

Chapter 1

Getting There Is Half the Fun

I started with Special Gathering as a volunteer. My first volunteer assignment was to do a van route. There were two things that mystified me as a volunteer van driver in the first months. They were the staff meetings where we jockeyed vans on paper and the management instructions regarding the use of vans.

I had been invited to attend monthly staff meetings. They were a learning experience because they were a total mystery to me. The first half of monthly staff meetings was consumed with how to get the vans, the keys and the members to the correct buildings on time. Then the last half was concerned with how to get the van and the keys and the members back home and still retrieve cars.

"I'll take my car to ARC to pick up the van on Sunday morning. After chapel, I'll drive the van to Rockledge Presbyterian Church. You take the van to Daytona. I'll take my car to Cathedral Pines to pick up the van for Titusville. Then you leave the van and pick up your car and I'll take the van to...No, that won't work. You drive the van to your car and I'll meet you there...No, that won't work either."

During these marathon stratagems, I sat quietly trying to figure out who was where and in what van. I merely hoped that at the close of the day, I would end up in my own car headed home.

I also wondered as a volunteer about the management instructions which required me to take the extra minutes to reset all the gages and radio stations, reset mirrors and seat positions. I was tired by the time my route was finished. Why did I have to take that extra time?

The instructions regarding the use of our vans seemed to place an added burden on me. Not only were we to return the radio stations to where they were, reset the mirrors and seats, but we were to pick up trash, even vacuum the van, if necessary. These were mundane things to do. I wondered why they were important. Why should I take my time to replace every gage and knob back to its original setting?

I wondered, that is, until later that year when my husband and I changed auto mechanics. I

had set my *sanctified* radio on Christian stations. This was to insure the purity of my car, of course. Alas, every time I got into my car after a repair, the station on my radio had been changed. When I turned the key to start my ignition, my ears were assaulted by loud music, extremely loud carnal music. It made me so irritated that I pondered changing mechanics. After that, I understood the purpose of resetting every dial, gage, and seat.

I remember my first van route. While staff meetings were confusing and my understanding of the manual instructions was not solidified, I felt I could handle a van route. I clearly remember the first time I ran my route. There was an excited, sinking feeling in the pit of my stomach when I stepped up into the Eastminster Presbyterian Church 15-passenger van to do the route. I had a scenic 67 mile drive down, then up, the coast paralleling the Atlantic Ocean. I had to pick up 10 people and ultimately take them home. I tasted a sense of adventure but I was scared. I had seldom driven a van. I did not know the members well and I was new to the route.

Armed with a county map and directions to the home of the first person on the route, I moved the van cautiously from the parking lot onto the highway. I was not accustomed to driving different vehicles. Constantly, I had to gage my speed. This van had more horsepower than I was used to. Things went great until we headed home and a flashing blue light filled my rear view mirror. I was stopped by a Melbourne Beach Policeman for going 30 miles an hour in a 15 mile an hour speed zone. The officer took pity on me. "I'll only give you a warning," he said putting his pen in his pocket. However, my reputation and rapport was sealed from that moment with the members of my route.

Of course, I have never stopped being teased about my first van drive with the members. However, I was scared and they knew it. Spontaneously, Brad said, "Let's pray for Linda," as I navigated the van back onto the road. Most of the people laughed and teased me during the rest of the ride. Pam said, "I know you're upset. But we all make mistakes. Please, don't stop helping us just because you made a mistake."

I promised her that I wouldn't. It's a promise I try to keep every day. That first day driving a van showed me the depth of love, fun, and concern that our members possess. Riding in the close quarters of a van breaks down barriers because we are in close proximity to each other. Therefore,

we invade other people's private spaces. A comradeship is built during those hours on the road.

While the jockeying for vans and cars and keys will always be a part of our ministry, it is important that we continue to take advantage of the accessibility a ride in a van gives us to our members. Let this be a time that we can minister as servants, but also it's a time that we can take the opportunity for Brad and Felicia and Delores and Tom to minister their faith and love to us.

SUBJECT: Operating Process For All Vehicles Used by The Special Gathering

A. PURPOSE

To identify the process to be used in the scheduling and operation of all vehicles used by The Special Gathering, Inc. to insure safety and proper operations.

B. GOAL

The Special Gathering, Inc. goal is to insure the safe operation of all vehicles used by The Special Gathering, Inc. for any reason.

C. PROCESS

1. Vehicles used by The Special Gathering, Inc. will be used for official ministry only. There will be no deviation from this policy.
2. Vehicles owned by The Special Gathering, Inc. will be used for official ministry and business only. Any deviation from this policy requires the advance approval of the Director of Christian Education.
3. All policy and procedures of organizations whose vehicles are in our use will be followed.
4. All vehicles used by The Special Gathering, Inc. will be returned in the same condition it was found. This will include but not be limited to:
 - a. Gas level returned to that which was in the vehicle.
 - b. Radio, A/C, etc. returned to the settings they were found in.
 - c. Locked or unlocked doors.
5. In the event of traffic violations, the driver is responsible for personal payment of any fines that are assessed.
6. Traffic and safety laws will be strictly adhered to.
7. Process to set up a van route (Usually done by the Director of Christian Education):
 - a. Determine who will be picked up on the route.
 - b. Taking a map, pinpoint (Take a pin and place it on the pick up point.) where each person who will be picked up lives.
 - c. By using pinpoints, you will usually be able to see a pattern for your route. Determine the route which would be easiest for the driver.
 - d. To determine times for pick up, start with the final destination. Then work your route backwards.

A route will look something like this:

Arrive at First UMC	9:00 a.m.
George Mason	8:55 a.m.
Susan Marie	8:30 a.m.
Pick up van	8:00 a.m.
Leave house	7:30 a.m.

- To find out the times between pick ups, you must run the route and time it.
- e. To determine drop off times, begin with the starting time of the route and work your drop off times forward. i.e. Program ends at 7:30 p.m.; first drop off 7:50; second drop off 8:05.
 - f. You may find it easier to do the drop off route backward. However, that may not be workable for one reason or another. For one reason, you always want one of your highest functioning persons to be the last one dropped off.
 - g. At the beginning of the route, the driver should factor in enough time should problems occur. If there are going to be problems, they will probably be at the beginning of the route.
8. Chapel Leaders will notify members and parents regarding pick up and drop off times. This can be done with notes sent home or with a phone call. Give the parents an emergency phone number or beeper number, they can call should their children not return home in time. In this way, we will be able to better monitor van routes.
 9. Chapel Leaders will ask parents and members to be ready at least 15 minutes early and to allow 15 minutes late for drop off.
 10. Doing the route:
 - a. Before you start the engine
 - i. Check for flat or leaking tires
 - ii. Check gas gage to be sure that you have enough gas to complete your route (See #3).
 - iii. Set mirrors.
 - iv. In some vans, fill out the log provided in the van, giving all information requested.
 - b. Picking up members
 - i. Before 9:00 a.m. and after 9:00 p.m., do not blow the horn to signal member that you are outside.
 - ii. It is always good to go to the door should the member not come out within two or three minutes.
 - c. Do not leave van or car unattended with members in van or car. That is, be sure you can see the van or car at all times. You will need to get out of the van to get gas, etc. Except for long trips, allow time before your route begins to get gas, etc. On longer trips, get gas at a station where you can see the van while paying for the gas.
 - d. When you have arrived at your destination, be sure you have the key. Lock all doors to the van.
 - e. Do not leave the van with the keys inside the van. We do not want anyone other than the designated van driver to be driving the van.
 - f. Have a list of the members whom you have brought in your van.
 11. Before you take people home, you should verify that everyone you picked up is on the van, according to your list. If someone is missing the Chapel Leader should be informed immediately.

