Elder in our congregation. The society did not readily accept this recommendation without our first looking further into some accusations towards him. The result was that in the end, he was removed from any assignments due to a history of violence. There is also an accusation of sexual abuse against him by his oldest daughter, [REDACTED]. Therefore we will try to be detailed in conveying this information to you.

To try to summarize all of the communication with other congregations as well as correspondence with the society would be difficult. It has been quite extensive. We have also had many conversations with both those who have made accusation as well as others whom may have had dealings with the family. However we will try to give you a picture of some of this background.

[REDACTED] oldest daughter [REDACTED] was at the time of our recommendation serving at Bethel with her husband. They are currently living in Maine. A few years earlier she had sent a letter to

our body of elders, accusing her father of specific acts of child abuse. The accusation was both of physical, as well as sexual abuse. She had also let her father know by way of phone conversation that she had written these accusations to the congregation. The body of elders began to get involved by inquiring with [REDACTED] specifically about these accusations. On more than one occasion, two brothers met with [REDACTED] to inquire of these accusations. [REDACTED] emphatically denied them. At the time, it seemed like there was only one witness against him and that there was no solid evidence. However, now the society encouraged us to have communication also with another of [REDACTED] daughters as well as previous congregations. This led to some additional information.

[REDACTED] daughter [REDACTED] is a regular pioneer. She and her husband serve in Springfield Ma. She was very cautious and reluctant to speak with us at first. When we mentioned that her father may be given further responsibilities, she now felt an obligation to speak. She also told of specific abuses, including both sexual and physical. She described a life of emotional difficulty ever since, even seeking some professional help. [REDACTED] described that she had tried to make this known before but that the elder to whom she spoke did not seem to take her seriously. While it may seem that now there were two witnesses to the same abuse, we must stress with you that officially there are not. [REDACTED] does not feel emotionally able to formally accuse her father. Till now, he does not know that she has made this accusation. It is [REDACTED] specific request that he does not come to know of her accusation. We spoke with her prior to writing this letter to confirm that we were not breaking confidentiality by conveying it to you. She felt it was important for you to know of it and thus gave us permission to do so. Especially was she concerned that you protect any children that he may now come into contact with anew. However, she did express that she does not want to go through another round of interviews to repeat what we have already gone through with her. To share with you some of the gravity of this, she expressed to us that her father told her he would kill her if she ever were to tell. Also she is fearful for any repercussions towards her mother whom is emotionally fragile. We assured her that this would remain confidential.

At the time of our speaking with his daughters, brother [REDACTED] was working with the mentally challenged. Interestingly one of his superiors was also a sister in our congregation. [REDACTED] had an incident at work whereby he lost his job due to a physical altercation between he and a client. While [REDACTED] expressed that he felt he was a scapegoat in the matter, his superior expressed that he had gone too far in defending himself. We were now concerned with regards to 1 Timothy 3:7,10. [REDACTED] was no longer "free from accusation", nor "having a fine testimony from people on the outside".

To add to this, in our communication with the [REDACTED] congregation in Maine, We spoke to the presiding overseer there, brother [REDACTED]. He is a congregation elder, and was also at the time that the [REDACTED] family served there. He described that there had been some congregation involvement with the [REDACTED]'s family. He described that he knew of the accusations by the girls. By his testimony, he said that [REDACTED] had admitted to going too far in his discipline. However, he has never confessed to committing the sexual abuse. Based on these related discoveries, it became necessary to now remove him from serving in any capacity in the congregation.

Therefore, the conclusion of the matter was that we were instructed not to use him in any assignments that others would conclude that he was an example, or considered as an assignment from the congregation. He could of course still go out in field service and give non-teaching