Episcopal
Relief & Development
Working Together for Lasting Change

16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM AGAINST GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

A FAITH AND COMMUNITY-BASED TOOLKIT

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Foreword

Josephine Hicks, Vice President, Episcopal Church Programs
"Will you strive for justice and peace among all people, and respect the dignity of every human being? I will, with God's help." This portion of the Baptismal Covenant reflects a driving principle behind all of Episcopal Relief & Development's work. In everything we do, we seek to respect the dignity of every human being. This includes eliminating barriers to growth and development. For women and children, those barriers can include unequal access to economic resources and decision making. Worse, women and children too often suffer from violence. Violence has a devastating impact, not only on the women who are direct victims of violence, but also on families and communities. It also contributes to cycles of poverty. By contrast, preventing violence, promoting equal access to economic opportunities and decision making, and cultivating women as leaders helps women thrive and become productive contributors to their communities and economies. This toolkit will help you and your congregation learn more about these important issues and Episcopal Relief & Development's transformative work in this area.

Tammi Mott, Vice President, International Program Operations
At Episcopal Relief & Development, we and our partners around the world share a vision for the work we do. It is a vision of community where all people — regardless of age, sex, gender or gender identity — live together in abundant dignity, trust, hope and love. This vision springs from our faith in the goodness of creation and our belief that every being is created equally in God's image. This vision is sustained by our deep commitment to our work, as demonstrated throughout the stories and resource links in this toolkit, which are both hope-filled and transformational in helping women and girls to rise up empowered and resilient. Be it for 16 or 365 days, I invite you to join with us and our global partners as we journey toward this vision. I lift up to you this toolkit and the opportunities it provides to learn more, pray more and do more so that, by our working together, gender-based violence may truly be no more.

The Rev. Pascual Torres, Co-founder and Executive Director, Siempre Unidos
"There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus" (Galatians 3:28). Siempre Unidos is a faith-based organization committed to eradicating gender-based violence (GBV) and all other forms of violence and discrimination. We welcome the initiative launched by Episcopal Relief & Development, 16 Days of Activism against GBV, by sharing stories, reflecting together, praying

and acting. For those who accept the invitation, the toolkit provides resources for the journey that will empower them to respond effectively and to step firmly into the fight to eradicate a form of violence so subtle that it masks itself as culturally correct, socially accepted, harmless and sometimes even funny. The material in this toolkit reflects its roots and connection with the Baptismal Covenant of the Episcopal Church as it is written in its Book of Common Prayer: “Will you persevere in resisting evil … Will you seek to serve Christ in all persons … Will you strive for justice… and respect the dignity of every human being?” it asks. And the people respond, “I will with God´s help. Amen.”

Trigger warning
This toolkit includes resources, factual accounts and narratives around themes of physical and sexual violence and other forms of gender-based discrimination. This content may be difficult for some. We encourage you always to care for your safety and well-being.

INTRODUCTION

THE 16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM AGAINST GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

Chiseche Salome Mibenge, Director, Gender Initiatives

Episcopal Relief & Development's global work with local community members, faith leaders and other partners focuses on attaining gender equity, balancing structures of power in societies and encouraging shared decision making in household and other roles. The organization works with partners to define specific actions to address discrimination, gender-based violence (GBV) and other forms of abuse in their contexts.

Partners bring impressive innovation and energy to promoting women's rights and gender equity. For example, in a rural community in Liberia, young female athletes gathered for a soccer tournament. They wore their team colors proudly, and they had two goals: to win the game and to engage in youth-led activism to eliminate violence against girls in Liberia's schools.

The players had undergone hours of coaching as well as years of training about the rights of women and children and the realities of GBV in their schools and communities. Their training was facilitated by the Episcopal Church of Liberia-Relief & Development (ECLRD), the humanitarian arm of Liberia's Episcopal Church and a long-term partner of Episcopal Relief & Development. Episcopal Relief & Development works with ECLRD and its networks to encourage and train faith leaders to speak out against violence and to change cultural norms in their communities that create an environment that enables violence. Uniting for change at the soccer tournament, a focal point for fun and for raising awareness, was just one activity Christian and Muslim youth leaders in Liberia carried out across 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence (the 16 Days of Activism).

The Center for Women's Global Leadership at Rutgers University in New Jersey started the 16 Days of Activism in 1991 to amplify feminist voices and bridge women's movements globally in order to secure women's rights. The campaign runs each year from November 25 (International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women) through December 10 (World Human Rights Day). These dates were chosen specifically to reinforce the message that GBV is a violation of human rights. Each year, millions of people

unite across the globe during these days to raise awareness and initiate discussions in their communities, challenge discriminatory attitudes and fight for a world free of violence against women and girls.

Annually, Episcopal Relief & Development's partners in countries such as Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Zambia, Liberia, Brazil and Honduras mobilize communities at local and national levels to engage in 16 Days of Activism. Liberian youth faith leaders sponsored by ECLRD have protested against violence using theater, music and soccer. Sex workers in Honduras, accompanied by The Episcopal Church's health ministry, marched through a red-light district and raised awareness about the right to live free from violence. And women in the Anglican Diocese of Muyinga, Burundi, marched with the bishop and used drama, dance, song and dialogue to raise awareness of GBV and promote women's empowerment.

Episcopal Relief & Development has published a toolkit for the 16 Days of Activism. The toolkit's objectives are:

- to encourage all its networks to join in this global effort;
- to raise awareness of GBV and the work being done to address it; and
- to amplify the voices and prayers of all working together for gender equity and the empowerment of the most vulnerable women in their communities, such as women with disabilities and incarcerated women.

Gender-Based Violence

Gender-based violence (GBV) is violence directed against people because of their sex, gender, gender identity or gender expression, or is violence that disproportionately affects people of a particular gender. Intimate-partner violence is the most pervasive form of GBV worldwide: Almost one-third (30 %) of women who have been in a relationship report experiencing some form of physical and/or sexual violence by their intimate partner in their lifetime.[1] GBV reinforces stereotypes and inequalities in society, and it disproportionately affects women and girls.

