

Thank you, to all those who have responded to us, thanked us, and blessed us. Your encouragement and kindness have meant a great deal to us, and we are really grateful.

People have asked us about putting the whole text on twitter to make it more readable. We do want to make it more readable, but we are hesitant about putting it in twitter format. We are concerned that the conversation so far has lent itself towards sensationalism and sound bites. The issues being discussed are so grave. We want to use a medium that is worthy of that gravity, and that makes attentiveness and thoughtfulness easier. To that end we are reposting the original letter and subsequent survivor statements as PDFs that can be directly accessed at believeustoo.com.

A quick note: I have seen more than one social media comment implying that Joanna was using this situation for personal gain. I want to emphatically clarify that that is not something that we meant to suggest, and none of us have ever believed that that is true. We are confident that she has engaged in this cause out of conviction. The point about the GoFundMe was to emphasize her centrality and commitment, not to question her sincerity. But nevertheless--everything we said about her role in this situation still stands.

I also saw someone refer to Joanna as a “grifter.” First of all, that is not true. Second, while we have had to say some hard things, it is our desire that Joanna, and everyone in this situation would be spoken of with respect and compassion.

A response to Cherin's response to our letter:

We are truly grateful that Cherin received support and comfort from Joanna. We do pray for Cherin's healing in this painful process.

However, I was jarred by the lack of clear acknowledgement of what this situation is like for the survivor that was harmed by Joanna, and of how that woman feels about the situation. Let me say again: we truly do not judge Joanna. We have no right to. But whatever the reasons were for her actions--that does not change the reality for the person that was victimized. I am disturbed that this is not being recognized.

Also, let me be clear. We were not saying that Joanna is disqualified from victim advocacy across the board, including for Cherin. But Joanna has not merely walked alongside Cherin to mediate between her and the church about needs that apply just to Cherin and others who have sought Joanna's advocacy. From our perspective, it seems that she has taken on a role as an advocate for all victims, which she is not. More critically, it seems to us that she feels that she should have authority over our bishop and our Province in many matters, which translates into authority over us. It feels like she has put forward a rigid vision for what is the right thing for the church to do, and the right thing for the church to become. And if our leaders don't do what she thinks is best, than they are not doing “the right thing.” A writer on ACNAtoo spoke of the need

for the church to have a victim advocate who has authority over the bishop. As this unfolded, it felt like Joanna, as an advocate, did try to take authority over our bishop. This was so offensive and so violating for us.

Please hear us on this, we are not saying that Joanna should be shamed or devalued. We are not saying that she doesn't have gifts to give. But we do not want her to have authority over things that affect our lives, particularly the life of the woman she helped to victimize. And we believe that we should have the option of saying no to that.

A couple of other things:

—We did not, and never would say that the church was “maliciously” scapegoated. We said that the church was scapegoated.

—Cherin did bring up several points about the situation that we had not addressed in our letter (claims of Bp. Stewart's failure to hold leaders accountable for mandatory reporting failure, and deceptive statements, etc.). In our letter, we were only trying to touch on a few critical, simple points that could be covered very quickly. We did not mean this to be exhaustive. We stand by all of our claims, but at this time, we do not wish to try to widen our scope beyond what we have already spoken to.

—I am saddened to read that Cherin feels that our claims dismissed her family's story. I am sorry for that hurt. We want to honor her story. At the same time, we believe that we are allowed to disagree with her about this, and we have to tell what we believe to be the truth.

And finally, we need to clarify a critical point about the way that both this letter and ACNAtoo's statement speak about survivors and their different perspectives and different paths to healing. We address this part of our statement directly to ACNAtoo and its supporters: Our differing “paths” toward healing in this situation are not contained and separate. This cannot be so simple as each of us honoring, affirming, and supporting the other in their own journey. The needs and goals that you have articulated involve *our* church, and the actions that you have taken to meet those goals have already had a significant impact on our lives.

And the opposition between our wishes and yours is deep. Here are just a few simple examples: you asked the church to choose a firm based on your wishes. We would have felt sickened and unsafe if you had been given that level of control over our process. You were set on that one firm. Many of us had deep objections to that firm. You felt that Stewart ignored survivors and cast them aside for his own protection. We felt like he exposed himself to attack, for the protection of survivors. You feel that the story told online is fair and true. We feel that it is staggeringly misleading. You want Bp. Stewart barred from ministry for life. We are grieved by his temporary absence. This list goes on and on, and includes things that have deep implications for our beliefs, and our life in the church. The difficulty is that our wishes and yours are not just different, they are often diametrically opposed.

What we tried to say in our letter is that you have been actively hurting us for eight months. I don't know how we can be more clear. When you respond by telling us that it's okay, survivors

have different perspectives, and you respect our different path to healing, that feels incredibly dismissive.