



# #MeToo, #ChurchToo

Exploring a Christian Response

Bonnie Nicholas, director, CRC Safe Church Ministry

# #MeToo

- Yes! This is bigger than we thought
- Yes! It affects the church
- Yes! Now is a watershed moment

Opportunity for the Church!



# God's Unique Image Bearers


1 in 4 girls; 1 in 6  
boys – **It's Not OK!**  
Imagine a world  
where there is no  
sexual abuse.





# The Church and its Mission

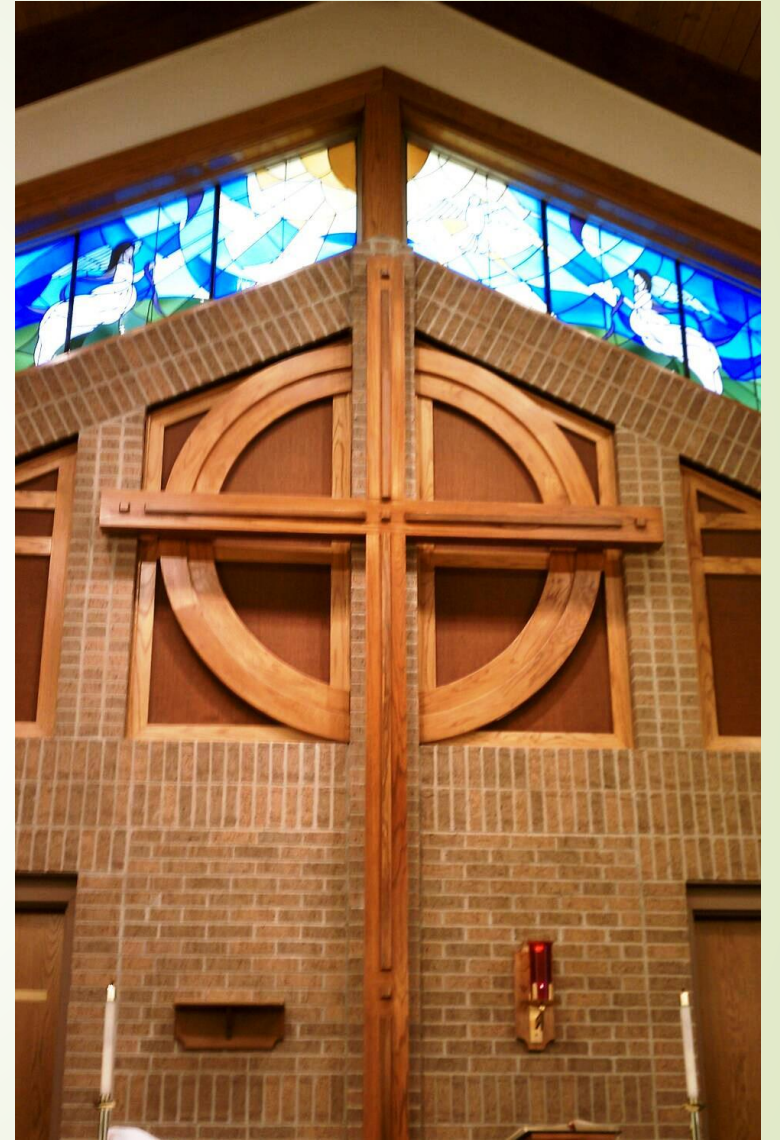
## Who is God calling us to be?

- A community that reflects God's character and love
  - Together, as one body of Christ
  - Together, as one temple where God's Spirit dwells
- 

# Jesus, Our Model

*“In your relationships with one another, have the same attitude of mind Christ Jesus had...”*

