

RESOURCES FOR THE 16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM FOR THE END OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN - 2022

Unite for the end of violence against women Unite against femicide

***Promotion: Red de Mujeres y Justicia de Género de Iglesias de América Latina y el Caribe
[Network of Women and Gender Justice of Churches of Latin America and of the Caribbean] –
LWF***

Presentation of the Proposal

In this year of 2022, again civil society organizations, social movements and many churches are mobilizing and joining the international efforts of the 16 Days of Activism Campaign to End Violence against Women. The Evangelical Church of Lutheran Confession in Brazil (IECLB), through the Department of Community Action (SAC), under the Coordination of Gender, Generations and Ethnicities, participates in this initiative and suggests this support material, so that congregations, parishes and groups can reflect and engage in this campaign, making people aware of the reality of gender-based violence and generating transformation for the end of violence, for a more egalitarian and just society for women and men.

In Brazil, the International Campaign of 16 Days of Activism for the End of Violence against Women became 21 days of activism. This is because in Brazil, in addition to the 25th of November, the International Day of Struggle for the End of Violence Against Women, the 20th of November, the day of Black Consciousness, is also included; December 1st, World AIDS Day; December 3, International Day of Persons with Disabilities; December 6th, White Ribbon Day, worldwide mobilization of men to end violence against women and December 10th, International Human Rights Day.

The emphasis on the joint celebration of these dates aims to deepen awareness of the intersectionality of forms of violence, which add up and make some realities of violence more acute. This is the case of violence against black women, which is statistically much higher, as well as violence against people with disabilities or the so-called feminization of HIV/AIDS, something perceptibly growing in Brazilian homes. The intersection of forms of struggle and engagement is fundamental to strengthen awareness and mobilization, which is not limited to an agenda only for women but includes men and all people concerned with the defense of human rights.

For this year, the theme suggested for the days of activism is “Unite for the end of violence against women – Unite for the end of femicide”. To this end, we suggest the hands as a symbol to be adopted by congregations in their celebrations. Hands that are laid on to heal and bless, hands that unite in resistance and struggle, open hands that welcome and include victims of violence, often alone and isolated, hands that say, “enough is enough!” to violence and femicide.

The biblical text indicated for reflection is from Acts of the Apostles 4:29-31. In it, Peter and John pray for the laying on of hands by God. Hands that heal, that promote miracles, that protect and care for those people who are persecuted for the proclamation of the Gospel, for the witness, especially when we think about the context of denouncing the different forms of violence that women suffer. The question that moves us is the following: How can our hands, united for the end of violence and femicide, be an extension of God's healing hands, capable of promoting the miracle of liberation and the dignity of women in our daily lives as Christian congregations?

RESOURCES TO WORK WITH THE THEME IN THE CONGREGATION

Liturgy

We provide a liturgical proposal for the period of the Campaign for Activism for the End of Violence Against Women, with preaching ideas, from the book of Acts 4:29-31 and with a proposal for congregational participation.

An Activity for group reflections

The reflection and invitation to activism for the end of violence against women and for the end of femicide aims to include all people. Only with our united hands can we overcome this evil that kills and destroys lives in our families and in all society.

In order to involve the congregation in this reflection, in addition to the liturgy, we offer a methodological proposal to work on the topic with groups of women, young people, couples, men and whoever else is deemed appropriate in the congregation. We suggest that the study be carried out days before the service and that the result of the study be shared in the liturgy of the word.

UNITED HANDS is the image we chose as a symbol to stimulate reflection.

We wish you a blessed and empowered time of campaign and activism!

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Support: Department of Community Action (SAC), through the Coordination of Gender, Generations and Ethnicities of the IECLB and the Gender and Religion Program of the Faculdades EST.

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LITURGY TO CELEBRATE IN THE 16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM FOR THE END OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