12. After all members have been taken to their homes, you should be sure that the van has been cleaned and that you have replaced gas used, being sure that the gas gage is in the same position it was when you took the van.
13. After the completion of your route, call or beep (with your assigned #) your Director of Christian Education to let him know that you have completed your route safely.
14. Problems which could occur
 - a. If you arrive to pick up the van and it is not where it should be, call the assigned phone number. If you get a beep, leave the number you are calling from. If you get an answering machine, leave a message. Your call will be returned soon as possible.
 - b. Disabled Vehicle on the side of the road
 - i. You cannot leave members unsupervised.
 - ii. If you must leave the van, take everyone with you. However, this is not a wise decision, if your passengers number more than three or four people.
 - iii. If you determine that you should not leave the van, raise the hood to indicate you are a disabled vehicle. Stay in the van and wait for someone to stop to give you assistance.
 - iv. When someone arrives, lock the door and raise the windows.
 - v. When the person approaches the van, lower the window about one or two inches.
 - vi. Ask the person to call The Special Gathering assigned phone number, and put in your assigned number followed by 811 if there is a beep or a message if there is an answering machine.
 - c. Medical Emergency
 - i. Determine that this is, indeed, an emergency, not a first aid problem or a normal seizure.
 - ii. If this is a medical emergency, get to a phone. Call 911. Be sure that the van is in full view of the phone you are using.
 - iii. Do not attempt to provide any medical assistance, except basic first aid.
 - iv. After calling 911, ask a person to call the local assigned phone number, and put in your assigned number followed by 811 or 911 if there is a beep or a message if there is an answering machine.
 - d. Vehicular accident
 - i. Do not leave the scene of the accident.
 - ii. Do not leave your members.
 - iii. Wait for the police to arrive.
 - iv. When the police arrive, ask them to call the assigned phone number, and put in your assigned number followed by 811 or 911 if there is a beep or a message if there is an answering machine.
 - v. Families will be called to inform them that members will be late by Chapel Leader.
 - vi. Families will be called if there are injuries by the Director of Christian Education.

- e. Calling Families
 - i. If there has been a problem and people are going to get home or be picked up late; the Chapel Leader will call each family and notify them.
 - ii. If the Chapel Leader is helping to get people home, or is taking care of a disabled vehicle or an accident, their supervisor should be called so they can:
 - Call the families.
 - Handle the situation so the Chapel Leader can call the families.
- 15. Completion of van route verification:

Each van driver will call their Chapel Leader once they have returned the van so the Chapel Leader will know they got home safely. This can be done by either calling the Chapel Leaders home or by calling the assigned phone number, and putting in your assigned number if there is a beep or a message if there is an answering machine.

Chapter 2

...And Then Some

The first month on the job is hectic for every new chapel supervisor. "I worked with you for almost a year as a volunteer," one new supervisor said breathlessly as she reached to turn off the air conditioner at the end of the program, "but I had no idea that there were so many things that had to be done."

Supervising members, setting up the building, checking members, preparing for the choir, putting on robes--every minute there are things to do and jobs to perform. Closing a program can tax even the best chapel supervisor. On one predawn Monday morning I bolted up from sleep at 2:00 a.m. "Frank," I said to my husband. "I'm not sure that I locked the back door to the ARC. I have to go and check it."

Frank sat on the edge of the bed. "Wait a minute. Let's talk this through." After about fifteen minutes, he agreed that I needed to check the building but he would go with me. With our early morning jaunt through town, we found the door locked and the alarm set but I still do not remember setting it. (Note: If you are saying in your mind that you would never have gotten up to do this, please quit!)

At the completion of every program, the pastor is contacted to let him know that everyone has gotten home safely and all the buildings are secured. His main concern is that all the members have made it home safely. However, there is another concern that needs to be added to our list as chapel supervisors. For it is at the close of every program that we can have a small witness to the people who allow us to use their equipment and buildings. As a love gift to them, each building and van should be left in better condition than we found it.

Some days you may be greeted with a building that is a disaster inside. One Sunday after Halloween, the building we utilize had been used for a party on Saturday night. I was greeted by a six foot iridescent headless horseman mounted on a life size horse. They were occupying the room used as our sanctuary.

When that happens, we take the extra time to pick up the trash, move the tables back into their proper rooms, wipe the kitchen cabinets, empty the garbage cans. We are not tenants but guests. As exhausting as the attention to details can be, the final touches that are added to the buildings and vans increase our credibility within the professional and church community.

We will never be able to afford to rent the buildings and vans that are freely lent to us month after month. As good stewards, we can see that the people who lend to us are not left bitter but satisfied that we appreciate their generous gifts. That message can be conveyed with the touch of the extra detail of help given while closing up the

SUBJECT: Protection of property used by The Special Gathering, Inc.

A. PURPOSE

To establish responsibility and identify the process for the security and protection of properties used by The Special Gathering, Inc.

B. GOAL

It is The Special Gathering, Inc. goal that each individual will be held responsible, on a common sense basis, for equipment, supplies and property used in ministry. They will further be held responsible for ensuring that the facility is secure when leaving the premises.

C. PROCESS

1. Procedure to set up building:

- a. Bring the key to the building with you. Know the alarm code. (This is not funny, if you do not have the key when you arrive.)
- b. Open the front door.
- c. Turn off alarm (if necessary).
- d. Be sure that rooms which are not available to members are secured.
Open the doors of the rooms which are to be used for classes.
- e. Turn a/c or heat on in the rooms which are to be used.
- f. Break down the room where worship will be held. Fold tables not needed and put them in the back of the room or in another room outside the worship area. CARRY--DO NOT DRAG--tables, chairs or other furniture.
- g. Set up the room using the following instructions:
 - i. At the front of the room, place an oblong table in the center of the room. To minimize confusion during the worship service, do not have the access doors facing the worship area, if possible.
 - ii. To find the center of the room:
 - Locate a visual marker in the center of the back wall or in the ceiling and align the center of the table to this visual marker,
 - or,
 - Find two visual markers on either side of the room which are equal distances from the side walls. Align table to these visual markers,
 - or
 - Visually align table in an aesthetically pleasing place at the front of the room.
 - iii. Allow three to four feet from the center oblong table before beginning the rows of chairs.
 - iv. Align chairs in equal rows--three on each side, four on each side, etc.

- v. Put a center aisle in between the rows of chairs. Aisles should be at least four feet wide. Allow at least seven feet for wheelchair access. (During worship service, put people in wheelchairs in center aisle close to the front, unless they choose to sit elsewhere.)
 - * To gauge equal footage, use a chair (or chairs) as your guide. Most chairs are two feet wide and two feet in length. Put a guide chair between two other chairs, front to back. Then remove the guide chair. Your distance between rows will be accurate. To make an aisle, use same procedure with two or three guide chairs, side to side.
 - h. Do not set up too many chairs. Set up only five or six extra chairs for a program of 50 people. You do not want your sanctuary to look empty. However, you do need to have extra chairs handy in case there are more people than expected.
 - i. Set up each classroom. You may set chairs around table, set them in a circle, or in a semi-circle depending on the needs and functioning level on the class and depending on the furniture available.
 - j. Classrooms may be set up in classes, offices, or hallways. Be flexible but try to be sure that there is an element of closure in each classroom. Try to ensure that classes in session will not have to compete with noise from other classes.
2. Breaking down a facility
- a. Put the furniture, fixtures and accessories back exactly the way you found them. CARRY--DO NOT DRAG--FURNITURE.
 - b. Close and lock appropriate doors inside the building.
 - c. Turn off a/c or heater. Turn off all lights and electrical appliances.
 - d. Pick up all food and empty trash.
 - e. Sweep floors, if needed.
 - f. Wipe counters, tables or other furniture clean. Dry furniture, if needed.
 - g. Check all outside doors to be sure they are locked.
 - h. Set the alarm.
 - i. Remember we are borrowing this facility. Try to do one thing extra each week for the people who own the building. It does not have to be something large but this is one way to build goodwill with the people who own the building.

At times, the building has been used on Saturday evening for a party by the agency that lets one of our programs borrow their building. Tables which do not belong in the worship area have been left there. As a courtesy, those tables are put back in their proper places. You may sweep a floor, clean a cabinet top, pick up trash. The opportunities are endless.

Other than the improvements you have made, no one should be able to tell that our program was there.

Chapter 3

Where's my Pen?

The heart of the chapel supervisor is the heart of a servant. That is why the “Checks” can appear mundane. You are dealing with paper as much as you are dealing with people. Checking members four times every time you have a service may not be attractive to some people, but I find that the times I cross off a name, there is a secret joy that fills my heart.

The first check is a praise that the members have arrived safely. The second check is enveloped with satisfaction that John and Misty are here worshipping God. As I have gotten to know our members, I find each person has a unique story. Often the ability to attend worship is a special treat for them. The third check is sometimes smeared with cookies and punch as the members gather in their Bible classes for small group study time. And, of course, the fourth check is the best. That's when the vans load up and everyone heads for home.

While the program locale or the community may vary, it is reassuring to know that God's call on our lives will not change. A big part of our job is so mundane that it keeps us honest with God, our members, and ourselves. The discipline of marking the names may seem to others a waste of manpower but to those men and women called to The Special Gathering to be chapel supervisors, those marks have become the signature of our call to service.