Philippians 2



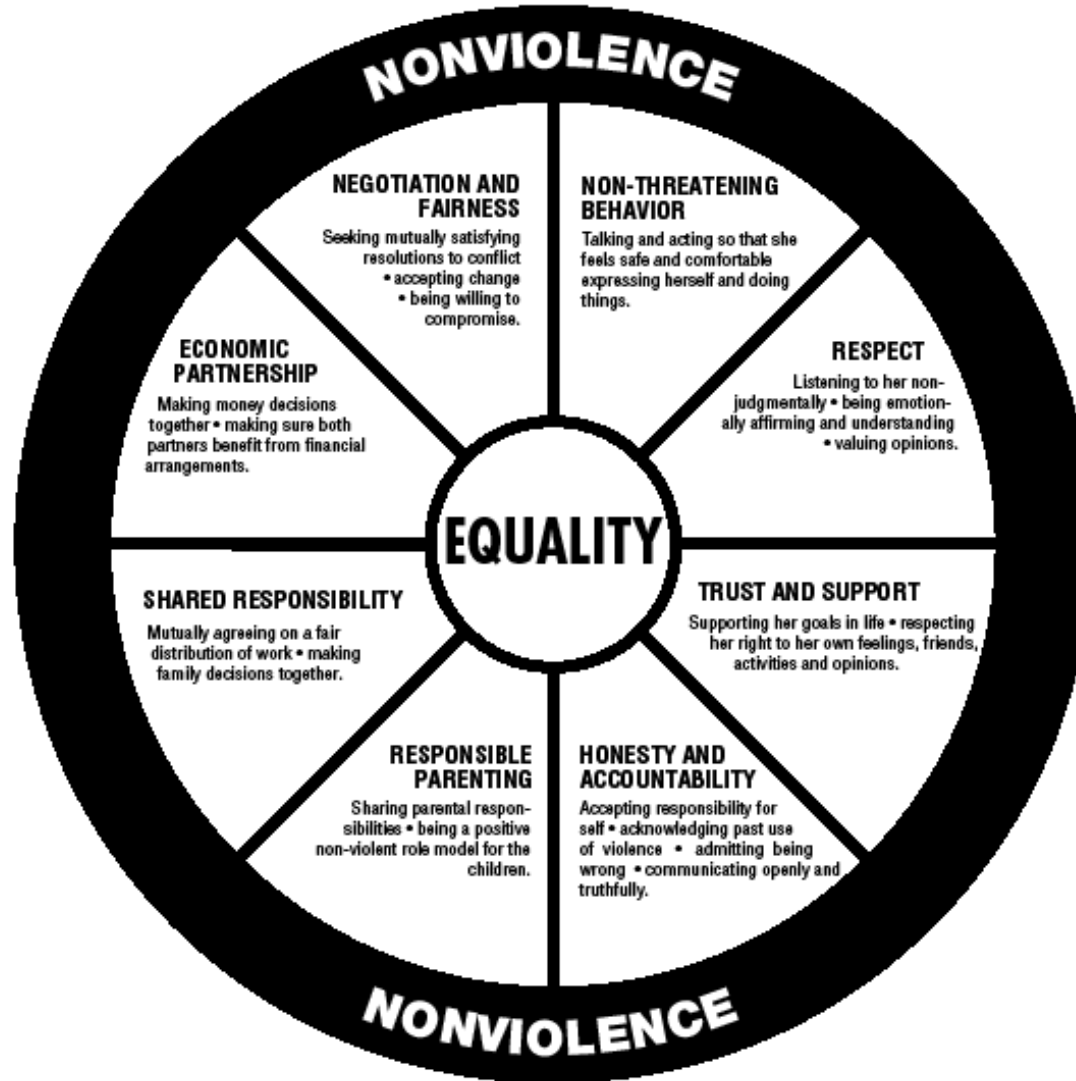


# A Question of Power

*“Our use of power will always be disordered and destructive – will result in idolatry and injustice – unless we find a way to a restored relationship with the Giver of power.”*

Andy Crouch,

*Playing God: Redeeming the Gift of Power*



A mutual relationship expressing value, dignity and respect toward one another. Though not lived out perfectly, equality is the shared goal.



A hierarchical relationship in which one person seeks to dominate and impose his will on another; using various means to maintain control.



# Recognizing Our Own Power

Mastering others is strength.  
Mastering yourself is true power. - Lao Tzu





# Power and the Christian

Baylor School of Social Work

[baylor.edu/content/services/document.php/99706.pdf](http://baylor.edu/content/services/document.php/99706.pdf)

Bible Studies:

- Jesus and Children
- Esther
- Eli and Samuel
- David and Bathsheba



# Listen to Scripture

## Dramatic Readings in 3 Scenes!

- The **Original Plan**: Genesis 1-2
- The **Great Fall**: Genesis 3
- A **Biblical Case Study**: 2 Samuel 13



# Genesis: A Closer Look

## Original Plan 1-2

- Mandated Partnership
- Naked, Unashamed
- Blessed Abundance
- Intimacy w/God

## Fallen Results 3

- Patriarchy (v.16)
- Fear, Hiding
- Painful Toil
- Enmity w/God



## 2 Samuel 13: Background & Culture

Women's value/Arranged marriage within family...

