

# MINUTE FOR MISSION

## ONE IN EVERY THREE

Here is a statistic you may find shocking and sad, but when you think about what we know about our troubled world, even our own community, it may not be as surprising as it should be.

The United Nations reports that violence against women and girls is one of the most prevalent human rights violations in the world. One in every three women worldwide will experience physical or sexual abuse in her lifetime. Gender-based violence knows no social, economic or national boundaries.

These are our daughters, our mothers, our sisters. Not only are they hurting, but in many cases so are children exposed to this violence. And make no mistake, gender-based violence extends beyond the physical pain. Trauma can, and usually does, permeate every aspect of life.

Our General Assembly encourages us to become active participants in the church's mission of healing and preventing sexual violence. God is calling us to act, to do what we can to ease this pain, and many are answering that call, encouraging peace at all times, in all ways (2 Thess. 3:16). Presbyterians at all levels of the church are involved in ministries that deal with the trauma inflicted by gender-based violence. They strive for the empowerment and equality of women and girls with help from the Peace & Global Witness Offering.

At the national level, resources with the tools for effective and compassionate action were created to help congregations deal with this violence that can directly affect their members. *Striking Terror No More: The Church Responds to Domestic Violence*, includes background articles on the issue, material for group study, and worship resources. *Anguished Hearts*, another publication, focuses on healing after violence has occurred. Each year, the Presbyterian Ministry at the United Nations facilitates PC(USA) involvement in the UN Commission on the Status of Women, helping shape global standards on the empowerment of women.

The National Presbyterian Church of Guatemala is facilitating men's groups called Men in the Mirror, encouraging men to challenge the prevalent machismo culture. The groups hope to build appreciation for women, thus diminishing domestic violence and creating better opportunities for women in church and society. The Presbytery of Western North Carolina has long been a partner of the Guatemala church and has an active role with Men in the Mirror.

Every year, when asked about the locally retained portion of Offering funds, many congregations say they seek to address the abuse of women and children more than any other issue that affects — let me say this again — one in every three women. One in every three. Whose face do you see when you hear the words “one in every three?”

[DOES YOUR CONGREGATION SUPPORT DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SURVIVORS?  
TALK ABOUT IT HERE...]

Please give generously to the Peace & Global Witness Offering. When we all do a little, it adds up to a lot.

### *Let Us Pray ~*

*All are welcome and honored at your table,*

*O Lord.*

*In the ways that abuse passes without*

*notice or care, we ask forgiveness.*

*May we work for a world in which*

*every woman and girl knows*

*the promise you intend for their lives*

*through our gifts to the*

*Peace & Global Witness Offering.*

**Amen.**