

**Holistic Community: Incorporating the Faith Community in a CCR**

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- **[Liz]** Hello, everyone, and welcome to this Rural Routes to Change webinar of Praxis International and the Office of Violence Against Women, OVW. I am delighted that you all could join us today. I am Liz Carlson, I'm the webinar technology person here at Praxis. My office is in our Duluth, Minnesota, office. I am joined today for our topic, Holistic Community Response Including the Faith Community in Your CCR, by our regular host of these RRC conversations, Rose Thelen. Hello and welcome, Rose, are you there?

- **[Rose]** Hi Liz, hello, everybody. I am here.

- **[Liz]** Great, wonderful. And our guest today will be Anne Marie Hunter, Doctor Anne Marie Hunter, Doctor Reverend Anne Marie Hunter of Save Havens Interfaith Partnership. Hi, Anne Marie, welcome.

- **[Anne Marie]** Hello, everybody, and hello, Liz. Nice to talk with you.

- **[Liz]** Thank you. We're so glad that you're here. I will just briefly introduce our topic and our speakers today and go over some webinar tips, and then I'll turn the session over to Rose. For our topic, we know that rural victims and survivors of domestic and sexual assaults who are religious, spiritual or affiliated with a faith community, that faith is a pillar of their identify and the community, and it's a critical factor in decision making and healing. For these victims, faith community leadership that is aligned with the efforts of domestic violence and sexual assault advocates can be pivotal in accessing and taking advantage of a full range of services. What we will consider today, that's just a little summary description of the publicity for this session. We will consider specifically what Safe Haven Interfaith Partnership does for faith leaders and advocates, service providers, the importance of faith communities to survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault, how faith community partnerships strengthen CCRs, and onsite Save Havens catalyst training in your communities across the country.

So Anne Marie, we are very fortunate to have her join us. She is a part, she's the director of the Interfaith Partnership, the Safe Havens Interfaith Partnership. She has received a Master's Degree and a PhD in Religion and Society, and founded the Save Havens Interfaith Partnership quite a number of years ago, 1991, I believe. Is that right, Anne Marie?

- **[Anne Marie]** That's right, yes.

- **[Liz]** Yeah, right. She will have a lot of information based on the work that she's been doing through Save Havens. There will be quite a wealth of information that she'll share with us today. So thank you, Anne Marie and Rose and to all of you. Before I turn this session over to Rose, I'll just say, I'll give you a

couple of suggestions for how to have a good webinar experience today. If there are any of you who happen to be participating just by telephone only and you're not connected to the webinar itself, the lines will be muted. So the way in which you could interact with our speakers today will be through email. So if you have a comment to share, send an email to [Liz@praxisinternational.org](mailto:Liz@praxisinternational.org). For the rest of you that are logged into the webinar, we will encourage you to be frequent users of the Chat tab, the Public Chat tab. Actually, right now, if we can just pause for a second, anyone who would like to say hello, let us know where you are participating from or if you have colleagues joining you, will you go ahead and chat that in in the Public Chat tab, in the lower left-hand portion of your screen?

If you move your cursor to that very bottom box, you can chat in your message, and hit Enter, and it will go to the whole group. Why don't you go ahead and do that so that you'll be familiar and comfortable with utilizing that chat for our session today? And while you do that, I'll just cover a couple of other brief pieces of information, and that is to say that, in addition to the Public Chat tab, there's a Private tab. That's an opportunity for you to chat individually with our speakers today, if that's helpful to you. It's available throughout our session. And if you happen to get disconnected through either your Internet connection or the telephone, simply rejoin through your process. This session is recorded, is being recorded, and will be posted to the Rural Archive Audio Webinar page of the Praxis International website. You should go there to revisit it, if you have colleagues who would like to hear it and are not able to attend today. With that, I'm going to turn the session over to Rose, our usual facilitator for these sessions.

And Rose, you can just get us started today with our topic and a further introduction of Anne Marie.

- **[Rose]** Great, sounds good. Thanks, Liz, I'm just really super excited to have Anne Marie with us today. As Liz mentioned, she's an ordained minister, and then she also has a doctorate in Religion and Society. But probably what makes her smartest of all on this topic, I'd like to think, is that she worked for a couple of battered women's organizations when she was going through school to get ordained and also to get her doctorate. She married the two when she started Safe Havens in , and now has a grant to provide technical assistance and resources to advocacy programs. In particular, she's got an offering that I think is going to be of interest to everybody on the line today. It's been my great pleasure to talk to Anne Marie throughout our preparation for this, because I live in a rural community myself and I just know how important the religious community is in the lives of the whole community. So, I think it really makes sense, and this is where Anne Marie comes from, she'll tell us about this today, but it really makes sense to include goals, or I should say, include the faith community within your planning about how they're gonna fit with the CCR. One of the problems that we have technically, and this is an aside, but I can't advance the slides. So I'm gonna be doing something that might be a little cumbersome to the listeners, which is telling or asking Liz to advance the slide. But I wanna bring Anne Marie in right away, just to say a few things and talk a little bit about Save Haven, Safe Partnership. Hi, Anne Marie.

- **[Anne Marie]** Hi, Rose, how are you? I founded Safe Havens, as you said, in 1991. Actually, all those academic credentials (chuckles) aren't what make me so great, or even the work I did in battered women shelters when I was in school. I just wanted to mention that I'm also a survivor and lived in a rural community, and experienced, when I was coming through a domestic violence situation, I reached

out to my faith leader and unfortunately, he did not respond well. So I know what that feels like and I know how devastating it can be to people of faith. I subsequently started going to a congregation where I did get support, and so I know also how wonderful it is to have the support of your faith community as you're going through a very difficult time or even a difficult decision making, where you're trying to figure out what you wanna do next. So for any of us experiencing domestic or sexual violence, I think it's really important to remember what an important resource this can be, faith can be, but also what an important barrier or road block faith can be, as well.

- **[Rose]** Oh yeah. Well, that's, again, that's what makes you, I mean, this is why we wanna listen to you, because you come from this experience and know, in fact, that the survivor and the victim themselves are gonna be the biggest experts about what's happening, what needs to happen, what needs to improve. I was thinking, Anne Marie, before we got started, and Liz, if you could advance the slide, it would be good to know how many people in the audience, and you can raise you hand, if you are engaged with community faith leaders in your CCR, or if you are doing outreach and partnership building with your local faith leaders. I guess, either of those two things merits a hand raising.

