

**Mothers' Union
16 Days of Activism Pack 2020**



Introduction

Mothers' Union has produced a set of resources specifically for its members and friends, which you are welcome to use and to encourage others to use during the 16 Days of Activism Campaign. We hope this helps to support our members and friends to engage with this important campaign. The information provided can be used to share knowledge and increase awareness of this important issue.

It can be distributed (for example, during meetings) or reproduced (for example, in church leaflets or as content for your own resources). Additional resources will be added as the 16 days draw closer – so keep checking back on the Mothers' Union website.

A specific resource pack for our Global Day, part of the 16 Days of Activism MU events, will be released in due course. Additional resources may be added closer to the event via the MU website.

What is 16 Days of Activism?

16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence is an international campaign. It takes place each year from **25 November** (International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women) until **10 December** (International Human Rights Day).

Significant dates throughout the campaign include:

November 25 – International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women

November 29 – International Women Human Rights Defenders Day

December 1 – World AIDS Day

December 5 – International Volunteer Day for Economic and Social Development

December 6 – Anniversary of the Montreal Massacre, which is observed as the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women in Canada

December 10 – International Human Rights Day and the anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights

Throughout the campaign, Mothers' Union joins with around 6,000 organisations from approximately 187 countries who participate in the campaign, to raise awareness of, and call for an end to, gender-based violence in all forms and in all societies. There is often a theme for the campaign but as of the production of this pack (September 2020) this has not been announced.

As part of the campaign this year we will be holding our first Global Day which is centred around the disturbing figure that “1 in 3 women worldwide have experienced domestic or sexual abuse” and that Mothers' Union, as a leading women's organisation, believe this to be unacceptable.

The 16 Days of Activism Against Gender Based Violence campaign is an extension of the day-to-day grassroots work of Mothers' Union. We work alongside communities to help end gender-based violence and to support those affected by it, every day of the year.

Timetable of Mothers' Union 16 Days Events

| | |
|--|---------------------------|
| 16 Days of Activism Begins+ online Morning Prayer | 25 th November |
| Online Prayer Zoom Meeting for 16 Days of Activism | TBC |
| Global Day (<i>Various online events will be taking place on this day</i>) | 5 th December |
| 16 Days of Activism Ends + online Evening Compline | 10 th December |

Other events will be confirmed closer to the time. All events will be via Facebook Live and available on You Tube.

What is Gender-Based Violence?

What is Gender-Based Violence?

- Gender-based violence (GBV) is any act of violence or abuse which is directed at an individual or group on the basis of their gender.
- It is important to note, therefore, that both women and men can be made targets of gender-based violence. However, it has been widely acknowledged that the majority of persons affected by gender-based violence are women and girls, as a result of unequal distribution of power in society between women and men. Further, female victims of violence suffer specific consequences as a result of gender discrimination.
- Gender-based violence against women is violence that is directed against a woman because she is a woman or that affects women disproportionately.
- “Violence against women” is understood as a violation of human rights and a form of discrimination against women. It is all acts of gender-based violence that result in, or are likely to result in, physical, sexual, psychological or economic harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life.
- Violence against women and girls is rooted in unequal power relations between men and women, and the underlying beliefs and values which accompany this, often manifesting as a means of control.
- Gender-based violence occurs in every culture and context around the world. It can be carried out by a wide range of people, including: partners; family members; those in the community; strangers; friends; those in positions of authority; armed groups; and the state.

Gender-Based Violence Facts & Figures

- In the year ending March 2019, in the UK and Ireland, 2.4 million adults aged 16 to 59 had experienced domestic abuse within the last year
- In the UK and Ireland data published by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) show 80 women were killed by a current or ex-partner between April 2018 and March 2019 – a 27 per cent increase on the year before.
- The UK police receive a call every minute about domestic abuse, 89 percent are about a woman being abused by a man
- 20% of children in the UK have lived with an adult perpetrating domestic violence
- The overwhelming majority of domestic abuse cases are not prosecuted; in the UK only 8% of domestic abuse-related crimes reported to the police will end in conviction
- Globally, only 1% of adolescent girls who have experienced forced sex, reach out for professional help
- Only 77 countries have legislation that explicitly criminalises marital rape
- 23 percent of women in high income countries, 25 percent in the western region and 8 percent of women in the south-east Asia are abused each year
- At least one in three women globally will experience some form of gender-based violence at some point in their lifetime
- Violence against women can damage the health and wellbeing of a women from physical health consequences such as chronic pain syndromes, induced abortions and disabilities to mental health consequences such as PTSD and depression

- It's estimated 650 million women and girls alive today were married before their 18th birthday. Child marriage often results in early pregnancy and social isolation, interrupts schooling, limits the girl's opportunities and increases her risk of experiencing domestic violence.
- In the EU, 1 in 10 women have experienced some form of sexual violence since the age of 15, and 1 in 20 have been raped. Just over 1 in 5 women have experienced physical and/or sexual violence from either a current or previous partner
- Women aged 15-44 are more at risk from rape and domestic violence than from cancer, car accidents, war and malaria

Useful External Resources

Mothers' Union has developed many relationships and worked with a number of organisations over the past years to develop our stance for 16 Days of Activism. We would like to draw your attention to some of their excellent resources which you can use alongside this pack.