SUBJECT: Supervision/Class Size

A. PURPOSE

To suggest class sizes and supervision needed to provide an environment that is safe and educationally sound.

B. GOAL

The Special Gathering, Inc. is dedicated to the maintenance of the safest ministry environment possible, while allowing our members to maintain the least restrictive environment.

C. PROCESS

1. A local chapel is a group experience. Members isolating themselves will be discouraged.
2. Each chapel will designate areas that people may occupy. During free times, when everyone is not in a group activity, an Elder needs to be present in any area where members congregate to supervise.
3. Develop a check list that has the name of each person that comes to a chapel service. (The one from the business office developed from the membership forms may be used M.I. 301-A.C.3)
4. A determination needs to be made on who needs to be monitored by close supervision or one-on-one supervision. The following process will be used to make this determination.
 - a. Eliminate all persons who live independently or in supportive living.
 - b. Eliminate all persons who work independently or in supportive work.
 - c. Eliminate all persons who have been registered for Retreat Agape".
 - d. These people should be checked two times, once when they get there and once when they load up to go home. This should happen on the same list used for M.I. 404.C.4 These people will be listed on the membership form under supervision as N/A.
 - e. Then eliminate all persons who attend a daily program that does not offer close supervision.
 - f. These people should be checked three times, once when they get there, once when they load up to go home and once when they change from chapel and Sunday school class. This should happen on the same list used for M.I. 404.C.4. These people will be listed on the membership form under supervision as Low.
 - g. All other persons should be evaluated. If there is any question, the member's family or guardian should be consulted. If there is no family or guardian, then the group home supervisor or the member's social worker will be consulted. We will abide by the advise given.

5. The Chapel Leader will verify that each moderate supervision member that comes to a chapel service will be monitored and accounted for. They will do this by doing the following:
 - a. All members who have not been eliminated by M.I.404.C.4 will be listed on the membership form under supervision as Moderate unless they need one on one supervision or constant supervision. For this supervision refer to M.I.404.C.6.
 - b. At the beginning of each chapel program, the Chapel Leader will position themselves to be able to see those who are arriving.
 - c. When a moderate supervision member arrives at a local chapel, place one half of an X in the box for that day next to that persons name.
 - d. When that moderate supervision member goes into their Sunday school class, place the second half of the X in the box for that day next to that persons name.
 - e. When that moderate supervision member arrives in the chapel service put a circle around the X in the box for that day next to that persons name.
 - f. When that moderate supervision member leaves (by the same means that they came), darken in the circle that is around the X in the box for that day next to that persons name.
6. Each person who needs constant supervision will be classified as High on the membership form under supervision. They will receive the same supervision as outlined in M.I. 404.C.5. Additionally these persons will need to be placed under the direct supervision of an elder or high functioning mentally challenged person.
7. Before worship services, all designated areas should be spot checked to determine that everyone has gone to worship.
8. The Chapel Leader (Chapel Supervisors, Chapel Coordinators, or Chapel D.C.E.s) will verify that each unsupervised visitor, moderate supervision member or high supervision member that came that week is in the chapel service. If someone is missing, the Chapel Leader will ask for help in locating the missing person(s). It is preferable for the Chapel Leader to stay with the main group and for Elders to look for the missing person.
9. Unless a person lives independently, they must have their families permission to leave in a different way than they came. Parents may be called for permission. If parents have made other arrangements without notifying you, and you can not reach the parents, you need to beep your supervisor.
10. Class sizes should be kept small (8-10 persons) with an Elder over each class. When a class is over 10 persons, an assistant should be assigned. Higher functioning members (preferably a Deacon) can also serve as assistants.

Chapter 4

"Wait Until Your Father Gets Home"

I never told my children, "Wait until your father gets home." Of course, there were some good reasons why I did not hang the threat of "Papa" over their heads. I felt that I should handle the situation myself and assert my authority when there was punishment to be meted out. I believed that it was important to have immediate punishment for a misdeed, rather than wait for six to seven hours when the Big Bad Dad showed up. And I also wanted my children to love the time that their father came home from work, not dread his arrival each day.

I have to admit, however, that there was at least one other reason. It hurt my pride to believe that anyone could get away with a transgression without my taking care of it. In addition, this proud haughtiness spilled over into my youth group activities. I wanted everyone to know that I was in charge and that things would run my way.

Thankfully, most of that pride had become weary and thin by the time I became a supervisor of a chapel program. I was much more confident that I did not have to win every skirmish in order to win the war of wits with the people I supervised. I have also learned that there were times that I was wrong and should lose the battle and the war.

Several years ago, I heard about a woman in another state who was beaten up by one of her members. I am not sure what happened but when a large young man became agitated, she tried to intervene and physically restrain him. He picked her up and threw her across the room. When asked why she did not leave the room, and wait for the police to come, she explained, "He might have destroyed the room; I had to intervene." Logic says that a room can be repaired. Bones may heal but there is not a physical facility that is worth a volunteer or supervisor sustaining bodily harm.

The Special Gathering standard rule is that you do not touch anyone.

Does that mean that we discourage handshakes? No, a handshake is always appropriate. What about hugs? It will depend on the situation. If we are at work, such as the sheltered workshop, I politely say, "John, this is work. I don't hug on the job." At chapel, you may greet someone with a hug. However, even then I have had to say to a man or woman, "Wow, you are too close. I need

for you to back away." "A-frame" hugs are always best.

Perhaps, the most critical time that this rule of not touching comes into play is when a member becomes abusive, either to himself or someone else. In our management instructions, we discuss in detail the procedure to use should this happens. The logic behind those instructions is two fold. The safety of all our members is vital and there are always liability issues to consider.

If Marjorie, who is in a wheelchair and immobile, starts to kick and scream, you may want to take her to a room, with an observer that Marjorie cannot see and let the tantrum play itself out.

The only time you touch someone is when he/she is hurting themselves or someone else. First, you must try other types of intervention like standing between him/her and the other person. If you must restrain someone, you do it just long enough to get the hurt person out of the area and then release him/her. Anytime a situation is at this point, you must call 911.

It is most important to remember that the reputation of this ministry has been built on the fact that our members and their families have come to trust us. They believe we will be able to act in a professional way during a crisis. Some of that comes from training and following tested procedures. Most of it comes from the fact that we have learned to trust in the Holy Spirit to give us wisdom and knowledge. In this way, we work with an advantage. Our Heavenly Father is never too busy. While it helps to have a continuing devotional life before the crisis arrives, He is always available and ready to help, soothe, and advise us.

SUBJECT: Discipline

A. PURPOSE

To establish limits for disciplining persons at a Special Gathering activity and outline administering authority.

B. GOAL

The Special Gathering, Inc. goal is to insure fair and consistent discipline while protecting the rights and dignity of all members. Unnecessary force will not be used.

C. PROCESS

1. The responsibility for maintaining group and individual discipline at a Special Gathering activity is vested in the Elders. Positive reinforcement for appropriate behaviors and interaction shall be the norm. If disciplinary action becomes necessary, the Elders have the responsibility and authority to:
 - a. Provide admonishments necessary to effect order and maintain a safe environment, expressed in such a manner to preserve the dignity of the members.
 - b. Direct a member to the Chapel Leader (Chapel Supervisors, Chapel Coordinators, or Chapel D.C.E.s) .
 - c. Dismiss the member from his/her class for the remainder of the day.
 - d. Complete a discipline report documenting the behavior and the action taken. The Elder may request the Chapel Leader to fill out the form but the form is to be reviewed by the Elder who will sign as person completing form.
2. Chapel Leaders are responsible for overseeing all aspects of a member's participation in programming. Where disciplinary action is involved, a Chapel Leader has the responsibility and authority to:
 - a. Provide crisis intervention as needed.
 - b. Ask a member to leave for the day.
 - c. Recommend to the local Elders an internal transfer to a new class consistent with member and the local chapel's needs.
 - d. Recommend to the local Elders actions to be taken for another infraction.
 - e. Provide presentations and recommendations to the Director of Christian Education and local Elders after a second infraction regarding the member's behavior.
 - f. Invite parent, guardian, or other responsible person to this meeting.
 - g. Ensure proper documentation of member's disciplinary action.

