

Hope SPEAK

Dear Hope of Survivors Family,



As many of you know, The Hope of Survivors had an exhibit booth at the 59th Annual General Conference Session, held every five years on behalf of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. There were 69,989 people (the official count on July 3)—from every conceivable country around the world—who passed through the exhibit

halls in Atlanta, Georgia, and many of those individuals passed by our booth. We distributed over 7,000 of our new educational booklets and spoke to about three dozen victims who had discovered The Hope of Survivors—and hope—for the first time as they passed by the booth. We were fortunate enough to be able to speak to many victims, pray with some and direct others to the additional resources available on the website.

The Lord truly blessed our outreach and awareness efforts and we had an overwhelmingly positive response from nearly everyone who stopped to find out what the ministry was all about. This should be encouraging to all, not just victims. This means more and more people are becoming aware of the prevalence of pastoral sexual abuse and recognize the need to do something about it. We were also blessed by several live and recorded TV interviews (Good News, MissionTV and Adventist Missions—ASI).

This was also the first time we had numerous individuals ask to be a part of the ministry and volunteer to serve in some capacity—a definite answer to prayer, as we are quite short-staffed and under-funded.

You can expect to see new faces and hear from new volunteers in the coming weeks.

I would like to



share with you some of the feedback we received, from a few of our volunteers, as well as some of the people who stopped by the booth:

“I had the privilege of attending the General Conference Session in Atlanta for three days, working with Steve and Samantha for The Hope of Survivors ministry. Not only were we able to help educate, talk about prevention, and raise awareness about the issue of pastoral sexual abuse, we were able to talk to several victims as well. To see the impact our discussions had upon them, and having them realize the possibility of real hope for the pain they had suffered, touched us all. The Hope of Survivors provides a much-needed ministry and I am blessed to have been a part of it.” —Sandy Kirkham, Victim Support Services & Member of the Advisory Panel

“I wanted to let you know how very blessed I was to volunteer at The Hope of Survivors Booth in Atlanta. Meeting the first victim of Clergy Sexual Abuse that

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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.

came to the booth made it all worthwhile. Even though it broke my heart to hear of her story, it also gave me great joy to know that she walked away with information to help her heal from the devastation of what she went through. Also, the hundreds [which later became over 7,000] of brochures we handed out to educate others on Clergy Sexual Abuse. I was amazed at all the positive responses from those that stopped by the booth and how much everyone could see the need for your ministry. Sadly, there is this great need but what a wonderful thing to “leave the ninety nine and reach out to the one lost.” This is exactly what your ministry does. This is truly a mission field right in your own backyard. In everyone’s backyard really. The church should be a place of healing, not of harm. How very admirable for you to pick up the slack where so many churches should have and in many cases have not. The first word that came to me when I met you was ‘humble.’ You are, and I am excited to see what God is going to do with this ministry and hopefully through me, too, as I want to move forward and help where I can. May God continue to bless you as you go forth to do His will. You are truly God’s voice to the voiceless. I came to Atlanta to give to others and, really, I was the one who went away blessed.”—Wendy Schwitzer, Victim Support Services, Canada



“I will never forget my time spent at the General Conference Session in Atlanta, Georgia. I spent three days handing out brochures, DVDs, and business cards for The Hope of Survivors at their booth in the exhibit hall. But it was more than just handing out brochures. It was about connecting with people. It was about doing our part to spread the love of God throughout the world through ministry and love. It was also about breaking the silence and the stigma associated with pastoral sexual abuse. There were literally tens of thousands of people from all over the world who visited the booth—most of them supportive, some not. I had the opportunity to hear real-life stories of people who have been a victim or know a victim of pastoral misconduct and hear how The Hope of Survivors is just what they need in their lives to help them heal. It opened my eyes even more to see that this is an issue that impacts thousands of people every day and it needs to be addressed and dealt with. I am very

Here are some of the more frequently heard comments we received at the General Conference:

“Happy to see this booth is here!”

“The church needs to acknowledge this happens and do something about it.”

“Much useful!”—Australia

“Very important!”

“This is so necessary.”

“I’m so glad you’re doing this ministry!”

“You’re very bold, brave and courageous for doing this. I commend you.”—U.S.

“It’s good to see a ministry addressing this. It’s long overdue.”

“Very powerful!”