The subordination of women's rights all over the world is sustained by harmful social, cultural and religious attitudes and practices and, in some cases, is encoded in law and policy. GBV occurs in various forms, such as domestic violence, sexual assault, forced sterilization, child marriage, revenge porn and cyber-stalking. It commonly is categorized into five central inter-related forms:

- Physical violence
- Psychological violence
- Sexual violence
- Socio-economic violence
- Spiritual violence

Spiritual violence is described as coercion and control of one individual by another in a faith context that can occur within faith communities. This abuse may include: misuse of Scripture or the pulpit to control behavior; excusing violent behavior; requiring submission to abuse; and reinforcing male privilege, for example by suggesting that the abuser has a divine position or that victims' endurance of abuse is Christ-like.[2]

On November 25, 2013, the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women, the former presiding bishop of The Episcopal Church, the Most Rev. Katharine Jefferts Schori, stated:

Our churches must accept responsibility for our own part in perpetuating oppressive attitudes towards women. In penitence and faith, we must move forward in such a way that our churches truly become a living witness to our belief that both women and men are made in the image of God.[3]

As Christians, we believe that God created all humans equally, in God's image, and that all are worthy of dignity, adequate resources and to be in loving, liberating and life-giving relationships with God, one another and God's creation. Our Scriptures, Jesus' Way of Love and our Baptismal Covenant call us to love one another and to seek and serve Christ in all persons. GBV, however, continues to be an obstacle

[1] https://www.who.int/en/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/violence-against-women
[2] Restored: A Handbook for Female Christian Survivors of Domestic Abuse (2019) www.restoredrelationships.org
[3] https://www.episcopalnewsservice.org/pressreleases/presiding-bishops-sermon-opening-16-days-against-gender-violence/

to that vision for equality, development and peace. The promise of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) — to leave no one behind — also cannot be fulfilled without ending GBV.

Faith leaders have a unique position of trust and influence at both the individual and community levels to claim and nurture this vision, acting as catalysts of change. Ultimately, to be lasting and effective, change must occur within our own hearts, homes and communities. All are areas in which faith leaders are actively engaged.

The Toolkit

The Episcopal Church General Convention has passed various resolutions calling for a faith-based response to gender-based violence (GBV). In 2012, the church resolved *that parishes and dioceses be encouraged to participate in annual awareness campaigns about gender violence*; and, in 2015, it noted that it *deeply regretted the lack of progress in stemming the global pandemic of violence against women* and requested that its clergy and congregations *speak out to transform the unjust silence of society in the face of this widespread practice of violence*.[4] This toolkit provides a framework for users to join a global faith-based movement against GBV by praying, learning and acting together.

Episcopal Relief & Development's work engages community and faith leaders to take action and speak out against violence around the world. Its programs play a pivotal role in creating interfaith networks in many countries that provide tools, skills and support for leaders to challenge the attitudes and behaviors that perpetuate injustice and discrimination. This toolkit draws heavily from the learnings from this work.

The toolkit is a set of resources specifically to help guide people of faith through the 16 Days of Activism and beyond, to a 365-day commitment to restoring dignity to individuals, families and communities everywhere. The toolkit will remain accessible as a usable and valuable resource all year.

Episcopal Relief & Development encourages users with a social media account such as Twitter to share Scripture and facts and to pray for all those affected by GVB as well as for those actively engaged in ministries to combat it. The toolkit contains resources for faith- and community-based action. Users also can share how they are using these resources by tagging @EpiscopalRelief or using the hashtag #16DaysofActivism.

A Faith- and Community-Based Toolkit

[4] Written statement submitted by Presiding Bishop Michael Curry at the 63rd session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (2019)

This toolkit inspires prolonged reflection rooted in faith. It provides users with Scripture that can reinforce our belief in the inherent and equal dignity of all God's children as made in God's image, and it centers responses to survivors of GBV in our faith.

All of the reflections and actions contained within the toolkit can be completed alone. However, groups such as youth and women's ministries, as well as collective prayer groups, are encouraged to consider using them.

An Evidence-Based Toolkit

Presiding Bishop Michael Curry, in his statement to the U.N. Commission on the Status of Women, spoke about the disproportionate suffering of women: women of color; women of African descent; indigenous women; women with disabilities; women experiencing discrimination for their ethnicity, race, caste, descent, language, religion, sexual orientation or gender identity/expression; migrant, refugee, internally displaced, undocumented or stateless women; enslaved, trafficked or incarcerated women; rural women; women experiencing poverty; unemployed women; women whose work is considered immoral, illegal or unacceptable; older and aging women; widows; and women who are heads of households.

Systems and structures that oppress women based on their gender and other intersecting and marginalized identities can dramatically heighten vulnerability to GBV, the presiding bishop noted.

In response, the toolkit includes facts about violence experienced by some of the most vulnerable women globally. It provides sobering facts about GBV to raise awareness of the extent to which it occurs. It also highlights responses and preventative measures led primarily by faith communities. The toolkit contains resources for faith-based action that are supported by evidence of impact and/or are recognized as best practice.

Episcopal Relief & Development has divided the toolkit into 16 Actions, parallel to the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence, but encourages users to regard the toolkit as a living document that can be referred to and utilized for all 365 days of the year.

ACTION 1: PRAY TOGETHER BEYOND BORDERS

Faith

"My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for he has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant. Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed; for the Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name."

Luke 1:46-55

Fact Sheet

- The United Nations recognized violence against women as a human-rights violation in 1993 when it adopted the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women.
- Globally, an estimated 35% of women have experienced physical, sexual or psychological abuse.[5]
- 84% of Native-American and Alaskan-Native women have experienced violence, 56% have experienced sexual violence and, of that second group, more than 90% have experienced violence at the hands of a non-tribal member.[6]
- Women physically or sexually abused by their partners report higher rates of serious health problems. For example, they are 16% more likely to have a low-birth-weight baby and almost twice as likely to experience depression compared to women who have not experienced partner violence.[7]

Reflection and Action

Join in prayer at the start of 16 Days of Activism.

The heads of communion of Churches Beyond Borders have published devotions focused on gender-based violence (GBV), timed with and inspired by the 16 Days of Activism.

