

A REPORT from Women Commission



Aashima Samuel

AEA Women Commission member



Globally, an estimated 736 million women, almost 1 in 3 have been subjected to domestic abuse. Seeing this growing concern, the Asia Evangelical Alliance (AEA) Women Commission hosted a webinar on “Biblical Understanding of Domestic Violence in the Family” on September 3, 2021. About 350 participants from 34 nations came together for the event where we shared and encouraged the equality of women through the word of God.

■ **Ms. Amanda Jackson,** Executive Director, WEA Women Commission, spoke on the Biblical Perspective on Domestic Violence. She shared that God established men and women as equal, right from the start in the Old Testament, and that ‘we are all equal in Christ’. She further shared that mutual submission between men and women is the key and encouraged the church to protect the weakest and most vulnerable just as God said in the Book of Isaiah.

■ **Ms. Grace Hee,** AEA Women Commission Executive Director, opened the webinar and shared how Domestic Violence is rapidly increasing, especially in pandemic times, due to increased stress precipitated by the loss of income and isolation. She stressed the importance of coming together as a church and having a collaborative concerned response towards the suffering.

■ **Ms. Aashima Samuel** from India introduced Domestic Violence and its different forms. She shared that the roots of domestic violence lie in the cultural norms of the family and the society. Based on the Biblical teaching Proverbs 31:8-9, “Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves, and defend the rights of the needy,” and not allow the voices to go unheard in the so-called culture of silence and highlight the hidden bruises as God desires.

■ Emma Scott

from Restored UK,

spoke on identifying signs of domestic abuse in a victim – the psychological, emotional, physical, sexual, economic and spiritual signs and its response. She used real life stories of victims to bring light on domestic abuse and highlighted that the abusive behaviors in Christian families are often justified using the Bible and Church doctrine, and therefore, churches should bring awareness, provide support and protection to tackle domestic abuse.

■ Rev. Martha Das

from Bangladesh

spoke on the Impact of Domestic Violence on Churches where she highlighted the lack of awareness of domestic abuse in churches.

She emphasized that a church is a place where the broken and insecure can feel safe and find healing, and urged the churches to give consistent messages on domestic violence and encourage each other through regular prayer support.

There was also a heart touching session where Sis. Ruby John and Sis. Amal from Pakistan, and Sis. Mahoko from Japan shared stories of grief, suffering and abandonment of women facing domestic violence and abuse.

During the breakout room session, the participants had the opportunity to share their stories with each other and

discussed the need to start awareness and create a culture to train boys to have mutual respect.

In the end, we closed the webinar with a precious time of praying for one another. In a first ever initiative in Asia, we praise the Lord and are grateful to Rev. Bambang, General Secretary of AEA, for agreeing to act on a recommendation from the webinar, which is to conduct a Domestic Abuse research among the churches of Asia. To God be the Glory ■