- **[Anne Marie]** Let's start one at a time.

- **[Rose]** Okay, gotcha.

- **[Anne Marie]** If you would raise your hand if you are currently engaged with your community faith leaders in your CCR, let's see a show of hands. And for anyone unfamiliar, there is a little hand icon in the top portion of your computer screen. Click on that, and the little hand will appear next to your name. It looks like, this is just a rough estimate, but maybe about / of us currently are working with our community faith leaders in our CCRs.

- **[Rose]** Okay.

- **[Anne Marie]** Okay, and so, we're gonna do that again. I'm going to clear the hand raising and now, raise your hand, please, if you are doing outreach and partnership building with your faith leaders.

- **[Voiceover]** I have to say that I'm looking at the list of attendees, and I see some wonderful people we've met recently while doing trainings in rural communities, so hi to all of you. I know they're doing good work on both of these.

- **[Voiceover]** Super, super. Well, I hope they're going in, too, and add their comments as we go. I'm not seeing any hands on my screen, either. I've got some...

- **[Voiceover]** Sorry, Rose. I think there's some sort of technology vortex.

(laughs)

(Liz and Rose talk over each other)

- **[Voiceover]** I'm taking it personally.

- **[Voiceover]** I'm really sorry about that. It seems like about half of us, well, or maybe this is also about / of us, are doing kinda the partnership building in our local communities with faith leaders.

- **[Voiceover]** Right.

- **[Voiceover]** Thank you for that, everyone. It's helpful grounding for the rest of our presentation.

- **[Voiceover]** Right. You know, I was thinking, too, when we asked the question involving faith leaders and your CCR. That's one of the things to address. As we advance to the next slide, we'll get into this whole piece about what are the goals for the faith communities in a CCR, and I guess in response to domestic and sexual violence in general?

So why don't you get us started with that, Anne Marie. What do you see as the goals? And in the context of that, if you can provide an overview, too, that helps, just to address some of these things.

- **[Anne Marie]** Okay. Save Havens started in 1991, and we really started with just consciousness raising in the faith community. At that time, many faith leaders would say that domestic and sexual violence are not happening in their congregation anyways, so why are we talking about this? It took us a little while to get over that hurdle, and there's still times when we hear that. But we began to do some training about it in faith communities, and we realized pretty quickly that we needed to really build linkages between faith leaders, and by that I mean both lay leaders as well as clergy, to build linkages between those faith communities and faith leaders, and the domestic and sexual violence service providers in their community.

You will hear us say again and again and again, that faith leaders shouldn't be dealing with this alone, but rather, should be partnering with their service provider agencies, because faith leaders are generalists. We will never become experts on domestic and sexual violence. I don't even consider myself an expert now, after all these years. Really, the experts are the advocates. So we really encourage faith leaders to build those linkages. To know you all, and to know how to talk with you, have a good sense of what services you provide, and how they can link to your services and help people get to your services.

So, looking at the big picture of where we hope faith communities are going, with some training under their belts we hope, and with having met service providers and know exactly what you do and who you are, is to think, we really encourage them to think on three levels. First of all, intervention. We're hoping that this is earlier intervention than it might otherwise happen, because in a faith community, you often know people well enough. There's another slide where we'll talk a little bit more about that. You know, we know folks pretty well in our faith communities, so we're hoping that we can extend help before someone is calling or there's been a terrible injury or, God forbid, a homicide.

So we're looking at that intervention. We're also looking at prevention. We hope that faith leaders and faith communities will work with the young people in their congregations to talk about power and control, to talk about what a relationship looks like that is not, like, in a dysfunctional way, full of power and control.

What do we mean when we talk about a Jewish relationship or a Christian relationship, or a Muslim relationship, or whatever it would be? What is the model for that? What would be a way of talking about that in a way that would help people, first of all, know what they're looking for, but second of all, know the red flags and know where the resources are if they need to find them. And then the third thing we work with faith communities is social change. We really feel as though faith leaders can preach about this, they can talk about it, they can undermine gender norms and other things that might make domestic and sexual violence more normative.

They can do all kinds of things. They can reinterpret scripture in a way that's helpful to victims and survivors, rather than unhelpful. And they can really build very positive gender models that can help all of us move toward relationships in which we can share power.

- **[Rose]** Anne Marie, you know, I'm thinking about, on this social change point, that this may be a tall order for some congregations. Do you see a whole range of faith-based communities where some may or may not be as receptive? Have you worked with extremely traditional faiths, versus more liberal, let's say, and how does that work? Do you have to, I don't know. Tell me something about that. Like, I think about, there's some faith-based communities where I live that would be pretty insistent that, you know, if there's gonna be any social change to be had, it's gonna be going back to where the man wears the pants and he's in charge. I mean, that's gotta be kind of a sticky wicket there, huh?

- **[Anne Marie]** Definitely. We have worked with faith communities across the spectrum, and we like to believe that there's a continuum that we are all on. We all have to start somewhere, and we move along the continuum to knowing more and understanding more. So our trainings are all about helping people understand a little bit more where victims and survivors are coming from, what some of the barriers might be for faith-based victims, and then, being able to put yourself in the shoes of a victim or survivor.

We believe that's one of the best ways to help people really put themselves in those shoes and understand more fully what it means to be in that place. We also try to speak the language of faith communities when we're speaking with them. And we also meet, or attempt to meet, every faith community where it is, rather than where we wish it were, just as people have met me where I am instead of where they wish I were on this topic. I think we're all learning, we're all growing. So we're extremely, I would say, welcoming to faith communities. We, of course, are also pretty stringent on safety issues, and so we're quick to point out where religious edicts might, for example, keep someone unsafe and how that could be, perhaps, worked with to prioritize the safety of victims and their children.

I know that the faith communities are all over the place and we really work hard to try to build those bridges and begin to help them to think about what it would be like to be a victim, what it would be like if their beloved family member were a victim, what kind of services they wish might be available, and that kind of thing.

So we do try and, even on a one-to-one basis, to build those bridges.

- **[Rose]** Sounds good. So now, tell us some about what you have accomplished thus far, I mean, the collaborations that you've fostered.

- **[Anne Marie]** Yeah. We always train as much as we can in collaboration with law enforcement service providers, locals folks. We really want faith leaders to get to know their local services. We think that those collaborations are really important because they lead to supported referrals. So we really want a faith leader to be able to say something such as, "Let's call Rose. "I just met her, and she works at Praxis "and she's really wonderful. "Here are the services that she provides, "and maybe something would be helpful.

