





## The Healing Path

*“He has showed you...what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God.” — Micah 6:8, NIV*

Who is Micah’s audience? God is speaking through Micah to all of us – the audience is the community of believers, including both those who have experienced abuse and have perpetrated abuse, along with their families and loved ones, who must embrace justice and mercy for all while practicing a life of humility.

To act justly is to seek justice. We are required to do more than talk about the problem. The following steps are adapted from Rev. Dr. Marie Fortune, founder of FaithTrust Institute, who outlines the elements of justice-making between those who have caused harm and those who have suffered harm:

- **Truth-telling:** give voice to the reality of abuse
- **Acknowledge the violation:** hear the truth, name the abuse, and condemn it as wrong
- **Compassion:** listen to and suffer with the one who has been harmed
- **Protect the vulnerable:** take steps to prevent further abuse
- **Accountability:** confront the one who has offended and compel repentance
- **Restitution:** make amends; restore what was lost to the extent possible; give tangible means to acknowledge the harm and encourage healing
- **Vindication:** to set free the one who has been harmed, from the shame and power of abuse

Justice without mercy is vengeance, and mercy without justice is weak. But together, justice and mercy create a path of healing for both the one who has offended and the one who has suffered abuse. Our desire for justice and our passion to be merciful must enfold both. When we do justice-making well, then healing can begin, because:

- We’ve broken the silence imposed by the abuse
- We’ve affirmed the damage caused by the abuse
- We’ve required the one who has offended to acknowledge the harm done in abuse
- We’ve begun to restore the trust shattered by abuse

Safe Church Ministry equips congregations in abuse awareness, prevention and response. For more information, contact:



Christian  
Reformed  
Church

Safe Church Ministry, 1700 28th Street SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49508-1407  
616-224-0735 | [crcna.org/safechurch](http://crcna.org/safechurch)