“This is the most powerful form of evangelism!”—Canada

“It’s [pastoral sexual abuse] a crime!”—Pastor

“Good topic.”

“It’s repulsive, but it happens.”—NY

“That’s great. You’re doing a great job.”

“I’m so tickled you’re here. I’ve been praying for someone to talk to.”—Victim

“This is so prevalent in our church. It’s a very important work you’re doing.”

“This is very real, but we don’t hear much about it.”

“This is REAL!”—Pastor from NY

“Muy bien. Es necesario.”

“Can I have another brochure?”

“How can I get involved?”

“We need this in the church.”

“This is a bigger issue in our church than most want to admit.”

“We need more people willing to speak out about this issue. It is so prevalent in our churches.”

“I’m glad to see our church doing something about this. We’ve been in denial too long, thinking this doesn’t happen in our church.”



honored and proud to say I was there to help reach people and impact people's lives through this ministry."—Heather Brockett, Executive Assistant

One experience that stands out in my mind is when a woman approached Steve and handed him a donation. He thought she must have talked with me previously, but she had not. In fact, she had not even received a brochure

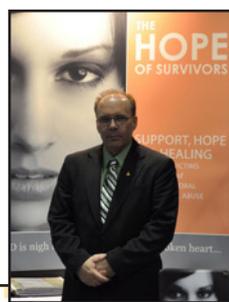
from The Hope of Survivors. When I was finished speaking with someone else, she told Steve she wanted to give me a hug. As she did, she whispered in my ear. "There are more of us than you realize. Keep up the good work!"

As you can see, God really blessed our efforts to raise awareness of The Hope of Survivors and the issue of pastoral sexual abuse. We look forward to seeing what great things are in store for the future! Thank you all for your prayers and financial support—you make it possible for The Hope of Survivors to continue to bind up the broken-hearted and restore people's faith and trust in the Lord.

In His service,

Samantha Nelson

Samantha Nelson
Vice President & CEO



Overcoming Dysfunctional 'Forgiveness'

—Martin Weber, D.Min., Board Chairman

"Just forgive your pastor! After all, nobody's perfect. So quit holding grudges and move on with your life."

Many victims of clergy sexual abuse find themselves scolded like that from church members who feel a mistaken obligation to shelter a predator pastor. Usually this comes after months of denying that anything happened, while often blaming the victim for making up lies.

When the evidence of pastoral sex becomes undeniable, the next step is to blame the victim for being responsible, entrapping their beloved "man of God." (Never mind the obvious fact that any man who cannot keep his clothes on in the counseling room when counseling vulnerable people is not qualified to serve in the clergy profession, whatever his talents may be or his knowledge of Scripture.)

The inevitable next step in the dysfunctional behavior of an enabling church is to sweep the pastor's guilt under the church carpet in the spirit of "forgiveness"—often without even the pretention of church discipline. They consider this attitude "being like Jesus."

Actually, the "Jesus" they worship is not found in the Bible.

Our Savior did not live in denial, pretending that nothing really happens to victims. Nor was Jesus an enabler of evildoers or the protector of their corrupt religious systems.

Time after time in the Gospels, we see Jesus exposing evil and evildoers: "Nothing is covered up that shall not be revealed, or hidden that will not be known" (Luke 10:21). Jesus also declares that those who abuse His children will have a huge millstone hung around their necks and then drowned in the depths of the sea (see Matthew 18:6). This is a metaphor of the predator's final damnation.

Of course, God is always willing to forgive anyone for anything through the blood of Christ's sacrifice on the cross. But when abusers and their enablers refuse to confess and come clean about what happened—hiding sin or even defiantly declaring innocence—the message

"Nothing is covered up that shall not be revealed, or hidden that will not be known."

—Luke 10:21

to them is: “God opposes [literally, ‘wages war’ against] the proud, but gives grace to the humble” (1 Peter 5:5). “Whoever conceals his sins shall not prosper, but whoever confesses and forsakes them shall have mercy” (Proverbs 28:13).

Evidently there can be no genuine closure without disclosure.

But what happens when the predator—or his enablers—refuses full disclosure? What can you, the victim of abuse, do at this point?

Having made your own disclosure to church leaders who refuse to support you, it now becomes possible for you to seek personal closure and healing without them. Even if your best friends refused to believe you and stand up for you (which qualifies them as former friends now), you are capable of moving on with the rest of your life.

