

Safeguarding Blog 12 – November 2025

Dark nights, dark forces and taking flight

As our clocks are wound back, the seasons change and those darker evenings make us appreciate cosy warmth and light, whether at home or in another safe space. However, I read this week that for many women it's a time when they change their exercise or commuting habits to feel safer as night falls earlier. Fear of attack or unwelcome attention forces them to adapt their routines until lighter nights arrive again in the spring. So, we do well to make sure that as we plan our autumn and winter evening events at church, we take proper account of this.

Violence against women and girls is a significant national, and in fact global, issue that a wide range of civil society organisations are committed to tackling. This includes the Methodist Church and Methodist Women in Britain who are planning to recognise the start of 16 days of activism on the subject on Tuesday 25th November, the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women. In London there is a special service at Wesley's Chapel on that day when the preacher will be Revd Michaela Youngson, Assistant Secretary of the Conference.

Methodist Women in Britain have decided to call their campaign the 'Butterfly Movement' and the reason for this is set out below in this excerpt from the publicity advertising the London service:

The 'Butterfly' Sisters

The Mirabal Sisters were four sisters from the Dominican Republic, three of whom opposed the dictatorship of Rafael Trujillo and were involved in clandestine activities against the regime. Three sisters were assassinated on 25 November 1960. On 17 December 1999, the United Nations General Assembly designated 25 November as the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women in honour of the sisters. It marks the beginning period of Activism against Gender Violence. The last day of that period, 10 December, is International Human Rights Day. These sisters were known as the Butterfly sisters, and we wish to honour them by launching our Butterfly Movement within Methodist Women in Britain whose emblem is a butterfly.

You may learn about this movement through other District communications, but as the Safeguarding Team have been active partners in planning the London service, I thought it right at the start of this month to bring it to readers' attention. I hope that efforts can be made locally to recognise and support this vitally important initiative.

Grahame Snelling

Independent Chair of Lincolnshire Methodist District Safeguarding Group