The devotions are written by the four bishops (heads of communion) and others representing each of the Churches Beyond Borders: Evangelical Lutheran Church of Canada, Anglican Church of Canada, Evangelical Lutheran Church of America and The Episcopal Church. Each writer has been deeply involved in this work, addressing grave issues such as missing and murdered Indigenous women, human trafficking, women at the borders, exclusion of people because of their sexual orientation or gender identity and domestic violence. Since Advent coincides with the campaign, they chose the Magnificat as their guiding text, offering prayer and reflection

[5] https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/85239/9789241564625_eng.pdf;jsessionid=9C0A487649A2AE2B08FAFBE400AEF2C0?sequence=1
[6] https://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/nij/249736.pdf
[7] https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/85239/9789241564625_eng.pdf?sequence=1

alongside the call for awareness and action. The devotions give thanks for the strong and enduring voice of Mary as she says “yes” to the angels to the angel’s annunciation and as she greets her sister Elizabeth. We share the Rev. Joann Conroy’s prayer and reflection. She is the president of the ELCA American Indian Alaska Native Association, Inc. (AIAN) and a chaplain at the Good Samaritan Society/Sanford Health in Maplewood, Minn.

Woyatan IyecheMary
Mary said, “My soul sings praises”

As we gather in your name, Creator God, we face the Four Directions remembering before you all Indigenous women and girls who are missing and murdered. We pray for those who are victims of violence, their families and communities. In Mary’s Song we find our way, loved, blessed, protected and strengthened with God who created us. We breath. Wakan Tanka , wocikiyaye, wocikiyaye. God Hear our Prayers. Amen.

Slow breaths and read:

Luke 1:46-55
46 “My soul magnifies the Lord,
47 and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,
48 for he has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant.
Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed;
49 for the Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name.

46 ēkwa Mary ōmisi itwēw,
“nitahcāhk mamihcimēw kā-tipēyihcikēyit.
47 mīna nitahcāhk cīhkēyihtam,
ayisk kisē-manitow ē-pimācihit,
48 ēkwa nikī-kiskisitotāk, niya ē-atoskēyākaniwiyān.
anohc ohci kahkiyaw ayisiyiniwak sawēyimikowisiw nika-itikwak.
49 ayisk ana kā-māwaci-sōhkātisit
kihci-kīkwaya nikī-tōtamāk mīna kanātaniyiw owīhowin.

(Plains Cree)

Slow breaths and read:

50 His mercy is for those who fear him
from generation to generation.
51 He has shown strength with his arm;
he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts.

50 Áádóó dahodísinígíí da’ahílchíihdęę’
áádóó da’ahílchíihgóó hwe’aa a’ááh
hasin bił dahólǫ.
51 Hagaan bee
hwe’adziil béézingo ájiilaa,
Diné bijéí biyi’dęę’ ádaa hodzódlí yee
Slow breaths and read:

50 His mercy is for those who fear him
from generation to generation.
51 He has shown strength with his arm;
he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts.

50 Áádóó dahodísinígíí da'ahílchíihdęę'
áádóó da'ahílchíihgóó hwe'aa a'ááh
hasin bił dahólǫ.
51 Hagaan bee
hwe'adziil bééhózingo ájiilaa,
Diné bijéí biyi'dęę' ádaa hodzódlí yee

(Navajo)

Slow breaths and read:

52 He has brought down the powerful from their thrones,
and lifted up the lowly;
53 he has filled the hungry with good things,
and sent the rich away empty.

52 Tsu-na-li-ni-gi-dv du-we-ka-hv-sv u-na-nv-di-yi,
a-le u-yo i-yu-na-dv-hna-de-gi du-sa-la-da-nv.
53 A-go-nu tsu-ni-yo-si-s-gi o-s-dv ge-sv du-ka-li-i-s-ta-nv,
tsu-ne-hna-i-no a-sv-ha do-u-ne-nv-s-di-yi ni-du-wa-ne-lv-gi.

(Cherokee)

Slow breaths and read:

54 He has helped his servant Israel,
in remembrance of his mercy,
55 according to the promise he made to our ancestors,
to Abraham and to his descendants forever."

54 Iye towaonxila kin he kiksuye,ca
Israel ookiyeye cin he ikiye ce;
55 Hunkakewicunyanpi, Aberaham
cinca kici, henan ohinniyan oie
wicakicaton qon hje iyececa ce,
eya,

(Sioux Lakota)

WO CI KI YAYE.

Recommended reading

The Executive Summary of Canada's "National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls"

The Declaration of the ELCA to People of African Descent

"Seeing the Face of God in Each Other: The Antiracism Training Manual of The Episcopal Church"

ACTION 2: MAKE A COMMITMENT

Faith

Bear one another's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ.

Galatians 6:2

Fact Sheet

- Four women a day in the United States are killed by their partners.[8]
- In the U.S., White women earn only $0.79 for every $1 earned by a White man, Black women earn $0.62 and Hispanic or Latino women $0.54.[9]
- 67% of the transgender community reported negative workplace outcomes such as being fired or forced to resign, not being hired or being denied a promotion while in the workforce.[10]

Reflection and Action

Bearing one another's burdens requires that faith communities respond to gender-based violence (GBV) and other forms of gender discrimination and hold themselves accountable to survivors. Commit your faith community to fulfilling the spirit and actions of the global campaign. You can adapt and adopt the pledge below and post it on your website or on social media.

> *We proclaim with one voice that violence against women exists in our communities and is morally, spiritually and universally intolerable. We recognize the damage that gender-based violence and other forms of gender injustice do to women, girls and society as a whole.*
>
> *We acknowledge that our sacred texts, traditions and values too often have been misused to perpetuate and condone abuse. We draw upon our healing texts and practices to help make our families and societies whole.*
>
> *As people of faith, we believe in the inherent dignity and divinity intrinsic to each person and are called to uphold it by Matthew 25:40: "Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me."*

[8] https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/mind-games/201909/the-number-women-murdered-partner-is-rising
[9] https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/women/reports/2020/03/24/482141/quick-facts-gender-wage-gap/
[10] https://transequality.org/sites/default/files/docs/usts/USTS-Full-Report-Dec17.pdf

We hereby commit ourselves to learn and take action surrounding gender-based violence by engaging in the global campaign, 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence, and we will continue to learn and take action after its conclusion.

