

Sex Abuse Task Force working on 'toolbox' for churches

ATLANTA (BP and local reports) – A subcommittee of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) Abuse Reform Implementation Task Force (ARITF) met May 8 to focus on production of a “toolbox” that is being designed “to help every church of every size take vital steps toward sexual abuse prevention and protection,” according to ARITF chairman Marshall Blalock, senior pastor of First Church, Charleston, S.C.



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“The mandate of the ARITF is to provide help for local churches to be as safe as possible for children, teens, and vulnerable adults,” Blalock said. “In light of that goal, the toolbox will put the essentials for prevention and protection

into the hands of every church and association.”

Workgroups among ARITF members have been assigned to focus “on different portions of our assignment,” Blalock said. “We hope to have the entire Task Force meet together as soon as these groups complete their work.”

Recently, a move away from recommending Guidepost Solutions to establish and maintain a database of those credibly accused of sexual abuse came following the ARITF’s April 4 meeting.

The ARITF had recommended Faith-Based Solutions, a division of Guidepost, for the role in its report to the SBC Executive Committee in February. That decision prompted criticism from some Southern Baptists when a tweet from the organization last year came to light that celebrated support for the LGBTQ+ community.

Blalock said ARITF will hold one more meeting prior to Southern Baptists’ gathering in New Orleans for the 2023 SBC Annual Meeting.

Brad Eubank, senior pastor of First Church, Petal, is an ARITF member. He may be contacted at brad@petalfbc.com.