The Characters:

- **Tamar** – Virgin daughter of King David
- **Amnon** – Tamar's half brother
- **Jonadab** – Cousin and advisor to Amnon
- **Absolom** – Tamar's only full brother
- **King David** – Israel's 2<sup>nd</sup> & greatest king



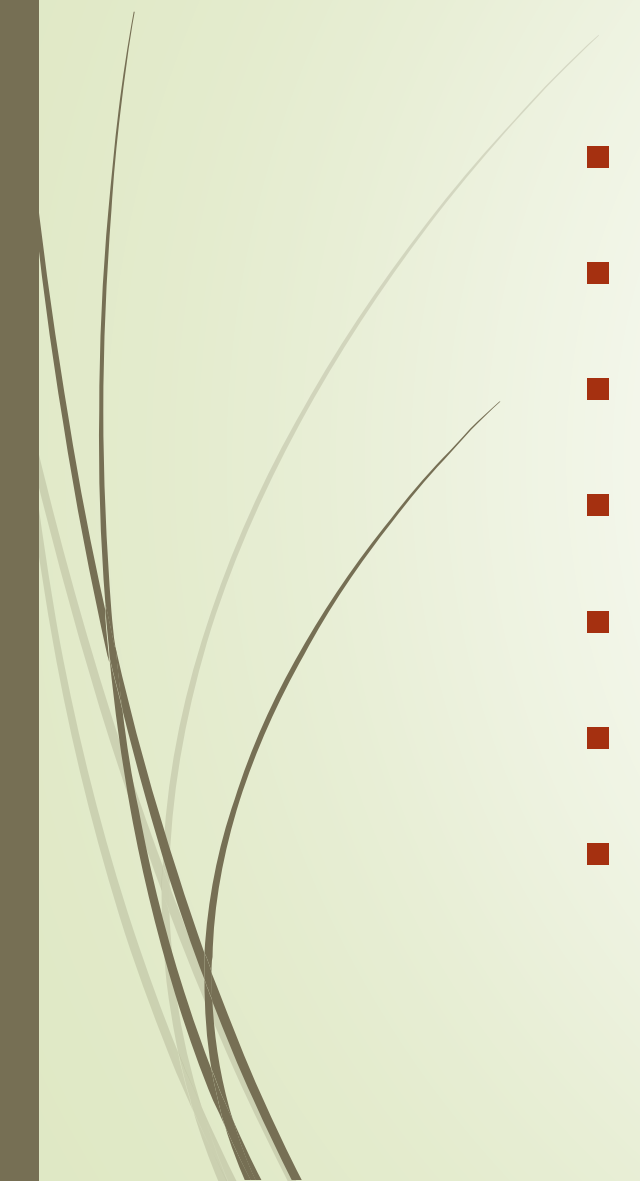
## 2 Samuel 13: A Biblical Case Study

### Group Discussion:

- Initial reactions
- A closer look, one character at a time
- What is similar and/or different about the way rape happens, and the way people respond, in today's culture?
- What can we take away from this scripture for our #MeToo world?




## 2 Samuel 13: A Closer Look

- Who Has the **Power**?
  - No Stranger
  - Planned and Premeditated
  - Not Tamar's Fault
  - Great Loss/Deep Grief
  - Inappropriate Response from Others
  - No Justice
- 



# Other Scripture Thoughts

- Greatest Commands: **Love** the Lord and love one another
  - What Love Looks Like: 1 Corinthians 13
  - One Another Passages: Love, honor, accept, encourage, serve, forgive, admonish, show hospitality, etc... NO ABUSE
- 





# Submission: A Definition

*“True biblical submission is not linked solely to hierarchy and roles. It begins in the very center of the Trinity where the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit all mutually honor and defer to each other... When Christians are instructed to submit to one another they are called into relationships that reflect the Trinity.”*

*Spiritual Disciplines Handbook* by Adele Ahlberg  
Calhoun); InterVarsity Press 2005



# Subtle, Powerful Messages: Gender

## Our Culture:

- Women, less valued
- Domination leadership model
- Words carry less weight/significance
- Derogatory labels
- Strict gender roles and characteristics

## Our Faith:

- Equal image bearers
- Partnership leadership model
- Words and ideas are treated equally
- Respect and dignity for all people
- Freedom to be



