

What you can do to help

The most admired heroes of any culture are those who have stood up to tyranny and oppression and fought for liberty and justice. Yet rarely have these acclaimed heroes battled alone, without weapons or troops of any sort, with children in tow, and with the enemy entrenched in their home, in their hearts, and sleeping in their beds. Yet these are exactly the extreme and painful conditions under which women all over the world set out to make their escapes from domestic violence.

Quote from —
<http://www.justicewomen.com/>

The struggle to escape an abusive relationship is heroic.

When you step up to support domestic violence victims and the shelters that help them, you become a hero too.

The MDUMC Hummingbird Ministry is dedicated to honoring domestic violence survivor's brave choice to end an abusive relationship by providing practical

support services to victims and area domestic violence shelters.

Ministry Opportunities

- **Attend a Hummingbird Ministry meeting — your ideas are needed**
- **Learn more about domestic abuse**
 - ◆ Attend seminars
 - ◆ Read books and articles
- **Volunteer professional services**
 - ◆ *Legal assistance (filing legal papers, navigating legal system, attend court dates with victim, legal representation, counseling)*
- **Financial support and donated items**
- **Event organization**



Memorial Drive United
Methodist Single's Ministry



Hummingbird
Ministry

Supporting Domestic Violence Survivors Through Christian Service — YOU CAN HELP

Every year over 180,000 incidents of domestic violence are reported. Many more go unreported. Over 100 women are killed by intimate male partners in Texas every year. Houston police alone answer an average of 155 abuse calls each month. These numbers likely only represent 1/5 of all domestic violence incidents.

Domestic violence cases occur in upscale neighborhoods, middle income communities, and in the poorest homes. Chances are you either have suffered abuse yourself or know someone who has.

Although ~12,000 adults and ~18,000 children found refuge in shelters, over 20% of domestic violence victims were turned away for lack of space at the most dangerous time of their lives.

It is the goal of the Hummingbird Ministry to provide resources to persons who have chosen to leave a violent relationship and rebuild their lives through partnership with local agencies.

Domestic Violence

An abusive relationship is about power and control.

Although there are no typical victims of domestic violence and all abusive relationships are not physically damaging, all abusive relationships share similar characteristics. In all cases, the abuser aims to exert power and control over his or her partner.

Although a lot of people think domestic violence is about anger, it really isn't. Batterers do tend to take their anger out on their intimate partner. But it's not really about anger. It's about trying to instill fear and wanting to have power and control in the relationship. It is a legacy that is passed from generation to generation.

Why victims stay in an abusive relationship:

- *Lack of awareness of services*

- *Fear of retaliation by the batterer—leaving an abuser can be the most dangerous time of an abused person's life*
- *Lack of financial resources*
- *Fear of losing custody of children*
- *Fear of not being believed*
- *Religious, family, or societal pressures*
- *Shame*
- *Denial*
- *Belief that the batterer will change*
- *Lack of support a network*
- *Cultural and ethnic/racial barriers*

Imagine what it is like:

You have left home after your significant other beat you up to stay in a shelter with other homeless people. When you get there you are issued a toothbrush, a towel, a washrag, a blanket, and assigned a bed. Because you had no time to pack, you have no clothes for you or your children, so the shelter allows you to go through donations. Most of the clothes are a little worn. If you are lucky, you will find something that fits.

You share community showers, community bathrooms, and a community kitchen. The shelter has a little food donated from the soup kitchen. You won't starve. There is a washer but no laundry soap. So you wash the few clothes you were given with dish detergent when it is available, just water when it isn't.

You look for a job and try to find an attorney to handle your divorce with no transportation, no childcare, and no money. The shelter helps you find an apartment, but you have no furniture, no dishes, no silverware, none of those domestic supplies that we all take for granted.

What would you do?

What would help you the most?

What would help you rebuild your life?

Who could you turn to?

With little or no resources, how long before you have to return to the abuser?