What does this mean? Here are some specific, practical suggestions:

After giving up hope of reconciliation with a dysfunctional church family, the next step is to find trustworthy spiritual support. This begins with a qualified Christian counselor, who understands biblical principles of healing. If none of your former Christian friends is supportive, pray for new friends of faith. Perhaps you are not yet ready to find another church home, but meanwhile you need a small circle of supportive women who love you, understand you and will pray with you. (Check out The Hope of Survivors on Facebook!)

Having secured a new spiritual support base, some victims then seek the help of civil authorities. In two of America’s 50 states (Texas and Minnesota), clergy sexual activity with a parishioner is actually a crime in which the predator can be prosecuted. All 50 states have at least some provision for clergy abuse victims to seek legal remedy. Whether it is worth the trauma to you of confronting your abuser in court is a matter only you can decide. Legal action is sometimes necessary to reclaim your losses in paying for counseling, job retraining, relocation or other expenses necessitated by abuse from a clergy predator and his conspiratorial church system. (The Hope of Survivors will not attempt to give advice

in legal matters, but we are always here to pray with you.)

The goal here is not revenge but closure.

The reason you don’t have to seek your own vengeance against the predator is that God has promised to take care of it for you: “Vengeance is mine,” says the Lord, “I will repay” (Romans 12:19). Indeed He will! Remember the millstone necklace from Jesus that has your predator’s name written on it.

Consider the secular judicial system in all 50 states: If a felony is committed against me, it’s “the state of the Nebraska against Martin’s abuser.” The government (of which I am a citizen) takes ownership of prosecuting the offender. I don’t have that role, whether I would desire it or not. I must release my offender from my personal vengeance and step back to let the authorities perform their judicial responsibility—not only on my behalf but also for the common good of society. And since my government is watching over my rights, I am free to resume my life under the provision of its protection.

So abuse victims have no role in either determining the guilt of the accused or executing punishment in some type of “street justice.” Our responsibility is to release the attacker to face whatever the government may want to do with him, and go about the business of living again. This is not yet grace on our part—as law-abiding citizens, we are simply respecting the sovereign role of government.

“God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble.” —1 Peter 5:5



Now as Christians, let’s consider the grace of God at this point. With our lives secure in the hands of One who is both just and merciful, we are free to experience healing to the point that we no longer worry about whether the perpetrator will be punished. We can even pray for his rehabilitation, hoping that he can experience the same grace that we need and receive from God every day.

This does not mean we should put ourselves in a position to be re-victimized by trying to rescue him. We are not his messiah, any more than we are his judge.

How do we forgive him? By releasing him entirely to God and not seeking our personal vengeance against him. We want him to get on with his life—such as it may need to be in order to keep him from hurting anybody else again (including us). Whether he repents and reforms is between

him and God. Meanwhile, we are focused on moving on with our own lives and looking to God to work it all out for good.

What kind of good can come from evil done to us? Lots of it, including but not limited to the following:

- We are now able to offer empathy to others who have been abused, which is far more comforting to them than mere sympathy.
- We are equipped through our experience to help others know how to find healing by explaining to them all of the above and guiding them through their own journey.
- The righteous indignation that we may feel about abuse can now be channeled into redemptive mission—primarily to others who have been victimized.

In cases of sexual abuse, we need to release the perpetrator to God and those whom He has appointed to have authority over their prosecution and possible recovery (depending upon their attitude). It is usually wise for us to be entirely removed from this process, for at least two reasons:

- The perpetrator needs to know that the game is over for him; he needs to be put on the other end of the power imbalance—firmly (yet fairly) dealt with by those who have authority. Any contact with his victim may re-awaken those proclivities to re-abuse the power he had (or still can manipulate) over that person.
- For the sake of the victim, the perpetrator must be out of sight and out of mind, so healing influences can take over.

This involves the victim not being obsessed with him any longer, either to seek evil or good to come upon him. To seek evil would be to keep our focus on the perpetrator instead of that which can help us heal. But trying to rescue the perpetrator would also keep the focus on him. Others (non-victims) are better positioned to help him get his life turned around.

“And since God is for us, who can be against us?” —Romans 8:31

Victims must release their abusers to God so completely that they do not even make it their responsibility to keep holding them up in prayer. Others who are not at risk of being re-victimized can pray for the predators. Besides, God—without anyone’s intervention or intercession—is fully able to save anyone who is willing to repent.

