


gather Search

SIGN IN | HELP

SPONSORED BY

NATIONAL CONVERSATION DRIVE™



Liberty Mutual.

Learn more about taking the pledge »

news.gather.com

[National](#) | [International](#) | [Commentary](#) | [Environment](#) | [Health](#) | [Crime](#) | [Weather](#) | [Weird](#)

Search group

Gather is the place where millions of people come for fresh perspective on what's happening now. [Join Gather »](#)

Jehovah's Witness Jailed for Child Abuse in UK



by **Anya Vinclauv**

Member since: April 19, 2010

October 19, 2010 10:39 AM EDT (Updated: October 19, 2010 11:01 AM EDT)

views: 900 | [4](#) people recommend this | comments: [16](#)

A 45-year-old UK man has been sentenced at the High Court in Edinburgh for sexually abusing a boy.

Thomas Gold has admitted to committing the abuse between November 1996 and November 2003.

The child was 7 years old at the time the abuse started, abuse which continued until he alerted his congregation leaders as a teenager.

Gold, who was unemployed, would take the child out in the door to door preaching of the Jehovah's Witnesses.

Instead of alerting authorities of the abuse the leaders of the church informed Gold that his wrong behavior must stop or they would expel him from the congregation.

Interestingly enough, the "wrong behavior" according to church leaders, wasn't that he was molesting a child, but instead his homosexual acts were the issue since the child is a male.

An article at the [BBC](#) states the leaders did attempt to persuade Gold to go to the police.

Lord Bannatyne, the judge for the case, spoke of how Gold's criminal conduct placed a "considerable impact" on the victim, and added how the background report on Gold shows he "systematically groomed" the child so he could sexually abuse him.

Gold has been placed on a sex offender's register where he will remain for the rest of his life. He has been sentenced to serve six years and eight months in prison followed by a 40-month supervision.

This abuse leaves emotional scars which often do not heal, and it is sad to know how so many children are victimized. What is even more disheartening is when we hear about such cases where a trusted member of the community or church member has preyed upon our young people.

This is not the first time the Jehovah's Witnesses, or other religions, have come up in a negative light in regards to sexual abuse. Many feel the Jehovah's Witness religion tries to cover up such allegations since they are not always reported.

Although the church leaders did urge this man to go to the police with his crimes, why not alert the authorities themselves to protect the boy?

Should the congregation be responsible to report such allegations, or is it up to the family to make such reports?



Photo Source: [BBC](#)

~For More News Click [HERE](#)~

© Anya Vinclauv -October 2010

GATHER GIVEAWAYS & PROMOTIONS

 Win a Daily Gas Card & Share Your Safe Driving Tips!

 Join Our Liberty Mutual Expert Chat from 3-4PM & Win A Borders Gift Card Today!

 Join the Movement to "Take the Pledge" – Find Out How You Can...

[more](#)

NATIONAL CONVERSATION DRIVE™



Take the pledge. Make a difference.

MOST POPULAR ON GATHER

 [McDonald's Plans to Raise Prices to Offset Commodity Cost - Will the Dollar Menu...](#)

 [Woman Drives with Dead Body for Months: Ed Everett Discusses Corpse Left in...](#)

 [Steve Harvey to Lose 21 Pounds in 21 Days on Martha's Vineyard Diet Detox](#)

 [Hobbit Cast Announced In The Midst Of Film Location Debate](#)

 [Angelina Jolie Cocaine Binge Before Charlie Rose Show - Franklin Meyer's Explosive...](#)

 [Kat Von D Trash Talks Nikki Sixx, Demands Segments Not Air On LA Ink](#)

 [Israel Dancing With The Stars To Feature Same Sex Couple](#)

 [Escaped Crocodile: Airliner Crash Caused by Reptile Smuggler](#)

[more](#)

Like Be the first of your friends to like this.