Restored – Ending Domestic Abuse, A Pack for Churches - <https://www.restoredrelationships.org/resources/info/51/>

Restored – Handbook for Female Domestic Survivors of Abuse - <https://www.restoredrelationships.org/survivorshandbook/>

There are also a number of helpful resources and information throughout their website - <https://www.restoredrelationships.org/>

Anglican Consultative Council and the Anglican Alliance – Domestic Abuse and Covid 19 How Churches can Respond - https://www.anglicancommunion.org/media/415112/2007-da-covid-19-churches_en.pdf

World Council of Churches – Thursdays in Black - <https://www.oikoumene.org/en/get-involved/thursdays-in-black>

It is vital that victims/survivors of domestic abuse know that they are not alone during COVID-19 and there is still help available in these challenging times. This is highlighted in a Government awareness campaign launched on April 11.

Blog by Bishop of London - Loving as Christ loved during COVID-19

Podcast - Bishop of Gloucester, Rachel Treweek talks to members of the Nelson Trust about domestic abuse

Different Forms of Gender-Based Violence

Gender-based violence takes many forms. It can include (but is not limited to):

- Intimate partner violence, which can include a range of sexual, psychological and physical coercive acts used against adult and adolescents (particularly women and girls) by a current or former intimate partner;
- domestic violence;
- mental abuse;
- psychological violence, including threats, humiliation, mocking and controlling behaviours;
- emotional abuse;
- economic violence, such as denying access of the victim to financial resources, property, healthcare, education, or the labour market, and denying them participation in economic decision-making;
- sexual violence, including rape, sexual assault and harassment in all public and private spheres of life;
- physical violence;
- crimes committed in the name of so-called 'honour';
- institutional or structural violence, which includes any form of structural inequality or institutional discrimination that maintains a woman in an inferior position to other people within her family, household or community;
- forced marriage
- child marriage;
- female genital mutilation;
- female infanticide and sex-selective abortion;
- human trafficking, slavery, and sexual exploitation;
- stalking and harassment;
- emerging forms of violations, such as online harassment and abuse, various forms of sexual abuse instigated or facilitated through the use of information and communication technologies, stalking, and bullying.

Support Available for Survivors of Gender-Based Violence

Forced Marriage Unit Helpline: 0207 008 0151 / email: fmf@fedo.gov.uk

Honour Network Helpline: 0800 599 9247 / www.karmanirvana.org.uk

National Domestic violence Helpline: 0800 200 0247 /
<https://www.nationaldahelpline.org.uk/>

Refuge: 0808 200 0247 / www.refuge.org.uk

Women's Aid: 0808 200 0247 / www.womensaid.org.uk

Rights of Women: 020 7251 887 / www.rightsofwomen.org.uk

FLAWS (Finding Legal Options for Women Survivors): 0203 745 7707 /
<https://www.flaws.org.uk/>

Men's Advice Line: 0808 8010 327 / www.mensadviceline.org.uk

Mankind Initiative: 01823 334 244 / www.mankind.org.uk

National Centre for Domestic Violence: 0800 970 2070 / www.ncdv.org.uk

Samaritans: 116 123 / www.samaritans.org

Rape Crisis England and Wales: 0808 802 9999 / www.rapecrisis.org.uk

Rape Crisis Scotland: 08088 01 03 02 / www.rapecrisisscotland.org.uk

Victim Support: 08 08 1689 111 / www.victimsupport.org.uk

The Survivors Trust: 08088 010818 / www.thesurvivorstrust.org

National LGBT Domestic Violence Helpline: 0800 999 5428 /
www.theproudtrust.org/national-lgbt-domestic-abuse-helpline/

Respect Phonenumber: 0808 802 4040 / www.respectphonenumber.org.uk

Republic of Ireland:

Amen: (for men) 01-5543811 / www.amen.ie

Crime Victim Helpline: 116 006 / www.crimevictimshelpline.ie

Sonias: 087 952 5217 / www.domesticabuse.ie

Talking to Survivors Do's and Don'ts

DO'S IN RESPONDING TO SURVIVORS

- Find a safe place to talk.
- Have someone else present - if this is acceptable to the survivor. It is advisable that the additional person is the same sex as the survivor
- Allow time for the person to talk.
- Listen to what they have to say - and take it seriously.
- Believe them; their description of the abuse is probably only the 'tip of the iceberg'.
- Give priority to their immediate safety (and that of any children involved).
- Empower them to make their own decisions.
- Support and respect their choices. If they choose to initially return to the abuser, it is their choice. They have the most information about how to survive. If there are children involved, however, their safety must come first, and this choice is often overruled.
- Give them information about relevant support agencies (as detailed in this pack) if appropriate offer to contact an agency on their behalf and do so in their presence. Offer a safe and private place from which they can contact the relevant agency.
- Use the expertise of those who are professionally trained. Be aware of your own limitations.
- Reassure them that it is not their fault, they don't deserve this treatment, and (only if it is appropriate and you know they have faith) it is not God's will.
- Assure them gently that what the abuser has done is wrong and completely unacceptable.
- Be patient, Be kind.
- Protect their confidentiality. Keep any information in a secure place and consider coding the information.

