

## OVERVIEW OF TOPIC

### **Focus Text: Amos 5:6-7, 10-15**

Hate evil and love good, and establish justice at the gate; it may be that the LORD, the God of hosts, will be gracious to the remnant of Joseph.

### **Scripture Commentary by Rev. Shadra Suzanne Shoffner**

“One who reproveth at the gate” refers to an honest judge. In the time of Amos, the city gate was a place where justice was meted out by judges who dealt fairly and equitably with all who cried out for help. Amos tells the people that God is not pleased by their abandonment of this practice. No longer do they allow judges at the gate who discern truth and administer justice fairly to all concerned. Now, the people of Israel pretend to be holy while trampling on the poor, taking bribes and pushing aside the needy.

### **Pastoral Reflection by Rev. Shadra Suzanne Shoffner**

Domestic violence is ever with us and the statistics sadly bear this out. Nearly one-third of American women report being physically or sexually abused by a husband or boyfriend at some point in their lives, according to a Commonwealth Fund survey. When the person you once trusted and chose to be with you as lover, friend or spouse becomes a monster who will physically and/or emotionally harm you, you feel betrayed and oppressed. You may also feel like a victim who participates in, and even is partially responsible for, the pain and the hurt.

### **Personal Vignette from Personal Stories of Victims of Domestic Violence**

“My husband and I were high school sweethearts. He had a love for politics, sports, life, and he knew exactly where he was going. We had a perfect marriage—until that first hit. At first, I took his behavior as total love and protection for me. He controlled my every action, my every move—even going to the bathroom. He was an awesome father to my children, but he was unbelievably mean to me...”

### **Key Fact**

Over 30 percent of Americans are acquainted with a woman who has suffered violence from her male partner.