

Healing and Hope

Intimate Partner Violence, Sexual Harassment, Domestic Violence, and Childhood Sexual Abuse leave deep wounds and harmful scars that keep people from living fully into all that God intends. Victims need opportunities to safely process and heal from shame and related issues. Victims find their voices and learn to speak up with courage.

Safe Sanctuaries, Healing Communities

Through Advocacy for Victims of Abuse (AVA) and Mending the Soul (MTS), congregations become safe sanctuaries and healing communities where the wounds of abuse are dealt with, so people can flourish and grow into healthy disciples of Jesus Christ. AVA and Mending the Soul are open to all persons.

*He has sent me to bind
up the brokenhearted,
to proclaim freedom for
the captives and release
from darkness for the
prisoners.* Isaiah 61:1

MENDING
THE SOUL



Healing *the broken hearted*

AVA (Advocacy for Victims of Abuse) is a ministry providing education, awareness, and support for persons dealing with Intimate Partner Violence, Sexual Harassment, Domestic Violence, and Childhood Sexual Abuse. It is offered by Women Ministries/Make and Deepen Disciples of the Evangelical Covenant Church.

Mending the Soul (MTS) is a healing ministry for those impacted by all forms of abuse. Trained facilitators lead scripture-based healing support groups that empower individuals to face the pain and damage of their abuse and find restoration and health in Jesus Christ, so they can experience the abundant and full life Jesus describes. "I have come that they may have life and have it to the full." (John 10:10)

*He gave them power
to kick out evil spirits
and to tenderly care
for the bruised and
hurt lives.* Matthew 10:1



The Evangelical Covenant Church
MAKE AND DEEPEN DISCIPLES

8303 W. Higgins Rd., Chicago, IL 60631
Phone: (773) 784-3000 Web: CovChurch.org

National Domestic Violence Hotline: (800) 923-0700

 women
ministries

AVA and
Mending
the Soul



The Problem of Abuse

- ◆ A woman is battered by her husband or intimate partner every 15 seconds.
- ◆ A report of child abuse is made every 10 seconds.
- ◆ Two to four million women are abused each year; 4,000 die.
- ◆ Every year, 1.3 million women and 835,000 men are physically assaulted by an intimate partner in the United States.
- ◆ One in 4 girls and 1 in 6 boys are sexually abused before age 18.
- ◆ More than 90 percent of juvenile sexual abuse victims know their perpetrator in some way.
- ◆ About 30 percent of abused and neglected children will later abuse their own children, continuing the horrible cycle of abuse.
- ◆ Women with symptoms of depression are 2.5 times more likely to experience domestic violence over their lifetimes than the general population.
- ◆ Those with anxiety disorders were more than 3-5 times more likely to have suffered domestic abuse. The extra risk grew to 7 times more likely among those with post-traumatic stress disorder.

What is abuse?

Abuse is a systematic pattern of behaviors in a relationship that is used to gain and/or maintain power and control over another. It can include intimidation, fear, harassment, humiliation, degradation, agitation, disorientation, or other forms of serious emotional distress, as well as the forcing of undesired, uninvited sexual behavior.

What are the kinds of abuse?

- ◆ Harassment
- ◆ Physical Abuse
- ◆ Emotional Abuse
- ◆ Verbal Abuse
- ◆ Economic Abuse
- ◆ Mental Abuse
- ◆ Sexual Abuse
- ◆ Spiritual Abuse

Who are the abused?

Women, children, men, older adults, churchgoers, Bible-believers, anyone who has been harassed, exploited or mistreated—persons of all ages experience abuse.

Why deal with abuse in the church?

Abuse damages the image of God in its victims causing shame, guilt, and feelings of worthlessness and self-loathing. These block the fullness of life and flourishing God intends. God calls the Church to develop communities of love and truth in Jesus Christ who offers healing, hope, and freedom from guilt and shame. God also calls us to defend the marginalized and speak up for the voiceless.

Ending abuse together

AVA (Advocacy for Victims of Abuse) and Mending the Soul (MTS) are for women and men alike. Training is available for any qualified person, and congregations with effective AVA and MTS ministries have both women's and men's groups working simultaneously.

MTS facilitates healing through small groups conducted by trained facilitators using scripture, journaling, confidential sharing, and prayer.

Training available for churches, individuals and teams:

- ◆ AVA Local Advocate
- ◆ AVA Regional Coordinator
- ◆ Safe and Healthy Relationships
- ◆ What Pastors Need to Know About Abuse
- ◆ Mending the Soul Facilitator Training
- ◆ Faith Issues for Survivors of Childhood Sexual Abuse
- ◆ The Faith Community and Domestic Violence
- ◆ Why AVA?
- ◆ Religious Roadblocks and Resources
- ◆ Breaking the Silence (Family Camps)

To schedule a training, email wmc@CovChurch.org or visit CovChurch.org/abuse.