DON'TS IN RESPONDING TO SURVIVORS

- Don't judge them or what they tell you.
- Refrain from making unrealistic promises.
- Don't suggest that they should 'try again'; evidence shows that victims experience several violent incidents before seeking help.
- Never minimise the severity of their experience or the danger they are in.
- Don't react with disbelief, disgust, or anger at what they tell you or react completely passively.
- Don't ask them why they did not act in a certain way.
- Never blame them for the violence.
- Never act on the person's behalf without their consent and/or knowledge (unless children are involved).
- Don't expect them to make decisions quickly.
- Never make decisions for them or tell them what to do.
- Don't recommend couple counselling/family meditation/praying for them/ marriage courses/healthy relationship courses. **These will not help in domestic abuse situations.**
- Don't encourage them to forgive their abuser and take them back.
- Don't send them home with a prayer/directive to submit to her spouse/bring them to church/be a better Christian spouse.
- Refrain from contacting the person at home unless they have agreed to this.
- Don't approach their partner for their side of the story, as this will endanger them.
- Don't give information about them or their whereabouts to the abuser or to others who might pass this information on to the abuser.
- Don't discuss the situation with church leaders who might inadvertently/unintentionally pass information on to the abuser.
- Don't encourage dependence on you or become emotionally involved; this can be problematic and make you seem to be the answer to her problems.

Advocacy Suggestions Before and During 16 Days

Even though COVID-19 has impacted so many of our plans this year and will likely still have implications to our plans for 16 Days of Activism there are still many things that we can do to help advocate for an end to Gender-Based Violence. No matter where in the world you live and what context you are in, think about the following:

- **WHICH** specific thing you would like to see improve or change? There may be many things! But it is helpful to pick one and follow the process below for each thing you want to address, so that your advocacy can be targeted and clear.
- **DOES** anyone in your local area have a specific expertise on this issue? For example, it is very sensible to speak to a local project – such as a refuge - to find out what support is lacking for their services, which you could then advocate for. They may have specific needs and requirements due to COVID-19
- **WHO** in your community/country might be in a position to influence that change? We can advocate to anyone who might be in a position to help influence or change things - you can decide to go as high-level or as local as you like. So, it could be your local councillors, your government, or even your local church or community leaders. We have some suggestions for Bishops and MP's regarding Domestic Abuse in this pack.
- **HOW** might you, or someone you know, be able to get in touch with them or meet them? Given the circumstances presently – this may be better via zoom, skype or phone.

When you contact them/meet them, be clear on the following beforehand:

- **WHAT** is the message that you want them to understand? (i.e. what would you like to see happen, and what they can do to help get there)
- **WHAT** is the current situation (i.e. what is the reason why that change is needed, why is what you are asking important?)
- **WHY** should they do what you ask (i.e. what would it achieve? How would the current situation change as a result of their action? What would the benefit be?)

Tips:

- **It is good to ask questions!** Even asking questions about what is being provided in a certain area can help put an issue on someone's radar.
- **It is good to listen!** If there is resistance, it is good to show that you are willing to listen to help understand why there is resistance. This may help them to realise that you are not just “demanding” something, but willing to walk alongside and support them to bring about change together. It can also reveal the obstacles that they may face in bringing about change – and therefore give you insights in who else to advocate to or other areas that need to be addressed first in order to bring about the change you are hoping for.
- **Have** a notepad and pen, and feel free to take in with you any key bullet points or details that may help you.

- **Persist!** It can take time for change to take place... but polite persistence can really work.

Below are a few specific ideas for Britain & Ireland which you could choose from, to do during this year's 16 days. Why not join with others in your local area and encourage them to do the same thing? There is strength in numbers!

Engaging your Church:

- Inform your church leaders about Gender-Based Violence and ask them to better inform themselves on the issue;
- Encourage training on this area for anyone that you know in a public facing role, which may help them identify and support victims. There are courses that can be taken.
- Ask them to be a part of our Global Day

Church Pack

Restored have published a pack for churches specifically on ending domestic abuse: [Ending Domestic Abuse: A Pack for Churches](#). This would be a very sensible starting point on addressing this one form of gender-based violence. There is also [the Church pack](#) produced by the Anglican Alliance which is specifically about how Churches should be responding to Domestic Abuse and COVID-19. You could also think about promoting it to other churches in your area too and inviting them to join with you on the advocacy points above?

Other broader messages

In conversations, take a stand against root causes of Gender-Based Violence, such as harmful attitudes and norms about men and women.

- Ask your government or leaders to support or make national, local and customary laws that prohibit all forms of violence against women and girls.

Methods of communicating with leaders

- Arrange a meeting this can be via zoom or phone
- Send an email or a letter
- Send an invitation to one of our MU events on Gender-Based Violence or a virtual one you may have organized yourself
- Use social media! – We will be producing a suggest social media document which will be released nearer the time.

And remember - there are other people in your area who may feel passionate about this. When you have a clear direction, you can bring other people from your church or community on board to advocate for the same thing. Something started during these 16 days could be something you see change throughout the year ahead

Opportunity to influence the Domestic Abuse Bill and connect (further) with Church Dioceses in ongoing work on Domestic Abuse

The Community of Interest for Advocacy and Policy, under the leadership of June Butler met for the first time on 19th August 2020 and focused specifically on the area of domestic abuse.

As well as hearing the amazing work which is ongoing across MU in supporting Refuges and Contact Centres, providing AFIA breaks and participating in the 16 Days of Activism, they reviewed opportunities to influence strategically. MU made a formal submission to the House of Commons Scrutiny Committee of the Domestic Abuse Bill in July, and this Bill will be progressing to the House of Lords towards the end of September. There are opportunities to influence debate within the House of Lords, and the associated Guidance through the Home Office.

The 2 key “asks” which MU is making is to remove the “no recourse to public funding” restriction for victims where their immigration status is unclear, which means that they are faced with the choice of returning to the perpetrator or becoming destitute; and to include faith as an important element, both in understanding causes of Domestic Abuse and the value of faith-based organisations in signposting survivors to appropriate support.

