

## **A Prayer for a New Perspective on Domestic Violence**

*Gracious God, you have made us man and woman –complementary, male and female – one humankind. We confess that often we turn responsibility for into rights over, partnership into control. We acknowledge that we have come to a place in our society where men often use power, demeaning language, social custom and physical strength to dominate and control, rather than to build complementary, respectful partnerships in home and community and church.*

*We are aware of the widespread abuse of power by men in the community. We recognize that some of that abuse of power by men arises out of our reading or mis-reading of the Bible. Or, at the very least, goes unchallenged by the way we have interpreted the Bible as giving the responsibility for leadership in the family and the Church to men.*

*We acknowledge that this patriarchal way of organizing families and the wider community, and the greater physical strength of men, has led us into a situation in which men often abuse their power and responsibility by violently dominating women and children in the home and community.*

*We want to start by examining our own relationships and the values which we espouse consciously or unconsciously.*

*And we want to be helpful in the present social situation in promoting respectful and non-violent means of building a society in which men and women, male and female, girls and boys respect, honour and mutually serve, living and working respectfully together for the health and wellbeing of the whole community.*

*We pray for the guidance of your Spirit as we consider the issues and reflect on how we might ourselves be continually transformed, and exercise more positive leadership in home, Church and community. We pray in the name of Jesus. Amen.*