ACTION 3: DIALOGUE ON GIRLS' EDUCATION

Faith

Strength and dignity are her clothing, and she laughs at the time to come.

Proverbs 31:25

Fact Sheet

- At least 207,459 children younger than 18, most of them girls, were married in the United States between 2000 and 2015.[11]
- One in five women in college experiences sexual assault.[12] Students are at the highest risk of sexual assault in the first few months of their first and second semesters in college.[13]
- Women who identify as lesbian, bisexual or gay are more likely to experience sexual assault on college campuses than those who identify as heterosexual.[14]
- In Botswana, South Africa and Zimbabwe, constitutional prohibitions against gender discrimination were used effectively to challenge regulations that banned pregnant students from attending school.[15]

Reflection and Action

Episcopal Relief & Development's Violence Against Women and Girls program in Liberia, a partnership with the Episcopal Church Liberia Relief and Development (ECLRD), convenes faith leaders for dialogue and reflection on religious, social and cultural practices and beliefs that can undermine or uplift women and girls' strength and dignity. A crucial tool for facilitating thoughtful and challenging reflections is the Fact, Association, Meaning and Action (FAMA) tool. FAMA is a behavior-change communication tool presented as a set of visual cards used to assist faith leaders, women, girls, boys and men in identifying and understanding various social phenomena that affect women's and girls' freedoms. Most cards depict discrimination against girls to emphasize links between early socialization and subsequent abuses such as intimate-partner violence.

FAMA trainings foster a deepening engagement around socio-economic factors that inhibit the education of girls, such as early pregnancy and sexual abuse and harassment by teachers and

[11] https://www.icrw.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/child-marriage-in-the-US-prevalence-impact_8-2020_ICRW.pdf
[12] https://www.bjs.gov/content/pub/pdf/ccsvsftr.pdf
[13] Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network. (2016). Campus Sexual Violence Statistics
[14] https://www.bjs.gov/content/pub/pdf/ccsvsftr.pdf
[15] https://www.worldpolicycenter.org/sites/default/files/WORLD_Policy_Brief_Equal_Rights_For_Women_and_Girls_in_Constitutions_2015.pdf

peers. The FAMA cards have led to scrutiny and challenges to long-held sentiments such as: “If you invest in a girl’s education, she will simply be married off and your investment will be wasted.”

Review the images of the FAMA cards themed “education for girls” and “sex for grades.” Then engage your community in a dialogue in response to the questions the cards pose.

ACTION 4: FOSTER DIVERSE AND INCLUSIVE LEADERSHIP

Faith

"In the church, too, we must avoid any implications in our teachings or behavior that men and boys are in any way superior to women and girls or entitled to dominate them. We know that the Bible was written in cultures where women were not equal. But Genesis is clear that, in our creation, [all genders] equally reflect God's image and so are worthy of equal dignity and respect (Gen. 1:27). The same equality is true in salvation, for 'there is no longer male and female, for all of you are one in Christ' (Gal. 3:28)."

Archbishop Thabo Cecil Makgoba, "To the Laos — To the People of God" (2013)

Fact Sheet

- In 1988, the Rt. Rev. Barbara Harris became the first female bishop consecrated in the Anglican Communion.
- The Dutch Reformed Church Botswana ordained its first female priest in 2003.
- The Church of England appointed its first female bishop, the Rt. Rev. Libby Lane, in 2019.

Reflection and Action

Imagine a gathering of bishops. Imagine a convening of leading Episcopal school educators. Do you imagine an inclusive and diverse leadership?

The Beijing Platform states that representation of women in leadership is critical for development. Episcopal Relief & Development's programs invest in institutional change that supports transformative leadership positions for women to help change harmful attitudes about women's role in society. This is highlighted in the Mazi yi Moyo (Water is Life) program in Angola, a partnership with the Anglican Church of Angola.

This program delivered clean water and sanitation to thousands of Angolans through Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) solutions. It also accomplished another goal: elevating female leaders. Every community WASH committee contains an equal number of men and women. This has inspired the community to see women not only as beneficiaries of a development program but also as assets, specifically as decision makers and leaders in designing and delivering life-saving services.

Read more about the Maza yi Moyo program in Episcopal Relief & Development's 2019 Annual Report.
Read Tearfund's guidelines for integrating women's specific sanitation needs into WASH programs here.

ACTION 5: FOCUS THE LENS ON GBV WITH THE ANGLICAN COMMUNION

Faith

For just as a body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. For in the one Spirit we were all baptized into one body — Jews or Greeks, slaves or free — and we were all made to drink of one Spirit.

Indeed, the body does not consist of one member but of many. If the foot would say, "Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body," that would not make it any less part of the body.

1 Corinthians 12:12-15

Fact Sheet

- About 17 % of Zambian girls aged 15 to 19 are married, compared to only 1 % of boys of the same age group.[16]
- 32 % of Kenyan young women aged 18 to 24 and 18 % of their male counterparts reported experiencing sexual violence before age 18.[17]

Reflection and Action

In 2020, the Anglican Communion launched a notable series of webinars to mark the 16 Days of Activism. Speakers included the Most Rev. Thabo Cecil Makgoba, archbishop of Cape Town and metropolitan of the Anglican Church of Southern Africa, who encouraged people of faith to make fighting gender-based violence (GBV) within the church part of the liturgy: "If it is read, if it is sung, if it is prayed, it is believed." Series themes included: addressing GBV around the communion; and engaging men in ending GBV.

[16] https://www.un.org/africarenewal/news/zambia-fighting-gender-based-violence-fresh-cases-continue-emerge
[17] https://www.unaids.org/en/resources/presscentre/featurestories/2018/may/gender-based-violence-in-kenya

ACTION 6: ENGAGE MEN AND BOYS

Faith

Nevertheless, in the Lord woman is not independent of man or man independent of woman.