Related posts on Gather | [view more](#)

- [Moscow Woman Faces Charges After Refusing Blood Transfusion for Child](#)
- [Oprah Winfrey Says She's Disappointed with School Abuse Case Verdict \(Video\)](#)
- [MacKenzie Phillip's Relationship with Her Father was NOT Consensual: Abuse Takes Many Forms](#)

More by [Anya Vinclauv](#) | [view more](#)

- [Moscow Woman Faces Charges After Refusing Blood Transfusion for Child](#)
- [County in NY Creates Animal Abuse Registry](#)
- [Police are Searching for a 3-Year-Old Missing Boy in Pasadena California](#)

Find more about: [abuse](#), [news](#), [sexual abuse](#), [jehovahs witnesses](#), [jehovahs witness news](#), [religion and abuse](#), [sexual abuse in religion](#), [church members sexual abuse](#), [child abuse](#)

Find Gather groups: [Gather News Channel](#)

[recommend](#) [Facebook](#) [Twitter](#) [bookmark](#) [email](#) [print](#)

4 people recommend this post



Danny H.



Lisa Love



Janet Tolland



Donald Pennington

Comments: 16



Danny H. Oct 19, 2010, 11:39am EDT

My concern with Jehovahs witness is that they have had a huge ongoing pedophile scandle similar to the catholic church.

Apparently the majority of the time when pedophiles are reported it's hushed up to keep the name of the church clean in the community. The only difference between them and the catholics is that the catholics don't send preist out to my door to sell me magazines. How do I know that when my teens are home alone and I'm out at work there isn't a pedophile going to my house trying to peddle their magazines and trying to get inside to share the "bible" with my daughters?



Janet Tolland Oct 19, 2010, 11:59am EDT

Jehovah Witness pedophiles come to your house

Respected Jehovah's Witness groomed and molested young girls over years

Yorkshire Post - Olwen Dudgeon - Dec 15, 2009

A RESPECTED Jehovah's Witness who served as an elder betrayed the trust placed in him by abusing young girls. ...

Church Jehovah's Witness elder abused young girls Bramley Today


<http://www.yorkshirepost.co.uk/news/Respected-Jehovahs-Witness-groomed-and.5911846.jp>

Jehovah's Witnesses proselytizer molest a child in their door to

door 'witnessing'

<http://www.religionnewsblog.com/16510/jehovahs-witness-in-door-to-door-sex-assault-scandal>

This cannot continue!

 [reply to this comment](#)



[Danny H.](#) Oct 19, 2010, 11:40am EDT

Many court documents and news events prove that Jehovah's Witnesses have required * two witnesses* when a child comes forward with allegations of molestation within the congregation. Such allegations have customarily been treated as sins instead of crimes and are only reported to authorities when it is required to do so by law, (which varies by state). It has also been shown that child molesters within the organization usually in the past have not been identified to the congregation members or the public at large.

These people have engaged in a door to door ministry, possibly exposing children to pedophiles. Although the Watchtower Bible & Tract Society claims that known pedophiles are accompanied by a non-pedophile in such work, there has been no law stating that such a practice must be followed.

The Watchtower corporation has paid out millions in hush money already.
<http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/21917798> HERE

Check out <http://www.silentlambs.org> to see just how much the JW Watchtower leadership has been hiding from the public and its own members.




[Lisa Love](#) Oct 19, 2010, 12:25pm EDT

The Jehovah's Witnesses have a policy within their religion that protects pedophiles. The official policy is that the elders of the "Church" are supposed to handle the matter internally, without contacting the police. They do this so that shame will not be brought on the religion.

It's important that they keep a squeaky clean image to the public. Remember they believe they are the only "True" religion and all other Christian Churches are under the control of Satan. JW's are not supposed to sue other JW's or involve the police or courts. They believe these are Satan's organizations and any crime by a JW should be dealt with internally.

The elders will contact the police ONLY if they're forced to by state law. Otherwise they are forced to follow official policy from headquarters. Some states require that "priests" or "pastors" report child abuse to the authorities. If they are not forced to report them than they cover it up.

You might actually get a unreported pedophile knocking on your door next time they show up peddling pamphlets and selling "Eternal Life".

 [reply to this comment](#)



Dorothy H. Oct 19, 2010, 11:50am EDT

This has always been a problem with religious communities and organizations. They think they are working to help the "sinner" by Biblically counseling them, but they fail to help the victims at all.

If these religious organizations really want to help people they need to turn the case over to the police so a real investigation can take place since much of the behaviour these organizations are attempting to deal with also happens to be illegal.