"Maybe we could go down there and see her or call her." We really want to have those kinds of referrals because, particularly in underserved communities, there's a trust issue, I think, sometimes with calling, just sort of cold calling a hotline or 911 or a sheriff or something. People really trust their faith leader.

And so, when the faith leader makes a referral, especially if they can make that referral by name, it helps the people in the community trust the agency, the service agency. So, really encouraging them, the faith leaders, to be able to make those kinds of referrals. So those collaborations are really important to us. And then we also encourage faith communities to collaborate with each other, either across denominational lines or geographic lines. There are all kinds of things we could be doing in consortium that would help to move the conversation forward, either in local communities or even, I mean, in the big picture, Save Havens is trying to engender sort of an interfaith coalition of faith communities and faith leaders who speak out very vocally against domestic and sexual violence.

- **[Rose]** Super. I suppose they participate in Domestic Violence Month activities, that kind of thing?

- **[Anne Marie]** Yes, exactly.

- **[Rose]** Super. And so, when they are reaching out, or when the, let's say, law enforcement you say might reach out to a faith, to a pastor or a minister or a religious leader, it would be to connect with the victim, possibly, or how does that look? I mean, when you say collaboration. I understand about a faith-based leader saying, "Why don't you talk to this hotline advocate "or this advocate who I know by name "at this local program?" But what's the linkage with law enforcement that you mentioned?

- **[Anne Marie]** Well, I think it's really important for faith leaders to also know what services might be available through law enforcement, to maybe know if there's a civil DV advocate in the police department or sheriff's office or whatever it is, so to know whatever those resources are. But also, when we're talking about the wider social change, for example, we encourage faith communities to think about having maybe a healing service or a vigil or something for domestic and sexual violence, and that's where you invite everyone from the community and maybe collaborate on this with law enforcement or with service providers, those kinds of things, so that there begins to be a voice, a united voice within the community that addresses domestic violence, admits that it's happening and says, "This is not okay and we have services "and we can help you."

- **[Rose]** I know we're gonna get into this in a little bit, but I think how helpful that would be to the advocacy program itself, to be given that kind of imprimatur, that sort of endorsement by the faith community, to say, "Look, these aren't a bunch of homewreckers. "These are people who we endorse "as valuable assets "to people in our community."

- **[Anne Marie]** It's huge. And it also says to people within the faith community that the faith leader knows that this is happening, and that they're not the only one, because most faith-based victims will be thinking that they're the only one that's ever happened to.

- **[Rose]** Right, right.

- **[Anne Marie]** Or that the faith leader is on the side of the abuser. And so, it's a really important way of acknowledging that this is happening, giving people some vocabulary around it to name what's happening to them, because, as you know, many victims would not label themselves as such. And then also to begin to have an idea where to reach out for help.

- **[Rose]** Anne Marie, now, do you have a, like, I don't know, some write-up on some of these communities? I see that one of the things I'm gonna be asking you about is the resources and support. I mean, I think it would be a value to say to an advocacy program, "Here is what it might look like, "a good collaboration," or to the faith community, "Here is the places that you would be working "on intervention, prevention, social change. "Here's what a CCR," are those the kind of resources you have?

- **[Voiceover]** Well, we put together a Partnership Guide. We began to tease out what some of those collaborations could look like, but also what are some of the challenges and barriers, and what are the strategies for getting around that? If you look at our Partnership Guide, I should say that all of our printed resources are on our website, which is [www.interfaith-faith-partners.org](http://www.interfaith-faith-partners.org). And we have a rural tab there and you can see all of our resources. One of them is a Partnership Guide. And it really delves deeper into you know, faith community leaders and service providers getting to know each other a little bit more, for example. Some of the challenges to partnership, how we're gonna establish trust and sort of build a team and then envision where we could go from here. And then, kind of at the end, we do talk about some existing partnerships, at that time. I mean, these resources are a couple of years old. At that time, we're sort of beginning to flourish, and there are many more that we know about now around the country. We do have some examples in there. I should also say that we're really looking for models of CCRs that currently have faith-based leadership, or whatever that might look like, in your community.

So if anybody wants to email me or call me, and let me know what's going on in their community, I would be thrilled. And we are, we hope, going to be able to raise up some of those examples of great ways that people have found to work together. And the CCR is a good example of a community collaboration, kind of a wrap-around services for the victim, and helping her have a coherent community around her.

- **[Voiceover]** Right, right.

- **[Voiceover]** One of the things I'm sure you've heard me say, CCR is for Coordinated Community Response. We talk about CCCR, Coherent Coordinated Community Response, because sometimes what's happening now is that the service providers are saying, "I'm concerned for your safety. "We have services, we can help you," but the faith leader's saying, "Go back home "and pray harder and make your marriage work "no matter what." And that is what I call incoherent message from the community, and it's so unhelpful, because, as you know, if you're a victim or a survivor, it's a crazy-making place to be, and the last thing you need is a community that isn't even speaking with one voice.

So we try to get the faith community on board with the message that this is not okay, and there is help.

- **[Voiceover]** Right. In other words, you're interested in finding out what people are doing out there, as well, so it's a two-way street, huh?

- **[Voiceover]** Yes, definitely.

- **[Voiceover]** Now, you know, in talking to you the other day in preparation for this, of course the thing that interests me, really piqued my interest, was this whole concept of the catalyst training. In addition to your website and that you're available by phone to ask any questions (mumbles), you have this little dog and pony show called the catalyst training.

(laughter)

What is it, and how can people apply, and anybody online, if any of this, if this catalyst training sounds like something you're interested in? I understand you have some slots open to do some more in other communities, right?

- **[Voiceover]** I do, I certainly do. We developed resources for a number of years with OVW. They are all on our website. They include posters for bathrooms and for bulletin boards and faith communities, they include a booklet on sexual violence and a booklet on domestic violence for faith leaders, and a wonderful toolkit cover to put them in, and then, an Outreach Guide and a couple of checklists and the Partnership Guide that I already mentioned. Those are all on our website. We also put together a training manual to just kind of give people a sense of the kinds of faith-based trainings that we do.

