

FAITH in ACTION

CONTACTS

WCC Project on Overcoming Violence Against Women:

www.wcc-coe.org

Women's Aid is the main secular agency providing help and support to abused women and their families throughout the UK. **Scottish Women's Aid** has a comprehensive website, providing local and national information for the whole of Scotland.

Scottish Women's Aid

2nd Floor
132 Rose Street
Edinburgh EH2 3JD
T: 0131 226 6606
F: 0131 226 2996
www.scottishwomensaid.org.uk

For local Women's Aid information see website or check local telephone directory

Domestic Abuse Helpline
0800 027 1234 (24 hours)



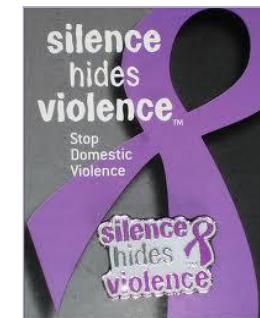
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Reformed Church Synod of Scotland (EMU)*

contact:
churchrelations@scotland.anglican.org

Monthly leaflets downloadable from
www.scotland.anglican.org/index.php/church_in_society_committee/

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November



Domestic Abuse

We call on churches to name and denounce all the various forms of violence against women inside and outside the church. We call on church leaders to declare together that violence against women is a sin. We urge them to take the side of the victim instead of sheltering the aggressor, to offer pastoral counselling that targets a concrete improvement in the victim's life situation instead of simply preaching patience, silence and submission.

World Council of Churches (WCC) Assembly,
Harare 1998

The most common form of violence against women in Scotland is Domestic Abuse. This is more than just physical violence: it can be sexual, mental or emotional, and is based on exploiting unequal power relationships. The vast majority of domestic abuse is carried out by men against women, though it can occur in any intimate relationship.

It is much more common than most of us imagine - in a typical year in Britain, 1 in 5 women experience domestic violence, and every week two women are killed by their current or former partner. We cannot and must not ignore the facts: SEC congregations will contain both victims and abusers - domestic abuse affects us all.

You may wish to try the following:

- pray for the victims of domestic violence and the perpetrators
- include prayers for perpetrators and victims of violence, and for agencies that assist abused women in services
- hold a special service for women victims of violence and abuse, giving them a space to tell their story in the context of the liturgy
- preach/invite a guest preacher on this topic
- use the Mothers' Union worship drama entitled *The Empty Chair*
- observe the 16 Days: 25 Nov - 10 Dec

The 16 Days movement is an international campaign which began in 1991. Every year, all around the world, imaginative action by grassroots organisations and women's networks raises awareness, and inspires change, to overcome different forms of violence against women. November 25 is the anniversary of the brutal murders of three sisters in the Dominican Republic in 1960 and has been designated UN International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women.

December 10 is International Human Rights Day, a sign of the fact that violence against women is a violation of human rights. The 16 Day period also includes **World AIDS Day (1 December)** and the anniversary of the **Montreal Massacre (6 December)**, when a man gunned down 14 female engineering students.

PRAYERS

Penitence

For the times when we have just passed by,
And pretended that we did not see
Lord, have mercy upon us.
For the times when we have said 'no, sorry',
And failed to reflect your love.
Christ, have mercy upon us.
For the times when we have made assumptions
And judged our brothers and sisters
Lord have mercy upon us.
AMEN

Seeing and loving the homeless Christ in the homeless

Homeless Saviour, teach us to see you
In the pale faces we meet huddled under blankets,
In the out-stretched hands,
In the anger, tears and pain,
That by recognising you in their faces, we might
see their real loveliness,
And so, by your love, love you in them.
AMEN

From Scotland to the World

Lord, be with the homeless on the streets of Scotland.
And lest we forget the extent of your love,
We ask that you might be not only with all the people sleeping rough on Scottish streets, but also with those sleeping in the dusty highways and shanty towns of your creation.
In the loneliness of a thousand cardboard boxes, And in the squalid darkness of a thousand doorways, Homeless Saviour, be with your homeless children wherever they may be.
AMEN

Thanksgiving

Homeless Saviour, despite the darkness of despair,
Through your light in all those who help the homeless,
Let your glory shine!
In the soup kitchens and hostels,
Let your glory shine!
In the befriending projects and charity shops,
Let your glory shine!
Till the world is luminous with your love.
AMEN