3. The local Elders, acting as a body are the only people authorized to terminate a member for disciplinary reasons. The Pastor will insure that all actions are fair, appropriate and properly documented.
4. This may be appealed by the grievance process..
5. The following major offenses are subject to immediate suspension of a member:
 - a. possession of non-prescription drugs or alcoholic beverages
 - b. fighting
 - c. insubordination
 - d. obscene language
 - e. theft
 - f. possession of firearms or dangerous weapons
 - g. lewd behavior or indecent exposure
 - h. deliberate or repeated non-compliance with The Special Gathering, Inc. rules, policies or management instructions.
6. In the case of reasonable doubt, the member will always be given the benefit of the doubt.
7. The completed discipline report will be submitted to the Pastor within 48 hours of the occurrence.

Chapter 5

“Richard Can You 'Help Us?”

I have had only a few calls that ripped at my heart like the call I received one Saturday afternoon. Nancy and I were headed out the house to visit a friend when the phone rang. I almost closed the door and didn't answer. I've always been thankful that I came back for this call.

The mother of one of the young women who regularly attended The Special Gathering spoke in a soft uncommonly even voice. "Richard," she said with a total lack of emotions. "Emily Ann has been raped. Can you come over?"

Sexual exploitation is a risk that all parents with mentally challenged children must face. Their concerns are legitimate. On a nationwide level, one in three girls and one in six boys will be molested before they reach age 18. These statistics include normal and mentally disabled children. My experience and the experience of other professionals has led us to believe that disabled children are more at risk, rather than less at risk than the normal child.

There are several reasons why this is true. First, mentally challenged children and adults are taught to be compliant, obedient and polite. There is a great desire within our population to please authority figures, to be liked and to be accepted. In addition, there has been a lack of teaching for people who are mentally challenged about the need to protect private parts of their body. Finally, while the normal child will reach a maturing stage that removes them from the risk of molestation, some mentally challenged persons will always remain at risk.

It has been proven that the lower the language level, the more a child is at risk of being exploited. This fact alone increases the vulnerability of persons with lower communication skills.

Parents often focus their training on teaching the children to beware of strangers. Yet, Lois was raped by her brother. Lorene was taken to parties by her sister and used as the entertainment for everyone who attended. Suzanne was raped by a trusted friend, her own age.

There was a highly publicized incident where a young high school student was raped by the local jocks who attended her school. The young men do not deny that she was promised a date with

the football, hero, if she agreed to their exploits. While the men involved admit the incident happened. They claim that the young woman was a willing participant in the sexual acts. Even though the facts show that a broomstick and other devices were used during the actual molestation.

It is common that many children who are molested know their offenders. In fact, seldom are the offenders unknown to the children. As with the rest of the population, it is often a trusted friend of the family, an uncle or cousin. Often the time the child is molested in his own home, or in the home of the offender.

Jean Edwards, D. S. W., is a member of the National Down Syndrome Foundation. In her article written for *The Down Syndrome News*, she reported that sexual abuse does not just "happen:" "Offenders choose their victim(s) and they move unobtrusive. Offenders look for the obedient and compliant child," Ms. Edwards writes. "This child will allow the offender to initiate 'games' and other activities."

Many people who are mentally challenged have been taught to be compliant. My parents, like most parents, saw to it that a big part of my training as a child was learning the importance of obedience. Bill and the other children in our family, of course, were cultivated in the same parental school. As an adult, I am still acutely conscious of my mother's training about the way to act in polite company. However, as my moral understanding matured, I came to understand the difference between obedience and willingly giving myself over to dangerous or vulnerable situations. The person who is mentally challenged may not ever naturally reach that level of development. Without a change in the direction of their training, they can become bait for the molester.

As a parent, I reward Daniel when he is good. Likewise, when I taught school, I leaned heavily on rewarding my students for appropriate behavior. In education circles, this is called behavior modification. It is not uncommon for a molester to use the same methods to train the person he has targeted as his victim to comply with his desires.

In fact, the molester of a mentally challenged person may use behavior modification reinforces and innocent games in order to destroy the resistance of the person. Beginning with the most innocent games, the involvement progresses, once the confidence of the person has been won,

into the deviant world of molestation.

"Offenders look for the child who seems to be alone," Ms. Edwards says. "They know that a child without friends and support is lacking in self-esteem, the child without confidence to say 'no.'"

As my son, Daniel, creeps slowly into the world without the ever present protection of Nancy and me, we are vigilant to teach him the basic warning signs of sexual abuse. He already knows about his public and private body parts. He has learned about appropriate touching, how to say no and how to report inappropriate touching. On the other hand, I am confident that by the time he has progressed through his teenage years and reaches twenty or twenty-one, he will grow out of the stage in which I will have to be concerned about a molester taking advantage of him.

Emily Ann was in her early thirties when she was raped. Lois was attacked by her brother when she was 54. She had been married and widowed. She was living alone when her brother decided to enter her trailer and rape her one Friday afternoon on his way home from work. A mentally challenged person may never move from the stage where he or she is at risk:'

While teaching and training are appropriate and necessary, the incidents of violent sexual crimes are of grave concern for those people who are a part of the mentally challenged community. Delores Norley is an attorney at law who lives in Deland, Florida. She is a nationally known advocate who has served on the President's Committee on Mental Retardation. She tells of a trial that took place in Grand Fork, North Dakota. This sleepy, provincial town was in an uproar over the multiple rape of a girl with retardation. There was a trial, but the accused males were acquitted because the jury decided that the men might not have been able to determine that she was retarded, even though the sheriff told the press, "I'm not sure she even knew what happened to her. "

"She certainly knew something dreadful had happened, "Mrs. Norley said, "but the sheriff did not think she has the sensibilities of every other woman.

"I'm not sure how much help the young woman in Grand Folks had during the trial process," said Mrs. Norley. "I don't know details as to whether her workshop staff and her family were at her side from the beginning. Perhaps an effective advocate could have explained better that her needs and vulnerability are the same as any woman's. The trial, in fact, seemed to be held on a strange

issue -- whether the men could recognize what the police called her *defect*."

Emily Ann's story had a happy ending. The man who raped her was arrested, tried and convicted. Or did it?

The other day in a local restaurant, I ran into a couple who had been a part of our ministry some years ago. They were back in town visiting. I stopped to have a cup of coffee with them and to talk about old times and old acquaintances: They had not seen Emily Ann in over six years and they did not know the ordeal that she has endured. "We saw Emily Ann the other day. What has happened to her?" they inquired. "We know it's been a long time but she looks and acts like a different person. Don't think we would have recognized her if she had not been with her mother. She was always such a happy, young woman."

Not wanting to go into private details, I casually shook my shoulders and changed the subject to happier matters. I wish I could have said that nothing has changed and that she is the same person; but that would be a lie. Even though we have prayed together and the Lord can heal wounds from sexual abuse, I know that it will take years. Emily Ann may never be the same. For now, she has lost something that no person can ever give back to her.

MANAGEMENT INSTRUCTIONS

Last Update: 7/1/95

SUBJECT: Sexual Abuse Protections

A. PURPOSE

To delineate a process by which The Special Gathering, Inc. can take proactive actions against the horror of sexual abuse.

B. GOAL

The Special Gathering, Inc's. goal is to do all we know to do to protect people taking part in a Special Gathering activity from sexual abuse.

C. PROCESS

1. Since those that abuse do not look any different than anyone else it will be assumed that everyone is a potential abuser.
2. The aim is to not provide an opportunity for abuse to happen. People should remain in groups where they are always subject to interruptions.
3. A local chapel is a group experience. Members isolating themselves will be discouraged. Volunteers, staff, and others having private time with members will not be allowed. If two people want a private conversation they can call each other or stand alone in an open place with a clear view.
4. One of the jobs of the Chapel Leader (Chapel Supervisors, Chapel Coordinators, or Chapel D.C.E.s) is to interrupt groups.
5. One of the jobs of your supervisor is to interrupt chapels.
6. Guest are always welcome to come to any Special Gathering activity, unannounced and uninvited, to observe and evaluate our ministry. This fact will be made known to local families and churches. They will be encouraged as a help to our sexual abuse protection process.
8. Directors of Christian Education will meet their vans at unexpected times and places.
 - a. Directors of Christian Education will meet them at different people's houses on the van route. This will:
 - i. Let the van driver know that they will never know when you may just show up.
 - ii. Let the Director of Christian Education know if the van is on time.
 - iii. Let the Director of Christian Education know if the established van route is being kept. If not, why not. If there is a good reason, a new van route should be established per Management Instruction 402-A, and the families should be informed.