1 Corinthians 11:11

Fact Sheet

- Men are more likely to perpetrate violence if they have low levels of education; a history of child maltreatment; exposure to domestic violence against their mothers; harmful use of alcohol; unequal gender norms, including attitudes accepting of violence; or a sense of entitlement over women.[18]
- One in 40 men in the U.S. is a victim of rape or attempted rape during his lifetime.[19]
- In the U.S., 97% of domestic-abuse perpetrators are male.[20]

Reflection and Action

Gender-based violence (GBV) is a societal crisis, and it is imperative that we engage women and girls, men and boys in combatting it so that our work is transformative. Engaging men and boys in transforming harmful gender norms and unequal power dynamics is critical to achieving gender equality. For transformative, sustainable change to occur, men and boys must see themselves as partners in the process. Men and boys also benefit when harmful norms are challenged.

St. John's Episcopal Church in Jackson Hole, Wyoming, engages men and boys, women and girls in its ministry for gender equality and justice. Initiatives include a project advocating for equitable access to menstrual-hygiene products and a forum for men and boys to examine their responsibilities to end GBV and other forms of gender inequity. Conversations for Men regularly convenes for men and boys to discuss themes such as love, consent, authenticity, masculinity, empathy and alcohol.

We encourage you to review the image of the Faith, Association, Meaning, Action card themed "economic violence", found here, and then engage your community in dialogue in response to the questions it poses.

[18] https://www.who.int/en/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/violence-against-women
[19] https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/2015data-brief508.pdf
[20] https://opdv.ny.gov/professionals/abusers/genderandipv.html

Recommended reading

"A Father's Hope: An Equal World" by Episcopal Relief & Development Senior Program Officer Ernest Cajuste
Promundo's "The Role of Fathers in Parenting for Gender Equality"
The World Council of Churches and the AIDS Initiative in Africa's "Contextual Bible Study Manual on Transformative Masculinity"

ACTION 7: ENGAGE WITH THE EPISCOPAL PUBLIC POLICY NETWORK

Faith

"Learn to do good; seek justice, rescue the oppressed, defend the orphan, plead for the widow."

Isaiah 1:17

Fact Sheet

- As of September 1, 2021, just 10 countries have a woman as head of state and 13 countries have a woman as head of government.
- Only four countries have 50% or more women in parliament in single or lower houses: Rwanda with 61%, Cuba with 53%, Bolivia with 53% and the United Arab Emirates with 50%.
- A further 19 countries, (nine in Europe, five in Latin America and the Caribbean, four in Africa and one in the Pacific), have reached or surpassed 40%.
- More than two-thirds of these countries have applied gender quotas — either legislated-candidate quotas or reserved seats — opening space for women's political participation in national parliaments.[21]

Reflection and Action

The Episcopal Public Policy Network (EPPN), run by the Office of Government Relations, is a grassroots network of Episcopalians across the country dedicated to carrying out the Baptismal Covenant call to strive for justice and peace through the active ministry of public policy advocacy.

EPPN advocates for stronger legislative protections against gender-based violence (GBV). The Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act has been reauthorized on a bipartisan basis three times since it was first passed, but the reauthorization expired in early 2019. EPPN's spring 2019 action alert quoted the Rev. Bradley Hauff, missioner for Indigenous Ministries:

"The Violence Against Women Act is significant especially for Indigenous Native-American women, who experience, in proportion to the general U.S. population, much higher rates of domestic abuse and violence, higher than any group. In particular, laws which have made it virtually impossible to prosecute non-Indigenous men in tribal courts for acts of violence such as

[21] All facts taken from https://www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/leadership-and-political-participation/facts-and-figures

rape and murder committed against Indigenous women, as well as child abuse and sex trafficking on reservations, have exacerbated this problem."

EPPN invites Episcopalians to show support for the Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act of 2019, which would, among other things, improve the response to violence against Indigenous women, including Alaska-Native tribes. EPPN also urges the passage of the Keeping Women and Girls Safe from the Start Act that expands the ability of the U.S. government to prevent GBV and provide early interventions at the onset of humanitarian emergencies.

Recommended reading

General Convention Resolutions
2012-A131: Express Solidarity with Indigenous Peoples
2012-A139: Endorse Efforts Against Gender Violence
2007-A167: Support Actions to Protect Victims of Human Trafficking
2015-A049: Prioritize Gender Equality Concerns in Foreign and Church Aid

ACTION 8: DIALOGUE ON HIV/AIDS AND DISCRIMINATION

Faith

"Do not fear, for I am with you, do not be afraid, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my victorious right hand."

Isaiah 41:10

Fact Sheet

- People living with HIV/AIDS experience high levels of labor discrimination. The International Labor Organization reports that people with HIV/AIDS have an unemployment rate three times higher than national averages.[22]
- Women living with HIV experience significantly higher rates of intimate-partner violence than women that do not have the virus.[23]
- Specific groups of women are disproportionately affected by HIV. An analysis of studies measuring the pooled prevalence of HIV in 50 countries estimated that, globally, female sex workers are approximately 14 times more likely to be infected than other women of reproductive age.[24]

Reflection and Action

Every year on December 1, millions of people come together to commemorate World AIDS Day. It's an opportunity for people worldwide to advocate for the rights of people living with HIV and to memorialize those who have died from an AIDS-related illness. Founded in 1988, World AIDS Day was the first international day for global health. Since then, awareness has grown about the links between vulnerability to gender-based violence (GVB) and HIV/AIDS.[25]

Siempre Unidos is a ministry of the Episcopal Diocese of Honduras supported by Episcopal Relief & Development. Operating in Honduras since 1999, this organization focuses on clinical and community-based services, advocacy and outreach for people living with HIV and communities vulnerable to infection as a result of their marginalization, such as commercial sex workers, incarcerated populations and transgender youth. Siempre Unidos successfully reached UNAIDS 90-90-90 Campaign goals, with 91% of its patients maintaining suppressed viral loads.[26]

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[22] https://www.unaids.org/sites/default/files/media_asset/01_PeoplelivingwithHIV.pdf
[23] https://www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/hiv-and-aids/facts-and-figures
[24] https://www.unaids.org/sites/default/files/media_asset/01_PeoplelivingwithHIV.pdf
[25] https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/Treaties/CEDAW/Shared%20Documents/1_Global/INT_CEDAW_GEC_4726_E.pdf
[26] UNAIDS' ambitious 90-90-90 campaign goals stated that: By 2020, 90% of all people living with HIV will know their HIV status. By 2020, 90% of all people with diagnosed HIV infection will receive

Concerning outreach, Siempre Unidos created a support group for those living with HIV/AIDS to support their medical and psychosocial needs better.