It’s quite possible that keeping the abuser as a prayer interest is a subtle way of not letting go of him, hanging on to one last vestige of the old abusive and possibly addictive relationship. Even if that’s not the intent of the victim, for her to make herself the perpetrator’s “prayer warrior” is to give him an opportunity to worm his way back into her life—if not in reality than at least in her nightmares (or her wishful thinking to get back to the good old days when he was your “friend” instead of your enemy).

To safeguard themselves from re-abuse, I urge victims to surround themselves with exclusively healing influences and move on with their lives. When they are healed enough to reach out with their own healing hand from God, let it be in empathetic ministry to fellow victims rather than to reconnect with their perpetrator.

Well, I’ve spent almost the whole day writing this and there is a lot of stuff piling up on my desk that I’d better deal with.

But first I would like to share one last thing, if I may. Please remember that even if you feel all alone right now, thousands of others are sharing your suffering. With Jesus on your side, you are not victims anymore or even mere survivors—you are conquerors! “And since God is for us, who can be against us?” (Romans 8:31).

“I pray for God’s continued blessings for you [Martin] and THOS. You have been God’s blessing to us—the face and heart of our Adventist church. God knew we could not bear this without your ministry.”—FL

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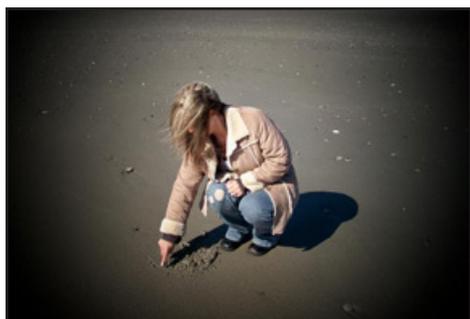
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Relentless

—Sabrina Satterfield



Have you ever felt no matter what you did or said it would be turned around to hurt you? The harder you tried to fix something the

more out of hand it became... You get tired of the shame and guilt, and hopelessness becomes so overwhelming you feel numb but aching all over at the same time. Your mind stays in a deep confusion and panic takes over every time you step out the door. The same type of car he drives, or the road leading to the place of connection gives you a deep longing for truth, love, and happiness to return to you. The powerlessness you feel to take it all back knowing in your heart you will never have that chance. The relentlessness of Pastoral Sexual Abuse brings broken dreams, misguided trust, lost relationships, and the ever-amounting rejection that comes from the separation of it all.

I always considered myself strong enough to stand on my own two feet.

I was married before I was 17 to my best friend and a good man. We had a marriage that was strong. We struggled with having children. I had a stillborn, two miscarriages and our fourth child was born early but ok and our fifth very healthy. I was left with some kidney problems and doctors decided it best for us to stop trying for any more children. It was difficult realizing my body just was not able to carry a child like most women. We saw our heartaches very early and at a young age we had a very stable relationship.

We tried getting into the ministry many times but, due to my husband's inability to read, it seemed like we were always pushed aside. We tried pastoring because my husband felt he was called into it right after our son died. After many attempts we went to just sit at a local church and then ended up being asked to leave there as well due to a big misunderstanding.

I had been judged by a pastor as being "difficult and trying to find reasons to leave." So we left and started our journey to find our 'new home'. The first church we tried for three months prior to leaving we decided to go to because the pastor was known for church planting. My husband had a meeting with him, shared his vision on church planting, and the pastor gave him a choice

to come under him and learn, or he could go ahead and place him somewhere. My husband knew we could use some more training so we decided to stay. We had tried pastoring twice before and it ended harshly.

After being at the church for almost a year, I was asked to work closely with the pastors. I can remember being so scared of failing them I couldn't even open mints to hand to one of them. My self-esteem has always been low but, at this point, I was at my lowest. I was so tired of failing and I felt that all I had ever done was fail. I wanted to please them so bad. After, about six months I was sat down and told I was mean, territorial and emotionally unstable. I was told by the leader over me to be aggressive toward people that came near the pastor's wife because she was pregnant with twins. I later took the fall for just doing what I was asked to do. I was told I made them look bad and, as soon as I could get my act together, I could come back to serve. I was devastated. I went into a deep depression because all I wanted to do is serve them well and my best efforts were treated as if they were nothing.

