



It is not enemies who taunt me – I could bear that; it is not adversaries who deal insolently with me – I could hide from them. But it is you, my equal, my companion, my familiar friend, with whom I kept pleasant company; we walked in the house of God with the throng.

Psalms 55:12-14

INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE

is a pattern of coercive, intimidating or violent behavior used to control an intimate partner.

1 in 4 women and **1 in 7 men** in the U.S. have experienced **severe physical violence** from an intimate partner.¹

In 2010, **534 U.S. soldiers** were killed by **hostile action** or **homicide**.²

In the same year, **1,336 U.S. citizens** were killed by an **intimate partner**.³



1 in 5 teenage girls has experienced physical or sexual abuse by a dating partner.⁴

Intimate partner violence **denies** the goodness of each human created in God's image and **violates** the freedom and joy we have in Christ.

WE ARE ALL CALLED ...

to recognize the image of God in every person and to love, serve, and care for our neighbors. We are called to:

- recognize, name and root out intimate partner violence and abuse in our church and communities;
- provide care and create safe communities for healing; and
- learn about intimate partner violence and abuse.

Adapted from the ELCA Social Message, "Gender-based Violence" adopted by the 2015 Church Council.

TAKE ACTION

- Post information for local and national crisis hotlines in church restrooms.
- Find out if your community has a domestic violence shelter, and ask how you can help.
- Review your congregation's policies on prevention and safety.
- Learn more at faithtrustinstitute.org.
- Volunteer to lead an adult class in your congregation about the root causes of intimate partner violence. Find resources at ELCA.org/justiceforwomen.
- Start a conversation with a young person in your life about the difference between a healthy and unhealthy relationship.

IF YOU BELIEVE YOU MIGHT BE A VICTIM

- Trust your instincts. Seek help.
- The abuse is NOT your fault.
- You are not alone. Help is available.
- Talk in confidence with someone you trust: a relative, a friend or your pastor.
- Set up a safety plan of action for yourself and your children (i.e. hide a car key or money in a safe place; locate somewhere to go in case of emergency).

National Domestic Violence Hotline:

thehotline.org or 888-799-SAFE

(24/7, confidential, assistance available in English, Spanish, and 170 other languages)

¹ "National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey." Factsheet. 2010. www.nsvrc.org/publications/NISVS-2010-fact-sheet.

² www.dmdc.osd.mil/dcas/pages/report_by_year_manner.xhtml. Number includes all active-duty soldiers at home and abroad.

³ U.S. Dept. of Justice. Crime in the United States, 2010. Data table 10. www.bjs.gov/content/pub/pdf/cv10.pdf

⁴ 2012 National Data on Intimate Partner Violence. New York State Office for the Prevention of Domestic Violence. www.opdv.state.ny.us/.