

# HopeSPEAK

## Dear Hope of Survivors Family,

It's been an eventful quarter and will be even more so in the weeks and months ahead! We are thankful for how the Lord opened doors for The Hope of Survivors to exhibit at various places in Illinois and Nebraska recently, and for the TV interviews on *The Harvest Show* in Indiana, as all these events helped to raise awareness of clergy sexual abuse and provided a resource for victims to receive help. Thank you for your prayers and support of this ministry—a ministry that is changing lives by offering hope and healing through the power of Jesus.

This newsletter is jam-packed with heart-wrenching, yet hopeful, testimonies, advice on how to prevent yourself from becoming a victim, what feminism means to Jesus and much more. We hope you will be blessed as you read the testimonies and that you will be impressed to take action within your own sphere of influence to prevent clergy sexual abuse and to offer a safe place for victims to share their pain and seek help.

The Hope of Survivors is stepping out in faith to launch a global campaign August 1—Clergy Sexual Abuse Awareness & Prevention Day™. Our goal is to partner with other individuals and organizations around the world to raise awareness, educate on prevention, and offer hope to victims. Already we have several events lined up and we want you to be a part of it! Please let us know if you'd be interested in hosting or conducting an event in your area. For more ideas and information, please visit the website at [www.clergysexualabuseawarenessday.com](http://www.clergysexualabuseawarenessday.com).

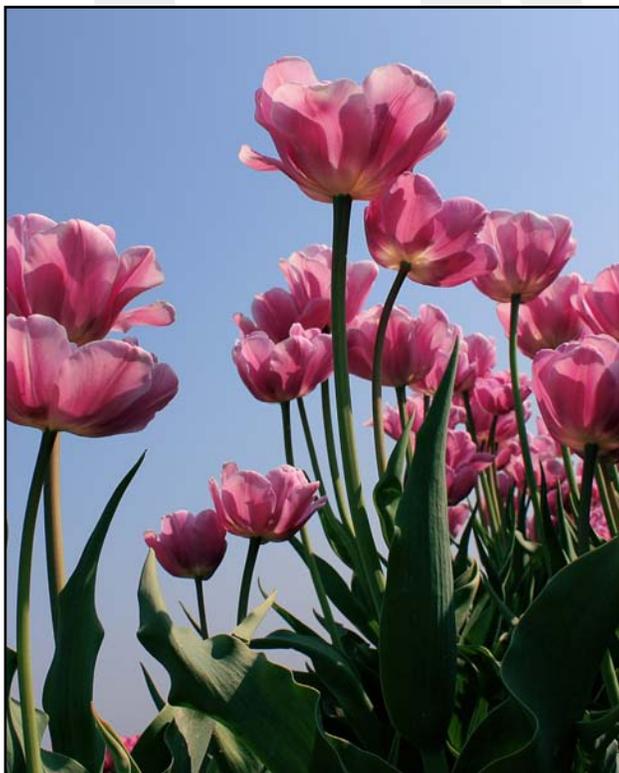
Together, we can do much to prevent clergy sexual abuse, educate church leaders and congregations, and provide a safe-haven for victims. Will you join us?

Until next time, may the Lord bless you, keep you, and may His countenance shine upon you.

Samantha Nelson



Vice President & CEO



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The Hope of Survivors is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization funded by individuals who support the mission and goals of the organization; survivors of pastoral sexual abuse who desire to use their means to help others; and by grants from private foundations whose values are similar to those of The Hope of Survivors. All contributions are fully tax-deductible as allowable by law. Your support is greatly appreciated.

## Are You Covering for an Abusive Pastor?\*

—Denah Michelle Moon

Signs you may be covering for a pastor who abuses the flock spiritually:

**1.** You've noticed a pattern of people leaving the fellowship, but you hesitate to ask your pastor about it and don't like to delve into the reasons behind the exits.

**2.** You've seen your pastor act in retribution for slights or criticism by removing people from ministries, publicly or privately shaming them or refusing to listen to them.

**3.** You excuse your pastor's wrong behavior: He's young (or he's old), he doesn't understand the people who are unhappy, he has a little trouble relating to people, he'll grow out of it, I'm probably not seeing the whole picture, God will show him his weaknesses and he'll handle things better soon, no pastor is perfect in every way, he's such a good preacher that we can overlook the other parts of his calling.

**4.** You find yourself blaming victims. You justify harsh behavior by your pastor by focusing on the sins or weaknesses of those who are shamed or shunned or criticized or punished.

**5.** You feel that to protect the name of Christ in your community you need to keep secret the alarming behavior by your pastor or leaders in the church.

**6.** You feel it's your duty to think the best of your pastor, no matter what charges are brought against him (but you don't extend the same courtesy to those who feel they've been abused or harmed).