After two years, I decided to throw myself fully into pursuing them to gain the relationship needed for them to cover us if we go out. I truly just wanted a chance to serve them and prove I could because I felt I had let them down. My kidney was showing signs of failure again and I had to lose some weight in order to help it work properly. Also, my wisdom tooth was pulled and I had dry socket for two weeks. Well, the pastor finally started treating me like I had something to offer. My dad started buying him cows and he would ask me to help with them; I had knowledge in the area. I gave him my dad's number but he would always call me. The pastor would get me to come to his home while no one else was there, and he would call me all throughout the day just to talk or do business about the cows.

Then he started telling me he liked my clothes or I looked good from losing weight. I felt a little uncomfortable, but also flattered he noticed the small things. My husband and I were not communicating very well because he wanted to plant a church and the pastor just ignored him about it. So, the pastor and I started joking around and becoming friends. We were to go on a mission trip—the pastor, myself, one couple and another man. When we arrived there and were settled the advances started more heavily. We ended up starting an improper verbal relationship that week while on the trip. We spent a lot of time by ourselves at night. He wanted to know about my sex life and also tried to get me to watch porn with him.

When we came home he would call me more often, and I texted a great deal. I couldn't talk about it face to face comfortably because I felt I was disrespecting him as my pastor. So I would text most of the time. He

would tell me what he would like to see me do and I would take pictures for him. Then I became dependant on him. I felt I needed him to comfort me, and build me up. I got to the place I fell for him. I became more comfortable talking sexual to him. I started hating being with my own husband due to the pastor wanting me to think of him while with my husband. This man awakened something in me I had not felt in a long time—that I was desirable. He made me feel like I could have better and I deserved him because I took all the resistance they threw at me and still stayed. He said I was so loyal I would do anything for them. I was so confused.

He tried to counsel my husband and me all the while telling my husband he couldn't give me what I needed and he could affirm me because he was my pastor. My husband and I, by this point, were fighting all the time and he even became abusive to me because I had changed so much. I was constantly over at the pastor's house doing for him, while my own family suffered. My boys would ask me, "how could you like being at their home more than your own?"

We were on our way to the lake and my pastor called, wanting me to tell my husband he could show him how to do me better sexually. My husband became furious at me for allowing the pastor to talk to him in such a fashion because, by this point, he was doing it on a regular basis to show my husband he could have me. Then he read some of our texts and found out we were involved in an improper relationship. He stepped down out of the children's pastor position and threatened to tell everyone if the pastor didn't leave me alone. I was later sat down by his wife out of the children's ministry because she said my husband had issues with her husband and she had to protect him.

Then the pastor started making sure I knew I should protect him at all cost to myself, which I did. I wanted to please him and prove I was loyal. He sent us to someone inside the church to help us with our marriage because he realized he was too close. My husband told the man everything and, after talking with the lady, I wanted to as well. I called him to feel him out and asked if he had said anything and he began saying his wife would hate me and I should be very afraid to go there.

Then he began to switch—telling me *they* loved me instead of *he* loved me. He started saying they were just trying to help our marriage and us. He started making

me feel like it was just me and I was the only one doing anything. I knew something bad was fixing to happen. I felt powerless; everything I tried to do to fix things just made them worse. The guilt of the relationship was overwhelming. I would try to talk to him about asking my husband to forgive us so he would come back to church, and the pastor would say, "don't go there." Then some ladies from the church asked me to go out with them. They told me the pastor was saying things in staff meetings, when asked why weren't we the children's pastors anymore, like, "I had a crush on him, I had issues, and they were trying to help me out." My heart sank and I told them some things we had done and he had done to my husband. I WAS EMOTIONAL AND HEART BROKEN. I felt deceived and the pain was relentless.

Then, when I went home, I told my husband everything my pastor and I had done. My husband just cried out, "this man calls himself my spiritual father and yet he has deceived me like this?!" He went to church that Sunday and confronted him. The pastor started yelling

at me, "what did you tell them?" (talking about the ladies), and my husband asked him nicely twice to not disrespect me like that. The pastor refused and my husband flew at him. The pastor didn't mind disrespecting me in front of others. One comment on the mission trip was, "Sabrina you're so submissive if I told you to get on your knees and lick water off the floor you would, because you won't tell me no." After they settled down, the pastor blamed us and told us he would let us know if we could come back after he'd told his wife that I'd told.