The incidence of GBV against people living with HIV/AIDS, sex workers and LGBTQ populations in Honduras is extreme, and Siempre Unidos' ministry is vital.

Read more about the work of Siempre Unidos. Finally, you can join global activists commemorating World AIDS Day by wearing a red ribbon, the universal symbol of awareness and support for people living with HIV.

sustained antiretroviral therapy. By 2020, 90% of all people receiving antiretroviral therapy will have viral suppression.

ACTION 9: DIALOGUE ON GENDER IDENTITY AND SEXUAL ORIENTATION

Faith

There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus.

Galatians 3:28

Fact Sheet

- 28% of LGBTQIA+ students are bullied online because of their sexual orientations.[27]
- Nearly one in five lesbian, gay or bisexual students has been physically forced to have sexual intercourse, more than three times the rate of their heterosexual peers.[28]

Reflection and Action

As Christ followers, members of The Episcopal Church have a legacy of inclusion, aspiring to tell and exemplify God's love for every human being. Bishops, priests and deacons cooperate as leaders at all levels of our church. Leadership is a gift from God and can be expressed by all people in our church, regardless of gender, sexual identity or sexual orientation.

Globally, LGBTQ people face discrimination based solely on their identities. Our partners in Brazil and Honduras, Serviçio Anglicano de Diaconio e Desenvolvimento and Siloe, challenge hate crimes and other forms of discrimination against LGBTQ populations. Episcopal Relief & Development has maintained a cooperative relationship on LGBTQ issues with American Jewish World Service, one of the largest and most significant funders of and leaders in LGBTQ advocacy around the world.

Read about All Saints Episcopal Church in Beverly Hills and St. Luke's Episcopal Church in Long Beach, California, just two of the US congregations that minister to LGBTQ communities. All Saints writes that 48% of the homeless youth in Hollywood, California, are LGBTQ. In their lives, they've faced the worst kind of bigotry and discrimination. Watch the ECF Vital Practices webinar "Discipleship from the Margins" on the transformative power of transgender youth leadership in The Episcopal Church.

[27] https://www.cdc.gov/lgbthealth/youth.htm
[28] http://dx.doi.org/10.15585/mmwr.ss6509a1

Recommended reading

Austen Hartke's "Transforming: The Bible and the Lives of Transgender Christians" (2018)

ACTION 10: DIALOGUE ON COVID-19 AND GENDER

Faith

COVID-19 has left us disoriented, uncertain and confused, afraid of what we know and anxious about what we do not know. Our old normal has been upended, and we hunger for its return.

Presiding Bishop Michael Curry's "Word to the Church: What Would Love Do?"

Fact Sheet

- Women and Children are 14 times more likely to die in disasters. During the 1991 cyclone in Bangladesh, 90% of the 140,000 casualties were women and girls. During the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami in Banda Aceh, 77% of the 80,000 casualties were women and girls.[29]
- LGBTQ people are disproportionately represented in the ranks of the poor, people experiencing homelessness and those without health care, meaning that they may be particularly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.[30]

Reflection and Action

Episcopal Relief & Development and its partners recognize the disproportionate impact the current COVID-19 pandemic is having on women in areas such as health, caretaking, unemployment, increasing poverty and domestic violence. We especially are attentive to the needs and priorities of our global programs working for women's empowerment and gender equity during this time. Program partners' continued commitment to commemorating the 16 Days of Activism speaks to their resilience and commitment to ending inequalities that subordinate women and exacerbate domestic violence and other forms of gender-based discrimination (GBV).

[29] https://www.unisdr.org/files/48152_disasterandgenderstatistics.pdf
[30] https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/SexualOrientation/ImpactCOVID19LGBTpersons.pdf, see also https://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/HRC/Pages/NewsDetail.aspx?NewsID=26448&LangID=E

Globally, faith communities have shifted their disaster strategies to provide better support to victims of domestic abuse and other social and economic hardships exacerbated by the pandemic.

Faith-based organizations have created and applied valuable resources for communities confronted with the impact of social-distancing measures. We encourage you to familiarize yourself with these faith-based tools. Episcopal Relief & Development's webinar on COVID-19 recognizes and responds to mental-health issues and family/partner violence as they relate to COVID-19 and provides suggestions for referrals for survivors. Side by Side, a faith movement for gender justice, has compiled a comprehensive list of tools and resources specifically related to gender, faith and COVID-19. You can find its list of COVID-19 resources here.

ACTION 11: DIALOGUE ON COVID-19 AND GBV

Faith

He has told you, O mortal, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?

Micah 6:8

Fact Sheet

- Globally, as many as 38% of murders of women are committed by a male intimate partner.[31]
- In the U.S., only five states explicitly list domestic-violence shelters, and thereby those who work in them, as essential in their guidance on COVID-19 responses.[32]

Reflection and Action

Women and children's exposure to gender-based violence (GBV) usually increases during disasters and other crises. The United Nations Population Fund urges us to pay attention to GBV risks in disaster-management laws, policies and planning, and to assume GBV is taking place, even if no reliable data is available.[33]

Relief Web notes in its policy brief on GBV and COVID-19 that, in light of the physical-distancing requirements and movement restrictions put in place across the world to curb the pandemic, women and girls face an increased risk of experiencing violence at the hands of family members, intimate partners or others living within their homes. In all emergency-affected settings, individuals known to the victims, not strangers, perpetrate most cases of GBV. Factors such as emotional stress, economic strain and shifting roles and responsibilities among family members often exacerbate the risk of experiencing household violence during times of crisis. With these risks combined with lockdowns and other movement restrictions, homes within the context of COVID-19 can become potential pressure cookers of GBV as drivers of violence increase while survivors and those at risk are more restricted than ever in their ability to seek safety or other necessary forms of support.

