



Online Boundary Training

For the online Boundary Training, you MUST take ALL three courses, pay for them and then submit a copy of each certificate to info@swtsynod.org. Boundary Training is expected to be taken every 3 years. For questions, contact [Pastor Judith Spindt](#) or [Deacon Darcy Mittelstaedt](#).

Course: Clergy and Ministerial Ethics - \$22

Course Summary: Clergy members and other ministry leaders are often expected to not only make all of the right decisions, but also have all of the answers. They are faced with ethical determinations in their personal lives every day, as we all are as humans. The decisions made in those ordinary moments can have long-term positive or negative consequences.

As a person charged with leading a church, a clergy member makes decisions at a level that can be far-reaching—more so than people in other professions. Ethical clergy can propel a congregation forward to do its best work. Unethical behavior, on the other hand, can have a ripple effect and seriously erode the fabric of an entire congregation.

The code of behavior for ministry leaders should be grounded in biblical truth. As clergy members are tested every day with situations that may challenge their own ethics and values, they must draw from this code of behavior. They must be ready to face life's everyday predicaments, grounded in the mission given to them by their congregation and the community they serve.

In this 6-module, 2-hour course, we will take users through the top issues challenging today's clergy and church leadership, and how they can navigate these ethical conundrums. Some of these issues include technology, sexualized behavior and misconduct, addiction, behavior with children and youth, narcissism, plagiarism, and more.

Learning Objectives:

- Define ethics and how it relates to the clergy
- Learn how a code of conduct can be helpful when challenged with ethical predicaments
- Learn about the top ethical issues facing clergy members today: technology, sexual abuse and misconduct within the church, dual relationships, appropriate behaviors when dealing with children and youth, addiction, secrecy vs. confidentiality, narcissism and abuse of power, plagiarism, responsible use of church resources and embezzlement, accountability and supervision, the importance of personal study and faith growth

- Identify how to formulate questions to guide behavior in challenging ethical situations
- Recognize how to evaluate one's own behavior and decision-making skills
- Learn about the importance of self-care for clergy
- Recognize the rewards for ethical behavior

Key Topics Include:

- **Module 1: Introduction.** Explore the definition of ethics and how it relates to clergy, including how the decisions made by clergy can affect a congregation both positively and negatively. Learn how a code of conduct can be helpful for clergy when challenged with ethical predicaments.
- **Module 2: The Top Ethical Issues Faced By Clergy Today.** Some of the top ethical issues faced by clergy today include technology, sexual abuse and misconduct, and dual relationships. This module explores these topics in-depth and includes scenarios for deeper reflection.
- **Module 3: The Top Ethical Issues Faced By Clergy Today (Continued).** This module discusses more ethical conundrums facing clergy, including recognizing and practicing appropriate behaviors when dealing with children and youth. Drug, alcohol, and other addictions and how they affect clergy are explored in this module, as well as secrecy vs. confidentiality. Also, clergy will learn about the clergy-penitent privilege, mandatory reporting, and handling an abuse disclosure.
- **Module 4: The Top Ethical Issues Faced By Clergy Today (Continued).** In this module, clergy will delve deeper into the topics of narcissism and abuse of power, plagiarism, embezzlement and using church resources responsibly, accountability and supervision, and the importance of personal study and faith growth.
- **Module 5: The Consequences of Unethical Behavior and Looking Forward.** It is important for clergy to have the skills to evaluate their own behavior and decision-making skills. This module includes questions to help guide behavior in challenging ethical situations, as well as recognizing the important of self-care. In addition, this module examines the rewards for ethical behavior.
- **Module 6: Conclusion and Final Exam.**

Once completed, please send a copy of your certificate to the Office of the Bishop (info@swtsynod.org)

Course: Social Media and Churches - \$12

Course Summary:

Social media can be a powerful outreach and communication tool, and your church can reach more people than ever before. However, instant technology can have its drawbacks, and your staff, clergy, and volunteers need to know about safe practices when using technology. This 30-minute

course will help users understand how social media can affect a person's image, reflect on their church, and potentially cause liability issues for a church.

Learning Objectives:

- Define social media and the most popular social networking sites
- Learn about the benefits of social media for congregations and how churches can deliver positive messages more effectively
- Create effective social media posts
- Identify some risks of social media and how to handle them, including photo releases, children and youth, copyrights, and other causes of lawsuits and litigation
- Identify security strategies when dealing with social media
- Determine how to establish a social media policy
- Learn how to address negative commentary on social media

Key Topics Include:

- What is Social Media?
- The New Town Square
- The Benefits of Social Media
- A Forum for Pastors and Clergy
- Using Social Media to Fulfill Your Mission
- Effective Social Media Posts
- Risks of Social Media
- Photo Releases
- Special Considerations for Children and Youth
- Copyrights and Infringement
- Other Causes of Lawsuit and Litigation
- Clergy and Social Media
- Speaking for the Church
- Protecting Your Social Media Sites
- Establishing a Social Media Policy
- Addressing Negative Commentary
- Questions to Ask Yourself

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Course: Abuse Prevention and Boundary Awareness - \$24

Course Summary:

As individuals involved in ministry, we play an important role in providing safe gathering places for all God's children, youth, and vulnerable adults. In addition, we strive to maintain an

environment that protects the integrity of all who serve. These are our spiritual, moral, and legal responsibilities. We must do everything in our power to prevent physical, emotional, and sexual abuse against children, youth, and vulnerable adults involved in our ministries.

It is our hope that this training will equip you with information to make wise decisions about your own and others' behavior while caring for and serving with vulnerable populations in a variety of ministry settings.

Time: Approximately 1.5-2 hours

Course Objectives:

- Prevent abuse within ministry settings, inside and outside the walls of the church, and ensure that all children, youth, and vulnerable adults (persons over 18 years of age with physical, mental, or developmental disabilities) have safe and secure gathering places.
- Raise awareness of the importance of abuse prevention. By acknowledging that abuse exists everywhere, including within churches, we can focus on providing environments that will help keep our most vulnerable people safe.
- Establish and communicate transparency and accountability in ministry by keeping the door open to dialogue and discussion on tough subjects such as abuse and abuse prevention within the church and its surrounding community.
- Provide training and best practices guidelines to all clergy, staff, and volunteers who serve with children, youth, and vulnerable adults—to protect those populations as well as those who serve them.
- Equip those serving in ministry settings with information to make responsible decisions about their own and others' behavior around vulnerable populations, and provide the necessary knowledge to responsibly report when abuse is suspected.

Key Topics:

- Introduction to the Training
- The Mind of a Child Sexual Predator
- Defining Sexual Misconduct and Abuse
- Other Types of Abuse
- Respecting Boundaries
- Defining Appropriate/Inappropriate Behaviors
- The Effects of Abuse
- Responding to Disclosure of Abuse and Mandatory Reporting
- Bullying, Hazing, and Peer Abuse
- Handling Off-Site Activities
- Safe Practices in Elder Care Ministries
- Scenarios and Discussion Points
- Test for Review

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