- b. Directors of Christian Education will follow van routes as inconspicuously as possible. This will:
 - i. Let the Director of Christian Education see that the van is operating in a safe manner.
 - ii. Let the Director of Christian Education know if the van route is being kept.
 - c. One of the more independent members should be the last person dropped off.
9. The estimated pickup and drop off time of each person transported will be given to their families with a contact number that can be called if their family member is not home on time or is being picked up too early. Parents will be advised to call that number if their child is picked up any more than 15min early or is any more than 15min late.
10. The goal is to not provide an opportunity for abuse to happen. This means people in groups are always subject to being interrupted.

SUBJECT: Abuse Reporting

A. PURPOSE

To delineate the process by which allegations of neglect, abuse or exploitation and unusual incidents shall be reported to state authorities.

B. GOAL

It is The Special Gathering, Inc. goal to comply with state record keeping requirements regarding allegations of abuse. The Special Gathering shall provide advocacy services to protect the well-being and interest of the members it serves in such instances.

C. PROCESS

1. Any Elder or staff member receiving an allegation of abuse, neglect, or exploitation or who is aware of an unusual incident regarding a member shall immediately notify the Chapel Leader (Chapel Supervisors, Chapel Coordinators, or Chapel D.C.E.s) and they will notify the Pastor.
2. Allegations shall be reported to the CAF abuse line 1-800-962-2873 at any time of the day or night. This call is to be made even if the Chapel Leader and/or the Pastor cannot be notified.
3. Reports of abuse shall be communicated to the parent, guardian or responsible person as soon as possible, unless they are part of the abuse report. This report will be made by the Pastor or his designee.
4. Reports of abuse shall be communicated to the member's support coordinator within 48 hours of the incident. A copy of the unusual incident report shall be maintained in the Business Administrator files of The Special Gathering, Inc.
5. The completed unusual incident report will be submitted to the Pastor within 24 hours. All copies of the unusual incident report that go before any Board of Directors and/or the safety committee will maintain the confidentiality of the alleged abused persons and of all volunteers who report the abusive situation by blacking out their names.
6. Additional services available to members for which referrals may be made are the Human Rights Advocacy Committee and the CAF Administrative Hearing Process. The Director of Christian Education shall assist the members in the referral process and in receiving advocacy services, if appropriate.
7. In the event of any question as to whether an event qualifies as suspected abuse, the CAF abuse line at 1-800-962-2873 shall be called.
8. The Director of Christian Education shall serve as liaison with CAF officials in a cooperative effort to resolve allegations of abuse.
9. Any allegations of abuse involving a staff member, Elder, or volunteer will be processed the same way. For the protection of all concerned, the staff, Elder, or volunteer will take a leave of absence until CAF investigation is completed.

Chapter 6

Who Has the Key?

There is nothing more frustrating to a chapel supervisor than the myriad of detailed duties that must be performed from the time you begin preparation for Sunday morning until the moment that the pastor walks down the aisle saying, "Good Morning! Praise the Lord!" In contrast, there is nothing more fulfilling than the feeling of calm excitement as you stand in the back of the congregation, knowing that all the minute details have been accomplished and the only thing left to do is wait for the minutes to click by so the worship can begin.

More than one chapel coordinator has forgotten important things. Yet it is the unexpected conditions for which we must be emotionally prepare ourselves. Sometimes a crisis evolves from mechanical mishaps. More than once, we have not been able to get into a building. One evening in Daytona, I could not get the key to the building to turn the lock. It was drizzling rain on the morning that the broken burglar alarm went off in Melbourne. One Sunday last year, the entire service in Cocoa had to move four blocks because the doors to the building would not open.

Other times there are medical crises. The chapel supervisor arrived at the Cocoa program one morning in June and found a member. Even though it was more than an hour before time for the chapel program to begin, she knew instinctively that something was wrong. As she approached him, the member seized. The man, who lives on his own and has a job in the community, had been dropped off at the chapel by his brother more than one hour before the service was to begin. Because he has grand maul seizures, the chapel supervisor acted quickly. Within minutes, she had called the ambulance. It was early and there were not other members to supervise. As the chapel coordinator waited for the arrival of the ambulance, she kneeled by the fallen member and quietly prayed. She prayed for the man who was continuing to seizure. She prayed for wisdom and geared herself for the arrival of the other members. "Those are the times that you need to be confident that God will give you the right answers," she later recounted.

The ambulance arrived and the medical experts began working on the fallen man as a van full of members and volunteers also arrived.

The emergency was handled. A trustworthy teacher came with her carload of people at the moment the ambulance was pulling out. "Go with Dutch to the hospital," the chapel supervisor instructed her. "He and his family may need you." The teacher followed the ambulance to the hospital. The chapel supervisor, of course, remained with the other members and kept them calm.

"As the ambulance drove away, some of the members gathered around to pray for Dutch," she remembers. "There are days that you wonder if you are touching lives because there are so many details to accomplish. But on those mornings when disasters are averted, you know that God has put you in a wonderful position."

It is not trivial to say that at times we deal in life and death issues. Because there can be medical considerations that need immediate attention, the ability to make quick decisions is important. That ability does not come by accident. It takes a certain state of mind.

I can procrastinate. But I find that early preparation and starting long before the deadline leaves me with energy and the ability to handle the stress of the unexpected. One chapel supervisor said, "I can set up the building in twenty minutes, but I come more than an hour early because I do not want to feel hassled when the service begins."

The beginning of the program means that your work is half finished. The most satisfying times in my ministry have been in those few minutes when buzzing conversations of The Special Gathering congregation grow still. I get a special thrill of satisfaction for a job done for our Lord when the pastor walks down the aisle with hands raised and the congregation shouts, "Good Morning! Praise the Lord!"

SUBJECT: Crisis Situations

A. PURPOSE

To establish process for crisis management.

B. GOAL

The Special Gathering, Inc's. goal is to provide appropriate crisis management

C. PROCESS

1. No person from The Special Gathering should make any public statements regarding any crisis situation.
2. When and if a crisis happens at a local chapel, the Chapel Leader (Chapel Supervisors, Chapel Coordinators, or Chapel D.C.E.s) is the person in charge, and the person that will be held responsible. The Chapel Leader is paid for times when there is a crisis. The Chapel Leader will do the following:
 - a. Pray (It helps if you prayed before the activity begins during a private devotion time.).
 - b. Assess the situation.
 - c. Remember the safety of all our members is our first concern.
 - d. Ask if someone is in immediate danger? Do that which needs to be done to remove everyone from immediate danger.
 - e. Do not hesitate to dial 911 for help. That is what the emergency number is there for.
 - f. Do not leave the group. You are the person in charge of your group. As much as you may want to go to the hospital, or go to the disabled van, or go to the problem; your primary responsibility is to the group. The following determination needs to be made:
 - i. If this is an emergency that needs immediate attention, dial 911 for professional help, and beep your supervisor.
 - ii. Get who, where, what, when type of information.
 - iii. Determine if there are any legal liability concerns.
 - iv. Determine if there are any public relation concerns.
 - v. As a general rule if things are not happening the way they should, beep your supervisor.
3. If the crisis happens at an activity that is a group activity of a number of chapels, the senior paid staff person there will be in charged.
4. Some general guidelines if there is a van accident.

- a. If the van bumps something or another vehicle with only minor damage and there is no one (the other driver, etc.) there, the van driver will:
 - i. leave a note,
 - ii. precede on with the route,
 - iii. then call the police (911).

- b. If the van bumps something or another vehicle with only minor damage and there are people there (who are with the vehicle),
 - i. the van driver will call the police (911) and the Chapel Leader.
 - ii. the Chapel Leader will make arrangements for the transportation of those on the van.
 - a) If the members are going to be late getting home, call their families.
 - b) If there are those who will be picked up late or not at all, call their families.
 - iii. Transportation can be arranged by
 - a) sending another vehicle,
 - b) calling families who would pickup members or bring their child,
 - c) calling your supervisor for help,
 - d) or the Chapel Leader may choose to go himself if there is no member to supervise, or if their supervisor takes over supervising the local chapel.

- c. If one of our vans is in an accident which disables the van in which no one is hurt, the van driver will:
 - i. Call the police (911) , and the Chapel Leader.
 - ii. The Chapel Leader will:
 - a) Beep their supervisor,
 - b) Arrange alternate transportation. Transportation can be arranged by:
 - sending another vehicle,
 - calling families who would pickup or bring their child,
 - asking their supervisor for help,
 - going yourself if there is no member to supervise, or if your supervisor takes over supervising the local chapel.
 - As a last resort, call a taxi.
 - iii. Do not forget to call families whose family members will be dropped off late, picked up late, or not picked up at all.