The Anglican Alliance and the Anglican Consultative Council published "Domestic Abuse and COVID-19: How Churches Can Respond" in response to escalating rates of domestic violence and calls to national helplines during the global health pandemic. The guidelines call upon the church

[31] https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/violence-against-women
[32] https://www.cisa.gov/publication/guidance-essential-critical-infrastructure-workforce
[33] https://lac.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/UNFPA%20version%20ingles%201.pdf

to follow the Four Rs when responding to GBV: **recognize** that GBV is occurring; **respond** by saying, "I believe you"; **refer** the survivor to proper resources; and **record** what the survivor said. We encourage you to read the guidelines and consider which R your community can strengthen in its response to GBV.

Recommended reading

"Loving One Another: A Biblical Discussion Toolkit on Gender-Based Violence," Anglican Service of Diakonia and Development (SADD) of the Anglican Church of Brazil, Global Partnerships Committee of the Scottish Episcopal Church and Christian Aid Scotland

ACTION 12: DIALOGUE ON FINANCIAL INCLUSION

Faith

But she said, "As the Lord your God lives, I have nothing baked, only a handful of meal in a jar, and a little oil in a jug: I am now gathering a couple of sticks, so that I may go home and prepare it for myself and my son, that we may eat it, and die."

1 Kings 17:12

Fact Sheet

- Women around the world are responsible for 75 % of all unpaid work.[34]
- Between 1995 and 2015, the global female labor-force participation rate decreased from 52.4% to 49.6%. The corresponding figures for men are 79.9% and 76.1%, respectively. Worldwide, the chances for women to participate in the labor market remain almost 27 percentage points lower than those for men.[35]

Reflection and Action

In 2019, the Center for Women's Global Leadership dedicated its toolkit for the 16 Days of Activism to raising awareness of the International Labor Organization Convention on Violence and Harassment adopted that year. Violence and harassment in the world of work is a global phenomenon that disproportionately and uniquely affects women, prohibiting them from fully realizing their human rights. This abuse contributes to social and economic inequality, creates vulnerability and perpetuates exploitation and precarious working conditions for millions based on gender and other intersecting identities.

Gendered barriers to women's integration into the workplace combine with barriers to women's financial inclusion in accessing banking services and exacerbate the feminization of poverty. Data show that, when women have more financial earning power and the ability to decide how finances are managed, they bring positive economic change to the lives of their children, families and communities.

Episcopal Relief & Development's programs encourage women to participate in financial decisions and to earn an income so they can provide food and health care for their families, as well as educate their children. Women participate in Savings with Education (SwE) groups, which offer critical financial and business training as well as provide small-business loans to individuals and groups. SwE groups develop micro-insurance products, village banks and cooperatives for people without access to traditional financial markets and institutions.

[34] https://16dayscampaign.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/2019-Global-16Days-Campaign-Guide-Final.pdf
[35] https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/---publ/documents/publication/wcms_457317.pdf

Read about the SwE program in Angola to learn more about the impact it has on women's financial health and well-being and watch Josephine Hicks, Episcopal Relief & Development vice president for Episcopal Church Programs, speak about community empowerment and SwE here.

ACTION 13: DIALOGUE ON HOUSING INSECURITY AND GENDER

Faith

"For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me." Then the righteous will answer him, "Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food, or thirsty and gave you something to drink? And when did we see you a stranger and welcomed you, or naked and gave you clothing? And when did we see you sick or in prison and visited you?" And the king will answer them, "Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me."

Matthew 25:35-40

Fact Sheet

- One of every four homeless women in the United States is homeless because of violence committed against her.
- More than 92% of homeless mothers have experienced severe physical and/or sexual abuse during their lifetimes.[36]
- In many major cities around the country, domestic violence is cited as the top reason for homelessness among families with children.[37]

Reflection and Action

Faith-based communities dedicated to serving survivors of gender-based violence (GBV) are located throughout the U.S. One such resource is Thistle Farms, located in Tennessee. This Episcopal organization assists survivors of domestic violence through a two-year residential program that provides safe housing, a meaningful job and a support system of other survivors.

Our partner, The Anglican Church of Burundi (PEAB), refers women experiencing GBV to government-run safe houses for shelter and medical care, including psycho-social support. PEAB also engages and enrolls survivors of GBV in workshops on financial security. In 2019, it formed five savings groups, with approximately 25 members in each. Some group members are using their savings for group income-generating projects.

These opportunities for shelter and financial empowerment, coupled with the social networking and cohesion that group membership in savings and loans programs provide, build the social and financial-support systems that can help prevent violence against women and children, as well as improve the lives of women already affected by such violence.

[36] https://www.greendoors.org/facts/family-homelessness.php
[37] Ibid.

ACTION 14: OBSERVE THURSDAYS IN BLACK WITH THE WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

Faith

"Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God."

Matthew 5:9

Fact Sheet

- People with intellectual disabilities — women and men — are the victims of sexual assault at more than seven times the rate for people without disabilities. That rate increases to about 12 times for women with intellectual disabilities.[38]

Reflection and Action

The World Council of Churches (WCC) describes Thursdays in Black as a global movement for a world without rape and violence. The campaign is simple but profound: Wear black on Thursdays and show your respect for women who are resilient in the face of injustice and violence. The WCC invites us to share our Thursdays in Black photos on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram, using hashtags #ThursdaysinBlack and #WCC! See the WCC video "Towards a World Without Violence" here.

Recommended Reading

"The Handbook for Female Christian Survivors of Domestic Abuse," published by Restored

[38] https://www.npr.org/2018/01/08/570224090/the-sexual-assault-epidemic-no-one-talks-about

ACTION 15: EMBODY JUSTICE, MERCY AND COMPASSION

Faith

God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved; God will help her when morning dawns.