PRELIMINARY INFORMATION

- 1) In the entrance liturgy, we suggest that the congregation participate in the confession of guilt and the kyrie. To identify the parts in which the congregation responds, we use the following letters:
L = Person leading the celebration (minister or liturgist)
C = Congregation
G1 and G2 = Group 1 and Group 2
- 2) In the liturgy of the word, we suggest introducing the intercessory prayer with an activity. It is about sharing with the congregation gathered in worship, the result of the reflection previously made in the congregational groups, as proposed in the attachment. To do this, post the poster and the outline of the hands with the groups' manifestations on the subject in a place visible to the congregation. Or, when introducing the intercessory prayer, arrange with a few people in advance to hold the sign and hand outlines in front of the congregation.
- 3) If the study of the theme has not been carried out previously, with any group in the congregation, we suggest the following activity for the service: Deliver, at the arrival of the service, a contour of hands, previously cut, for each family, couple or person present. Provide pens and, before the prayer of intercession, ask them to write a word that expresses gratitude or a reason for intercession about the context that involves actions of overcoming and the reality of violence against women. Then, invite them to place the clippings at the foot of the cross or on the altar table with the following motivation: *We believe that God can and wants to transform situations and people. In this trust, let us place our reasons for gratitude and intercession before him. Each person who feels comfortable places the outline of the hand at the foot of the cross or on the altar table. The person who directs this moment reads some intentions and includes them in the intercessory prayer.*

ENTRANCE LITURGY

Prelude

Welcome

We are welcomed in this service with the biblical motto of the gospel of John 10:10 where Jesus says: "I came that they may have life and have it in abundance."

We chose this word as the biblical motto for this worship service alluding to the *16 Days of Activism to End Violence against Women campaign*. The campaign is a worldwide mobilization strategy for the engagement of societies and organizations in the prevention and elimination of violence against women and girls.

The biblical motto for this service reminds us that the revelation of God in Jesus Christ has as its ultimate purpose the promotion of life. We believe and confess that Jesus brings us life in abundance.

Because abundant life is God's promise to all people and excludes all forms of violence, we come together in God's presence to intercede for the overcoming of violence against women in our families, in our congregation and in our society; to unite our voices against situations of domestic violence,

including children, people with disabilities and the elderly; to unite our voices and join our hands in a prophetic and diaconal witness in favor of life.

Trinitarian Greeting

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us.
Amen

Hymn: Momento novo - LCI 605 <https://www.luteranos.com.br/conteudo/momento-novo-1>

Confession of Sins

God calls us to life in communion; however, our relationships do not always respect the ethics of divine love. In prayer, let us confess our sins to God. Let us pray:

L. God of mercy and justice, who in Jesus Christ welcomed us with love and offered us the water of life. Forgive us when this life is violated and disrespected by us.

G1. Forgive us when we submit to a patriarchal and sexist social order that naturalizes and trivializes violence against women;

G.2 Forgive us when we allow violence into our homes and lives;

G.1 Forgive us when we close our eyes to violence against women, present in every corner, in many homes, including our families and congregations;

G.2 Forgive us when we don't hold hands to stand up in defense of women, children, people with disabilities and the elderly, who suffer different forms of violence, from the most subtle to the most severe that, in many cases, lead to death;

C. Because you are the God of life, to you we bow and to you we give ourselves. Recreate us! O God of justice, have mercy on us.

Hymn: Ó Deus da Justiça – LCI 34 <https://www.luteranos.com.br/conteudo/o-deus-da-justica>

Announcement of Grace

L. In the 1st Letter of John 1:9 we are reminded that “When we confess our sins, God is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness”. God is the source of love and forgiveness. If we are forgiven, it is not because of our own effort or our own piety, but because in him forgiveness was unconditionally manifested. By confessing our sins, we neither earn nor produce forgiveness, which can only come from God. When we confess, we appropriate what, in Jesus Christ, has already been done for us, unconditionally and forever. So, I announce to you the forgiveness of sins in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit (+). Amen.

Hymn Justiça terá por fruto – LCI 261 <https://www.luteranos.com.br/textos/justica-tera-por-fruto>

[At this time, while singing, invite people to greet each other, wishing peace with justice to each other.]

Kyrie Eleison

[The Kyrie is read responsively with the congregation. Where possible, we suggest drawing images for each motive of intercession].

L. A congregation that knows that it has been forgiven by God does not close in on itself. It is a congregation that cares about the life around it, that brings the cries of the world into God's presence and allows itself to be sent by Him as a messenger of the life that Christ brings us. In the certainty that God has the power to transform people and violent situations into just and peaceful experiences, we unite our voices and hand in hand, we cry out to God:

C. For the silent reality of the violence we experience in our daily lives;

L. For the memory of women who were murdered because of gender-based violence;

C. For the cases of violence that we know of in our families, neighborhood and congregation;

L. For the invisible suffering of children, women, elderly people and people with disabilities;

C. For situations that generate anguish, fear and lead us to a lack of hope.

L. For all this we cry out.

C. O God, come quickly. Make haste with your salvation. Hear when we cry out to you:

Hymn: Pelas dores deste mundo, ó Senhor – LCI 56 <https://www.luteranos.com.br/textos/pelas-dores-deste-mundo-o-senhor>

Gloria

Because God hears the cry of his people, he stretches out his hand of kindness upon them to free them from the yoke of violence and death, we glorify him by singing: Glory to God in the highest.!