[reply to this comment](#)



Ryan Reid Oct 19, 2010, 1:26pm EDT

you just had to do it didnt you...lol

[reply to this comment](#)



The Vin TT Oct 19, 2010, 1:58pm EDT

As a 15 year zealous person for Jehovah (and elder) here is my story!

<http://exjehovahswitnessforum.yuku.com/topic/922>

[reply to this comment](#)



Stuart Chamberlin Oct 19, 2010, 2:41pm EDT

Jehovah's Witnesses Child Abuse Policy--Exposing the Myths
Click link

<http://thirdwitness.com/childabuse/default.html>



Janet Tolland Oct 20, 2010, 3:38am EDT

Stuart Chamberlin

You are Jehovah's Witnesses troll and bully Steve Klemetti with about a dozen or more different user names and you stalk and harass Watchtower educators and have been posting illegally copyrighted Watchtower articles.

They have been letting you get away with it for years or did you finally get disfellowshipped?

[reply to this comment](#)



Rachel D. Oct 19, 2010, 6:33pm EDT

I know in the United States it's against the law *NOT* to report a crime - you could be arrested and charged as an accessory to the crime you witnessed. Of course, this is only used for cases like murder - and sexual abuse like this case. Since I agree with this rule in the U.S. in my opinion, yes, the congregants had a duty to report the abuse.

[reply to this comment](#)



Randy G. Oct 19, 2010, 9:58pm EDT

I served as an elder when stories about pedophiles broke and Bill Bowen set up silentlambs.org. In 2007 I left the faith after 27 years of deep involvement. At

first I was not too sure what to make of Bill's accusation that Jehovah's Witnesses had unwittingly created a "pedophile paradise" (a word play on "spiritual paradise" often used by members).

Foremost it must be acknowledge pedophiles are criminals and these crimes violate one of the most sacred trusts imaginable, that of an adult towards a child, often a son or daughter. As you might imagine most rank and file Jehovah's Witnesses find such acts repugnant and inexcusable. In all my years I never directly saw even a hint of accommodation for such behavior.

Unlike churches with a paid clergy Jehovah's Witness elders and ministerial servants are un-paid volunteers. Thus removing an elder or MS from responsibility is not the same as ending someone's career and means of living.

Yet, on this subject Jehovah's Witnesses run into issues, that are caused by, or made worse, by the structure of the faith itself. On the surface it seems JW's are concerned foremost with 'truth', even it means changing their beliefs or acknowledging imperfections within the organization. However the sad fact is the JW leadership is often deeply concerned with appearance. This appearance issue filters down to the members. Thus individual JW's will often consider how this or that action will 'reflect on Jehovah and his organization'.

When JW's were sued in the USA over improper handling of this issue they settled out of court, paying a considerable sum to the victims. I have no problem with this, let the victims receive some monetary damages, even if my contributions had to pay for it -- but why stipulate a gag order? The answer of course is maintaining a clean reputation is more important than simply allowing court testimony to enter the public domain.


The second problem is the 'judicial committee' process. This internal tribunal system is intended to keep the congregation clean from defiling influences as well as help straying members to correct their way. The system at times can work exactly as intended, but placed in the context of a criminal situation is hopelessly flawed. The tribunal (usually three elders) are charged with what is basically impossible. The process is not about what offence has been committed, what evidence supports such and what the punishment should be. No, instead they decide if the offender is 'repentant', which involves judging level of remorse. This is done by men who have no special training in these areas, who believe they're blessed with God's holy spirit in the process. Without a doubt many of the men involved try to be good judges, but they too will very concerned with how things might reflect on the congregation.

Judicial Committees operate in secret, testimony and proceedings are not recorded. If the decision is to privately reprove (giving about 30 to 40 minutes of counsel from the Bible) nothing further happens. As Bill Bowen discovered uninvolved elders who have concerns about lack of action will be told it is not their concern and are duty-bound to remain silent on the matter.

Members should be told congregation elders will report confessions of a criminal nature to the proper authorities. Elders should be told they are expected to report confessions of crimes in all cases. These simple changes would go a long way to resolving these issues. It is not that authorities have always acted in the best way, but at least there is a proper judicial system in most countries to handle such matters.

