

PROJECT 3:28

ONE IN CHRIST

Press release

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For the second year running, the Baptist Assembly has topped the rankings of Christian events and conferences based on how well they achieved gender parity among speakers.

Project 3:28's third annual analysis of gender parity at Christian events in the UK, released today, ranks 21 different conferences and festivals and assesses year on year improvement.

The Baptist Assembly's speaker lineup comprised 26 men and 24 women - a 52/48 per cent split - and was closely followed by the Church and Media Conference (14 men and 16 women speaking; 47/53 per cent) and youth festival Soul Survivor (36 men and 29 women; 55/45 per cent).

The project's analysis is based on the assumption that conferences should aim to achieve equal representation of men and women speaking, however two conferences - the Church and Media Conference and Youthwork Summit - demonstrated a clear commitment to highlighting the gifts and expertise of women, each with a higher number of female speakers than men.

The events held in 2015 with the fewest women speaking were the Northern Ireland-based New Horizon (36 men and 4 women; 90/10 per cent), then each with an 80/20 per cent split of male/female speakers, Westpoint, Keswick and Word Alive.

12 events demonstrated an improvement in gender parity between 2014 and 2015.

Project 3:28 was set up in 2013 to provide an insight into the gendered dynamics of Christian events, where women speakers are often a minority despite the fact that in many churches, women are a majority. This has prompted conversations on how to create platforms that better reflect the diversity of Christian experience.

As a result, some conference organisers have underlined a commitment to amplifying the voices of women, conducting gender audits and being proactive in finding more women speakers and making their events more accessible.

However it is clear there is work still to be done - especially from those organisations that affirm the leading and teaching gifts of women in theory, yet do not necessarily reflect this in practice.

"It's great to see Christian events committed to increasing gender parity on their platforms; that the statistics show a slight rise from 2014 is positive," said Natalie Collins, part of the Project 3:28 collective.

"For events that have a theological commitment to the equal gifting and calling of women to leadership positions there's still a long way to go, but hopefully these statistics, as with previous years, will inspire event organisers to be intentional in inviting, including and equipping women."

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