We have been working with The Right Reverend Rachel Treweek, Bishop of Gloucester and her team, to see how we can work most effectively together. Bishop Rachel is leading the Church influencing through the Lords Spiritual, working together with the other Female Lords Spiritual, and they are going to be encouraging Diocesan Bishops to become active, not only in influencing the Bill, but also in addressing the challenge of Domestic Abuse on an ongoing basis, both within and outside the Church family.

She is keen to encourage the Dioceses to participate with MU in the 16 Days of Activism this year, and is keen for us to make Diocesan teams aware of what is being planned, as well as looking at ongoing options for collaboration, and highlighting the areas of the Domestic Abuse bill which we seek to influence.

There is an additional opportunity for members or branches to write to their MPs to ask for specific issues to be addressed in the Home Office Guidance.

The Community of Interest supported the following:

Draft letters to be sent to Dioceses, to go from the Diocesan Presidents to their Bishops, which include the areas we wish to influence, and also highlight what MU is doing to counter Domestic Abuse locally, including participation in 16 Days. This has already been sent to your Diocesan President to action.

Draft letters for individuals, or branches in the same constituency, to send to their MP, to influence the Home Office Guidance.

What can you do?

You could consider amending the draft letter for members, so that you can send something to your MP during September or October.

Domestic Abuse Bill: Draft letter for individual members or Groups to send to their MP:

Dear *Name of your MP*

Personalise the first paragraph. Perhaps thank them for anything they have done that you appreciate. Perhaps refer to previous contact you've had or say this is the first time you've written to them, because Domestic Abuse is so important to you. State that you live in their constituency.

I am writing to you in connection with the Domestic Abuse Bill, which as you know has now passed to the House of Lords.

This Bill addresses a major scourge on our society – statistically, 1 in 3 women worldwide will be affected by domestic abuse. *Add in something about why it's important to you – perhaps you know a family that's been affected, perhaps it's because as a Christian you believe everyone is entitled to be treated with dignity and respect and no-one should be faced with any sort of domestic abuse, and if they are they should receive all the support they need; perhaps refer to your interest coming from the fact that you have been supporting the local refuge.*

I am even more concerned because there has been such a significant increase in domestic abuse as a result of the control measures against Covid-19, as has been highlighted in the media, for example, the Panorama programme in August. The World Council of Churches has referred to this as “the second pandemic”.

I am really pleased at how much is covered in the draft Bill, but remain concerned about 2 areas:

- Women with insecure immigration status suffering violence and abuse are routinely refused access to support of any kind, owing to the government's 'No recourse to public funds' (NRPF) policy. It cannot be fair that simply because of their immigration status they are put at such serious risk. In practice it means they are forced to choose between homelessness or destitution on the one hand and returning to the abuser on the other. I feel very strongly that all survivors, regardless of their status, should be entitled to support and protection. This will require the cancellation of the NRPF as it applies to them. There is no moral justification for the current situation.
- The Bill ignores matters of faith. There are two elements that need to be covered. First, the fact that religious beliefs can be used as a justification for domestic abuse, and the sad fact of the potential for spiritual abuse; secondly, the role faith leaders can play in recognising signs of domestic abuse in their communities, and signposting survivors to local services. As a Christian, this makes me sad, and I think it is a wasted opportunity. Although

I would prefer the Bill itself to cover these points, at the very least, the Home Office guidance as to how the Bill is put into practice should do so. Some specific suggestions:

- Training should be quickly put in place to enable faith leaders to respond well to suspected domestic abuse in their communities

- Faith literacy training should be made available so that those making decisions and offering support in relation to complaints of domestic abuse are more able to respond appropriately; and
- The Domestic Abuse Commissioner's Advisory Group, and the Local Partnership Boards, should both include faith representatives.

It is not too late for these matters to be dealt with, and I am therefore asking you to do whatever you can to raise them with your contacts in the Lords, with the Domestic Abuse Commissioner-designate, and with the Home Office. Please let me know what response you receive.

I look forward to hearing from you and will be most grateful for anything you can do to make the Bill even more supportive of some of the most vulnerable people in our communities.

With my best wishes

Your Name or Branch

Add in your postal address so your MP knows you are a constituent and therefore they must respond

Hints and Tips for Writing to your MP

Hints and tips for writing to MPs

- MPs get a huge amount of correspondence and their advisers won't necessarily show them every item that comes in, but will pass to them the ones where the writer has clearly made an effort and not just cut and pasted a standard form.
- Do personalise the draft as much as you feel comfortable to!
- MPs will give more attention to issues on which they receive large amounts of correspondence – so the more individual letters the better, although a letter from a group of members who live in the same constituency would also be powerful.
- Email is fine and normal – apparently, letters in the post have even more impact, because now so unusual
- Link to find details of the relevant MP, and the address for correspondence.
<https://members.parliament.uk/FindYourMP>

Ways to connect digitally for 16 Days

We know that many changes are being made to events planned for 16 Days 2020 and we wanted to give some ideas on how you can connect with one another easily during the campaign. We have also provided a guide to make using the digital platforms as easy as possible.

Do not forget to join the online 16 days and Global Day events throughout the campaign.

WhatsApp

Why not set up a 16 Days of Activism prayer group with your branch or group. You could post a prayer a day in the group to encourage everyone to set aside some time of reflection every day throughout the 16 days.