# How does it play? What if...

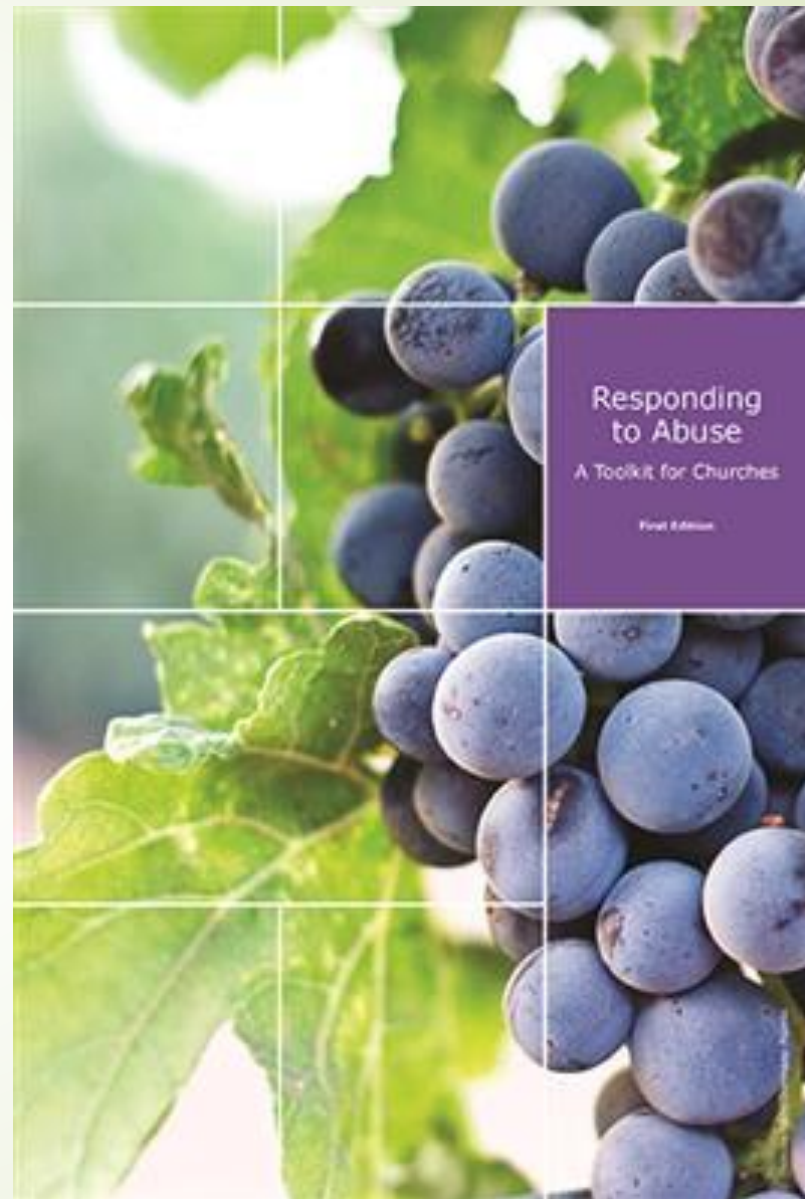
## Group Discussion, Scenarios:

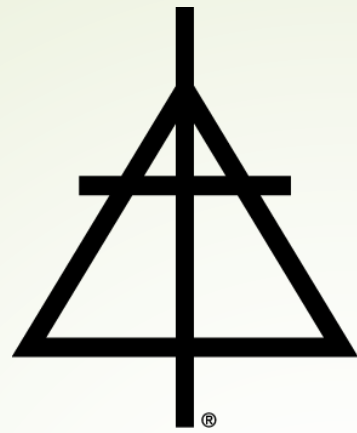
- Where is the **power**?
- What are the important factors to consider?
- What might be a good response?
- What resources might be available?
- How might this have been prevented?



# Responding to Abuse: A Toolkit for Churches

[network.crcna.org/safe-church/responding-abuse-toolkit-churches](http://network.crcna.org/safe-church/responding-abuse-toolkit-churches)





Christian Reformed Church  
**Safe Church  
Ministry**

On Facebook:

[facebook.com/SafeChurchMinistry](https://facebook.com/SafeChurchMinistry)

On The Network:

[network.crcna.org/safe-church](https://network.crcna.org/safe-church)

Safe Church website:

[crcna.org/safechurch](https://crcna.org/safechurch)