**7.** You feel it's okay for your pastor to build up your church by criticizing other churches with "inferior" doctrines or practices, but it's not okay for anyone to question decisions by church leaders if it looks like criticism.

**8.** You enjoy being flattered by your pastor and seek to please him often. You spend a lot of time in church flattering and seeking approval from your pastor.

**9.** You are frequently in fear of being criticized by your pastor or having your ministry in the church taken away.

**10.** You've seen your pastor flatter those he can use and then later turn on them or ignore them.

**11.** You would feel uncomfortable asking to see financial records of the church, and you are willing to just assume that they are being used in a godly manner.

**12.** You feel constant pressure to help more in church or to give more, or both.

**13.** Going to church often seems like a burden, but you don't want anyone to know you feel that way.

**14.** You have criticized other churches or individuals with your pastor.

**15.** You like the feeling of being in the "inner circle," and you sometimes feel you have the pastor's confidence in a way no one else does.

**16.** You often feel a little bit superior to Christians who don't witness as much as you, or who don't practice their faith as well as you, or who don't emphasize certain doctrines as much as you do.

**17.** You feel that no one quite understands the scriptures, delivers sermons or reaches out to the weak and poor like your pastor does.

**18.** You spend much time defending your pastor, either in your own mind or to others.

**19.** You don't like to admit it, but you often spend more time thinking about your pastor or leaders than you do about God (whether positively, negatively or both).

**20.** You are exhausted.

If many of these items speak to you, it might be a good idea to evaluate what your role in your church really is. Are you providing a constant stream of "narcissistic supply" for your pastor? Is your main role to make him look good? Do you equate making him look good with powerful ministry in your community? You can serve many years believing you are doing good in your church by covering spiritual abuse for your leader, while really doing great harm. Check out the signs of spiritual abuse. If they look familiar, and you feel you may have had a hand in perpetuating it, all is not lost.

You can recognize the harm and turn from it, even if it's been a long time coming.

\* This article refers not only to clergy sexual abuse, but to abuse of power in other ways, such as financial, spiritual, emotional, etc.



*Denah Michelle Moon is a guest contributor to this edition of HopeSpeak. She lives in South Carolina with her husband and four children. This article, originally posted on Facebook, is used with permission.*

## ***I Will Never Regret Telling the Truth***

—Serenity\*, 14 years old  
\*A pseudonym

My pastor could have been supportive during what was the most shocking summer of my life. Instead he did the opposite and became a part of the cycle of abuse.

Three years ago this summer I made a stop on the way home from camp and during a visit with my best friend, she abused me. I was shocked, scared and surprised. Two days later during a play date at my home she abused me again. My parents had always taught me to communicate to them if someone touched me when they weren't supposed to. I told my parents as I realized she was not going to stop. My parents contacted the authorities to report the abuse. I knew that I never wanted to see her again and that I could never be safe alone with her. I was still very sad and knew it would never be the same. I was also very sad for her as well. I knew she needed help. The friendship I had known since I was little was gone in a second.

My family was very active in our church and my best friend and her family went to the same church. I was really afraid of how things would be. My mom told me she would make sure I was safe and that I would not be alone with my friend who had done this to me. When we found out that our pastor had been told about my report of abuse from the other family my parents helped me to write up my wishes in a safety plan and gave it to our pastor. We thought this would help keep me safe at church.

What I did not know then and later learned was that my pastor was not supportive of my reporting my abuse. He was angry that my parents had done this. For me this was disturbing because he baptized me and I knew him personally and trusted him. For him not to believe me felt so awful. For me to be abused, and him not to support me in going to the authorities, made me very angry. I never asked him to take sides.

My pastor did not support my requests for safety at church. Instead he did things that made it clear that he supported my abuser and wanted me and my family to apologize to my friend and her family. People in church found out about my abuse. They walked up to my family in stores and told us to apologize. My pastor wrote my mom a letter demanding she be nice to the abuser and forgive them and their family. I was very confused during this time. My best friend and her family made us very uncomfortable at church. They even approached us after we asked to be left alone. Our

pastor wanted my mom to allow my friend who abused me to stay in a program that I volunteered for every Sabbath. My parents told me it was unsafe for me to go to church anymore. This was all happening while my dad was at home recovering from surgery. Our pastor knew what he was doing. He told my parents that they had done the wrong thing. Not only did my pastor hurt me but he hurt my whole family...at times it became too much to bear. I felt like I could not breathe. I knew my life had changed.

**“Church belongs to God...not the pastor. He should have listened and cared for all of us in this very difficult situation.”**

This made me angry. Church belongs to God...not the pastor. He is not supposed to take sides. He should have listened and cared for all of us in this very difficult situation.