If you do not want to do this by phone you could do the same via a daily email during the campaign

WhatsApp is a communications app which allows you to message and call friends and family. You can download the app on iOS (Apple), Android and Windows Phones.

WhatsApp is remarkably like regular texts and phone calls; however, the app uses Wi-Fi instead of your phone signal. This means that if you find that service can be a little bit unreliable then WhatsApp could be a good alternative way to keep in touch. To access the messages and WhatsApp calling please see below:

1. Download the WhatsApp app from an app store on your phone or computer.
2. You will be asked a series of questions once you first open the app, these are outlined below:
 - a. Allow WhatsApp to access your contacts – you need to say yes to this one so you can add contacts
 - b. Allow WhatsApp to send notifications – you can choose whether you want to receive notifications and you can change this later under the settings tab (looks like a cog).

- c. Agree to the app's terms of service and privacy policies – you need to say yes to this to use the app.
3. You will then need to verify your phone number. You will do this by typing in your mobile number then WhatsApp will send you a verification code by text message. Once you have received the verification text message you need to enter the code into WhatsApp.
4. You then need to set up your account by adding in your name. You can also upload a profile picture – this is optional, but it does make it easier for your contacts to recognise it is you.
5. You can change your privacy settings if you want, for example you can change who can see your profile picture, who can add you to a group and if you want to share your live location or not. The privacy settings can be found by clicking settings (the cog tab) then account (the key tab) then by selecting Privacy at the top.
6. You will now be able to search for the contact on the WhatsApp app. To note, you need to make sure the person you are looking for has also downloaded WhatsApp and is a contact on your phone.
7. Once you have found the contact, you just need to click on their profile and from here it will take you to a page where you can message them as you would with a text message. You will also see in the top right-hand corner there is a camera icon, and this enables you to video call your friends and family. There is also a phone icon, and this allows you to phone your friends and family (as you would normally) but uses Wi-Fi instead of signal.

Zoom

Zoom is a great tool to use to have an online service or prayer meeting with your diocese or branch.

Zoom is a video conferencing programme which can either be downloaded as an app on your phone or desktop or used in a web browser. Zoom is particularly good if you want to set up a virtual meeting or service that has lots of people attending a meeting at one time. With Zoom you don't necessarily have to sign up, if one person in the group has. The reason for this is because the person who has signed up can send you a meeting code and you can then enter this code and join as a guest. If you do choose to sign up, then please see below for further instructions:

1. After you sign in, you will see the home tab, within this tab you will be able to see these options:
 - a. **New Meeting:** The new meeting icon is an orange icon with a white camera, this is what you need to set up a new meeting which will start straight away. When setting up the meeting if you click the downwards arrow (underneath the camera icon) you can enable video and you can see your personal meeting ID (PMI). The personal meeting ID is what needs to be sent to other people attending, to ensure they sign into your meeting.
 - b. **Join:** The join icon is blue with a white plus; you need to use this if you want to join a meeting which is already in progress. You need to make sure you have the Personal Meeting ID from the person hosting the meeting before you can join.
 - c. **Schedule:** The Schedule icon is blue with a white calendar; this is where you can set up a future meeting.
 - d. **Share Screen:** The Share Screen icon is Blue with a white box that has a small blue arrow inside. This icon lets you share your screen in a meeting, you can do this by entering the (personal) meeting ID.

For more information to change your settings and to access the messenger options then [please click here](#).

Service Outline for 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence 2019

This service outline may be used and adapted for a variety of contexts. Please add hymns and other material as required. If you are unable to hold this service in person – you can either join our MU online services or maybe hold your own zoom service with your branch or diocese?

Another new service outline, specifically written for the Global Day (during 16 Days of Activism) will be available in the Global Day resource pack.

Welcome

Welcome to our service, which is part of our 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence. As members of the body of Christ we draw near in faith to commit ourselves to be Christ's hands and feet in the world. Hands to raise awareness by pointing out injustice and unrighteousness and feet to march for change, and to run to those in need of help.

Opening hymn

Opening prayers and confession

**Loving Lord,
who has called us to be the body of Christ,
make us ready to act as his hands and feet in the world.
to raise awareness of what must be challenged,
and to address the plight of the vulnerable. Amen**

Forgive us, Lord,
who call ourselves your own
but daily cause you pain,
who see someone in need
and walk across the road,
hear about injustice
and fail to say a word.
Forgive us, Lord,
who call ourselves your own.

**Renew our hearts,
our souls and minds;
Strengthen our faith
and make us a people
who are your hands,
your feet and voice
within this world. Amen**

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Bible Readings:

O people, the Lord has told you what is good,
and this is what he requires of you:
to do what is right, to love mercy,
and to walk humbly with your God.
Micah 6:8 (NLT)

Just as a body, though one, has many parts, but all its many parts form one body, so it is with Christ.

God has put the body together, giving greater honour to the parts that lacked it, so that there should be no division in the body, but that its parts should have equal concern for each other. ²⁶ If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honoured, every part rejoices with it.

Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it.

1 Corinthians 12:12, 24-27

Homily

The information sheets included in the 16 Day resources on the website may be helpful in preparing this.

Hymn

Intercessions

These are suggestions for appropriate actions to accompany these prayers:

- 1. Reaching out of hands*
- 2. Marching on the spot*
- 3. Holding hands together*

If you are involved in specific local initiatives then include your own intercessions for these here.

Lord of justice and mercy,
draw us close to those who hurt.
Let us reach out our hands in your name
to share the sorrow and lessen the pain.

