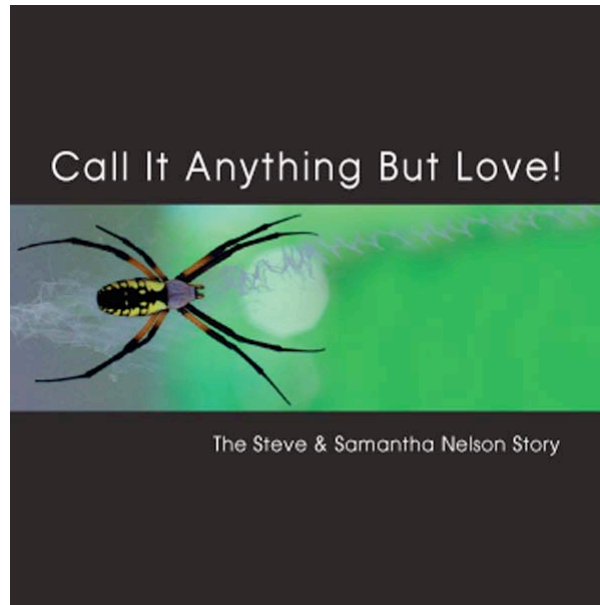


THE  
**HOPE**  
OF SURVIVORS



## **A Film about Pastoral Sexual Abuse**

The Hope of Survivors presents *Call It Anything But Love!* written and produced by Steve Nelson

[www.TheHopeofSurvivors.com](http://www.TheHopeofSurvivors.com)

Contact THOS: (866)260-8958  
Inquiries: [Help@TheHopeofSurvivors.com](mailto:Help@TheHopeofSurvivors.com)

# THE HOPE OF SURVIVORS

## ***Call it Anything But Love!***

This film is the powerful true story of a couple's struggles and challenges as they overcome their painful pasts to find themselves in a spider's web of lies, deceit, adultery and abuse—at the hands of their pastor.

## **Film Synopsis**

*Call It Anything But Love!* is the stunning achievement of Steve and Samantha Nelson, as they invite us on a journey through the darkest period of their lives. Their incredible and disturbing story offers context for the all too common, and widely misunderstood, topic of pastoral sexual abuse. This poignant illustration brings answers to the troubling questions we've all asked—Why? How? Who?

Steve Nelson displays his immense talent, acting as the films' producer, director, editor, and videographer. The result is an artistic and personal expression of a pilgrimage from despair to hope.

In front of the camera, Samantha personifies every victim, while Steve compels us, as the strong and gentle hero. Through both unique perspectives, we are able to understand the destructive impact that pastoral sexual abuse has on every person involved.

Vulnerable and refreshingly honest, the Nelsons' inspire within us all, no matter our struggle, the courage and faith to overcome.

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**“I was deeply moved by your story...”**

-Martin Weber, D.Min.

**“...one of the most disturbing topics in our culture today...  
*Call It Anything But Love!* has an emotional punch yet still  
manages to challenge our deepest, most profound beliefs.”**

-Martin Doblmeier, filmmaker  
Journey Films

**“You’ve lent me some insight that I didn’t have before”**

- Survivor, HI

**“5 Stars!...a spectacular force...”**

-Herb Douglass, Th.D., CA

# THE HOPE OF SURVIVORS



## A Statement from the Filmmaker

The production of *Call it Anything But Love!* was a project that evolved over many years' time. Throughout these past years, Samantha and I would often revisit the different events that transpired during the pastoral abuse, and even things that led up to our vulnerabilities. The thought came to me one day, *we could turn our story into a video*. We spent a number of hours, while on a trip, speaking into a little pocket recorder, talking about the different events involving our past. A few years later we sat down, and again, went through all of those events.

Samantha typed each event into a vignette, and we tried to figure out which ones would be the best to bring into a video format. How would they be portrayed? Would we reenact certain events? With these questions in mind, we created a storyboard outline of what we wanted to show.

We traveled back to where we used to live and shot some footage at the actual locations where the abuse had happened. Back at the office, we sat down together and taped our experiences, based on what we had outlined on the storyboard. The major project was to come together to see what would fit, and to outline how we would meld together both of our experiences. What would we keep? What could we throw out, and what could we illustrate? We purchased some stock photos for the events that we were not able to reenact. Over a number of months and many hours of editing and shooting, the final project—thanks to the Lord—came out and is what we have today.