Psalm 46:5

Fact Sheet

- 18 Indigenous women ran for congressional seats in 2020 — a record in a single year.[39]
- A record number of Indigenous women were elected to Congress in 2020.[40]
- The 117th Congress has a record number of Native-American women after voters elected three to the House of Representatives.[41]

Reflection and Action

The Rev. Canon "Ginny" Doctor contributed to the 2021 "Churches Beyond Borders Joint Devotions." She was a member of the Mohawk Nation Turtle Clan and lived for years in New York state, Alaska, and Toronto. Ordained a priest in The Episcopal Church, she most recently served as the coordinator for Indigenous Ministries in the Anglican Church of Canada. Ginny passed away in 2021 at the age of 71. She dedicated much of her work and passion toward justice for Indigenous Peoples on the continent of Turtle Island, with a particular concern for Indigenous women and girls and the disproportionate violence they often face. Ginny's reflection excerpted from a previously published article for The Anglican Journal (June 11, 2019) under the title "Where are all our flowers going?" is a call to justice for Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls. Churches Beyond Borders offered this reflection as a tribute to Ginny's legacy and vision.

"Where have all the flowers gone…?" – Pete Seeger

I grew up on a reserve near Syracuse, New York. As children, for the most part, we lived a carefree, safe life. There were times of family violence related to alcohol abuse; alcohol was not part of our traditional lifestyle, but was brought to my people by the settlers. We called it the "mind changer," and that is what it did.

Alcohol brought with it the power to change our communities — but another, greater problem is one I remember well, and one that our whole country is now facing. For Indigenous communities across North America, the disappearance and murder of women and girls is a life

[39] https://cawp.rutgers.edu/election-analysis/native-american-women-candidates-2020
[40] https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2020/nov/04/native-american-women-elected-congress-record-number
[41] Ibid.

changer — once that kind of violence enters the community, it doesn't leave. I remember one of our young girls being abducted, sexually abused and murdered. It devastated the whole community, and after that our moms were more restrictive about where we went and told us not to travel the roads alone.

This kind of advice is widespread among Indigenous women and based on our life experience. When I lived in Alaska, I was driving a group of elders to a meeting in one of the Alaska Native villages. They were talking about the road we were traveling. One said there were many good berry patches off that road. Another said, "Yes, but we always have to carry a gun and never pick alone." Then one elder said, "This is a bad road. Several women have died along this road." She went on to say, "When I pick berries, I don't fear the bears. I fear those crazy white men."

The National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG) has now produced its final report. It's more than a thousand pages long, with personal stories of loss and the hard numbers. It's in plain language and is available online for free. Where do we go from here? How do you talk about a problem so large that it needs a thousand pages and its own acronym?

MMIWG has been with us for a long time; it goes way back to first contact. And it's here with us now. Every day on Facebook, I see several postings of missing Indigenous women and girls. Each one breaks my heart, and I wonder, "Where are all our flowers going?" They are gone to death and human trafficking.

What needs to change in our communities to protect our women and girls? I see two ways to help our women and girls, and our church can help in both of these tasks. For one thing, we can make a good life for them in our communities — a task that is economic and environmental. Maybe then, they won't have to travel bad roads looking for something better. We must tend to the gardens in which our flowers grow, increasing economic justice within them. We can find value in their work and their skills, bringing opportunities to where they live.

The other way is spiritual. We can find value in who these women and girls are, in their being. This is about honouring the importance of women and girls by reconnecting with our traditional values: respect, humility, wisdom, truth, honesty, courage and, most important, love.
My niece just sent me pictures of the flowers she has grown; they are beautiful, but not as beautiful as the two daughters and son she is raising. There is beauty all around us. Look for it, cherish it and safeguard it — before you have to ask, "Where have all the flowers gone?"

ACTION 16: Observe Human Rights Day on December 10

Faith

Dear God, creator of the heavens and the earth, we pray for all who have gathered globally to observe the 16 Days of Activism Against Violence Against Women.
Help us to see one another through eyes enlightened by understanding and compassion.
Release us from prejudice so that we can receive the stories of our sisters and brothers with respect and attention.
Open our ears to the cries of a suffering world and the healing melodies of peace.
Empower us to be instruments in bringing about your justice, peace and equality everywhere.[42]

Fact Sheet

- The 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence (GBV) is the most widely recognized and longest-running campaign for women's rights in the world. [43]
- In 2015, #16Days generated 183,000 tweets, reaching 344 million users.[44]

Reflection and Action

The United Nations has organized four world conferences on women. Each produced a political declaration.

The Fourth World Conference took place in Beijing in 1995. This year marks 26 years since the Beijing Conference on Women's Rights and the popularization of the phrase "Women's Rights are Human Rights."

The Beijing Declaration and the Platform for Action is a key global-policy document that sets strategic objectives and actions for the advancement of women and the achievement of gender equality. In preparation for that conference, members of the Anglican Mothers' Union and Episcopal churches met frequently to identify their priorities.

During the conference, the women's consultation included a daily noonday prayer — an important pause amid long days of debate about ecumenical women's priorities for gender equality. Twenty-six years after the conference, women around the world continue to use this communal prayer, adapted to their circumstances. The prayer above is an adaptation of that prayer. We invite you to coordinate a noonday prayer with members of your faith community.

[42] Beijing Noonday Prayer [updated for Episcopal Relief & Development toolkit]
[43] https://16dayscampaign.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/16-Days-Campaign-Assessment.pdf
[44] Ibid.

The presiding bishop's delegation to the U.N. Commission on the Status of Women facilitated an online study group — Beijing +25: Celebrating the Blessing, Realizing the Dream — to review the Beijing Platform for Action and publish reflections about the 12 areas of concern the platform raised.

Read more about The Episcopal Church's continued advocacy for women's rights in the Episcopal News Service.

CONCLUSION

International Human Rights Day is observed in a single day, and the 16 days campaign spans two Sundays.

Reflect on your views of gender-based violence (GBV) at the beginning of 16 Days of Activism compared to what you know now about its prevalence and about local and global responses. Will you continue the conversation around GBV after 16 Days of Activism is over?

We challenge you to sustain your prayer, commitment, reflection and action throughout the year. Continue to follow Episcopal Relief & Development's partners in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Honduras, Brazil, Liberia and elsewhere as we strive to fulfil our common vision of community where all people — regardless of age, sex, gender or gender identity — live together in abundant dignity, trust, hope and love.