But we realize that, just as judges wanna be trained by judges and law enforcement wants to be trained by law enforcement, oftentimes faith leaders respond, at least initially, better to a training if it is faith-based or brought to them by faith leaders. So we, then, offered to go to 18 communities over three years, this was in a proposal to OVW, 18 communities in three years, and we're also doing follow-up conference, regional conferences, with the people that we've trained. I can say more about the regional conferences in a minute. But the way this works is, it's a one-day training for service providers and faith leaders in the room together. Some of it will be repeat for the service providers, but it's a really good way to get to know your faith community leaders. You can get a really good sense of where they're coming from, where are they gonna need more support, and training and so forth. It's a very interactive training, it's a lot of fun. We are bringing these two communities. We've done five so far. The sixth one



will be in October in Maine. And we're just back from Louisiana, where we had a blast. And I see people on the list whom we visited, so I'm glad you're here. We do a one-day training, typically, and it sort of runs the gamut.

We start with looking at domestic violence, we branch out into sexual violence and then we, by the end of the day, we're talking about what would responses from the faith community look like.

- **[Voiceover]** Oh yeah, super. Yeah, I think that hearing it from a minister, a minister, there I am with my narrow world view, the faith leader, from another faith leader would make the audience much more receptive to the message, huh?

- **[Voiceover]** Right, exactly.

- **[Voiceover]** So you're looking for, like, you've got, like, 10 more slots, is that right?

- **[Voiceover]** Let's see, 18, and I think, yeah, we have about 10 more slots, and anybody who's interested can just call me or email me. I'm happy to hear from you, even if you just want more information, we're happy to talk. Of note, though, about the regional conferences, at the end of doing about nine communities, we're going to have a two-day, two- to three-day regional conference. I believe it'll be probably some time in June of , the first one. We're gonna gather together advocates from the communities where we have done training, as well as faith leaders. And we're hoping that the advocates can pay for their travel costs from their OVW grants, with the OVW training budget. But we, in our grant, we put in money to bring in a couple of faith leaders from each of these communities. So you could have, you could hand pick a couple of your favorite faith leaders that you think are gonna be around for a while and that you really want to bring alongside you, to help you with this work, and they could come to our two-day training, two- or three-day training.

You can tell we still have to plan that out. We're gonna be talking more about collaborations, about what are some of the barriers, how can we work together, what are some of the ideas? It's going to be very interactive. I don't think it'll be very didactic at all. It'll be very interactive, and really just learning from other communities, networking, getting to know your faith leaders more. I think it'll be a really good time. And we're trying to go somewhere cool. We've been asking, in each of the places where we train, we've been asking, "Where do you wanna go?" We're hearing a lot about the beach.

- **[Voiceover]** Hawaii comes up, probably.

- **[Voiceover]** Hawaii I don't think I can afford. But the beach I might be able to afford. (laughs)

- **[Voiceover]** Okay, and there's gonna be, again, your email and your website will come up at the end of this. You can remind people at that point. But let's move on and talk to some of these, you know, the importance of the faith community in the lives of victims and survivors, and what are some of unique assets of the faith community, especially in rural areas.

- **[Voiceover]** Right.

- **[Voiceover]** And this may, I don't know, this may not be news to people on the line, and if you have other things that you can think of, please add them in here. But I think these are good selling points for the faith community itself, right? To pique, get their interest in participating. But anyway, talk to me about some of these things that are up here on the slides.

- **[Voiceover]** Okay. We've been arguing for some time that faith community leaders and members are really well placed, really well located, to respond to victims and help them get to services. For example, let me just speak about myself in my own faith community when I was pastored for six years.

First of all, I knew those families, believe me, and I often knew them across generations. I often knew three or four generations of the family. I was often in their homes, so I had a pretty good sense

of what was going on. If I were someone who had a lot of red flags, kind of knew what to look for, I think that would be a really helpful way to be able to maybe connect folks to services. We also, faith leaders typically understand the norms and the values of a community, and can help service providers maybe, you know, work within those.

For example, we put together a bathroom flyer once. We thought it was brilliant. We sent it out,

(chuckles)

and we immediately heard from our Orthodox rabbi, who said, "We can't put this in our bathroom. "It's got scripture on it." And they don't put scripture in the bathroom. Just those kinds of norms are really helpful when you're reaching out to a community. So assume that these folks are expert in what will fly and what will not fly in the community. You can often leverage that to make sure that your services are as accessible as possible. Faith communities are also involved in families at some of those key points where we all know that domestic violence, for example, might increase, for example around pregnancy, child birth, marriage, we're often involved in those sort of key moments. I know myself, with premarital counseling, for example, I used to do a piece on domestic violence and sexual violence in premarital counseling, and I would say to people, "Don't feel singled out. "I do this with everyone, because look at the statistics."

And it gives me an opportunity to talk about it, to name it, to talk about power and control a little bit with the couple. I often meet with them separately. So there's an opportunity there, I think, for faith leaders to be doing some work with folks.

- **[Voiceover]** Yeah, I mean, I think about, I worked in a batterer's group for a number of years. When you talk about cultural values or norms, a lot of the batterers came and they said that it's more or less biblical, that the guy is supposed to do these things. I mean, you can correct these kind of misunderstandings or misinterpretations or maybe reinterpretations of scriptures, with the batterer who thinks it's God's will that he does what he does, hum?

- **[Voiceover]** Exactly. And I would hope that some of that's going on from the pulpit. That's what we're hoping to get. That's not where most faith leaders will start. In my sort of big vision, that's where we would go, is that those scriptures would be challenged from the pulpit, those interpretations would be challenged.

- **[Voiceover]** We used to have a minister come into our batterer's group and do a whole segment on the things we had heard about where the bible says it's okay for them to use violence. It was very helpful.

- **[Voiceover]** Exactly, yeah.

- **[Voiceover]** Hearing it again from a faith leader was real important.

- **[Voiceover]** It's a message for victims, but it's also important for the faith community as a whole, because it will eventually change this norm, definitely. We do the same thing in trainings. Not with the catalyst trainings, but we ask faith leaders often to come in and just, "Would you please address scripture XYZ, "that's been used against victims forever? "Could you help us reinterpret that?"

- **[Voiceover]** You know, on the last bullet here, where it says "refer members to resources," do you see that ministers, or I should say faith leaders, again, are they okay with doing that? Are they reluctant do to that, the referral business? What's the response to that? Do they think it should stay within the confines of their faith community or within their office, or whatever?

