

Corsiglia, McMahon & Allard Law Firm Files Sexual Molestation Lawsuit against SJ Church on the Hill

Lawsuit claims that the alleged negligence of the Church allowed a sexual predator to sexually abuse a then seven-year-old girl.

SAN JOSE, CA, USA, August 21, 2013 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Sex abuse victim advocate/attorney [Robert Allard](#) of Corsiglia, McMahon & Allard has filed a [sexual molestation lawsuit](#) (Santa Clara County Superior Court, Case #113CV251524) against Church on the Hill, also known as The First Baptist Church, of San Jose, alleging the Church enabled an alleged sexual predator named [Keith Woodhouse](#) to molest a then seven-year-old girl. The minor is now 14-years-old and is named as Jane Doe due to her age and serious medical and psychological problems resulting from the sexual molestation.

The lawsuit alleges that Woodhouse was observed by Church lifeguards during a summer camp called "Camp on the Hill" in July of 2007 holding the seven-year-old as she was sitting in his lap in the Church's swimming pool. At that point in time, Woodhouse was observed kissing the minor's shoulder and/or neck. Soon afterwards, another female lifeguard heard the young girl scream out that something was "poking" her in the butt. The lifeguard claims she saw Woodhouse exit the pool with a full erection. A third lifeguard then followed Woodhouse into a nearby bathroom where, the complaint alleges, he overheard Woodhouse masturbating. Woodhouse returned back to the pool where he immediately resumed holding Jane Doe, at which point the lifeguards intervened and ordered him to release the girl.

Despite all three lifeguards providing reports of the incident to Church management, including two comprehensive typewritten statements from two of them, Church Pastor Elliot Sands failed to notify law enforcement and the parents of the child. Instead, he simply fired Woodhouse and ordered him not to return to the Church property for the time being.

Woodhouse was arrested approximately three and a half years later for multiple counts of child molestation which allegedly occurred at multiple day care centers in San Jose where Woodhouse worked as an assistant teacher. Investigating officers indicate that there were as many as fifteen minor children who were sexually molested by Woodhouse at these centers. The lawsuit states that San Jose Police detective Erik Martin asked Pastor Elliott Sands why, as a mandatory reporter, he did not report Woodhouse in 2007. In response, Sands defended his actions by stating that Jane Doe did not appear to be traumatized and refused to take blame for failure to

act. When the detective told Pastor Sands he was likely to face lawsuits over his conduct, Pastor Sands, according to the detective, allegedly shrugged and stated with no emotion or remorse, "Oh well, that's what insurance is for".

The lawsuit alleges that Sands and the Church, prior to the Jane Doe incident, was already well aware of Woodhouse's inappropriate behavior involving little girls.

In 2004, three years prior to the Jane Doe incident, the lawsuit alleges he was terminated from his position as a counselor at the Church's on-campus school called "Achiever Christian School" by his supervisor for misconduct with children and his inappropriate interactions with little girls. Two years later, when Woodhouse was in Lake Tahoe with other church members, he was reported to Child Protective Services for his behavior toward a little girl by the same supervisor.

Despite his prior termination for misconduct with children, the Church decided to re-employ Woodhouse as a Camp counselor starting in 2006 and allowed him to work directly with and supervise children, including Jane Doe.

Even after the 2007 pool incident, Sands allowed Woodhouse to return to the Church in 2009 to once again supervise children, this time within its "Children's Ministry" department. As reported to the police, Woodhouse was soon thereafter observed engaging in "continuing behavior" with children and was once again let go by his supervisor.

The next year in 2010, when Woodhouse applied for the position of an assistant teacher at the day care center where he went on to molest up to fifteen children, the same supervisor within the "Children's Ministry" department at the Church provided him with a glowing recommendation and otherwise mentioned nothing about the previous instances of misbehavior with children, including the 2007 pool incident. When asked to comment on Woodhouse's ability to interact with children, this supervisor stated that Woodhouse "loves kids" and has a "heart for children". Based thereon, the day care center hired Woodhouse.

The lawsuit claims that only when Jane Doe was notified of the criminal investigation in 2011 did the parents find out that she been molested by Woodhouse years earlier. That delay, according plaintiff's retained pediatric psychiatrist, resulted in the victim's condition deteriorating to the point where numerous hospitalizations were required to treat, amongst other ailments, a severe eating disorder.

Church on the Hill does business and ministers under the names "Achiever Christian School" and "Camp on the Hill". The entrance to Church on the Hill is named after Pastor Sands grandfather who pastored at the Church for 35 years. Woodhouse and his family were longstanding members of the Church. Woodhouse's father was an instructor in Bible study classes.

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