# THE HOPE OF SURVIVORS

## Steve and Samantha Nelson



The Nelsons founded The Hope of Survivors in 2002, as a result of their own experience with pastoral sexual abuse. They've since been actively involved in aiding and counseling over 700 pastoral sexual abuse victims worldwide, while an average of 10,000 people per month receive help by viewing the website on their own.

As renowned speakers on the subject of pastoral sexual abuse, they are uniquely qualified to testify to the damage and pain, but

also the hope and healing that can be found in Christ.

In addition to producing educational material and maintaining the ministry website, they've traveled the world, conducting seminars in an effort to educate the Christian Church about abuse prevention within a religious environment. Together, they've appeared on television and radio, bringing awareness and understanding to the issue of pastoral sexual abuse. They stand as a beacon of hope for survivors everywhere.

Steve pastors a four-church district in southern Illinois, while Samantha runs the daily operations of The Hope of Survivors. They hold multiple counseling credentials, have written various Bible studies and, most recently, produced a documentary about their story.



## Our Mission

- ***Reaching the Hurting***—ministering to those who have suffered abuse at the hands of clergy.
- ***Calling the Faithful***—providing resources and support to church leadership to help them remain true to their high calling.
- ***Bridging the Gap***—leading the hurting to hope through a healing relationship with Christ.

Pastoral sexual abuse happens to people of all ages, backgrounds, gender and race. It is a **global problem**—existing in every denomination around the world. The Hope of Survivors focuses primarily on assisting adult victims of pastoral sexual abuse, but also receives requests for help from teens and young people who have been abused by a youth pastor or someone in the role of spiritual authority.

The organization's purpose is to provide **hope and healing in Christ** through encouragement, Biblical counseling, support, referral, assistance, educational programs and information to victims of pastoral sexual abuse and misconduct.

Building public awareness about the issue of pastoral sexual abuse is an important element of The Hope of Survivors campaign to heal the wounded, and to prevent such abuse from occurring.



## What You Should Know

**Pastoral sexual abuse and misconduct** has been defined as *“Ministers, priests, rabbis, or other clergypersons or religious leaders who make sexual advances or propositions to persons in the congregations they serve who are not their spouses or significant others.”\**

- A nationwide research study\* on the topic of pastoral sexual abuse and misconduct reports that in the average American Church of 400 congregants, there are, on average, 32 persons who have experienced pastoral sexual misconduct in their community of faith, 7 of whom have been the direct victims of such abuse.
- Due to factors such as cultural “niceness”, ease of private communication, lack of oversight, and assumed trust in the propriety of a religious sanctuary, pastoral sexual abuse is able to thrive, with limited ability to detect.
- Family members, friends, and victims frequently ignore the warning signs. When Religious leaders act inappropriately in public as well as private settings, the Christian Church culture has no cognitive categories for understanding or explaining pastoral sexual misconduct as anything other than an “affair,” observers often mistrust their own judgment.

\*Source: <http://www.baylor.edu/clergysexualmisconduct/index.php?id=67406>

# THE HOPE OF SURVIVORS

## From the Film

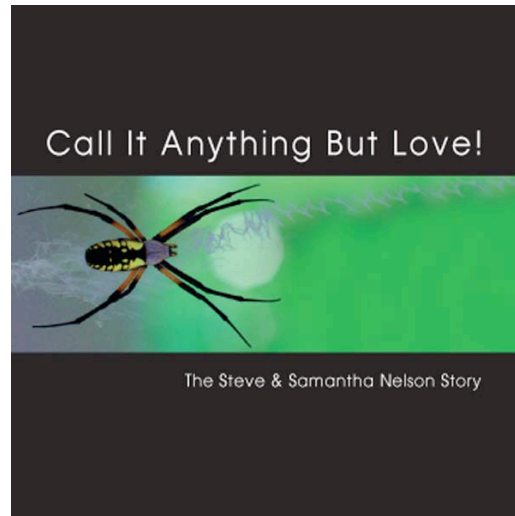




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