- **[Voiceover]** I would say that the gut instinct of faith communities, and we've seen this on a number of levels in the last decade, I would say that the gut instinct of faith communities is to circle the wagons when something goes wrong. We are working really hard to help them see that this is a problem that no single institution can deal with by itself. So, we really point them to those linkages with community services, and we, sort of teasingly, say that our mantra is, "Refer, refer, refer." We really want them to help folks reach services. And we talk about the roles of faith leaders versus the roles of advocates, for example. Faith leaders might know a little bit about safety planning and know the importance of safety planning or of legality assessments, but we say to them the advocates are the experts who have been doing this, and it's really important for people to have a safety plan before they do anything.

So, just telling them what some of the services are and how critically important they are, I think, helps them understand that, as empathetic as they may be, that they really need the help of service providers to be able to help someone move forward.

- **[Voiceover]** And that leads us to our next slide, which talk about faith communities in a, it says CCR here, and you've changed that to this, CCCR, right?

(Anne Marie laughs)

- **[Voiceover]** We're going for coherence.

- **[Voiceover]** Yeah, there you go. And that's the coherence aspect of this CCCR, and competence, we could put a bunch of CC's--

- **[Voiceover]** We could put a lot in. (Rose laughs)

- **[Voiceover]** Some of these we've touched on. But just to kind of highlight these pieces about their importance there. And I just wanna say, too, I wanna clarify that when we're talking about a CCR here, we don't necessarily mean that they're invited to a monthly networking meeting. Right?

I mean, you're talking about just, when you talk about CCCR, what do you mean, outside of attending a monthly meeting?

- **[Voiceover]** Right. We've just seen faith communities kind of come alongside service providers in a number of ways. I've heard reports in rural communities of faith leaders who are pulling from their discretionary funds to provide maybe some help for a person who's trying to move into an apartment, for example, or faith community—

- **[Voiceover]** That would be the green arrow, there. They're involved in the intervention.

- **[Voiceover]** Exactly. Even just by referring, you're involved in intervention. We've seen examples of faith communities who are providing space for advocates to meet with victims, in the faith community, maybe during the week, so that maybe, if I'm a victim, I'm now allowed to go to the service provider agency, that might be obvious in a rural community. But if I'm meeting someone in my, if I just say, "Oh, I'm going down the street "to my faith community," that might be okay. So, just all kinds of ways that faith communities, you know, everything from taking up donations, just money donations, to also just toys for the kids or clothes or food or anything, those kinds of movement in the community.

I've also heard of faith communities that have spare furniture to give to people who are setting up households again, all kinds of things like that. Not to mention just volunteering at the agency. I really encourage faith leaders to call and ask, "What do you need?" Ask the agency, "What do you need." I've said to them, "You'll be surprised with the answer." Sometimes it's duffle bags and sometimes it's shampoo and sometimes it's something else, diapers or something.

It's a really good way to build those linkages so that faith communities feel very comfortable referring someone to the service, but also, over time, when faith leaders receive training and begin to understand domestic violence better, and as advocates can begin to trust what their responses will be, and we do talk some about protocols for faith leaders in responding, so that also, when an advocate is working with a client, for example, who may be of a particular faith community and is really struggling, maybe there's a faith leader in the community from that denomination or from that faith who can step in and help a little bit with some of the faith questions.

So we're hoping down the road, I realize we're not there now, but as we train faith leaders, as we bring them alongside, we're hoping we can begin to think about, maybe faith leaders could help out a little bit, too, with individual victims, with obviously the permission of the victim and safety and all that concerns. You know, could help folks think through whatever scripture that is that's just driving them completely crazy, or a real barrier to them.

- **[Voiceover]** So that would be the DVSV-competent faith community.

- **[Voiceover]** Exactly.

- **[Voiceover]** The aligned faith community. You've said that that's, obviously, that's a faith leader who knows what DV is, what sexual assault is, what the victims are going through, the need for advocacy, the understanding of resources et cetera. What else identifies a DVSV-competent faith leader?

- **[Voiceover]** We usually talk about protocol. It's not blaming victims, it's knowing not to blame them, not to tell them what to do, prioritizing safety, being welcoming to everyone who comes forward, acknowledging that there are no perfect victims, no matter how much we might try to pretend we're perfect.

It's protocols like that, allowing victims to make their own decisions, which again, when you talk about the gut instinct of faith leaders, it's often to jump in with a quick fix. So teaching them that, in this situation, jumping in with a quick fix is not going to be helpful. There are five protocols that we talk about, that really, we hope begin to influence how faith communities respond to victims and survivors.

- **[Voiceover]** Super. You know, as you're talking, I'm thinking, maybe for the chat, for the participants on the call today, if they could maybe type in an issue or something that they may be having with a faith leader, a faith community, in their area, and maybe we'll have some time, or we can take some time at the end, to take a look at some of those and see if there's particular resources that might work, or they could contact you or maybe it's something new that you'll go, "Oh, well, we need to address that," right? To the chatters, if you would be interested in putting something in, because I know that, I think that programs do struggle with, what do they do with, let's say, a non-aligned religious faith leader--

- **[Voiceover]** So, yes. And they can be so destructive.

- **[Voiceover]** Right. I mean, I see it, though, on the bottom on this slide, to the, maybe the faith leader who minimizes and sanitizes what's going on. The classic, I think it used to be a, I don't know if it was a George Carlin joke or where that came from, but back in the day, they used to talk about, "Pope says you gotta do it," you know, and that was kind of the joke back then, that, if you're beaten, it's because maybe you're not fulfilling your wifely role, that kind of thing. I mean, I think that's why it's so important to have faith communities who will help to correct some of these, the very narratives that structure our lives. You know, where do we learn what reality is, if it isn't from our faith communities? We learn it from other places, media, et cetera. But religion is a big one up there, right? I mean, what we learn about our God or what religion is, is gonna be really instrumental in shaping who we are as men and women.

Let's go to the next slide and talk about some of these resources and support. And then, Liz, if you could look at, also, keep track of the chats for us, and see if there's anything that comes up.

- **[Voiceover]** Yeah, certainly. We did have someone chat something in. If we can take that up now, is that all right, Rose?

- **[Voiceover]** I think so. Anne Marie, are you flexible?

- **[Anne Marie]** Um-hm.

- **[Voiceover]** We're nothing if not flexible on this call today.

