

DENOMINATION POLICY STATEMENTS ON DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

CATHOLIC

As pastors of the Catholic Church in the United States, we state as clearly and strongly as we can that violence against women, inside or outside the home, is *never* justified. Violence in any form—physical, sexual, psychological, or verbal—is sinful;

In 1992 we spoke out against domestic violence. We called on the Christian community to work vigorously against it. ... In this update of our 1992 statement, we again express our desire to offer the Church's resources to both the women who are abused and the men who abuse. Both groups need Jesus' strength and healing.

Religion can be either a resource or a roadblock for battered women. As a resource, it encourages women to resist mistreatment. As a roadblock, its misinterpretation can contribute to the victim's self-blame and suffering and to the abuser's rationalizations. ... As bishops, we condemn the use of the Bible to support abusive behavior in any form. A correct reading of Scripture leads people to an understanding of the equal dignity of men and women and to relationships based on mutuality and love.

CHURCH OF THE NAZARENE

The Church of the Nazarene abhors abuse of any person of any age or sex and calls for increased public awareness through its publications and by providing appropriate educational information.

EPISCOPAL

Resolved, ... That this 69th General Convention urge every bishop to direct an appropriate body within the diocese to: 1) establish and conduct training workshops for clergy and laity to identify the signs of battering and sexual abuse of women and children; 2) produce a register for the clergy and laity of available resources within their communities, such as support services, shelters and entitlement programs; and 3) encourage clergy and laity to consult with and refer victims to professionally trained counselors and support groups; and be it further resolved, that this convention urge the seminaries of the church to include in their curricula appropriate education and training in the area of family violence.

LUTHERAN

Whereas, ... Domestic violence and abuse degrades the family, increases human suffering, prevents healthy growth and development, and perpetuates unchristian lifestyles, and whereas, Ministry to those affected by domestic violence and abuse follows from the strong commitment of the Synod to the sanctity of life and the Christian family; therefore be it resolved that the Board for Human Care Ministries continue to: 1) sensitize congregations to the problem of domestic abuses... ; 2) provide resources and recommend models for ministry to assist families in dealing with domestic abuse... ; 3) encourage programs in synodical institutions that train professional workers to provide appropriate Christ-focused care to individuals and families caught in violent and abusive relationships....

PRESBYTERIAN –PC (USA)

Domestic violence is always a violation of the power God intended for good. ... In responding to domestic violence, the church ministers to both victims/survivors and abusers and engages in advocacy for peace and justice in society. ... In addition, the church is responsible to engage in ongoing reflections and repentance regarding its own complicity in violence and to model by its life and witness, a nonviolent and Christ-centered way of relating to one another.

SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS

Seventh-Day Adventists affirm the dignity and worth of each human being and decry all forms of physical, sexual and emotional abuse and family violence. ... We believe that Christians must respond to abuse and family violence both within the church and in the community. ... We accept our responsibility to cooperate with other professional services, to listen and care for those suffering from abuse and family violence, to highlight the injustices, and to speak out in defense of victims. ... We will address the spiritual questions confronting abused persons, seeking to understand the origins of abuse and family violence and developing better ways of preventing the recurring cycle.

SOUTHERN BAPTIST

... be it RESOLVED, That we recognize domestic violence as one of the serious moral issues of our time, and Be it further RESOLVED, That we encourage local churches to be involved in local programs of ministry for those involved in domestic violence, and that we encourage pastors to utilize available resources such as public and voluntary organizations which can aid them in ministering to families touch by domestic violence,...

UNITED METHODIST

We affirm the right of women to live free from violence and abuse and urge governments to enact policies that protect women against all forms of violence and discrimination in any sector of society.

JEWISH (CCAR)

Whereas Judaism affirms the sanctity of life and the inherent right of each person to a life of dignity and respect . . . and whereas domestic violence, especially the battering of women, has been minimized, ignored, or denied . . . therefore be it resolved that the Central Conference of American Rabbis acknowledge the presence of domestic violence and make it known that victims may go to them for help and that they will educate their congregants in order to prevent domestic violence before it occurs.