We still cannot go back to our church. Church members told my mom that she would be arrested if she returns because of what happened. I had to leave all my friends and my church family. This was the church I was baptized in. The church I had attended church school at.

My family has tried lots of things to ask for help with the church situation but no one will help. My cry for help is not answered.

The one place I have been heard was The Hope of Survivors. They believed me. They supported me. They cared about me and told me that it would be all right. They cared for me and my family the way I think our pastor should have.

I thought church was for everyone and to worship God. I did not think it was only for certain people or sides. That seems to be the last thing God would want.

My prayer is that kids do not have to be abused and that pastors support kids in reporting abuse and dealing with all the emotions. We need healthy boundaries in our churches and with our pastors. I was taught at church to tell the truth. My experience was that the other family and our church made it clear that I should not have told the truth.... I don't agree and I will never regret telling the truth.



## Predator Pastor

—Chris Keaton

My nightmare began September 2001 when my husband went out of town for a few days. He was the mission pastor at our church and had been on staff for 10 years at that time. Whenever Mel went out of town, the other pastors on staff would tell me to let them know if there was anything I needed while he was gone. This time was no exception, except this time it was the senior pastor who offered his help. That night, after I got the kids to bed, he called and wanted to know if everything was ok; did I need anything. I said everything's fine. At one point in the conversation he said, "If you need anything, even maybe if you need me to make love to you..." Hold on! (*The sound of screeching brakes in my head!*) I thought, *surely I didn't hear him right!* It was weird. I didn't respond. I don't remember the whole conversation. I was in shock, in disbelief and really confused! Then he came over!

He just showed up at the house and that really shocked me. He'd never been over to the house before. He told me he'd always felt like there was a special connection or bond between us and he wanted to know if I felt the same. I'm thinking in my head, *Holy Cow! NO!* I'd always looked to him as a father figure! But I couldn't say that. Here's my pastor—and I had respected him and loved him as my pastor since I was 16 years old. He was a spiritual leader, a counselor...he was confusing me really bad. I told him I loved him as my pastor, but not in the way he was talking about. Then I told him I thought he should leave. He reacted like he was taken aback, like he didn't expect that at all. I think he was shocked I said that he should leave. He continued talking, saying everything again, and I had to tell him to leave again. He did leave finally. I think he was flabbergasted, but he left. As he was walking away (it seemed he'd parked his car on a different street), the whole way he reacted to me telling him no, the whole way he came across, I thought, *oh dear God, what have I done?* He's going to fire Mel. He's going to get me back. He has the power to make my husband's life miserable or even just fire him. He never said any of those things, but the way he reacted made me feel that way.

After he left, I thought, *I've got to call Mel!* But then he called on the phone again and was apologetic and said how he screwed up; he shouldn't have said those things. He'd never done anything like this before, but he really thought there was something special between us, and he thought I felt the same way, but he guessed he was wrong. I wanted to call Mel and tell him everything but I remember thinking, *what will happen if I tell him?* He messed up, yes, but nothing happened, and I didn't want to destroy this man's life when he was sorry. Ev-

everyone messes up. Just because you're a pastor doesn't mean you don't mess up or that you're not human. I didn't want to be responsible for destroying his life. And if he lost his job as the senior pastor, what would happen to Mel & me with four little kids? What would happen to the church? Besides that, I was thinking, *how will anyone believe me?* I thought, *nobody's perfect; I'm not going to destroy his life over one mistake that he's made.* So I decided not to say anything.

The next night, I got my kids to bed and was getting ready for bed myself when he called again. He wanted to come over, but I told him no, I was already in bed. Then he said, "If you're already in bed, then why is your light on?" (*The sound of screeching brakes in my head again!*) I turned the light off and looked out the window and, sure enough, he was sitting in his car in front of my house! He wanted to come in. I had to keep telling him no. The next night, he showed up at the house again. I felt obligated to be polite and respectful. I couldn't believe he came over again. I thought I was clear that I didn't "like" him in that way. I thought he was sorry for what he'd done.



It's easy to look back now and know exactly what I should have done but back then, in the middle of this all happening, it wasn't so clear. There was so much confusion in my head about how to process it all. Why was he putting me in this position where I had to keep telling him 'no' when I knew that was not the answer he was looking for? He was being so nice and so friendly and so much more personable than he ever had before. Because of who he was in my life, I wouldn't dare be rude to him, much less get angry or speak my mind bluntly. This was my pastor that I'd always looked up to and saw as being very close to God. The one I trusted to have all the right answers because of his relationship with God, his position as pastor and his knowledge of the Bible. Why was he backing me into a corner with no way out and acting this way toward me? Couldn't he see how much he was hurting me with his actions and his words? He must have asked me three times that night if he could kiss me and, each time, with all the strength I had, I told him 'no'. Each time, scared to death that he would get mad at me or end up hating me. Each time, it got harder and harder to tell him 'no' because I couldn't understand why he hadn't heard me the time before...why was he making me tell him 'no' again and again? As weak and soft spoken as my "no's" were, it was killing me inside to have to 'stand up' to him like that. I was left wondering what was wrong with me; something had to be seriously wrong with me because bad things like this kept happening to me.