Later, that day I tried to kill myself, and they were having a staff meeting to let them know what had happened and why. He stated in the meeting, "he felt trapped." I had a very hard time

with that statement, knowing how it all happened and why it stopped. I went—after getting out of the hospital the next week—and got drunk, I had never drunk before in my life but I felt so broken and so much despair from everything.

Then, a friend introduced me to The Hope of Survivors...

The stories on THOS website sounded just like ours.

continued on page 9...

Rejected?

Isaiah 53:3; Mark 8:31; Luke 17:25

Degraded or humiliated?

Matthew 27:30-31

Shamed?

Matthew 27:28-29

Suffered for another's sake?

Philippians 1:29; Galatians 6:2

Will you let God help?

Psalms 40:17; 42:5

I Will Not Be Silent Anymore

—Wendy Schwitzer, Victim Support Services, Canada

I struggle with telling my story. I have tried to tell it many times only to erase all that I have written. Today I will not be silent anymore. In 2003, I was sexually violated by my married pastor. This form of violation is one of the worst kinds because it not only affects you physically, but emotionally, financially, mentally and, mostly, spiritually. I have had to separate church from God in order to keep a relationship with God. I lost my identity. It affected my identity because being a Christian is how I defined myself. Really my identity was stolen.

Right before this time in my life, while I was travelling in Israel, I heard God speaking these words to me (no, not in an audible voice, but in that still, small voice that one hears when they have a relationship with Him) “You are as innocent as a dove.” I never knew why He was saying this to me or why I had heard this. Now I think it was because He knew what was about to happen and in all His love He wanted me to know that it was not my fault.

I now know the grooming that was done on me in order for this sacred, trusted, boundary line to be crossed. Grooming creates desensitization. Dictionary definition: “To make insensitive and non reactive by long exposure or repeated shocks.” There are different degrees of grooming, some done over years. Grooming is done through actions and with words. This pastor would shock me, not only in action but also with words and then back those words up with scripture. He would twist scripture in answer to every question I had. This left me confused.

This type of abuse, Clergy Sexual Abuse, is very hard to get out of. As women we need to talk to someone and, because we feel like we cannot tell anyone, we go back to the only person we can talk to and that is the abuser himself. That is how they keep you in it. Shame wanted to cover me but the anger inside of me took precedence and I was a fighter. Once I was free from this very controlling, manipulative, narcissistic pastor, and found The Hope of Survivors ministry, my healing began.

Even after this, I would still often question God about His words of me being innocent. Many times I would

say to God, “Why, if I was innocent as a dove, why was I not also as shrewd as a snake?” I was referring to the scripture in the Bible that says, “be as shrewd as snakes and as innocent as doves.” (NIV) God remained silent but I continued to ask him the same question over and over. One day I was at my kitchen sink doing the dishes and casually asked that same question. All of a sudden I heard these words: “Because you never knew you had to be as shrewd as a snake **IN** my synagogue.” I stopped what I was doing and ran to get my Bible. I turned to the scripture in Matthew 10:16 and read these words:

*“I am sending you **OUT** like sheep among wolves. Therefore be as shrewd as snakes and as innocent as doves.”*

There it was. The wolves are thought to be outside, not inside, let alone in the pulpit. A church is a place where you let down your guard, let your vulnerabilities surface around those you consider to be family. A place that should be the safest place on earth. A place of refuge. I trusted this pastor. I attended this small church for 10 years as a single mom. He was married, his daughter was one of my best friends and he called us sisters. He was 15 years older than me, and a spiritual father figure in my life. He

was my counselor and I trusted him. I was sexually abstinent the whole time I attended this church. I was living my life for God, whom I love with all my heart, soul and strength. It never once crossed my mind that this pastor was grooming me in order to abuse me. People think grooming happens only to children in Catholic churches but that is not true. It is also happening to women in churches of all denominations. This pastor told other senior pastors, “he fell into temptation.” That is also not true. He would never in a million years have gotten close to me if he had not put me through a grooming process. I trusted someone I should not have trusted.

