

The Dignity Coalition Church Charter

Violence against women in all its forms is unacceptable in the church and in society.
The Baptist Union Council:

- i. Resolves to work towards making all our churches safe places where women who have experienced abuse can find sanctuary and informed help.
- ii. Commends the guidelines *It doesn't happen here* for use in churches in membership of the Baptist Union of Great Britain
- iii. Urges every local congregation to break the silence over domestic violence.

(The Council resolution November 1997, affirmed at the Baptist Assembly May 1998. Baptist Assembly 2004 further called on churches to take domestic abuse seriously, and to respond in responsible and creative ways, using the available resources).

With acknowledgement of the work of the Women's Group of the Gloucestershire Churches Together and Restored, the Baptist Union stands with BMS, BUW, BUS and IBN in supporting the Dignity Coalition Church Charter.

The Dignity Church Charter

This Church:

1. Understands domestic abuse to be the abuse of a person physically, sexually, psychologically, spiritually, socially or financially within an intimate or family-type relationship and that forms a pattern of coercive and controlling behaviour.
2. Holds that domestic abuse in all its forms is unacceptable and irreconcilable with the Christian faith and a Christian way of living.
3. Accepts that domestic abuse is a serious problem which occurs in church families as well as in wider society.
4. Undertakes to listen, support and care for those affected by domestic abuse.
5. Will always make the safety of women and children a very high priority.
6. Will keep up to date with the work of domestic abuse agencies, will learn from them, and will publicise their work appropriately.
7. Will play its part in teaching that domestic abuse is a sin.
8. Believes in a God of love, justice, mercy and forgiveness.
9. Will live and teach what it means to be male and female equally made in God's image.
10. Will seek to appoint advisors to encourage the use of good practice guidelines, and keep the church informed about the implementation of this charter.

If your church would like to sign up to this Charter and receive a certificate to display in your church building, go to [bmsworldmission/dignity](https://bmsworldmission.org.uk/dignity)