- d. If one of our vans are in an accident in which someone is hurt, the van driver will:
- i. determine their location, dial 911, and call the Chapel Leader.
 - ii. the Chapel Leader will beep their supervisor and the Pastor.
 - iii. the Chapel Leader will send their most experienced Elder to help with the accident.
 - iv. have the other Elders lead the membership in prayer.
 - v. Once the Elder you sent gets to the accident, have him figure out what is happening (in particular, who is hurt and how badly) and then to call you.
 - vi. If we have members at/or going to the hospital, have that Elder go to the hospital emergency room and wait.
 - vii. Pull up those members' medical records on your computer
 - viii. Call the hospital to tell them any medical information that you know.
 - ix. Then call the families of those hurt, tell them that their family member has been hurt and taken to the hospital. If you KNOW that it is not serious, tell them that you UNDERSTAND that it is not serious. Otherwise tell them that you are not at the hospital yet, that you are not sure what the status is, that you are contacting families, and that your Sunday school teacher named, _____ is at the hospital with their child.
 - x. Do not forget to call families whose family members will be dropped off late, picked up late, or not picked up at all.
 - xi. Transportation can be arranged by
 - a) sending another vehicle,
 - b) calling families who would pickup their child,
 - c) asking your supervisor for help,
 - d) going yourself if there is no member to supervise, or if your supervisor takes over supervising the local chapel.
 - e) as a last resort, a taxi can be used.
 - xii. Once your supervisor calls you back, give them all the information that you know.
 - xiii. Chapel Leaders and their supervisor will determine who is to go to the hospital. Remember that Chapel Leader cannot leave the group until their supervisor arrives as a replacement staff person, or until your program has been completed.
- e. When you speak to families members (and others) do not make absolute statements.
- i. In these situations, our main concern is the physical safety of our members.

- ii. Next is the spiritual and emotional support the hurt persons' family and friends will need.
 - iii. BUT, there are also legal and public relation concerns. Do not give any public statements. Do not give any absolute private statements.
 - iv. Concern yourself with getting the immediate help that your members need. Then concern yourself with giving the emotional help that your members and families need.
 - v. Blame can be determined at another time. The final medical determination can be made at another time also. Often when things look grim, they improve the next day.
 - vi. Make no public statements.
- f. If someone has died, do not call the family. They should be personally visited. Who makes that visit will be determined by the Pastor or his designee. NO one else will be told about the death until the family has been told.
5. Some general guidelines if there is a report of abuse.
- a. If the report is against a volunteer or staff member,
 - i. call the abuse number 1-800-962-2873.
 - ii. Beep your supervisor and tell him.
 - iii. Review our Management Instruction 504-A with the volunteer or staff person and tell him he will have to be temporally suspended.
 - iv. Also tell them there is no assumption of guilt.
 - v. Communicate with the family about the accusation and what actions you have taken. But do not say who the accused person is.
 - b. If the report is against a family member,
 - i. allow the member to make their own phone call to the abuse line at 1-800-962-2873. Allow them to make their phone call in privacy
 - ii. Now you must determine several things. (This situation can be a problem.)
 - a) Do you take your member back to an alleged abuse situation?
 - b) If not, where do you take them?
 - c) Once you have determined where to take the member, determine what you will tell the family. After all they are going to be expecting their child to come home after the chapel.

- d) Follow this process:
 - i) Ask the person from the abuse line what they suggest.
 - ii) Beep your supervisor.
 - iii) If the member is legally competent, ask them what they want.
 - iv) If the member is a minor or has been adjudicated legally incompetent, they must be removed from the family by a person empowered to do so. You are not that person. They must be returned at the normal time.
 - v) If you think you are endangering your member to take him home and CAF has not arrived by the time you normally end your program and your member is a minor or has been adjudicated legally incompetent, your member may call the police department.
 - vi) If your member is not going home, you need to communicate with the parents. They will be worried if their child does not come home.
 - vii) Do not assume the guilt of the family members.
 - viii) Tell them one of the following. "Mr. or Mrs. _____, CAF has just picked up your child. (since you were not part of the phone call, you do not have details on what's going on) I do not know what happening but I would suggest you contact CAF." Or, "Mr. or Mrs. _____, the police department has just picked up your child, (since you were not part of the phone call, you do not have details on what's going on) I do not know what happening but I would suggest you contact the police department." Or, "Mr. or Mrs. _____ your child does not want to come home. He used our phone today to call the abuse line. CAF is on their way here now."
- c. If the report is against an agency or anyone else, then call the abuse line at 1-800-962-2873
- 6. Some general guidelines about restraining people.
 - a. Never restrain someone, unless there is an immediate danger of them hurting themselves or another person.

- b. If there is a fight, try to physically get into the middle without restraining anyone. Do not do this if you think they will hurt you. Have an Elder call the police. Have the other Elders remove everyone else from the area. If one or both of the persons walk away, let them. Have an Elder follow them until the police arrive. Call their parents / guardian to inform them of what is happening.
- c. If you can not breakup the fight by getting into the middle, protect the person getting hurt. Get the hurt person to a safe area. If you must, physically block the aggressive person from hurt anyone. Once everyone is in a safe location, stop blocking the aggressive person. Any equipment we have is not worth anyone getting hurt.
- d. If someone is hurting themselves, ask an Elder to call 911, remove all of the other members, and assist the person in not hurting themselves.

SUBJECT: Medical Process

A. PURPOSE

To establish process for medical treatment.

B. GOAL

The Special Gathering, Inc. goal is to provide appropriate and properly documented minor first aid and to make referrals for necessary professional medical attention.

C. PROCESS

1. When minor first aid is required, the Elder who was first aware of the problem will notify the Chapel Leader (Chapel Supervisors, Chapel Coordinators, or Chapel D.C.E.s) that a member is sick/hurt.
2. The Chapel Leader will try to make contact with the member's parents, guardian or responsible person for consultation.
3. Minor first aid is rendered as determined necessary.
4. The Chapel Leader will file an Unusual Incident/Accident Report within 24 hours.
5. If the illness is of the nature that requires the member to go home, the Chapel Leader will contact the parent, guardian or responsible person to work out transportation.
6. If the illness is of the nature that requires the member to receive professional medical attention, abide by the following:
 - a. The welfare of the injured party is of primary concern.
 - b. The Chapel Leader is the person in charge and needs to be making the decisions.
 - c. The Chapel Leader will be held responsible for all decisions made.
 - d. Emergency medical assistance and/or transportation is available by dialing 911. In the event that there is any question as to whether professional medical attention is necessary, the referral will be made.
 - e. The other members should be cleared from the area and maintain the same schedule if possible.
 - f. Contact will be made with the parent, guardian or responsible person as soon as possible.
 - g. Remain calm no matter what the situation is.
 - h. An Elder will stay with the injured person until the parent, guardian or responsible person arrives.
7. Your supervisor and the Pastor will be notified as soon as possible. (Use their beeper number or cell phone number.)
8. All Unusual Incident/Accident Reports will be reviewed by the Area Safety Committee.

SUBJECT: Abuse Reporting

A. PURPOSE

To delineate the process by which allegations of neglect, abuse or exploitation and unusual incidents shall be reported to state authorities.

B. GOAL

It is The Special Gathering, Inc. goal to comply with state record keeping requirements regarding allegations of abuse. The Special Gathering shall provide advocacy services to protect the well-being and interest of the members it serves in such instances.