Lord of justice and mercy
lengthen our strides to march for good.
Clothe our feet with your living Word
to trample the works of unrighteousness.

Lord of justice and mercy
knit us together as the body of Christ
that we may speak out with one accord
for the kingdom of God to prevail. Amen

Symbolic Prayer offering

You may like to use the hands and feet templates provided to write prayers on either before or as part of the service. Display a prayer tree or other holder at the front and bring the prayers up now to be attached and offered to God. If doing this online you could send out the templates before then so participants can print or draw out, fill in and then hold up on screen as you pray.

**Lord of justice and mercy,
who has called us to be the body of Christ,
we offer up our prayers for those who
are affected by gender-based violence
and as a sign of our unity with all who
campaign for justice across the world. Amen**

Closing hymn

Final blessing

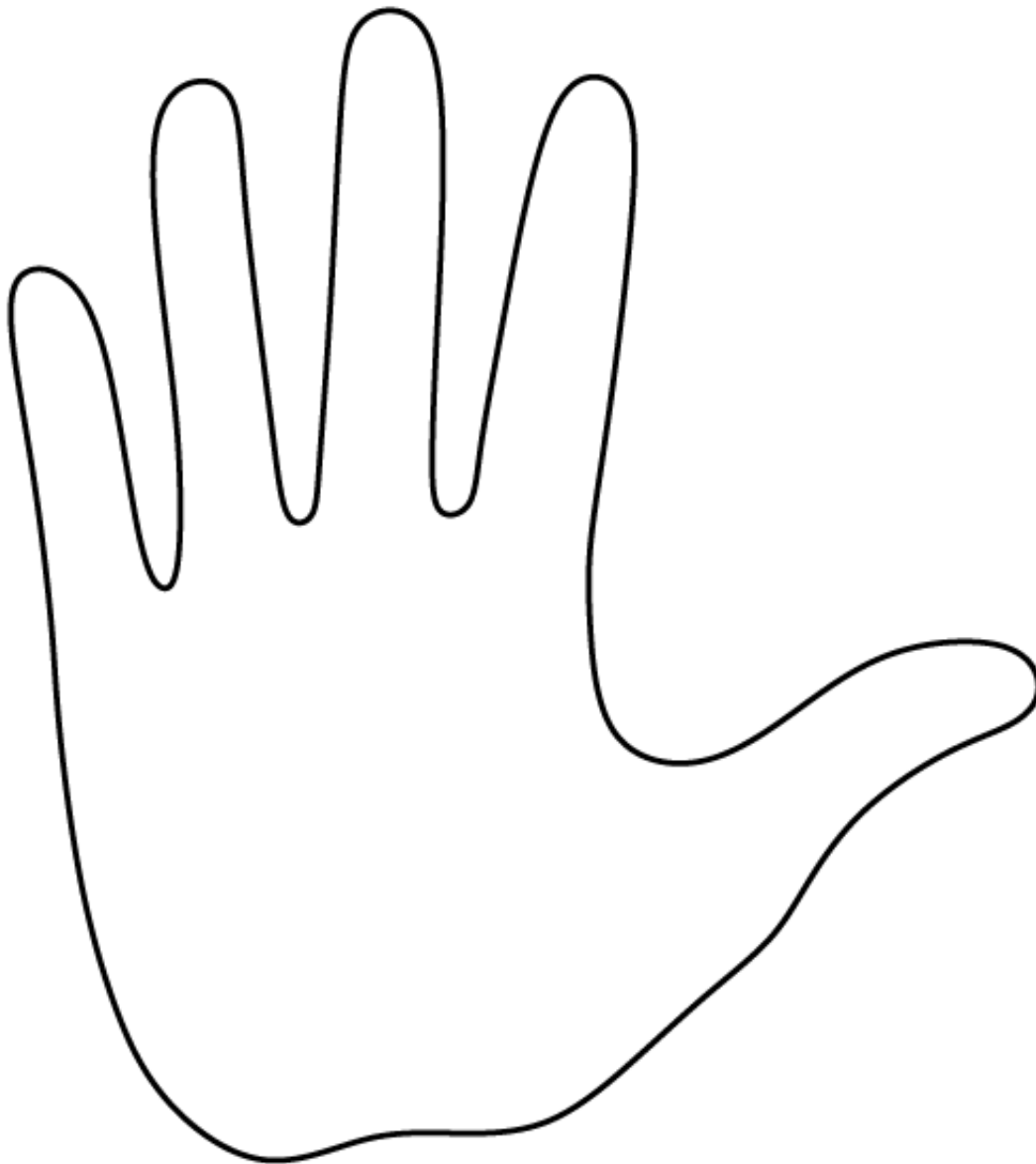
Christ has no body now on earth but ours,
no hands but ours, no feet but ours.
Ours are the eyes through which
Christ's compassion is to look out to the earth.
Ours are the feet by which
he is to go about doing good
and ours are the hands by which
he is to bless us now.
St Teresa of Avila