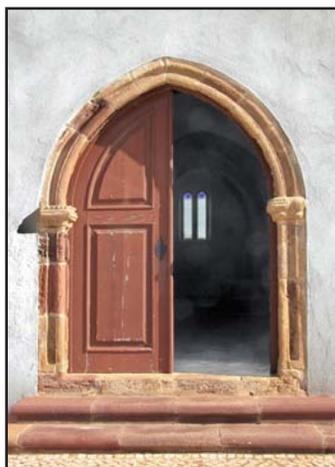
His phone calls and advances were persistent and continuous. I kept telling him no, but it didn't matter. He'd push and pressure until I felt like I had no choice but to

give in. He gradually wore down all of my defenses and trapped me into his web of guilt, shame, confusion and silent compliancy. My soul went numb, my heart broke to pieces, and mentally and emotionally I disconnected myself from reality so as not to feel anything as I was manipulated into mindless, reluctant obedience. I was always scared he could fire Mel. It absolutely terrified me. Even if he didn't fire him, he had the power to make his life completely miserable. No matter how unwilling I was, he was not taking no for an answer. He would jokingly keep pressuring and pushing me until I would freeze up and give in.

I would tell him. "I can't live like this; it's driving me crazy." There would be a break where he would leave me alone and wouldn't call me for a while. Then he would start calling again and he'd want to meet again and the whole thing would start over. There had been so many times I wanted to tell Mel but he talked me out of it every time, completely convincing me that it would be wrong, and nothing good would come of it, only bad. I was filled with terror, absolute panic-stricken fear.

Depression and anxiety became a huge problem in my life so I started seeing a therapist, thinking maybe I needed to finally deal with my issues from the past. But I never said a word about what was going on with the senior pastor. After seeing this therapist for a year and a half, things were not getting any better. In fact, everything seemed to have gotten worse because I had this dark, suffocating secret sucking the life out of me, and because church had become nothing, when it used to mean everything. I went through a period where I got high to escape from everything because I was so depressed and suicidal.

He had me convinced that if I ever said a word to anyone, I would be responsible for the destruction of everything that would follow. But I was dying on the inside. I'd been slowly fading away from everyone, including my husband and five children. All those years of abuse, I was emotionally and mentally vacant. My children had no nurturing mother concerned for them. My husband saw that I had "checked out" and our marriage suffered because of it. I didn't want to do anything; I just wanted to die. Everything in me was saying I should tell, but I was so scared because he was a very well liked man, very influential, and he had the power to destroy everything. But then I thought, you know, he had already destroyed everything. I trusted him, and he played on that. He used everything he knew about me to get what he wanted. I almost killed myself over this. I didn't want to lose my kids, or for my kids to lose their mother. I'd been feeling like I was losing my mind and I knew it was because I'd been keeping this a secret and I couldn't do it anymore.



October 2008, I told my therapist and I told Mel everything. I then recorded the senior pastor talking to me on the phone for evidence. Mel & I wanted very badly to bring all the other pastors on staff and their wives together to let them know all that was happening and to hear the recordings, but first of all, Mel felt strongly directed by God in prayer that it wouldn't be appropriate to bring such an issue to them when they have no authority to do anything about it. We needed to bring this to the people who have the authority to act in removing the senior pastor from his position, not only in the church as pastor, but also as the 2<sup>nd</sup> in charge in our state. Secondly, we had no idea who we could trust anymore. The man we trusted the most, and with everything about our lives, turned out to not be at all who we thought he was. How could we know whom we could trust? That was a big reason for using legal means when we brought this to the attention of the leadership in the fellowship.

After 8 weeks of my husband fasting, praying, seeking God, and talking with Christian professionals that were completely unrelated to the church, we decided on the best plan of action. Copies of the evidence, along with a letter from our lawyer went to the heads of the fellowship overall and also locally. The letter from the lawyer stated that this was to be handled correctly, or if they tried to "sweep things under the rug," we were prepared to file a lawsuit against the fellowship and the church.

Although the ministerial credentials of the senior pastor were taken away from him and he was made to resign from the church, it didn't happen for 10 weeks. During those weeks, the senior pastor lied to everyone, kept the other pastors and the board from hearing the evidence, and had such a controlling grip on them, he had them all believing Mel and I were the ones who were lying and we were just after money. These guys, whom we'd worked alongside in ministry for almost two decades, all believed the worst about us because that's what the senior pastor wanted them to believe.