C. PROCESS

1. Any Elder or staff member receiving an allegation of abuse, neglect, or exploitation or who is aware of an unusual incident regarding a member shall immediately notify the Chapel Leader (Chapel Supervisors, Chapel Coordinators, or Chapel D.C.E.s) and they will notify the Pastor.
2. Allegations shall be reported to the CAF abuse line 1-800-962-2873 at any time of the day or night. This call is to be made even if the Chapel Leader and/or the Pastor cannot be notified.
3. Reports of abuse shall be communicated to the parent, guardian or responsible person as soon as possible, unless they are part of the abuse report. This report will be made by the Pastor or his designee.
4. Reports of abuse shall be communicated to the member's support coordinator within 48 hours of the incident. A copy of the unusual incident report shall be maintained in the Business Administrator files of The Special Gathering, Inc.
5. The completed unusual incident report will be submitted to the Pastor within 24 hours. All copies of the unusual incident report that go before any Board of Directors and/or the safety committee will maintain the confidentiality of the alleged abused persons and of all volunteers who report the abusive situation by blacking out their names.
6. Additional services available to members for which referrals may be made are the Human Rights Advocacy Committee and the CAF Administrative Hearing Process. The Director of Christian Education shall assist the members in the referral process and in receiving advocacy services, if appropriate.
7. In the event of any question as to whether an event qualifies as suspected abuse, the CAF abuse line at 1-800-962-2873 shall be called.
8. The Director of Christian Education shall serve as liaison with CAF officials in a cooperative effort to resolve allegations of abuse.
9. Any allegations of abuse involving a staff member, Elder, or volunteer will be processed the same way. For the protection of all concerned, the staff, Elder, or volunteer will take a leave of absence until CAF investigation is completed.

SUBJECT: Unusual Incident/Accident Reports

A. PURPOSE

To define documentation process for all accidents, injuries requiring medical or para-medical attention, and any unusual incidents which occur during any Special Gathering function.

B. GOAL

The Special Gathering, Inc. is dedicated to the maintenance of the safest ministry environment possible. When accidents do occur, any injured person will receive prompt medical treatment as needed. All accidents or injuries will be reported to the Pastor and will be reviewed by the safety committee.

C. PROCESS

1. The Chapel Leader (Chapel Supervisors, Chapel Coordinators, or Chapel D.C.E.s) will be notified immediately following any serious injury of a member or any other person at a Special Gathering function.
2. Welfare of the injured party is of primary concern. The "Medical Process" management instruction (503-A) and all other safety procedures will be followed.
3. All accidents to persons at Special Gathering functions, or in vehicles used by The Special Gathering, will be reported by phone to your supervisor and the Pastor immediately by calling their cell number or by beeping them. This happens after emergency care is given. An Unusual Incident/Accident report form will be filled out by the Chapel Leader as soon as possible, within 24 hours after the accident.
4. All appropriate data will be provided, including circumstances surrounding the occurrence; nature and extent of injury; immediate action taken; Chapel Leaders recommendations; and further referral information when required.
5. The completed Accident Report will be submitted to the Director of Christian Education and the Pastor within 24 hours of the accident.
6. An original and two copies will be made and the routing process followed:
 - a. Original to the Pastor's office.
 - b. A copy to be kept by Chapel Leader.
 - c. A copy to your supervisor.
7. Compliance with legal reporting will be completed as required. Any accident or injury requiring a claim against insurance must be reported within 24 hours.
8. The Chapel Leader is responsible for completing the Accident Report. The area safety committee will review all accident reports. The Director of Christian Education is responsible for submitting legal reports, as required. These reports will be reviewed by the Business Administrator.

INCIDENT/ACCIDENT REPORT

THE SPECIAL GATHERING

Member(s) Name _____

Special Gathering Program _____

Type of Occurrence:

Behavior _____

Date _____

Illness _____

Time _____

Accident _____

Location _____

Other (specify) _____

Describe Incident/Accident _____

Previous Infractions _____

Illustrate Position of injury, if any, and any other pertinent facts:

505-C

Immediate Action Taken: _____

Recommendations for Corrective Action: _____

Additional Information of Follow-Up:

Referral:

Where taken or sent: _____

Transportation used: _____

Time of departure: _____

Notification:

Family Name: _____ Time: _____

Physician Name: _____ Time: _____

Person Completing Form: _____

Date and corrective Action Taken: _____

ALL ACCIDENT AND ABUSE REPORTS MUST BE SUBMITTED TO THE PASTOR WITHIN TWENTY-FOUR (24) HOURS OF THE OCCURRENCE.

Chapter 7

Paperwork-- The Bane of our Existence

Some of the least productive arguments that my husband, Frank, and I have had involved my handling of the checkbook. Frank has expressed a desire to exercise my mathematical calculations. My filing system is also a unique breed. I know where everything is, but the logic of my filing strategy does not seem to transfer easily. In addition, my computer setup is a mysterious maze to other people, though it makes complete sense to me.

As the Director of Christian Education, it is my responsibility to be sure that the paperwork that the supervisor produces is accurate. There have been supervisors who felt that this part of my position brought out a rather sick and sadistic side of my personality. While this may be true, there will always be a need for accurate and legible paperwork. Contrary to what some may believe, the forms that must be kept did not develop from an obstinate desire to make life miserable for supervisors. They are designed to provide the chapel supervisors protection.

There are three areas where paperwork is always required by The Special Gathering: in handling money, in case of an unusual incident or accident, and our supervisor's checklists. (Supervisor's checklists were cover in previous chapter.) For your protection, we discourage our staff from handling money. However, you cannot ask a volunteer to transport offerings and checks that are to be deposited. That means that the supervisor is responsible for making sure that the offerings and checks get to the business administrator. The paperwork, which is filled out and verified by a volunteer and members, becomes your safety net.

In an unusual or emergency situation, we become most liable. The paperwork is the supervisor and organization's record of what happened. It should be accurate and complete.

It is a simple narrative of what happened. There are two reasons for the current system that we use. First, these simple forms keep me from making up my own, thereby complicating the procedure beyond imagination. Second, they give us a standard and uniform vehicle for communicating the information to others. These forms are designed to be easily understood and

translated.

While some people may have legitimate doubts about my ability to keep things simple, our paperwork is a proven and simplistic method for keeping the chapel supervisor out of the sea of despair and tribulations. It is a shield of protection that should be used regularly, correctly, and accurately.

While the paperwork is simple, it is time consuming. It is one of the reasons volunteers have a hard time going from being a volunteer to being a supervisor. Our volunteers love mentally challenged persons. Our volunteers love interacting with mentally challenged persons. When you are supervising, you do not have time to interact with people. If you are standing around speaking to someone, you are not doing one of the two things you should be doing:

1. Doing "Checks"
2. Rotating through the facility we use to make sure everything is functioning correctly.

As long as we are speaking about the subject, one of the hard things about being paid staff is we get to do what no one else wants to do. Volunteers are volunteers, so they get to do what they want to do, we are not volunteers, so we get to do what no one wants to do. After the Christmas Play, and everyone is eating cookies and laughing while you are in the backroom packing up Christmas costumes. And this is not the bad part. The hard part is when everyone has gone home and you are still there mopping the floors and cleaning the punch bowl.

SUBJECT: Sunday Offerings

A. PURPOSE

To establish the manner in which offerings at a local chapel will be accounted for.

B. GOAL

It is the goal of The Special Gathering, Inc. to handle all collections professionally by generally accepted practices and manner.

C. PROCESS FOR HANDLING CASH OFFERINGS

The following order of events and process will be followed with all offerings:

1. The offering will be counted by at least one (1) Elder and one (1) member immediately after being collected.
2. A Cash Offering Sheet (see sample page) will be filled out and signed by those counting the offering.
3. The Chapel Leader (Chapel Supervisors, Chapel Coordinators, or Chapel DCE's) will then become responsible for the keeping of the offering until the end of each month.
4. At no time should the Chapel Leader be the person counting the offering.
5. The Chapel Leader will oversee the disbursement of the cash offering for transportation and other expenses. The person receiving a cash disbursement will provide a written receipt or he/she will sign the Cash Offering Sheet.
6. All checks received in the offering should be forwarded to the Director of Christian Education on a weekly basis. These checks are not counted into the weekly cash offerings.
7. The Director of Christian Education will forward all checks to the Business Administrator on a weekly basis.
8. On the last day of each month, the Chapel Leader will give the portion of the cash offering which is in excess of that needed for the next month to the Director of Christian Education for deposit. This amount should be counted and put into an envelop. The amount should be marked on the outside of the envelop with the name of the chapel and the amount enclosed. i.e. Cocoa \$45.34.
9. The Director of Christian Education will forward all excess cash to the Business Administrator on a monthly basis.
10. A weekly accounting will be kept by the Chapel Leader of the cash offering on the Monthly Cash Report. (See sample page.)
11. On the last day of each month, the completed Monthly Cash Report and weekly cash offering sheets-will be turned in to the Director of Christian Education. The Monthly Cash Report original and the weekly Cash Offering Sheets along with the excess of the monthly cash offerings (SEE 202-B, 12) will be forwarded to the Business Administrator. A copy of the Monthly Cash Report will be retained by the Chapel Leader. This copy should be kept until after the annual audit has been approved for the next year.

