

**Media Statement by The Church of Eleven22
Regarding Criminal Charges against Former Part Time Staff Member
September 23, 2016**

The Church of Eleven22 leadership were notified late Thursday evening during final preparations for our mid-week service about the arrest hours before of a former volunteer turned part time staff member. We are shocked and saddened by the news, and are grieved for any hurt and confusion this has caused those in our church family and community.

The Executive Team has been working in full cooperation with law enforcement to identify and comprehend known facts, notify staff and ministry volunteers and began an internal investigation related to the individual's involvement in our ministry. The accused tendered his resignation as a part time staff member in August to pursue another opportunity.

The Church of Eleven22 considers the safety, protection and care of our children to be one of our highest callings. Since the founding of the church four years ago today, our NewGen ministry has had a comprehensive Child and Youth Protections policy in place to provide safeguards against abuse. Our leadership and staff work diligently to ensure that our protocols are followed carefully and that the well being of our children is protected and maintained while in our care.

All volunteers and staff working with children must go through a detailed screening process, which includes a thorough interview, verification of references and a criminal background check before being allowed to work with children. Additionally, NewGen has a comprehensive policy requiring two adults to be present at all times with children in our care.

In addition to the above mentioned protocols, security of the physical space is also of utmost importance. We employ off duty Police Officers and have a highly trained security team present at all locations for each worship service. There are strict security measures at all entry and exit points of the physical space.

Throughout his tenure as both volunteer and part time staff, the accused and all workers in the department were held accountable for compliance with the children's program safety policies and procedures by leaders and supervisors, including regular review and ongoing training.

While we have no reason to believe these safeguards were not followed, we are doing our due diligence to ensure there was no situation affecting our children during the time the accused served with us, though at this point, we have no evidence or accusations of misconduct in conjunction with our ministry programs.

The accused is the son of an elder at The Church of Eleven22, who will be stepping down from his duties as an Elder Board member so he can devote his full attention to the needs of his family during this season. Our hearts grieve for them in this time of turmoil. In order to effectively minister to both the parents in our congregation and the family, we have divided these duties. Those evaluating the safety protocols and ministering to the congregation will have no contact with the accused or his family during this time.

We remain committed to pursuing the highest moral and ethical standards in staff hiring and conduct. Recognizing it is ultimately a spiritual battle in which the Church is engaged, we remain steadfast in our calling and commitment to continue to proclaim the Word of God and to provide hope, healing and restoration to anyone seeking God's grace and peace, found only in and through the power of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

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Media Contact:

Melissa Layow, Communications Director, The Church of Eleven22

Phone: 904-685-6815

Email: melissa.layow@coe22.com