- **[Voiceover]** All right, very good. Brenda Hayes is commenting that in her community what they hear a bunch is that, "We're a small town. "It doesn't happen very often here." Do you have kind of a response or a series of things, comments, that you make when you get that kind of statement?

- **[Voiceover]** Yeah, just a couple of things. One is that one of our resources is called an Outreach Guide. And what we did, honestly, this is, like, just right from my own experience, because we've been doing these kinds of trainings for so long in our local community, before we even started to do them nationally, we have come up exactly against this, "It doesn't happen here." What I did for the Outreach Guide is just, take those responses that we are hearing a lot of, and these are one of them, and you'll see that, you know, "If what you're hearing is," and we name it, you know, distancing or minimizing or whatever it is.

And then, on the opposite page in that Outreach Guide, you'll see that we have strategies for getting around that. I just would encourage you to take a look at that Outreach Guide. Now, for this one specifically, "It doesn't happen here," and the Guide, by the way, is on our website, and if you'd like a printed copy of any resources, please just give me a call or email me, because we do have printed resources here that we can send you, as well.

- **[Voiceover]** I don't see your Outreach Guide on this very busy slide we have here. Is it part of something else?

- **[Voiceover]** It's part of our toolkit.

- **[Voiceover]** Okay, there it is, sorry.

- **[Voiceover]** On the Hearts and Hands Rural Toolkit, you'll see it on our website. We're happy to send these out. What you would do when you get the toolkit is, take out all the resources for services providers and keep them in your office, but then maybe go visit a faith leader and give them the resources that are developed for faith leaders. Those would be posters for the bathrooms and the bulletin board, and the booklets on sexual violence and domestic violence.

- **[Voiceover]** Question I see, I just happened to glance over at the chat, and they wondered if we could send out this Hearts and Hands Rural Toolkit. Is that a possibility to people who are on the call today?

- **[Voiceover]** As long as I have a mailing address, I can send them, definitely.

- **[Voiceover]** Okay, mailing address, huh?

- **[Voiceover]** Mailing address is what I need.

- **[Voiceover]** Liz, do we have that, when people sign up?

- **[Voiceover]** Yes, I do. The easiest way for me to track that, if you don't mind, anyone interested in receiving those printed materials, if you would send an email to [liz@praxisinternational.org](mailto:liz@praxisinternational.org), and give me your mailing address. That would be the easiest way for me to forward that information to Anne Marie and expedite the mailing process. So feel free to send a little note to me, please.

- **[Voiceover]** That would be great. The other thing I wanted to say is, we did send these out to all the rural service providers, with the list provided at the time. But we're happy to send them out, and honestly, sometimes they went to, you know, someone in an office somewhere who didn't even understand what it was, and it never actually got to the advocate. So we're happy to send them out, yeah. Absolutely happy to send them out.

- **[Voiceover]** Let's talk about some of these other resources that are listed here. Are all of the things that are listed here, Partnership Guide, Hearts and Hands, oh wait, no, okay. The Partnership Guide, is that in the Rural Toolkit?

- **[Voiceover]** Yes, that will come with it, I'll definitely--

- **[Voiceover]** Okay.

- **[Voiceover]** The Community Forum is an online forum. I think the best way to connect with that, because we have to invite people to be part of that, would just be to email me. Again, my email information is at the end of this slide.

- **[Voiceover]** You know, it seems to me, I'm always wearing the CCR hat, but it seems like that would be a good thing for a local CCR to set up. Can a group participate in this Community Forum? Is that a web-based thing, or is that a webinar? What is that?

- **[Voiceover]** It is a web-based platform that allows us to chat back and forth, to post events, to ask questions of the community, and so forth.

- **[Voiceover]** Do you do webinars for communities?

- **[Voiceover]** Yes, I'd be happy to. (Rose laughs)

I'm just putting into the chat box my email address, as well. And I'll put my phone over here, too.

- **[Voiceover]** You know, because it may be a way to get CCRs interested in thinking about this, and also, for those people who are in your CCR already, or let's say they're part of the court system and they're involved, and they happen to be religious. It never hurts to reinforce the importance of this to the faith community. It may have some leverage there, too, as well.

- **[Voiceover]** We're really committed to helping to build those bridges so that faith leaders are helping as much as possible in the community. On the earlier slide, there was something about minimizing and sanitizing. If I have a minute, I'll just say a word about that. Is that okay?

- **[Voiceover]** Yeah, do. Yeah, please.

- **[Voiceover]** We've been thinking about what it is that makes it so difficult for faith leaders to connect with service providers and vice versa. And we realize that one thing that may be going on is that victims, when they're talking to an advocate, of course they're going to say what's happening. In no uncertain terms, usually, if they are comfortable and safe and so forth. When they talk to their faith leaders, it's very difficult for victims to use the really, really ugly language of domestic and sexual violence with their faith leaders in sacred space, it's very hard. So, if there's someone in my community, my congregation, for example, who's being abused, she might go to an advocate and really lay it out on the line as it is.

But when she comes to me, she'll say something like, "Well, he's not very nice," or, "He calls me names."

We as faith leaders, and we need to talk about, how do we make it possible for people to tell us what's really going on? But we're hearing this sanitized version because you don't say to your faith leader exactly what this abuser is calling you 50 times a day, which is extremely obscene and ugly and horrible.

So faith leaders are hearing this very sanitized, minimized version and saying, "Why are advocates getting so upset?" And poor advocates are looking at the faith leaders. They're hearing what's actually going on, and they're, like, "What is this faith leader thinking of, "sending this person back into the relationship?" And so, I think if we just know that about each other, and we train faith leaders to know that they're hearing the tip of the iceberg, which most advocates know already, but also that the language is ugly and that they're probably not gonna hear that language.

So they need to learn to read between the lines a little bit or hear between the lines, and know that this is a terrible situation. If somebody reaches out to you to help. Yes, yes, if somebody reaches out for you to help, just assume that it's gone pretty far and it's pretty terrible. So we're doing that kind of training, to help service providers and advocates and faith leaders understand each other a little bit better, as well.

- **[Voiceover]** I think, too, that, you mentioned something about sending her back in and for me, I think sometimes, faith leaders are gone to be, I mean, women will access faith leaders because they don't wanna hear from somebody, "You gotta leave him." And I think it's real important, it's something for advocates to be aware of, as well, of course, that it's not always about her leaving but how to get him to stop, right?

- **[Voiceover]** Right, yeah.

