

# Spiritual SPEAK OUT for Violence-Free Families

*An ecumenical sermon contest*

## A Call for Sermons

One of every three members of a church or synagogue is a victim or survivor of domestic violence or sexual assault (*statistic from Family Refuge Center, WV*). Religious teachings can serve as either a resource or a roadblock in addressing the issue of domestic violence. As religious communities, our responsibility is to minimize any barriers facing abused members of our congregations and maximize the resources that exist within our religious traditions. We are pleased to announce a sermon contest sponsored by Harbor House Domestic Abuse Programs. Ministers and faith leaders in the Fox Valley are asked to help us play a pivotal role in actualizing a vision of families and communities free of violence.

## Sermon Guidelines

Sermons should be typed, double-spaced manuscripts of oral sermons. To enter the sermon contest, each sermon **must be preached** and the typed copy should include the date on which the sermon was delivered to your congregation. **To be inclusive of all preaching styles, we are allowing submission of audiotapes of your sermon.** A volunteer of Harbor House will transcribe for all audiotapes for the judging panel. Please keep your sermon 10-20 minutes in length and include the following elements:

- o Address the issue of power and control in relationships
- o Interpret religious texts referring to domination and submission
- o Spread a message of hope and/or a "call to action"
- o Make graceful use of inclusive language

Provide your name, religious organization/church, and contact information (address, phone number and email address).

**Deadline** for submitting a sermon is Wednesday, November 1. Remember, you must preach this sermon before the deadline date to qualify. This contest will run from April 1, 2006 to November 1, 2006.

### **Send, email or deliver to:**

Harbor House Domestic Abuse Programs  
Attention: Kathy Flores  
720 W. 5<sup>th</sup> Street  
Appleton, WI 54914

Email: [hhkathy@athenet.net](mailto:hhkathy@athenet.net) Questions: 920-832-1667

Include the date on which the sermon was delivered to your congregation.

## Judging

A panel of judges, including clergy, lay person(s), formerly battered women, and domestic violence advocates will rate each entry according to sermon guidelines.

## Awards and Recognition

All entrants are invited to our Reception of Faith Leaders to be held at Harbor House Domestic Abuse Programs. The date for this reception will be announced soon. The winner of the contest **will be asked to deliver her/his sermon** at this reception. The winner of this contest will also receive the special prize of *Broken Vows: Religious Perspectives on Domestic Violence*, a video and training packet for their organization's library valued at \$139. The winner will also receive a plaque to display in their church or religious organization denoting them as a supporter in the fight against domestic violence. Winning sermons will be posted on our website at [www.harborhouseonline.org](http://www.harborhouseonline.org) and will appear in the winter newsletter edition of *Harbor Lights*.