Here I am today. Seven years have gone by and I still have a very hard time walking into a church. Some Christian songs, some scripture and partaking in communion bring me triggers. I listen to others’ stories, some worse than mine, and I know that I need to speak out. Our churches need to change. It is because these pastors are not held accountable that they continue to abuse. Other pastors and leaders, those with integrity, need to do the right thing by not allowing these pastors to continue to hold these trusted

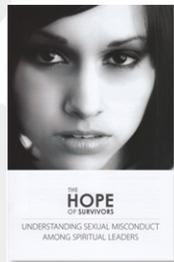


positions of power. Their license should be revoked immediately, never to be reinstated again.

I will not be silent anymore. I will speak to those who are willing to listen. I will be a voice for the voiceless, for those who cannot find their own voice. This is not the end of my story. I know the greatness of my God and the love He has for all those that have been through this. I know my God is a God of justice, truth and freedom. I can say today that God once again has given me peace and a joy that can only come from Him. If you have been through Clergy Sexual Abuse, this is not the end of your story either, God can and will bring you through!

The Hope of Survivors welcomes Wendy Schwitzer as the newest member of our volunteer staff. In June 2010, she became the victim support services representative for victims in Canada. She also helps with victims from other localities as needed.

New Resource!



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>

Relentless, continued from page 7...

They had very detailed information on *Why me? What happened to me? Fact vs. Lies*, etc. I was able to feel hope again. It made me realize I am not alone, and it's not my fault. Also, it taught me about being groomed for this relationship, and I was able to recognize the grooming that took place early on. The part on *Consequences of Abuse* let me know why I felt I needed to die. THOS helped me deal with my shame, regret, powerlessness, and deceit. It helped me when confessing my sin. The lies I told to cover and protect the improper relationship. The scriptures were awesome in showing me God forgives me, and loves me. This helped when all the relationships I thought I had left to cover the pastor. I have THOS to thank for leading me to recovery.

Testimonials

"So great to see you guys are going to be in GEORGIA!!! :) I hope all is well w/you and w/the ministry. I still think of you from time to time and am still deeply grateful for your help in time of great need. I'll never forget staring at my computer screen in almost disbelief of what I was reading as I searched your website... that was when I was still grappling to believe that what I had experienced was truly abuse and NOT my fault. Praise God for His chasing after me and healing my wounded heart (from many things). Thanks again for all you do for the Kingdom in this much avoided issue. Keep pressing on!!"—GA

"Thanks for the support...it makes a difference talking to other victims compared to a mate, family, or friends. I don't think anyone can understand what we're experiencing until they've walked in our shoes!"—MN [comment made to Heather Brown, Victim Support Services volunteer for The Hope of Survivors]

continued on page 10...

How Can I Help?

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)

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**. Just be sure to type The Hope of Survivors in the charity to be supported box.

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

Thank you for supporting The Hope of Survivors!

Calendar of Events

July 31

Thompsonville, IL—Abuse Prevention Emphasis Day
 Time: 11:00am; 7:00pm
 Thompsonville Seventh-day Adventist Church (also known as the 3ABN Community Center)
 3577 Angel Lane
 Thompsonville, IL 62890

Do not miss the Abuse Prevention Emphasis Day sermon being presented by Steve Nelson at the Thompsonville Seventh-day Adventist Church. **There will be also be a benefit concert at 7:00pm.** You will hear testimonies from victims of pastoral sexual abuse and learn more about the work of the ministry around the world. Proceeds will benefit The Hope of Survivors and its outreach projects.

Hope & Healing victim's conferences are currently being considered in various locations (i.e., Indianapolis, IN; 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

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



Immediate Needs...

- Reprinting of new educational booklet (\$4,000)
- Printing of new educational booklet in SPANISH (\$4,000)
- Donations to offset the current budget deficit (\$12,000)
- Monthly operating expenses (postage, office supplies, utilities, printing, etc.), staff, educational materials and victim assistance
- *Hope & Healing* (victim's) conference expenses (meeting space rental, meals, travel, materials, etc.)

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.

Testimonials, continued from page 9...

"I am taking a moment ... to tell you how much I have appreciated your website and the quality of material you have made available. I myself have pastored for over 20 years and see the real need for this information as I have, indeed, everyone has, sadly, seen men fall. There is a great need today for an aggressive training of men to be true men of God by leadership—starting in their theological training. I looked at the compilation you put together from the book Christian Service, chpt. 24 on your website and feel that that is a very good place to start. May God continue to bless and honor your ministry as you honor Him with it."—Dave M.

THE
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P.O. Box 27, Effingham, IL 62401