- **[Voiceover]** And so often, victims feel pressured by the whole community, and maybe within the safety of their faith leader's office, they feel, oh, maybe some relief in that it's not being responded to as if, you know, she's gotta pull up the whole apple cart. That's the wrong metaphor, but I mean, that's a nuanced place. When you talk about competent and aligned faith leaders, it really becomes a tall order. What are they doing there with the victims? And then, what do they do with the offenders? Because I think some faith leaders feel like the basic unit they work with is this family, but this battering stuff and these advocate types, they're all about breaking up the family. And if we could change the narrative around



that, to suggest that maintaining this healthy family is about intervening on this violence and getting the batterer to stop. I'm talking about domestic violence here, and the sooner we get to them the better, right?

- **[Voiceover]** One of the things we say repeatedly to faith leaders is, someone asking for help is not what breaks up this covenant of marriage, it's violence that breaks the covenant. I've seen faith leaders' faces just lift when you say that to them, because they finally have something they can hold on to. Violence has broken the covenant. And we might be able to restore that covenant after a lot of batterer's intervention, or heaven knows what. But it may just be broken. And then we just need to mourn that it's broken, and help people pick up the pieces, instead of constantly trying to push people back into relationships that are already broken and not mended. So there's that.

The other I would say is that we really are stringent with faith leaders that they not do couples counseling or marriage enrichment or marriage counseling or family counseling. The problem is that that's the tool that most faith leaders come out of seminary with. So it's a completely useless tool in this situation, but it's the only tool we have, often. And so many faith leaders will turn to couples counseling, thinking that that's going to be okay, And it's really important, in the training we are very clear that that is not a safe or effective way to respond to the situation, that couples counseling should never, ever, ever happen in a situation where a faith leader even suspects that there might be abuse going on.

- **[Voiceover]** Is there any work you're doing, you or another group is doing, with the seminaries?

- **[Voiceover]** There is a consortium of us who do this kind of work who are working to try to get this kind of learning in seminaries. But it's gonna be a long slog. It's gonna be a long slog. We're really, I think there's only a handful of courses all the way across the country.

- **[Voiceover]** Right, right.

- **[Voiceover]** I taught about elder abuse in a seminary a couple of years ago, and I think it was the first time anyone had ever mentioned elder abuse in a seminary, I think, ever, in the US. We have a long way to go.

- **[Voiceover]** Well, my stepdaughter just went through a master's program in psychology, and they didn't once mention domestic violence here.

- **[Voiceover]** Oh, no!

- **[Voiceover]** You know, so it's kind of, like, "Okay, who defines reality "and where is it generated?"

- **[Voiceover]** Exactly. I should say I graduated from seminary so long ago that I keep thinking, sort of hopefully, "Maybe something has changed," but it hasn't. That's the scary thing. I mean, what you're saying about your daughter is just, like, still not happening. So we are working on that.

- **[Voiceover]** Good, good, that's good. Anything else that you think of when you talk about reaching out to faith communities? I'm jumping all over here, but there's the content on the slide, and then it's just,

probably that's a question, how do you reach out to the community per se? Do you just call them up and say you wanna have a conversation, or you say, "I just listened in on this webinar and I wanna," you know, "I wanna talk to you about this "Safe Havens group"?"

- **[Voiceover]** I've seen all kinds of things. We, you and I, Rose, had done a webinar similar to this maybe a year and 1/2 ago or so, and one of the service providers actually invited faith leader from the community in to listen to the webinar together, which I thought was such a brilliant idea.

So there's all different ways of reaching out. In the Partnership Guide, we talk about sort of the foundation of that. One thing that we're really encouraging is service providers and advocates being willing to acknowledge the expertise and the skills that faith leaders do have. They may not be experts on domestic violence or sexual assault, but they do know their communities, they do have the well being of their communities at heart. So, how can we build on that expertise that they already do have, and sort of honor each other as kindred professionals in the community, we're finding is really the helpful way to go about it. When we first started this work, we interviewed a whole lot of rural service providers, and then, from there, reached out to some of their rural faith leaders, just to talk about, how did you get involved, how did you get some training, et cetera?

And one rural faith leader told me something really interesting. He said that he had gone to a hospital-based training program that included domestic violence along with some other things. I said, "Really? How did they get you in the door?" And he said, "The flyer said, 'To faith leaders "'Your work in the community is as important "'to the health of this community as our work is,'" the hospital's saying that to faith leaders. And I think something similar from advocates, that what the faith leaders are doing in the community is as important to the safety of the victims who are sitting in those pews as what the service provider's doing on some level. We just have to be building the bridges to services, faith leaders, now, I'm saying.

- **[Voiceover]** I'm glad you said that. In other words, they don't have to become the best advocates in the community, just have to know where to find them.

- **[Voiceover]** Well, and that's what I say to them. One of the other excuses I'll hear in addition to, "This isn't happening here," is, "I don't have time for this." And I'll say, "Spend some time building "these partnerships now, and I will save you "so much time down the road, "because you don't have to be the hotline, "you don't have to be the advocate "or the legal advocate or the shelter "or any of that. "There are services in the community. "One you know where they are, "you're going to be so much more effective. "And you will ultimately save yourself some time." So that's one of my selling points.

- **[Voiceover]** You're gonna be happy to hear, Anne Marie, that in the chat column there is an Eliza who's saying that there is a seminary in her area where they've been doing a course for at least--

- **[Voiceover]** Yeah, this is--

- **[Voiceover]** I'm not sure if it'st a seminary, or is it a--

- **[Voiceover]** It is a seminary. It's Andover Newton Theological School, and the Dean's name is Nancy Nienhuis. She's on my Board of Directors, and it was in her class that I did the lecture on elder abuse. But Nancy is head and shoulders above other people in the community, in the country, I think, in terms of teaching in a seminary setting about this. The American Academy of Religion is where people who teach in seminaries get together. And this year, we are doing a session on teaching on this subject.

- **[Voiceover]** Super. Listen, I'm seeing that the time is waning here, and I wanna provide some time for people to put in some last questions and comments. Liz, if you advance the slide, we've already gone through some of this catalyst training for advocates and leaders. You know, when you mentioned what it was, you've come out to the community, you said three times, is that right?

- **[Voiceover]** We come out to the community for a three-day visit. But only one day is training. The first day, when we arrive, we meet with the service providers and really ask them, what are your hopes and dreams for a faith community work? What have you done so far? What's been successful, what are you challenged with? And just kind of help to talk it through and see where we can be helpful. Then the next day, we do the training. And then on the third day, we meet again with the service providers and advocates and say, "Well, what did you think? "What are the next steps, "and how can we help you move forward?"

