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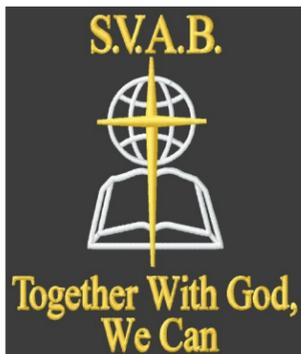
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Dealing with A Local Church Bully

Perhaps we have encountered a bully in our lives. Perhaps we have been bullied either at school, or at work, or by our siblings. Some of us know from experience that bullies can impact our lives. They can intimidate us. Some of us know from experience that bullies can pop-up anywhere in life and at any time. Unfortunately, the one place that might surprise us for bullies to pop-up is in our local church. Yes, sadly, the local church, (the place that proclaims God's love, grace, mercy, and forgiveness), that local church can be a bully's domain. That is, if the local church lay leadership allows the bully to bully the sheep.

For example, let's consider a few possible illustrations. The church treasurer delays in paying the ministerial staff and neglects to produce monthly financial statements. Why does the treasurer get away with this behavior? Because this bully has been allowed to behave as such overtime and no one has ever confronted this bully about his/her behavior.

Then there's the kitchen chair. This "bully" controls the kitchen. Nothing or no one uses the kitchen without this bully's permission. This bully even has locks on all the cabinet doors and this bully controls the keys to those locks. Again, this bully behaves as such for no church leadership(s) has ever confronted him or her about this behavior.

Then there's the key church leader. This bully appears nice to the new ministerial staff through the following expressions: "We love you. My family and I are so glad that God has called you here."

These statements are usually accompanied by lunches together, in which the bully buys. On occasion, this key leader brings in gifts to the staff. This bully weekly stops by to talk encouragingly to the staff. Then, when the ministerial staff disagrees with this bully's agenda for the church, this bully's true colors emerge.

The bully stops buying lunches. The bully stops offering encouraging conversations. The bully begins to circulate rumors about the staff. At first, the rumors are among a few church individuals, for the bully is "fishing" to see if anyone agrees. Then, the bully begins to increase the rumor circulation about the ministerial staff. When the bully has a few key allies, the bully will approach the pastor or staff with the following comments: "People are saying. . . ." Or, "Pastor, I am concerned at what people are saying." Yet, the bully never identifies "the people."

Dear Reader, Bullies exist in churches because church lay leaders allow them to exist for various reasons. These bullies demand control. They refuse to respect the leadership. They slander those who disagree with them, and sadly, they will "run off" well-meaning members when those members will not go along with their bully agenda.

3 John 1:9-10 tells the story of how the John the beloved addressed a church bully. John brought to everyone's attention what Diotrephes was doing to the church and the church's visitors. Diotrephes loved to stand out. He rejected John's leadership. He talked nonsense about John. He ignored or treated coldly the missionaries sent to this church. He excommunicated loyal members who showed hospitality to these missionaries. Diotrephes was a local church bully.

So what was John's solution? He planned on confronting him when he arrived. He warned the church not to copy Diotrephes' bad behavior.

From John's teachings, we understand that bullies cannot be allowed to bully. Bullies must be confronted by the church leadership, before they destroy the harmony and fellowship of the local church.

Your Servant in Christ,

R. Shawn Edwards
Director of Missions
Severns Valley Association of Baptist
"Together with God, We Can"

↓ Positions Needed ↓

Churches without Pastors

Cecilia Baptist
Magnolia Baptist
Heavenbound

Northside Baptist Church

Northside Baptist Church located in Elizabethtown, Kentucky is seeking candidates for the full-time position of Minister of Worship. Candidate must have experience planning and leading blended style of worship as well as experience directing an adult choir. Candidate must have a minimum of Bachelor's degree in music but preferably have a seminary degree or working toward one. We are currently accepting resumes. For a more complete look at the Job Description for the Minister of Worship position, please click here. Resumes and other relevant information as well as inquiries, may be emailed to: nsbchumanresources@gmail.com

New Horizon Baptist Church

is seeking God's leadership in filling the full time position of **Senior Pastor**.

For more information, please view the info. At <http://svabaptist.org/helpful-resources/area-ministry-positions-available>

Youngers Creek Baptist Church

is Currently accepting resumes for the following part-time positions:
Youth Minister, a Music minister, and a Children's minister.

Please send resumes to:
Youngers Creek Baptist Church
251 Youngers Creek Rd
Elizabethtown, Ky 42701

Round Top Baptist

Round Top is looking to add a PT music leader to our staff. Sunday mornings only, unless there is a special occasion or special service. This would be a great opportunity for someone that's wanting to use their musical talents to lead a smaller church that's growing. We're looking for someone that can lead contemporary music and who can play guitar. Contact person is Don Martin 270-5234-3429