After 10 weeks had gone by, one board member made the decision, against the pastor, to go to the district office to hear the recordings. After the board and the other pastors got to hear the recordings, that's when they knew it was the senior pastor who had been lying the whole time, not us. We thought we'd finally get to talk to them to tell them our side of the story. After having been lied to for 10 weeks and having never heard the true story, we thought they would want to hear from me what happened in order to set things straight in their minds about what the truth was and what the lies were. But the poison of the lies the senior pastor had

*continued on page 8...*

## Jesus' Kind of Feminism\*

—Jennifer Jill Schwirzer

This week I've feasted my heart on a study of Jesus' relationships with women. Amazing things happened inside of me. Passion rekindled. Apathy disappeared. My desire to follow Him to the ends of the earth revived. Oh, how I love Jesus!

Here's what I learned: Jesus respected women. Often we emphasize respect of men. I sometimes get the impression that women don't really need respect; that they function similarly to small kittens, thriving best when well-cuddled. Yet the thing that grabs me about Jesus' treatment of women, the thing that ultimately endears me to Him, is not so much His tender affection for women—although that's plain and precious. It's the respect factor. And Jesus demonstrated this respect in the midst of mass, general, persistent, pervasive and extreme societal and cultural *disrespect*. His respect translates to me today into the most exalted and holy kind of love I've ever known.

Probably no category of people has, over the eons of time, suffered more disrespect than women. Even today, one in three women walking this earth have been raped, beaten or coerced into sex. Women are the primary victims of sex trafficking, domestic violence, rape and sexual abuse. Women comprise half the population, but they do two-thirds of the world's work and get one-tenth of the world's pay. Women are at an educational, political and financial disadvantage globally.

I'd call this disrespect, wouldn't you?

Westerners have a hard time grasping the full impact of these things because our society enjoys more equality. Stepping outside of our safe little world, though, the facts I've just cited hit us between the eyes—female genital mutilation in Africa, bride burning in India, sex slavery in Thailand—the list goes on and on. Similarly, Jesus lived at a time when the status of women rested at a low ebb. Even within Israel, pagan attitudes warped

the Torah's protective boundaries into severe limitations on a woman's freedom and dignity, until "They had become second-class Jews, excluded from the worship and teaching of God, with status scarcely above that of slaves."<sup>[i]</sup>

Now, behold Jesus in his brief public career. He works His first miracle at a wedding, essentially at His mother's request. Soon after He holds a



very personal conversation with a foreign woman at Jacob's well (John 4:7-42). He talks similarly to a Canaanite woman, healing her daughter (Matthew 15:22-28). He speaks against divorce, a practice which harms chiefly women at that time (Mark 10:11-12). He travels with women supporters (Luke 8:1-3) Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Susanna and "many others." He defends Mary Magdalene before His disciples (Luke 7:37-50). He teaches women students (Luke 10:38-42) when the rabbinical sentiment is, "Rather should the words of the Torah be burned than entrusted to a woman... Whoever teaches his daughter the Torah is like one who teaches her obscenity."<sup>[ii]</sup> He befriends Lazarus, Mary and Martha. He uses the respectful term, "daughter of Abraham" (Luke 13:16), unheard of at that time. He dies and rises again, appearing first to Mary Magdalene (Mark 16:9).

Much of conservative Christianity wrings its hands over the encroachments of feminism upon modern society, upon the home, and upon the church. Yes, secular feminism (comprised of many schools of thought, all fighting with one another like Medusa's snake heads) carries unbiblical baggage. But something troubles me; all the dire warnings against the evils of feminism have somehow drowned out concern for its evil counterpart—male chauvinism. Yet hasn't male chauvinism, defined as the belief that "females are inferior to males and thus deserving of less than equal treatment or benefit"<sup>[iii]</sup> led historically and globally to untold horror, atrocity and violation of basic human rights? Won't those following the Master follow Him in countering every such violation?

On June 11, the North American Division of the Seventh-day Adventist Church celebrated "Women's Ministries Emphasis Day" (<http://adventistwomensministries.org/>). It is a good way to reinforce our respect for womankind. I wonder if my conservative Christian brothers and sisters are brave enough to take a stand for the rights, education, salvation and upbuilding of women, even when this might align them, for a brief moment, with those of a more liberal persuasion.

If they do, they'll remind me of Someone named Jesus.

[i] B.M. Metzger & M.D. Coogan, "The Oxford Companion to the Bible", Oxford University Press, New York, NY, (1993), P. 806 to 818

[ii] "Rather should the words of the Torah be burned than entrusted to a woman...Whoever teaches his daughter the Torah is like one who teaches her obscenity."