- **[Voiceover]** Good model.

- **[Voiceover]** Yeah, so it's a lot of fun and it gives us a lot of times with the advocates, which we love, and helps us really focus on what they have accomplished, which is usually a lot, and then where they hope this goes in the future. And then we'll be bringing everybody together, as I said, for the regional trainings, as well, the regional conferences.

- **[Voiceover]** And, that everybody knows who it's for already, it's for faith leaders and advocates. Are other people invited to attend, as well?

- **[Voiceover]** Yes, in fact, interesting that you should say that, because that has come from the communities. We've had entire sheriff's departments, we've had local counselors, we've had lots of law enforcement, we've had EMTs, hospital staff, district attorneys, we've had a lot of additional folks, and it's been really a wonderful way for everyone to kind of get on the same page and embrace the faith community's coming into this conversation. Oftentimes, the conversation's been going on, and so, kind of, welcoming faith community leaders into the conversation, and wonderful way for the faith community leaders to see, oh, there is this whole menu of folks and services that I need to know about. It's been really wonderful.

- **[Voiceover]** Yeah, very good. I see somebody else is saying, Luther Seminary in St. Paul sponsored a week-long awareness event last year, with Marie Fortune, Reverend Marie Fortune of Safe Trust Institute.

- **[Voiceover]** That's the (mumbles) Desiree, who's doing wonderful work in her community, with her faith.

- **[Voiceover]** Now, is that Desiree in North Dakota?

- **[Voiceover]** Yes.

- **[Voiceover]** Okay, I know Desiree. Hi, Desiree.

- **[Voiceover]** She's doing great work. We were just there.

- **[Voiceover]** Exactly, yes. She used to be an advocate in northern Minnesota, and that's how we met. She was doing CCR work, too. And, as you mentioned, you've got some slots available that people can sign up for through contacting you, and we'll put the website up. You have already provided your email already, but, you know, you got some time now. Let's just roof a little bit. What are your hopes and dreams, what are you thinking? What do you envision? Why do you do this?

- **[Voiceover]** I do this, I used to say I started doing this for me, and then I was doing it for all the other women that I met who were telling my same story on some level, and now I'm doing it for my daughter, and probably someday I'll have grandchildren, I'll be doing it for them. I do this because it really, I know how important faith is to those of us who are raised faithfully, and to those of us who have converted to be observant.

There is just, I can hardly imagine a way to be more violated and crushed than having your faith community not support you when you're trying to be safe, or trying to get to safety, for yourself, your children, your family. It is crushing. So I do this work in the hope that little by little by little, fewer women, fewer victims, will come up against that terrible barrier of having to choose between faithful and safe. And if you look at the Safe Havens byline, it is, "No one should have to choose "between faith and safety."

I think that's kind of where we're going. We really feel that it's possible to be safe and faithful at the same time. And how do we make sure that communities can support victims and survivors as they seek to be whole, safe, faithful people?

- **[Voiceover]** Right, right. Not only are the not able to recover as quickly as they would if they had support in their faith communities, but it sets them back further if they're responded to inappropriately.

- **[Voiceover]** Oh, it's horrible. I mean, one of the reasons I started Safe Havens was, in the shelter where I was working, one woman said to me, she said, this is a direct quote, "I told my priest " years ago, and he told me to pray harder. "So now I have calluses on my knees, "and my husband still beats me."

And another woman, and this is a reference to a Christian scripture, she said, "I turned the other cheek and turned the other cheek "until I ran out of faces." At the same time, I was seminary, taking counseling courses that never mentioned violence in the home, or sexual assault or sexual violence.

- **[Voiceover]** You know, it occurs to me that one of the things your work does, too, is it restores my faith in faith. It gives faith a good name, because you know, you see so much writ large these days where, I don't know, bias and intolerance is committed in the name of faith. So this is an antidote to that.

- **[Voiceover]** Yeah, the people that grab the headlines are the people that are burning Korans or something like that. It's horrifying. But there are many of us, who are not maybe grabbing headlines, but who are very steadily working to make sure that the faith community moves forward on this. And I will say that in my own denomination, people will stand around saying, "Why are people "abandoning the church?" And I'll say, "No, the question is, "why has the church abandoned the people?" And that's what's happening if we're not able to respond to these issues. We've abandoned our people.

- **[Voiceover]** Very good, well spoken. Ann Marie, it's been a tremendous pleasure. I hope to continue to work with you, and you'll see, I'm up here, listed as a resource, as well, in terms of CCR. I think that, as Anne Marie talks about CCR, of course, there's a whole range, again, across from a CCR that has a group of people who get together, and they operate in the community that has horrible things happening in the criminal justice system, the courts, child protection, et cetera. And then you have the CCR that's making huge changes in terms of the responses to domestic and sexual assault. I think that, as you go forward, it is a good idea to go forward with what is happening in CCR, what does a faith leader need to know about what a good CCR would look like. If a woman does go to the police, will she be humiliated, or will there be justice?

- **[Voiceover]** Exactly.

- **[Voiceover]** Is she impoverished or will resources be accessible, available and affordable? So all of these things are very important in that sense, part of the collaboration thing again. So, Anne Marie, it's been a pleasure. Thank you so much for joining us today, and thank you to everybody online. Keep us informed of what you're doing, and I look forward to hearing more about this catalyst training. It sounds super good. I'll be paying attention, and Liz, thanks to you for all your efforts on reining us in technologically, let's say. Do you have anything to say in closing?

- **[Voiceover]** Well, just thank you so much, Anne Marie, for your very generous and informative information. It's helpful for us to pause and consider the whole needs of the women that we serve.

So thank you for all of your efforts. And Rose, every month you do such a marvelous job, so thank you for that. I just will remind you all that our next session, we hope you'll be able to join us, it is Wednesday, October 21st. You'll receive publicity about it for registration and information. Watch for that.

And then, finally, when you disconnect from our session today, you'll be routed to an evaluation. We really do appreciate and utilize the information that you share with us in adapting our programming and

ensuring that what we offer is what you need. Everyone, all of you, thank you for participating today, and I look forward to talking with you again. So long, everybody.

- [Voiceover] Goodbye.

- [Voiceover] Goodbye.

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