Hymn: Glória – LCI 72 <https://www.luteranos.com.br/conteudo/gloria-2>

Prayer of the Day

God of kindness, who takes care of us as a good father and a good mother take care of their sons and daughters. We ask in trust that our lives be transformed by Your Word and the power of Your Holy Spirit, in order to experience relationships marked by love, respect, equality, justice and peace. May your Word be edifying in all areas of our lives, empowering us to bear the courageous witness that, in your Son Jesus Christ, you promise life in abundance to the world you created. That when we leave here we do it hand in hand, united to act in this world for the overcoming of all forms of violence. This is what we ask of you, in the name of your Son Jesus Christ, who with you and your Holy Spirit lives and reigns, now and forever. Amen!

LITURGY OF THE WORD

Hymn: Pela Palavra de Deus – LCI 152 <https://www.luteranos.com.br/textos/pela-palavra-de-deus>

1st Reading: Acts 4:29-31

Gospel Acclamation

Thy word is a lamp to guide my feet and a light on my path. Psalm 119:105

Canticle: Aleluia

Reading of the Gospel: Matthew 9:18-26

Sermon

[preaching ideas]

- The text of Acts 4:29-31 is a small clipping from a longer passage. It dates back to the beginning of the work of the apostles in the public witness of their faith, through which they also performed signs for the people in need.

- In the larger pericope, which begins with chapter 3, Peter and John heal a lame man who was begging for money at the door of the Temple in Jerusalem. After healing and awakening the faith of more than 5,000, as the text says, Peter and John witnessed their faith in the Temple courtyard, were questioned and arrested by the Temple authorities. Finally, they were released due to popular pressure from the people who believed when they heard their message and saw the signs they performed.

- Our text is part of the reunion of John and Peter with their group, a moment in which they pray to God to “stretch out his hand to heal”, so that “miracles and wonders may be done”. These miracles and wonders are, in the context of the apostles, related to the witness of the Gospel in its mission as a church that preaches and lives the Kingdom announced by Jesus.

- The **symbol chosen for this service are the hands**. Hands that can be instruments of violence, as in many cases of violence against women, in cases of femicide, in cases of domestic violence against people with disabilities and the elderly.

- The theme of the Campaign for Activism to End Violence Against Women this year is “**Unite to End Violence against Women**”, with a special emphasis on unity against femicide. Brazil is the country with the 5th highest rate of femicide in the world, that is, the murder of women due to their gender condition. It is not fortuitous violence, but, for the most part, violence carried out by family members: parents, stepfathers, brothers, uncles, neighbors, etc.

We understand that witnessing the Gospel today is to stand up and unite against all forms of violence. Something that is not just limited to women, but a responsibility of men too – and here we emphasize December 6th, White Ribbon Day, a worldwide mobilization of men to end violence against women. A concern of the whole society, therefore, a moment of struggle for human rights, celebrated on December 10th. It is a witness and activism in defense of the abundant life promised by Jesus also and, above all, in his Church. It is our task and responsibility, as disciples of Jesus, to assume this task of working for the end of the different forms of violence.

- The text of Acts refers us to the request for the extension of God's hands over his people, to give them healing and to grant them the Spirit so that, through their witness and diaconal action, they may promote healings and miracles.

- We, the Church of Jesus, have the task given by God himself to also be people who stretch out their hands in the world. Who extend them to heal, to protect, open hands that welcome and care, united hands that say "enough is enough!" to the violence against women and femicide.

- The healing and the miracle, promoted by the power of the Holy Spirit granted to the church, in the context of these 21 days of activism for the end of violence against women is the transformation of the reality of violence, which sometimes resides in our homes and which is about a true epidemic that generates pain, suffering and death in our society, if not sometimes in our families and congregations.

- On this day, it is suggested that the congregations also extend their hands, because the Triune God has already extended and permanently extends God's hands over us, giving us the opportunity to heal and the miracle of transforming lives, by the power of the Holy Spirit.

- In this sense, this message can focus on the invitation to courageous witness and public diakonia, full of love and transforming power, on the part of individual Christian congregations and people, adding to the efforts of organized civil society, social movements and various churches that aim to work together to end violence against women, children, people with disabilities and the elderly.

