EVANGELICAL ALLIANCE

Abortion and pregnancy crisis

A briefing note equipping engagement with the topic of abortion and pregnancy crisis with biblical conviction, legal clarity, and pastoral sensitivity

Purpose: To equip church leaders, policymakers, and members to engage with biblical conviction, legal clarity, and pastoral sensitivity.

Cultural context

Abortion remains one of the most contested moral and political issues in UK public life. While abortion has been legal in Great Britain since the Abortion Act 1967, recent years have seen significant shifts in law, practice, and public framing.

Key developments include:

- Rising abortion numbers across the UK to an estimated total of more than 300,000 in 2025/26 [1]. In England and Wales, for every two live births there is now one abortion. More than 40% of women who have an abortion have had one before. [2] 98% are carried out under Ground C, almost always on the basis of an unspecified risk to mental health. [3].
- The introduction of telemedical (at-home) abortion during the COVID-19 pandemic, later made permanent in Scotland, England and Wales.
- Legislative change in Northern Ireland in 2020 that decriminalised and significantly liberalised abortion law.
- Legislative change in England & Wales in 2026 that removed women from the criminal law related to abortion when acting in relation to their own pregnancy, at any stage of pregnancy up to birth. There is ongoing political pressure to decriminalise abortion entirely.

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estimated abortions across the UK in 2025/26: more than 300,000	abortions to live births in England and Wales: one abortion for every two live births	of women who have an abortion have had one before	are carried out under Ground C, almost always on the basis of an unspecified risk to mental health

Public debate is often polarised between "pro-life" and "pro-choice" frameworks, with limited space for nuanced discussion of women's experiences, the rights and legal status of unborn children, men's roles and societal responsibility. Many women report feeling under pressure, unsupported, or lacking meaningful and life-affirming alternatives when facing an unplanned or crisis pregnancy. The experiences of women who express grief, regret or harm post-abortion are often denied, silenced or minimised, despite research linking abortion to negative health outcomes. [4]

> We advocate for the health, dignity and wellbeing of both women and unborn children because both lives matter.

Biblical framework

Overarching Narrative

Creation

Human life is created by God and bears His image. This is true of women and men, and of all human life from its earliest stages (Genesis 1:26–27; Psalm 139:13–16). Pregnancy involves the creation and development of a distinct human life, while also profoundly affecting the woman who carries that child. Scripture affirms the dignity and value of both lives in pregnancy, not least in the incarnation, where God's own human story begins at conception in Mary's womb (Luke 1:31, 41-44)

Fall

Unplanned or crisis pregnancies often arise within broken relational, social, and economic contexts. Fear, coercion, poverty, and abandonment are features of a fallen world. Women facing abortion are not moral abstractions but precious people navigating complex and painful realities. Sin and brokenness distort both personal choices and social structures. Scripture contains many unexpected or 'crisis' pregnancies including those of Hagar, Jochebed and Mary (Genesis 16; Exodus 2:1-10; Luke 1:26-38).

Redemption

Jesus consistently meets people at points of vulnerability with truth and compassion. Jesus and the early church were radical in how they cared for both women and children. The gospel calls for both moral clarity and practical love. Redemption does not deny hard realities; instead it offers forgiveness, healing, and hope. The church is called to embody this redemptive posture toward women, men, and families affected by abortion.

Restoration

Christian hope includes the restoration of all things, including bodies and lives harmed by sin and injustice. The church anticipates this future by protecting life, extending mercy, and creating communities where both women and children can flourish.

Summary

Every human life is made in the image of God. Pregnancy involves two lives — the woman and her unborn child — both of whom possess inherent dignity and worth. Faithful Christian engagement seeks the protection, care, and flourishing of both.

Public policy areas

Abortion Law

Current Law (Great Britain): The Abortion Act 1967 allows abortion up to 24 weeks under specified grounds, with later abortions permitted in limited circumstances. However, in practice, abortion is essentially available on request, reflecting the broad interpretation and application of Ground C of the Act. In April 2026, Parliament decriminalised abortion in England and Wales, removing women from the criminal law when acting in relation to their own pregnancy (at any stage, up to birth) [6].

Clinical services continue to remain within the framework of the Act, permitting abortion up to 24 weeks on specified grounds, with later abortions permitted in limited circumstances. Outside of that framework abortion remains a criminal offence.

The Scotland Act 2016 made abortion a devolved issue. The 1967 Abortion Act continues to apply there.

Northern Ireland: Abortion was decriminalised in 2019, with a new legal framework introduced in 2020 (The **Abortion (Northern Ireland) Regulations 2020).** This marked a significant shift from one of the most restrictive abortion frameworks in Europe to one of the most liberal. [7]

Legislative Developments 2020-2026

- Permanent approval of telemedical abortions in Scotland, England and Wales in 2022. We are concerned that this reduces safeguards and access to support for women, including those experiencing coercion and abuse. The loss of in-person care increases the risk of inaccurate gestational assessment, missed ectopic pregnancy, loss of face-to-face support and other associated risks. It also provides limited oversight and results in incomplete data on post-abortion care and follow up once abortion pills have been issued.
- Abortion was decriminalised in Northern Ireland (2020), and England and Wales (2026). Legislation which would decriminalise abortion in Scotland has been proposed and is being debated (2025/26).

