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## Introduction

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## INTRODUCTION

On November 1, 2019, the Liberty University Law Review hosted its Twelfth Annual Symposium. This volume's Symposium examined child abuse within the Church and the growing developments in that field. We hosted legal practitioners with different viewpoints to interact with each other in defining and applying the law. The speakers included Pastor Jimmy Hinton, Pearl Kim, Esq., Peter Janci, Esq., and Laura Dunn, Esq. Our primary purpose in hosting the Symposium and publishing this Symposium Issue is to make an effective contribution to national legal scholarship.

The Liberty University Law Review is grateful to the authors and speakers for their contributions to this Symposium and to the ongoing worldwide discussion on child abuse within the Church.

Taila K. Lewis  
Symposium Editor

### *Why Discuss Child Abuse and the Church Now?*

Child Abuse and the Church has become particularly relevant in recent years and is poised to become even more so with high profile cases being covered by the media and movements such as #ChurchToo. A number of years ago, the three companies that insure most Protestant churches reported receiving approximately 260 reports a year of minors being sexually abused by church leaders and members. More recently, an investigative report published by the Houston Chronicle identified over 700 victims of sexual abuse within Southern Baptist churches during the past twenty years. The troubling reality is that the real numbers of those who have been abused within the Church are much higher due to underreporting and the manner in which such information is collected and determined. The systemic sexual abuse of children is not limited to any one faith or denomination, but tragically pervades all of Christendom.

As followers of Jesus who have no tolerance for those who hurt little ones, the Church must become the safest and most welcoming community for children and those who have been abused. This Symposium focused on educating and equipping the Church on many of the key issues related to sexual abuse within the broader faith community from various perspectives by experts who are serving on the front lines in combatting this evil.

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