- The Gospel suggested for this day emphasizes, in practice, the example of the life of Jesus, who cares and acts in favor of women and girls who suffer, who are marginalized and made invisible by the patriarchal society in which he lived. An opportunity to emphasize through his hands that he reaches out to women, giving them the healing and miracle of life in abundance, promised by him.

Confession of Faith – Apostolic Creed

Announcement and information about the offering

Hymn: Unidos, Unidas – LCI 560 <https://www.luteranos.com.br/textos/unidos-unidos-em-teu-nome-unidos>

ACTIVITY– UNITED HANDS

- 1) This is the moment to present the poster made previously, in the groups that used the proposed study activity, attached at the end of this liturgy. We suggest including in the general prayer the phrases, words and situations highlighted in the poster and in the cutouts of hand outlines as

reasons for gratitude and intercession. Inform the congregation about the process of preparing the material presented and which groups worked on the topic. The posters or cutouts of the outlines of hands can be fixed in a place visible to the gathered congregation, they can also be placed at the foot of the cross or on the Eucharistic table. Another suggestion is to ask, in advance, for some people to stand in front of the congregation holding the posters and outlines of hands and present them.

- 2) If the study of the topic has not been carried out previously, with any group in the congregation, we suggest delivering a previously cut outline of hands to each family, couple or person present at the service. Provide pens and ask them to write a word that expresses gratitude or a reason for intercession about the context that involves actions of overcoming and the reality of violence against women. Then invite them to place the clippings at the foot of the cross or on the altar table with the following motivation
- 3) More about the original text:

In the certainty that God can and wants to transform situations and people, we entrust our reasons for gratitude and intercession to Him. Let us join our hands in prayer to the God of life for an end to all forms of violence.

General Prayer of the Church

Let us pray,

God of goodness, who in Jesus Christ manifested love for the world; Through the Holy Spirit, you strengthen and encourage us to fight for a world without violence, so that all people may have life in abundance; Put your hand on the world, transform us and strengthen us in the quest to overcome violence against women, girls and boys, against people with disabilities and the elderly; therefore, we pray:

Refrain: Ouve nossa oração e atende a nossa súplica [Hear our prayer and answer our supplication]
– LCI 196 <https://www.luteranos.com.br/conteudo/ouve-nossa-oracao>

God of justice, we thank you for the hands that unite in defense of life against violence. We thank you for... (*cite here the reasons that were presented in the poster and in the hand outline clippings*); We intercede for situations that still need to be transformed... (*cite the reasons for intercession presented in the poster and outline of hands*). Therefore we pray:

Refrain: Ouve nossa oração e atende a nossa súplica. – LCI 196

We intercede, God of love, for this congregation, for the families who attend here, for the people we know and love and who are going through the degrading situation of violence. Look kindly on every situation so that they can feel your healing and liberating hand. May your *Ruah*, the strength of the Holy Spirit, surround them with wisdom and resilience, and give us courage to be agents of transformation in this world. Therefore, we pray...

Refrain: Ouve nossa oração e atende a nossa súplica. – LCI 196

We intercede for your Church in the world to resist every form of violence and injustice. That in it and through it people can join hands to welcome those who suffer from violence based on gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, social class. Therefore, we pray...

Refrain: Ouve nossa oração e atende a nossa súplica. – LCI 196

We pray for the authorities that run cities, state, country, so that they may govern with honesty, justice and transparency with a view to the well-being of the entire population. We intercede for public policies that guarantee a life free from violence and oppression for all women. Therefore, we pray...

Refrain: Ouve nossa oração e atende a nossa súplica. – LCI 196

Much more we carry in our hearts and in silence we place before you, when hand in hand we unite and pray as Jesus Christ taught us:

Our Father

CLOSING LITURGY

Blessing

May the hand of God, creator of life, reach out to you, to protect and heal you.

May the love of God, revealed in Jesus Christ, be abundant in your life;

May the aggregating and sanctifying power of God, active by the Holy Spirit, the divine *Ruah*, be upon you and remain with you.

(+). Amen

Sending

Blessed by God, let us go hand in hand, to witness with courage and perseverance the peace that comes from God.