[iii] See <http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/male+chauvinist>

\*Feminism= "The theory of the social, political and economic equality of the sexes."

## Testimonials

*“May God bless your ministry. I think this is going on in the church all the time, and someone needs to speak out. You have a ministry second to none.”—Pastor, South Africa*

*“Thank you for your kind assistance and prayers. I often visit the website for information and encouragement. It is a true blessing. I pray that you continue this work.”—MD*

*“I hope you still remember me from way back in 2007! Praise God! Now, I can say that now I’m one of the survivors! =) Thank you for your ministry. Praise God for your ministry. God has used you to make my broken life whole again! Pray for us as we continue to love God with all our hearts and follow Him always! Hope to be able to support your ministry soon! From the bottom of my heart, thank you so much!”—Philippines*

*“My wife is one of the victims associated with this mess in Pella, Iowa. We truly need help over here. If someone does not commit suicide over this whole ordeal I will be very surprised. On a side note... your website has been very helpful. We read it daily. The articles associated with this website have been very helpful and we have forwarded them on to many people within our community. Can someone please respond to this...I don’t know how much longer I can hold it together. Thank you.”  
—Survivor, IA*

*“I am one of the four victims that was manipulated by this sexual predator. This website has been a true answer to prayer and blessing for myself, husband, family and friends. Thank you for your blog entry...God have mercy on us all! I need to process the info you shared—you shall hear from me again. God bless your work!”  
—Survivor, IA*

# ENOUGH IS ENOUGH

**Clergy Sexual Abuse Awareness & Prevention Day is August 1!**

Read more endorsements and get involved here:

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

May 20, 2011

When any trusted helping professional, be it a medical or mental healthcare provider, a lawyer, a teacher or a member of the clergy, puts their own needs ahead of those of their patient, client, student, staffer or congregant, exploitation occurs. Professional exploitation is one of the most egregious of human offenses. The harm done affects every aspect of the victim/survivor’s life and most often the damage is never really completely healed.

Adult victims/survivors find little understanding when it comes to the *fact* that they hold zero accountability for the abuse they have endured. The professional is responsible for maintaining professional boundaries and ethics. Because there is an imbalance of power, authority, and trust, the adult victim cannot consent to the exploitive relationship.

When a child is abused, everyone understands that they had no consent or accountability or responsibility. No difference exists when adults are exploited/abused by professionals that have vowed to forego their own needs for the needs of others that seek their help.

There is not a more egregious offense than a member of clergy abusing a congregant. The loss of one’s spiritual self is added to the emotional damage that victims/survivors of other professionals don’t generally endure. For the victim/survivor of clergy abuse, this loss is the most devastating of all.

The Hope of Survivors organization is a lifeline to those abused by clergy. The organization offers a hand up with unlimited resources and support. Those involved in providing the support are the most selfless among us. They care deeply and provide support for all those that face the long and arduous path to healing.

If there is just one thing that you can do to offer your support for The Hope of Survivors, it is to make a donation to ensure that this organization remains viable for all those that are in such dire need of guidance on their healing path and the support that only The Hope of Survivors can give.

Cindy Boling  
President  
AdvocateWeb  
HOPE = **Helping Overcome Professional Exploitation**

**Clergy Sexual Abuse**  
Awareness & Prevention Day,  
**AUGUST 1**

...*Predator Pastor*, continued from page 5

told about us was still very much alive. Here we are, over two years later, and although they believe the senior pastor is guilty, none of them has ever apologized to me for the lies they believed about me or has even been interested in hearing my side of the story. The fact is most of them have not talked to me at all. I feel abandoned and rejected by their silence toward me, their neglect of me as a victim, a friend, a fellow pastor's wife. It has been more painful to me than the abuse endured by the senior pastor. That church was my home for 26 years, and now I'm left homeless because the leadership chose to ignore me, rather than make things right. I feel like the man left in the ditch to die after having been beaten and robbed (Luke 10:30).

To make matters worse, although they let the senior pastor resign when he should have been fired, they fired Mel without even talking to him because of the threat we made to sue if things weren't handled properly. His ministerial credentials were also taken away from him for the same reason. We never filed a lawsuit, but all the preachers acted like we committed the unforgivable sin by even threatening it.

Since my coming forward, there have been many other women who have come forward also. Nonetheless, the former senior pastor continues to deny the truth and to lie to his family and friends. He has since started a new church where he continues to masquerade as a shepherd. I believe he was able to do this because leadership failed to handle things decisively and truthfully before the congregation. So many are still confused as to what really happened. Mel and I have been trying to do whatever we can to make sure the truth gets told in order for people to be free from his control and for him to not be able to hurt anyone else again.