OUR APPROACH

The Evangelical Alliance supports a "pro-both" approach that:

- Affirms the dignity and value of both lives in pregnancy, from conception.
- Recognises the complexity of circumstances in any pregnancy crisis that may drive abortion decisions.
- Opposes further deregulation or decriminalisation that removes protections from women and unborn children.
- Calls for law and policy that recognises, protects and enables life before birth and both lives in pregnancy.
- Calls for an explicit end to abortion on the grounds of the baby’s sex or a diagnosis of disability.
- Rejects a definition of healthcare in which abortion is provided solely on the basis of choice, while recognising that carefully and narrowly regulated termination of pregnancy, including by early delivery, may be necessary where there is a real and serious risk to the women’s life, or of long term or permanent harm to her health.
- Calls for life-affirming support pathways that enable women to continue to birth and parenthood or to voluntarily relinquish their baby and help choose the baby’s adoptive family.

Language & Framing

Public discourse increasingly frames abortion solely in terms of autonomy and healthcare. The Evangelical Alliance resists language that:

- Perpetuates a ‘tug of war’ of human rights between women and unborn children.
- Dehumanises unborn children.
- Frames abortion as healthcare without a defined or determined health need or risk.
- Presents abortion as the assumed, only or best solution.
- Treats abortion as morally neutral.
- Equates the ability to end the life of an unborn child at will with progressive women’s rights.

Instead, the Evangelical Alliance promotes language that recognises the value of both lives as well as complexity, responsibility, and compassion.

Implications for the UK church

The abortion debate directly affects churches and Christian organisations pastorally, theologically, and practically. The church has an important role in supporting those affected by pregnancy crises and abortion by equipping Christians to engage thoughtfully with this issue and demonstrating a compassionate, life-affirming response.

Pastoral Care

Churches regularly provide support to:

- Women facing an unplanned or crisis pregnancy, including where there is a difficult medical diagnosis, financial insecurity, relational breakdown, or coercive and abusive behaviour.
- Men affected by abortion decisions.
- Those carrying grief, regret, or trauma following pregnancy crises and abortion.

The Evangelical Alliance encourages and helps to equip churches to be places of non-judgemental support, offering practical help, prayer, counselling, long-term community, and where appropriate, signposting to specialist external support.

Practical support

Churches are encouraged to:

- Celebrate every human life as sacred, created with and for a purpose.
- Support women and families facing an unplanned, unexpected or crisis pregnancy.
- Address drivers of abortion such as financial insecurity, poverty, isolation, third party pressure or coercion to have an abortion, relationship breakdown and domestic abuse.
- Create a culture where choosing life feels realistic and supported. Offer compassionate care to women who seek support after an abortion, helping them work through regret and find hope and healing.

Teaching and discipleship

Churches are encouraged and equipped to:

- Teach clearly and compassionately about the value of women and children, and both lives in pregnancy.
- Engage in public debate with grace and confidence.
- Address abortion within wider teaching on sex, relationships, forgiveness, and healing.

Public engagement

The Evangelical Alliance supports churches and Christians to speak out publicly and engage missionally on issues of pregnancy crises and abortion:

- **Public voice:**
  - Engaging respectfully and constructively with policymakers and the media.
  - Navigating workplace, social, and cultural conversations with confidence and compassion.
  - Defending freedoms of expression and resisting polarisation in debates while maintaining biblical conviction.
  - Sharing the personal experiences of women and men impacted by pregnancy crises and abortion.

Missional engagement:

- Boldly and publicly expressing the theological and moral value of life, the harm of abortion and the need for a life-affirming response in church and society.
- Demonstrating a credible, compassionate Christian witness.
- Producing resources that explore the value of life from conception including God Unborn and the National Day of Prayer for Life prayer resource.

Summary

Abortion is a complex issue involving law, culture, theology, and lived experience. The Evangelical Alliance advocates a **pro-both** approach that:

Affirms the dignity and value of both lives in pregnancy, from conception.	*Takes seriously the needs and wellbeing of women.*
Calls for laws and culture that protect and provide for both lives before and after birth.	*Encourages churches to lead with truth, compassion, and practical care.*

You can find out more about how the Evangelical Alliance is speaking up and resourcing Christians on these issues by following the Both Lives initiative on eauk.org

Helpful resources

- The Both Lives Podcast, [online]
- Evangelical Alliance and Both Lives (2024) God Unborn [Online]. Accessed on 9 November 2026 at: eauk.org/what-we-do/initiatives/both-lives/god-unborn
- Both Lives, Law and statistics [Online] Accessed on 9 November 2026 at: eauk.org/what-we-do/initiatives/both-lives/statistics/statistics
- CARE (2026) Open ministries [Online] Accessed on 9 November at: openministries.org.uk/
- The Post Abortion Course [Online] Accessed 9 November at: postabortioncourse.com/
- Restored UK [Online] Accessed 9 November at restored-uk.org

References

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2. ibid
3. ibid
4. Fergusson, Horwood and Ridder [Online] https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/16405636/ Accessed October 2026
5. Jones [Online] https://www.penguin.co.uk/books/443864/matrescence-by-jones-lucy/9781802061307 Accessed October 2026.
6. House of Commons Library (August 2026), Changes to the law on abortion in England and Wales [Online] researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/CBP-10970/CBP-10970.pdf Accessed 22 October 2026.
7. Evangelical Alliance (October 2018), Both Lives urges MPs not to meddle with N. Ireland's law, [Online] eauk.org/news-and-views/both-lives-matter-urges-mps-not-to-meddle-with-n-irelands-law Accessed 22 October 2027