The oddest thing of all that gave me pause what while Bill Bowen was vilified (as a group of elders we listened as the Circuit Overseer shared his personal highly-negative views of Bill Bowen) his actions resulted in improvements in policy. Why, I thought, didn't Jehovah act prior to this time? Surely Jehovah could have seen the need to improve the policy before this circumstance came along? Alas, all indications are Jehovah's Witnesses move along like everyone else --


responding when things come up, not before.

 [reply to this comment](#)



LaRue B. Oct 20, 2010, 6:26am EDT

There is way too much abuse happening. And that's just what we have heard. How about what we haven't heard. That might just be too gruesome to report. Good story! Keep 'em comin'!!!

 [reply to this comment](#)



Scott Markle Oct 20, 2010, 12:08pm EDT

Hebrews 10:31 "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God".


Its amazing the hateful things that these SAME people say over & over. They follow every news item online and post the same reterict. They are mostly people that have been disfellowshipped from our organization for wrongdoing along with an unrepentant attitude. They have now advanced to being outright apostates. There are many scriptures that speak of them. They take a few unfortunate actions of some wrongdoing and turn it into something it is not. It is unfortunate that some individuals have abused young people. It is wrong and hurtful to the victim. Fortunatley, we don't have a God that is hateful and unforgiving like these apostates. King David took another man's wife, had her husband killed to cover it up...Jehovah forgave him. King Mannasseh worshipped false gods, burned his CHILDREN alive...Jehovah forgave him. Do you see the difference? Jehovah vs. apostate. Apostates act like their father not Jehovah. If you want to blame someone for the mess with child abuse coverups...blame the system. For a long time the church was used as a protective sanctuary. That privelege of confidentiality has been long abused. Not everything you here about a situation is as black and white as it seems. Don't focus on the few that have done wrong but on the MANY that have done right...preaching the good news throughout the whole earth, helping their neighbors, raising law-abiding families, showing respect to others, etc. Its a really long list. These haters and apostates would have you think different. Take the time to talk to Jehovah's Witnesses. Find out what the Bible really teaches.
www.jw.org



Janet Tolland Oct 20, 2010, 12:47pm EDT

Steve Klemetti you are an embarrassment to you own organization.Are you sober when you post these fanatical rants?I don't know if I should feel sorry for you or be afraid of you or what!

Please get some help go talk to your elders or someone.

 [reply to this comment](#)



Margaret Toomuchinfo Oct 23, 2010, 1:42am EDT

I am a Jehovah's Witness.

However, I am also a victims first person.


I blame rogue elder council, and/or any spineless parents of victims, for not taking these *apes to the police.

The first of Israel's temples was run by their own kings. However, it was Gods

will that the second temple was under the rule of Caesar, and the high crimes of *ape and murder were handed over to Roman authority. The Christian congregations did the same.

And the Christian Congregations of Jehovah's Witnesses are under obligation by "Caesar" and Jehovah God to do the same today. Call the police. Witnesses to the crime or Pics of the crime are not necessary to establish facts. Naturally, include the elders so they can take care of things on 'their' end.


These appropriate measures are what keeps Gods name from reproach.

 [reply to this comment](#)



Margaret Toomuchinfo Oct 23, 2010, 1:49am EDT

The comment above is by me who has the usual username Margaret, or megthepearl.

 [reply to this comment](#)

Join the Conversation

Chime in! Become a Gather member to comment.

Join Gather » Already a member? [Sign in](#)

[Report this as potentially inappropriate](#) 

[top](#)

[Gather](#) | [Friends](#) | [Groups](#) | [Share](#)

[About Gather](#) | [Engagement Marketing](#) | [Gather Points](#) | [Socialwrite](#) | [Advertise on Gather](#) | [Gather Press](#) | [Privacy](#) | [Terms of Service](#) | [Community Guidelines](#)
[Books](#) | [Business](#) | [Celebs](#) | [Entertainment](#) | [Food](#) | [Giveaways](#) | [Health](#) | [Money](#) | [Moms](#) | [News](#) | [Politics](#) | [Sports](#) | [Style](#) | [Technology](#) | [Travel](#) | [Writing](#)

Version 18091, "Travolta"; Copyright © 2010 Gather Inc. All rights reserved.