C. We give thanks, to God!

Postlude

Liturgy proposal prepared by P. Soliana Schneider and by P. Dr. Felipe Gustavo Koch Buttelli, Evangelical Community of Lutheran Confession of Goiânia – IECLB

ACTIVITY PROPOSAL FOR GROUP STUDY **16 Days of Activism for the End of Violence Against Women – 2022**

MATERIAL

One A4 sheet (varied colors) for each participant

Enough pens and scissors to share in groups

Initial Prayer

Hymn: Momento Novo – LCI 605 <https://www.luteranos.com.br/conteudo/momento-novo-1>

Ideas for Reflection

To start talking about violence against women, we start from the information that about 40% of the complaints made in specialized entities are made by women who call themselves evangelicals. Probably, the number of women and girls who suffer from domestic violence is much higher, as many do not report it out of fear or shame of the religious congregation in which they live, and when they seek help, they are often told that they must pray for everything to be resolved. However, what we have seen and heard are women suffering from abusive and violent relationships. We often see cases culminate in femicides, leaving the whole society stunned.

Brazil is the 5th country with the highest number of femicides in the world, according to the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR). According to Law 13,104/2015,

femicide is characterized as a crime of homicide committed against a woman for reasons of being female, when the crime involves domestic and family violence and contempt or discrimination against the condition of being a woman.

As Christian people, it is important to understand that where Christ truly dwells there is no violence. In homes where violence is present, not only are women affected by violence, but sons and daughters as well. Of the boys who suffer or witness violence at home, many may become potential aggressors and girls, in turn, may find it normal to suffer any type of aggression and repeat this situation as adults.

As Christian people, we are called to break the silence that sustains domestic violence, crying out for women and children who cannot express their pain and welcoming those who seek help. Men and women need to unite to overcome violence against women. As it is written in Acts 4:29b-30 "Give your servants confidence to speak your word boldly. Stretch out your hand to heal, so that through the power of the name of your devoted Servant Jesus, miracles and wonders may be done."

Femicide is not the first act of violence, but the last. It is known that femicide is preceded by other forms of violence. Usually by a more subtle behavior, sometimes camouflaged as a gesture of love or excessive care. Therefore, knowing the cycle of violence and understanding its functioning in order to identify the degree of danger in which the woman finds herself is essential to be able to help or seek help and create coping strategies. To learn more about this topic, access the link and download the material <https://fld.com.br/publicacao/nem-tao-doce-lar-uma-vida-sem-violencia-e-um-direito-humano/>

Reading and Dialog about the text of Acts 4:29-31

Motivating Questions

- 1) This text corresponds to a prayer that Peter and John recited in a context of persecution and threat to the apostles, who preached the Gospel of Jesus Christ and performed signs in his name. What are the threats and censorship we face today when we denounce violence against women?
- 2) In verse 30 the apostles pray for the laying on of God's hands, that there may be healing and miracles. Where can we cry out for the laying on of God's hands in our context of violence? How can we extend our hands and where are these hands being laid on the reality of violence against women in our life context, generating healing and liberation?

Reflection in groups

First moment

In small groups, reflect on how violence against women happens; Give examples from the most subtle behaviors at the beginning of the cycle of violence to the attitudes that lead to femicide. Here it is important to share the different forms of domestic violence established by the Maria da Penha Law (11.340/2006): Physical Violence; Psychological Violence; Sexual Violence; Patrimonial Violence and Moral Violence.

Second moment

Talk about strategies to face violence against women. The Christian faith calls us to defend life and overcome relationships of violence and oppression. As men and women, what can we do to prevent and overcome violence against women in the family, congregation and society?

Third moment

Provide each group with scissors, pens and a sheet of paper (can be of different colors) for each participant. Each person draws the outline of their hand on the sheet and then cuts it out. Within the outline of the hand, choose a word that expresses gratitude or a reason for intercession in the search for overcoming violence against women. This word may be related to the reflection made in the group.

Plenary:

Each group will have the opportunity to share something about their reflection. At the end, each person places the outline of their hand in the center of the circle on the floor or on a table. The hands, placed side by side, form a circle. The person can say if the word she or he chose refers to reasons of gratitude or intercession.

OBS. It is important that each person has the freedom to speak or be silent. Talk about the importance of respect and commitment to what is being entrusted at that moment. Make a commitment to secrecy within the group, especially if there are manifestations of people experiencing violence. If this happens, the priority should be the welcoming and the proper referrals.

Finally, ask the group if they agree that the hand outline cutouts with the prayer motifs be shared in the congregational worship.

Final prayer

End the meeting with a prayer including the reasons for gratitude and intercession indicated by the group.

Hymn: Justiça terá por fruto - LCI 261 <https://www.luteranos.com.br/textos/justica-tera-por-fruto>

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