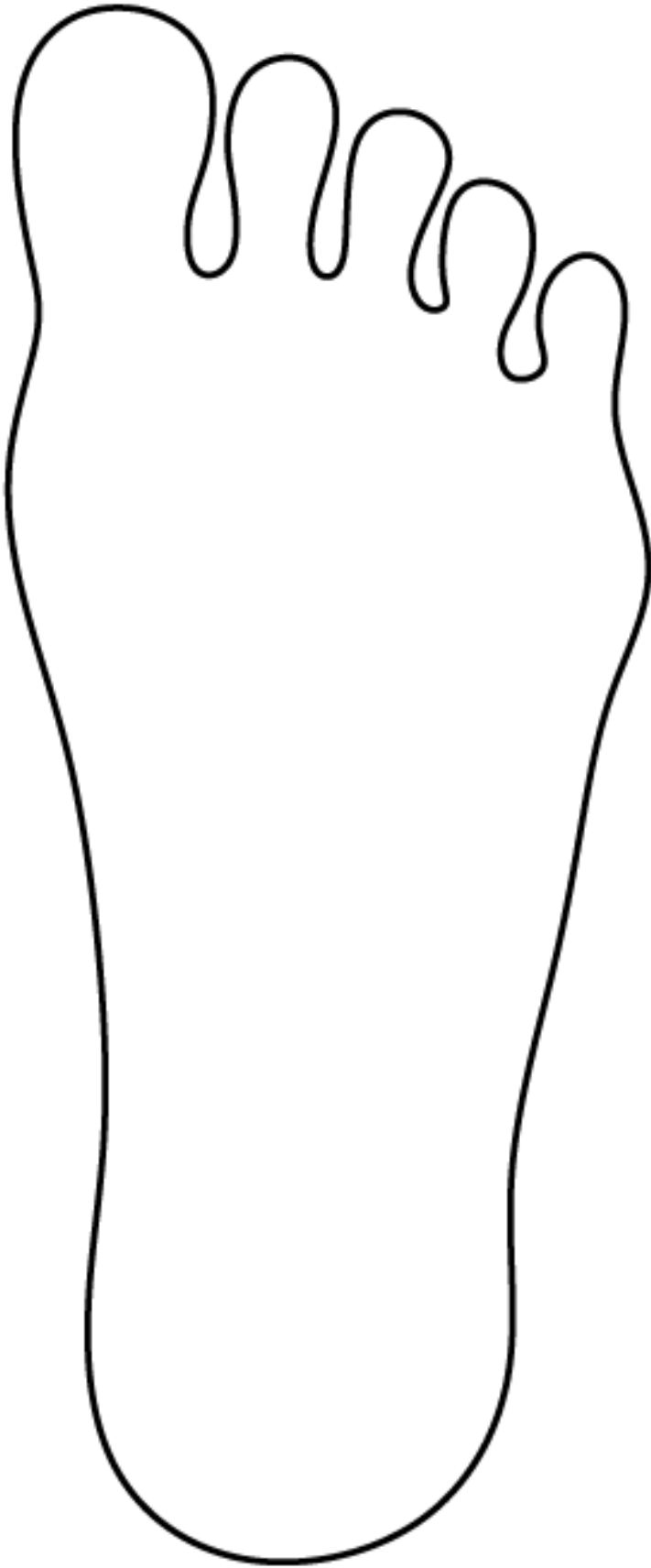
Now may the God of peace equip you
with all you need for doing his will.
May he produce in you,
through the power of Jesus Christ,
every good thing that is pleasing to him.
All glory to him forever and ever! Amen

We say The Grace together

Hands and Feet templates 2020

You may like to use the hands and feet templates provided to write prayers on either before or as part of a service. Display a prayer tree or other holder and bring the prayers up to be attached and offered to God. If doing this online you could send out the templates before then so participants can print or draw out, fill in and then hold up on screen as you pray.





16 Days of Activism Bible reflection: Let's talk about it

During 16 days of Activism it can be helpful to spend time thinking about and reflecting on the taboos felt by many victims and survivors of violence against women and girls. These include the stigma and unwarranted shame often put upon them by both the perpetrators and others. We highlight this to raise awareness, confront the stigma and break the power of silence.

This Bible reflection could be done together if possible, individually or via a zoom meeting.

The Old Testament account of the rape by Amnon of his half-sister Tamar in **2 Samuel 13** is, for obvious reasons, often used as an example of the evil of gender-based violence and God's condemnation of it.

One specific aspect of the story illustrates starkly this negative response from perpetrators and others to the victim herself, which compounds the initial wrong.

Firstly, the perpetrator, Amnon, having violated Tamar, then turns on his victim, as though she is to blame for his actions, with a further expression of aggression and banishes her from his home.

Then Amnon hated her with intense hatred. In fact, he hated her more than he had loved her. Amnon said to her, 'Get up and get out!' 16 'No!' she said to him. 'Sending me away would be a greater wrong than what you have already done to me.' But he refused to listen to her. 17 He called his personal servant and said, 'Get this woman out of my sight and bolt the door after her.' 2 Samuel 13:15-17

Secondly, her brother Absalom responds to her distress by apparently belittling the incident, excusing the perpetrator, and calling for her to keep silent about her ordeal. (Later, we find that he exacted his revenge on Amnon, and thus the serious consequences of the original evil continued with more bloodshed and family conflict.)

Tamar put ashes on her head and tore the ornate robe she was wearing. She put her hands on her head and went away, weeping aloud as she went. Her brother Absalom said to her, 'Has that Amnon, your brother, been with you? Be quiet for now, my sister; he is your brother. Don't take this thing to heart.' And Tamar lived in her brother Absalom's house, a desolate woman. 2 Samuel 13:19-20

Reflect for a while on this biblical story and how it mirrors the experiences of many in the 21st century. Then consider together:

- How did Amnon's abuse of his victim trigger his hate for her after his actions? What does this show us about the ongoing risk that victims are at from their perpetrators?
- Consider Absalom's initial reaction to Tamar's ordeal. How can we counter similar attitudes in our day?