Had it not been for my therapist and The Hope of Survivors, Mel and I would have been completely lost and alone through all of this. Reading through all the information on The Hope of Survivors website, we couldn't believe how widespread clergy sexual abuse is but, most of all, we had found people who knew what we were going through; we weren't alone. It was such an encouragement to learn and understand how I'd been groomed and manipulated, how this wasn't an affair, or my fault; I wasn't just stupid and weak. I



The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

—John 1:5

believe that, because of the knowledge and understanding we gained about pastoral abuse, it helped to save not only me, but our marriage also. Telling the truth didn't destroy me. My husband and I are closer than ever before. And, although the road will be long and hard, I've been made free and am on the path to healing.

## Immediate Needs...

- Conference and convention expenses for raising awareness and providing assistance to victims (meeting space rental, meals, travel, materials, etc.)
- Monthly operating expenses (postage, office supplies, utilities, website hosting—THOS maintains multiple websites, printing, etc.), staff, educational materials and victim assistance
- Donations to offset the current budget deficit

Donations are the primary source of funds that make it possible for The Hope of Survivors to maintain its ministry. Since The Hope of Survivors receives no denominational subsidies, your gifts are vitally important. Thank you for considering a tax-deductible donation to further the work of this ministry and bring hope and healing to wounded hearts.

## International Division Contacts

### Australia Division

Coralie Roll (Administration)  
Arlagene Groves (Victim Support Services)  
Phone: (866) 260-8958 extension 6 (from U.S.) or (in AU) 07 4615 2430  
Web: [www.TheHopeOfSurvivors.com](http://www.TheHopeOfSurvivors.com)  
Email: [Coralie@TheHopeOfSurvivors.org](mailto:Coralie@TheHopeOfSurvivors.org)  
Email: [Arlagene@TheHopeOfSurvivors.org](mailto:Arlagene@TheHopeOfSurvivors.org)

### Latino Division

#### (La Esperanza de los Sobrevivientes)

Shyleene Rosado-Maldonado  
Phone: (866) 260-8958 extension 2  
Email: [Ayuda@LaEsperanzaDeLosSobrevivientes.com](mailto:Ayuda@LaEsperanzaDeLosSobrevivientes.com)  
Web: [www.LaEsperanzaDeLosSobrevivientes.com](http://www.LaEsperanzaDeLosSobrevivientes.com)

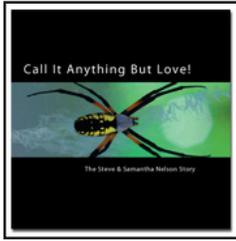
### Romania Division

Romulus Chelbegean (Vice President, Romanian Division)  
Email: [Romulus@TheHopeOfSurvivors.com](mailto:Romulus@TheHopeOfSurvivors.com)  
Web: [www.TheHopeOfSurvivors.ro](http://www.TheHopeOfSurvivors.ro)

### Canadian Division

Wendy Schwitzer (Victim Support Services)  
Email: [Wendy@TheHopeOfSurvivors.org](mailto:Wendy@TheHopeOfSurvivors.org)  
Web: [www.TheHopeOfSurvivors.com](http://www.TheHopeOfSurvivors.com)

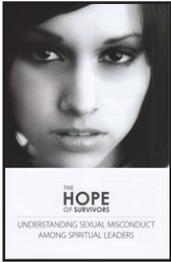
## Resources



### DVD: *Call It Anything But Love!—The Steve & Samantha Nelson Story*

*Call It Anything But Love!* is a 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. \$15.00 each.

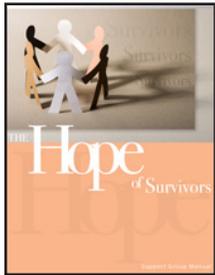
Order online at: <http://www.thehopeofsurvivors.com/products.asp>



### *Understanding Sexual Misconduct Among Spiritual Leaders*

Ever wonder what is really happening to you or someone you know? Are you trying to decide how to help someone who has been abused by a pastor? Or wanting to know how the church should address the issue? This booklet provides information for victims, spouses, youth, pastors and wives, church leaders and congregants, and an overview of the issue of pastoral sexual misconduct. It is a "must" for those who need answers and help! (8.5x5.5, 20 pages) Only \$2.95 each.

Order online at: <http://www.thehopeofsurvivors.com/products.asp>



### THOS Support Group Manual

Do you like to lead small groups? Do you have a heart for sharing the pain of others? Have you ever wanted to be involved helping victims of pastoral sexual abuse? Then The Hope of Survivors' *THOS Support Group Manual* may be just what you need! This manual provides step-by-step instructions and guidelines for becoming a THOS Support Group Facilitator in your area.