12. Should the monthly expenses exceed the monthly cash offering, additional operating money may be requested during the month. See Management Instruction 203-A.

D. PROCESS FOR FILLING OUT MONTHLY CASH REPORT

The following order of events and process will be followed when filling out the Monthly Cash Report.

1. On the first day of the month, each chapel will begin the month with a minimal amount of offering monies, not to exceed \$75, carried from the previous month. (All other money will be turned into the Director of Christian Education for deposit. See C-8). This amount will be determined by the Director of Christian Education and Chapel Leader. It will be enough money to enable the Chapel Leader to pay expenses incurred during the month. It is suggested that at least enough money should be kept to cover one week of expenses.
2. Each Sunday, the Chapel Leader will transfer the weekly cash offering total from the Cash Offering Sheet to the "Cash Offering" Column on the Monthly Cash Report. That entry should be added to the amount in the "Balance" Column.
3. Transportation expenses will be transferred to the "Transportation Expense" column. Subtract the transportation expenses from the "Balance" column.
4. Follow steps 2 and 3 each week until the end of the month.
5. On the last Sunday on each month, total the "Cash Offering" and "Transportation Expense" columns, entering the totals in the bottom of the page on the line above the "Cash on Hand."
6. The "Cash Offering" column plus the amount carried from the previous month subtracted from the "Transportation Expense" column should come to the same amount recorded in the last entry in the "Balance" column.
7. If these totals do not equal, check the addition and subtraction until the mistake in the math is found.
8. Subtract from the amount in the "Balance" column the amount needed to bring forward for the coming month. Enter the difference of the "Balance" amount and the amount needed to bring forward in the "Cash Deposit" column.
9. Bring the "Cash Balance" down to the last line, to the right of "Cash on Hand." Transfer this balance amount to "Cash Balance" column on Monthly Cash Record for the next month.
10. On the last day of each month, the weekly Cash Offering Sheets should be attached to the Monthly Cash Report and turned into the Director of Christian Education. The Director of Christian Education will retain a copy of the Monthly Cash Report for his/her records. The Director of Christian Education will forward this information to the Bookkeeper.
11. The person filling out the monthly cash report will sign the monthly cash report.

Chapter 8

The Buck Stops Here

Almost 100 percent of the time, this is the best job in town. But one percent of the time, you will wonder why you took the position. Seventy-five percent of the time, a Special Gathering chapel is on autopilot. The van drivers pick up their passengers; the members socialize with their friends; the teachers teach their classes; and God is worshiped in chapel. Twenty-two percent of the time, a minor problem erupts: Two members are upset with each other. Someone has a seizure. A member gets sick. There will be a real problem 2.8 percent of the time. A van breaks down; an ambulance is called; or you are short a teacher.

There are some realities about what does *not* constitute a problem. The problems are not parents. The vast majority of the parents of our members are grateful and thankful for what we do. The problems are *not* our volunteers. You could not pay people to work as hard as our volunteers. Even if there is a difference of opinion between The Special Gathering and some parents or volunteers; it will not be your problem.

The problem is the fact that the buck stops here. We can philosophize about mentally challenged persons being just like anyone else, but let something happen and we will be asked why we let it happen. As a result, we are constantly faced with the dilemma of “which staff is where and when.” Usually, scheduling conflicts can be accommodated. But we cannot function without staff being in place.

Staff and our Management Instructions are our safety net. They are not only the safety net for our members but for our future ability to be able to minister. If we do not follow our Management Instructions or if we do not have a staff in place who knows what to do and someone dies or is seriously hurt; we will lose our credibility and our ability to exist.

What does this look like in real life? It is Tuesday and you get a call that your brother (who is in the Army) and his wife are flying in on Friday with their new baby. He has called the pastor of the church where you were all raised (and your parents still attend) and your brother is having his

new baby baptized Sunday morning. Your mother tells you the rest of the family will be there, and then asks you if you can come. Seventy-five to eighty percent of the time, your Director of Christian Education (DCE) will be able to be at your chapel or the DCE will be able to pull in staff from a different area, but there will be times when nothing will work out.

The reason why it can usually be worked out is because most of the time you will not be the only staff present at a chapel meeting. At most meetings, your DCE will be there. The double staffing allows for the DCE to schedule his or herself elsewhere when needed. A secondary benefit is the ability of the DCE to be more pastoral and less supervisorial. But the main reason we have supervisors is so the DCE's can schedule themselves at local churches during this time. If your DCE has a choir at a local church, it is going to be hard to allow you to miss that Sunday. If we know ahead of time, we will not schedule the choir for that Sunday.

The situation we all fear are when there is a crisis. This has not happened, but it has been close. One of our DCE's had a group of 80 mentally challenged persons at a campground she had rented for four days. This DCE does not have a supervisor. The night before camp she received a call telling her that her mother's health had taken a turn for the worst. Even if her mother is dying, she cannot leave camp to be with her. She has the choice of calling everyone and canceling camp, but this has at least two problems. Not only will the campers be disappointed, but she has signed a contract with the campground. Not only will she have disappointed campers she will have to refund, but she will also have to pay the campground. She decides to go to camp and three years later when this chapter was written her mother is still alive.

As a supervisor you would not be at this level of decision making. But it may be Sunday morning and your D.C.E. has the choir at a local church and you receive a phone call telling you your child is sick, your spouse was in an accident, or some other problem. You need to stay at the chapel until we can get a replacement staff to you. The chances of this happening are rare, in fact it has never happen.

Sound harsh? Let's turn the situation and view it through a different angle. Your child's kindergarden class has taken a field trip to another town about an hour away. The teacher has driven the school's van with thirteen students to a special program and then they will have a picnic

in the park. One of the student's mothers has gone to help, but you do not know her. The teacher's son is hurt in an accident and is rushed to the hospital. He was with his father in another town about three hours away in the opposite direction of your child's class. What if the teacher took the school van and left the volunteer mother with 13 five year olds stranded. Even if she arranged for the school to get another van to them in a few hours, would you believe the teacher had done the responsible thing in regard to your child? If the teacher does leave, what happens if the volunteer mother loses one of the children? What if your child is injured after the teacher leaves?

Even with these examples your gut reaction may be, "Wait a minute. My family comes before ministry." I would say "yes" and "amen." But there is a tension with responsibility that must be factored into this equation. As a general rule, I would say the following, "I put God first, my wife second, my child third, my family fourth and my ministry somewhere after that."

Let me use an example, however, that illustrates the problem with this general rule. In this general rule and model, my wife is second and my son is third. If this is always true, my wife will take priority over my son no matter what the circumstances. Think with me, if my family was on the Titanic and if there were only room for one more person on a lifeboat, we would put our son in the boat, not my wife. Why? Our general rule is superceded by our responsibility to our son. I am responsible for my son in a way that I am not responsible for my wife because he is a child. That responsibility is constantly factored into my actions along with my priority.

Theoretically we think God being first is not even questionable. But Paul says my responsibility to my wife will effect my actions in relation to God (I Cor. 7:32-35). In fact in I Cor. 7:3-6, Paul is warning against praying too much and not spending time with your spouse. I think you could say these verses are saying, do not pray too much and have sex with your wife. Is that putting your wife before God?

The responsibility of the safety of mentally challenged persons and the reputation of this ministry may be the proverbial buck that stops on your desk. In our spirits, the choice needs to be made before it confronts us. I need to tell you that in 20 plus years of ministry not one of these critical, wrenching situations has happened to any staff person. But all of our staff members are prepared in their hearts and minds to respond to the responsibility that God has given to them

because of the exceptional nature of our calling.

SUBJECT: Cancellation of a Program

A. PURPOSE

To set up the times and conditions for the cancellations of a weekly meeting of a local chapel.

B. GOAL

It is the goal of The Special Gathering, Inc. to conduct weekly services at each local chapel. There must be extenuating circumstances not to do so.

C. PROCESS

One of the following conditions must be present to cancel a local chapel of The Special Gathering.

1. That other planned functions would make it futile to try to hold a local chapel. This must be previously approved by the Director of Christian Education, or the local Elders.
2. Lack of sufficient supervision. We never operate a local chapel that we cannot safely run. All attempts must be made to organize the help of parents, Elders from other chapels, etc., before the cancellation for this reason. Your supervisor will be called for consultation prior to cancellation for this reason.
3. Unsafe weather conditions.
4. Other: Any other reason would require the approval of your supervisor.