

OMPC's Suicide Prevention Initiative

# S.T.O.P THE HARM

**S.T.O.P. *the* Harm Initiative** (Acts 16:28) is a Church-based suicide prevention initiative that Oak Mountain Presbyterian Church is implementing for the Birmingham community...

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**Strategic placement of the church for frontline suicidal prevention ministries:** The U.S. Surgeon General called upon the church to do more in intervening with the suicidal. According to the Hartford Institute there are approximately 350,000 churches in America; therefore, imagine the good if every church bolstered her efforts in preventing suicides. Here at Oak Mountain Church we are initiating such a strategic ministry realizing that suicides are at a 51 year high in the State of Alabama. strategic placement of the church for frontline suicidal prevention ministries: The U.S. Surgeon General called upon the church to do more in intervening with the suicidal. According to the Hartford Institute there are approximately 350,000 churches in America; therefore, imagine the good if every church bolstered her efforts in preventing suicides. Here at Oak Mountain Church we are initiating such a strategic ministry realizing that suicides are at a 51 year high in the State of Alabama.

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**Training opportunities for staff and members to be ministry First Responders:** Make training available for the members of the church team in how to intervene in Christ's name with the suicidal—equipping each on how the Gospel of grace helps those suffering from suicidal ideation.

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**Orchestrating conversations of hope in Christ:** Providing an Oak Mountain Church 24/7 Emergency Referral Sheet to those in the church. Such resources provide people the wherewithal to offer tangible help and hope to those in need; but even more, it gives them confidence to coach their family or friends in how to help those they encounter in crisis.

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**Public Prevention Service Announcement on the Church's Website:** Including a public service announcement about preventing suicide on the church website that will make a difference because the suicidal will often call a hotline because 1) it is free, 2) it is confidential, 3) it is convenient, 4) and the caller can remain anonymous. If the over 200,000 churches in America estimated to maintain a church website would include such a Good Samaritan public service announcement on their site it would provide a merciful avenue for the suicidal to find help. For example, upon clicking on our church's Immediate Help Hotline tab the visitor reads (with access to the 24/7 emergency referral list): "If you are in crisis, then call the National Crisis and **IMMEDIATE HELP HOTLINE: 1-800-273-TALK (8255)**. Remember as Evangelist Billy Graham urges, "Suicide is extremely serious and tragic in God's eyes, and if someone who is reading this is contemplating suicide, I beg of you to reconsider and seek help for whatever your problem may be. God loves you – and whether you believe it or not– God does not want you to end your life (Acts 16:28 and Exodus 20:13). Put your faith and hope in Christ and His love for you. You are never alone if you know Him because nothing 'will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord' (Romans 8:39). Turn to Him today, and by faith receive Christ as your Lord and Savior. When we know Christ we are never alone."

A large, stylized white letter 'Q' is centered within a dark grey, semi-circular shape that resembles a quarter of a circle. The 'Q' has a thick, blocky font style.

In any event, the S.T.O.P. the Harm Initiative is in line with the noble tradition of St. Paul's urgent message in Acts 16:28 that he called out to the suicidal jailer:  
Do not harm yourself!