(Full-size Binder) **\$39.95 \*\*\*New Price!\*\*\***

Order online at: <http://www.thehopeofsurvivors.com/products.asp>

**Please Note:** The purchase of *THOS Support Group Manual* does not automatically grant you permission to begin THOS Support Groups in your area. You must comply with the guidelines in the Manual and submit to a background check and review process before being approved as an official THOS Support Group Facilitator.

## Creative Ways To Help!

Contribute with ease by setting up **monthly recurring donations** to The Hope of Survivors. It's easy! Just go to [www.thehopeofsurvivors.com/donate.asp](http://www.thehopeofsurvivors.com/donate.asp) and type in the amount you'd like to contribute.

Did you know The Hope of Survivors is listed on the social networking site **Facebook**? Check it out! ([http://apps.facebook.com/causes/47537?m=33935&recruiter\\_id=12747904](http://apps.facebook.com/causes/47537?m=33935&recruiter_id=12747904))

**No money?** You can still support The Hope of Survivors! We will receive a penny each time you **search the Internet using [www.GoodSearch.com](http://www.GoodSearch.com)**. You can also earn money by shopping at your favorite stores! Just be sure to type The Hope of Survivors in the charity to be supported box. Happy searching and shopping!

You may also donate through **American Express Giving Express** by going to: <http://amex.justgive.org/non-profits/donate.jsp?ein=65-1211701>.

As a nonprofit organization, The Hope of Survivors may be listed as a beneficiary on life insurance policies, trusts, etc. Contact us to find out more!

*Thank you for supporting The Hope of Survivors!*

## Calendar of Events

### August 1, 2011

Global Event—Clergy Sexual Abuse Awareness & Prevention Day! Visit the website for more details: <http://www.clergysexualabuseawarenessday.com>

### August 3-6, 2011

Sacramento, CA—ASI International Convention  
Sacramento Convention Center  
1400 J Street, Sacramento, CA 95814  
The Hope of Survivors will be exhibiting at this convention Wednesday—Saturday. For more information about the convention and lodging facilities, please visit the ASI web site (<http://www.asiministries.org/convention>). All are welcome to attend and stop by the booth to visit. We look forward to seeing you there!

### August 26-28, 2011

San Marcos, TX—Spanish Women's Retreat  
Shyleene Rosado-Maldonado will be presenting information (in Spanish) about The Hope of Survivors and its Latino Division, *La Esperanza de los Sobrevivientes*, at this women's ministries retreat. All women are invited to attend.

### August 28, 2011

Indianapolis, IN—*Hope & Healing* Conference  
**Time:** 9:00am-4:00pm (Sunday)  
**Location:** Holiday Inn Express—Indianapolis Airport, 6295 Cambridge Way, Plainfield, IN 46168

Samantha and Steve Nelson are Co-Founders of The Hope of Survivors. They strive to facilitate healing in the lives of those who have been wounded by a spiritual leader.

The ministry is founded on the commission in God's Word, which calls us to *"...comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God."*

—2 Corinthians 1:4



**Cost:** There is a \$50 per person fee for the conference, which includes the cost of lunch and materials. You are responsible for your own lodging and transportation, if necessary. **Registration deadline is August 17.** There is limited seating and the conference will be on a first-come, first-served basis, so we encourage you to register now at:

<http://www.thehopeofsurvivors.com/registration.asp>

**Note:** There are no childcare services available for this conference.

Please visit the web site for more information about lodging and transportation:

<http://www.thehopeofsurvivors.com/calendar.asp>

### August 28-31, 2011

Ontario, CA—Pacific Union Conference Session & Ministerial Council

Ontario Convention Center  
2000 E. Convention Center Way  
Ontario, California 91764

The Hope of Survivors will be exhibiting at this convention Sunday—Wednesday, represented by volunteers Gail & Elgin Jenkins.

### August 29, 2011

Redding, CA—Fundraising Event  
Prime 11 Cinemas—Monday Sponsorship Program  
Arranged by The Hope of Survivors' volunteers, Peggy and Dave Mahrt, The Hope of Survivors will be the recipient of a portion of funds collected at Prime 11 Cinemas (<http://www.primecinemas.com/mondaysponsor07.html>) during the day. If you're in the area, please plan to participate in this fundraising event.

*Hope & Healing* victim's conferences are currently being considered in various locations (i.e., Long Island, NY; Jacksonville, FL; etc.) and will be scheduled when funds become available to conduct such programs.

To schedule or sponsor a conference in your area, call (866) 260-8958. Check our web site for additional details and the most current information.  
[www.TheHopeOfSurvivors.com](http://www.TheHopeOfSurvivors.com)



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HOPE  
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