



## Purple benches to pop up across Adelaide to support victims of violence

Purple park benches are about to pop up all over Adelaide to honour people who have been killed as a result of family and domestic violence and to provide resources to others who may be at risk.

The first of the benches has been installed by the SA Anglican Provincial Domestic & Family Violence Working Group outside St Peter's Cathedral in King William Road North Adelaide and

It was blessed on Sunday 24 November 2024 by Dean of the Cathedral Bishop Chris McLeod and leader of the Anglican Family Violence Working Group, the Reverend Tracy Lauersen. The Cathedral bells then rang out across the city for an hour.

The blessing coincided with the start of the United Nations initiative 16 days of activism against gender-based violence from 24 November to 10 December.

The Purple Bench project was first set up in Nova Scotia, Canada in 2015 and purple benches are now springing up, worldwide. Painted bright purple each bench is situated in a public place and displays a plaque, in memory of those who have died through family or domestic violence (FDV).

The bench also displays crisis helpline numbers for those who find themselves in need. Purple is associated with the global Domestic Violence Awareness Movement.

The Domestic & Family Violence Working Group supports the installation of purple benches in public spaces and parishes across Adelaide.



***Adelaide's first purple bench outside St Peter's Cathedral was blessed by Bishop Chris and the Rev'd Tracy Lauersen***

The project is part of a wider commitment of the Church to combat the problem.

"Christians cannot stand by when women and children are living in terror," says Adelaide bishop Sophie Relf-Christopher.

"This year, at least one woman is being murdered in Australia every week through intimate partner violence. The scourge of violence against women and children and the culture that supports it must be challenged now."

The Purple Bench project seeks to publicly reflect the commitment of the Diocese's in the Province to the Anglican Church of Australia's Ten Commitments for the prevention of and response to domestic and family violence.

One in three (30.5%) Australian women has experienced physical violence since the age of fifteen and one in four Australian women (23.0%) has experienced emotional abuse by a current or former partner.

The Anglican Church of Australia is also supporting the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence with a social media campaign to tackle the root causes of domestic violence.

The [You May Have Heard It Said](#) campaign echoes the words of Jesus and contrast the unhealthy attitudes that can lead to domestic violence with healthy ones. For example:

‘You may have heard it said that a man has the right to control their partner, however, Jesus repeatedly challenged the unjust treatment of women, teaching that both men and women are created equally in God’s image. An image bearer of God is to be respected.’

The campaign will run to coincide the United Nations initiative 16 days of activism against gender-based violence from 24 November to 10 December.

It reflects the churches commitment to prevent and address domestic and family violence affecting its members and those in the broader community.



**Members of the Provincial Domestic & Family Violence Working Group join the Archbishop of Adelaide and Anglican Primate, Geoff Smith in displaying a purple bench along with resources, at the Adelaide Synod held on 18-20 October 2024.**

“The Anglican Church is determined to be a part of the solution to the national problem of gender-based violence and support victims and survivors of intimate partner violence,” the Primate of the Anglican Church, Archbishop Geoff Smith said.

“This campaign aims at the roots of that violence to change the culture that supports violence.

“We want to start conversations about poor attitudes we may hold towards people around us and reinforce better ones to replace them.”

The Church has made [Ten Commitments](#) to prevent and respond to domestic and family violence and this campaign forms part of the churches strategy.

The commitments were developed by the Anglican Family Violence Working Group, led by the Reverend Tracy Lauersen.

“We want people to help us to get the message out to as many people as possible, so we invite the community to like, follow and share these social media posts via our Ten Commitments to prevent violence Facebook and Instagram pages,” the Rev’d Lauersen said.

Bishop Genieve Blackwell, Chair of the churches Families & Culture Commission, said the Church wanted to deliver a powerful message.

“Our churches operate in local community spaces throughout the country and we want to play our part in helping to prevent and respond to the scourge of domestic violence by raising awareness about the link between attitudes and actions,” she said.

Follow and share social media posts on our Ten Commitments to prevent violence Facebook and Instagram pages:

Facebook: [Ten Commitments to Prevent Violence: Australian Anglican Program](#)

Instagram: [tencommitments. Ten Commitments to Prevent Violence: Australian Anglican Program](#)

**For more information and resources:**

[16 Days of Activism 2024 Campaign: “You may have heard it said...”](#) – <https://www.tencommitments.org.au/16-days-of-activism-2024>

[Ten Commitments](#) – <https://www.tencommitments.org.au>

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