- In what ways does our society make it hard for those who have experienced gender-based violence to speak out about their experiences?
- Consider the impact of stigma and silence on victims of gender-based violence today. How can we raise awareness of these issues?

If there is time, consider further: How God views gender-based violence. What do you think is His response to the plight of the victim, the sin of the perpetrator, the responsibility of the bystander? In the light of your discussion consider what response God expects from His church to the evil of gender-based violence.

**Forgive us Lord
when we hear neither your plea,
nor the cries of your people.**

**Free us Lord
from the fears that bind us,
or from any sense of powerlessness.**

**Fill us Lord
with your dream of a just world
and the tenacity to keep going
in playing our part,
in your name, Amen**

Maggie Lunan

It may be that there are those in your group for whom this reflection brings back memories of personal experiences, and causes a measure of distress, particularly if help was not sought or forthcoming at the time. The do's and don'ts for supporting survivors and support contact list, which can be found in this pack, may be helpful.

16 Days of Bible Verses and Prayers

Day 1

God created human beings in his own image.
In the image of God, he created them;
male and female, he created them.
Then God looked over all he had made,
and he saw that it was very good!
Genesis 1:27, 31 (NLT)

Creator God, thank you that we are all made in your image, and equally loved by you. Open our eyes to see your face in those of our sisters and brothers. Amen

Day 2

He has sent me to proclaim that captives will be released,
that the blind will see that the oppressed will be set free,
and that the time of the Lord's favour has come.
Luke 4:18-19 (NLT)

Compassionate God may those experiencing all forms of violence be given courage, hope and practical help to break free from their abuse. Amen

Day 3

Let us not become weary in doing good,
for at the proper time we will reap a harvest
if we do not give up.
Galatians 6:9

Steadfast God, give us resolve to work tirelessly to change attitudes that promote, accept and perpetuate all forms of violence and abuse. Amen

Day 4

The Lord God has told us what is right and what he demands:
"See that justice is done, let mercy be your first concern,
and humbly obey your God."
Micah 6:8 (CEV)

Righteous God help those who administer justice for victims and survivors of gender-based violence to make decisions with integrity and compassion. Amen

Day 5

Remember those in prison as if you were together with them in prison,
and those who are ill-treated as if you yourselves were suffering.
Hebrews 13:3

Righteous Saviour, who came to free the oppressed, use us to challenge social injustice with a clear voice, in a world where the vulnerable strive to be heard. Amen

Day 6

The thief comes only in order to steal, kill, and destroy.
I have come in order that you might have life
— life in all its fullness.
John 10:10

Lord of life, thank you that many women and girls are now free from abuse and violence. Thank you for your healing power which brings hope to survivors. Amen

Day 7

Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul
and with all your mind and with all your strength
and love your neighbour as yourself.

There is no commandment greater than these.

Mark 12:30-31

Loving Lord, you have called us to love our neighbour as ourselves. Help us to treat all with dignity and respect as we follow Christ's example of selfless love. Amen

Day 8

Do not fear, for I am with you.

do not be dismayed, for I am your God.

I will strengthen you and help you.

I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.

Isaiah 41:10

God of righteousness, we pray against regimes that endorse violence against women and girls. Replace their evil influence with a rule of justice and decency. Amen

Day 9

God will give a crown of beauty for ashes,
a joyous blessing instead of mourning,
festive praise instead of despair.

Isaiah 61:3 (NLT)

Transforming God, we pray for all who live in fear of violence and despair that life will ever change. Bring to an end their suffering; restore their sense of worth. Amen

Day 10

Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying,
'Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?'
And I said, 'Here am I. Send me!'

Isaiah 6:8

Holy Spirit fill us with new resolve to challenge unacceptable mindsets and actions and to champion the cause of righteousness in the name of Christ. Amen

Day 11

Then the king will answer,

"The truth is, anything you did for any of my people here,
you also did for me."

Matthew 25:40 (ERV)

Lord Jesus be with those who work with survivors of gender-based violence. May they be given the resources they need to offer long lasting support. Amen

Day 12

Jesus said: Truly I tell you, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Therefore, whoever takes the lowly position of this child is the

greatest in the kingdom of heaven. And whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me.

Matthew 18:3-5

Heavenly Father protect children who witness violence in the home. May they be given support to enable them to lead positive lives, in freedom from fear. Amen

Day 13

Don't copy the behaviour and customs of this world,
but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think.

Romans 12:2 (NLT)

All-powerful God break the patterns of abuse committed down the generations. Transform attitudes and behaviour for current and future relationships. Amen

Day 14

Endow the king with your justice, O God,
the royal son with your righteousness.
May he judge your people in righteousness,
your afflicted ones with justice.

Psalms 72:1-2

Lord of the nations, we pray for governments as they deal with gender-based violence. May they make policy and law with wisdom and discernment. Amen

Day 15

Don't take part in doing those worthless things that are done
in the dark. Instead, show how wrong they are.
The light will show what these things are really like.

Ephesians 5:11, 13

Merciful God bless those working with perpetrators of gender-based violence. Give them your resources to bring about lasting transformation of lives. Amen

Day 16

There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free,
nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

Galatians 3:28

Lord of heaven and earth, we pray for all to follow Christ's example of treating women with equality and respect. We pray for the dawn of a better world where justice and peace may flourish. Amen

