



## **Pastor, Survivor of Sexual Abuse and Trafficking to Speak about his Experience**

November 24, 2020 Lancaster, PA

Pastor Mark Harris will discuss his experience of abuse, trafficking, and journey to healing in a virtual Zoom interview on Thursday, December 3, at 6:30 pm. He will be interviewed by Linda Crockett, Director of Safe Communities, an organization based in Lancaster, PA dedicated to supporting adult survivors of child sexual abuse, as well as ending child sexual abuse. The event is part of the new Survivor Voices series launched by Safe Communities featuring the voices of survivors as part of its effort to educate the public about how this issue impacts individuals and communities.

From the ages of 11 to 15, Mark Harris was progressively groomed and led into a network of pedophile and child pornography by a charismatic man who was well known to his family. The man was the director of an outdoors program/school that worked primarily with adjudicated youth. Through progressive stages, he encountered a dozen men who sexually abused him, and made him the subject of child pornography. In the course of extensive therapy as a young adult, he took part in the prosecution of some of these men. His recovery from trauma took place over the next two decades, although he would hesitate to say that it is ever over.

Recently, he graduated from Lancaster Theological Seminary, and is well on his way to being ordained in the United Church of Christ. For now, he is a working Pastor, leading a small church as an authorized minister. He is writing a book about his experiences and sees his path in ministry as including working with survivors of child sexual abuse, as well as survivors of other trauma. He feels strongly that the story of Jesus offers much to those who are recovering from traumatic experiences.

Harris's story is very informative and meaningful for pastors, teachers, law enforcement, parents and anyone who works with children and teens.

Interested persons must register at [www.safecommunitiespa.org](http://www.safecommunitiespa.org). Registrants will receive a Zoom link to the event. A recording will be available after the event for a limited time to registrants only.

There is no cost. A donation to Safe Communities to support their ongoing work to prevent child sexual abuse is appreciated.

### **To learn more:**

[www.safecommunitiespa.org](http://www.safecommunitiespa.org)

### **Press Release Contact:**

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### **Visuals:**

2 photo options attached. One with event graphics, one without.

*Photo of Mark Harris: Courtesy of Mark Harris*