

# The Executive Council

## Report of the Committee for the Full Participation of Women in the Church

### MEMBERS

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The Rt. Rev. Craig Anderson is authorized by the committee to receive non-substantive amendments to the report in the House of Bishops.

Pamela P. Chinnis is authorized by the committee to receive non-substantive amendments to the report in the House of Deputies.

### “REACHING TOWARD WHOLENESS”

#### PROLOGUE

*Then God said, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness . . . So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.*  
Genesis 1:26-27

*For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.*  
Galatians 3:27-28

These two statements, central to the biblical revelation founding our faith, contain both the promise and the paradox of the Good News about men and women: God creates “man” male and female in “his” likeness. Both male and female are essential to the full representation of the image of God, yet biblical language suggests that God is “he” and that humans are essentially male. Through baptism the divisions among people, including between male and female, are abolished. In Christ male and female are one, yet baptism does not eliminate the differences between men and women.

The limitations of language vex reason and manipulate subconscious attitudes. The same texts have been used to justify both the total subordination of women and their

full partnership, with men, in creation. Yet we are called to move beyond centuries of debate; to catch the vision God offers today for the manner in which Christian men and women should understand themselves and relate to one another; to offer ourselves, male and female, in one Body of Christ on earth—both men and women fully participating in the Church to be fully the image of God in the world.

The Holy Spirit bestows upon every person, male and female, gifts and talents to be affirmed, nurtured and used for the glory of God. No one should be denied the opportunity to develop and use those gifts and talents within the total ministry of the Church. For centuries, women's ministries have been hidden from view, their talents and commitment channelled into subordinate roles within church institutions, their gifts for leadership overlooked and often actively rejected.

In the past two decades, thanks to the dedicated efforts of many people, women and men, canonical and constitutional barriers excluding women from decision-making and sacramental ministries within the Episcopal Church have been removed, and we have begun to experience the benefits of women's gifts across a wider spectrum of the Church's life. Doing so, we move deeper into the paradox, that in Christ there is *neither* male nor female, yet only male and female *together* constitute the image of God.

We are a broken and sinful people, alive in a broken and sinful world. We are called to repentance and amendment of life, individually and corporately. The whole Church suffers when the ministry of anyone is curtailed. The whole world suffers when the Church is not the New Creation it is called to be. The task of this committee is to awaken us to our unfinished witness, to proclaim that women's full participation is essential to the health and holiness of the Church, to compare present conditions with the unfolding vision and point a way toward wholeness. Working on this task has broadened our vision for the *whole* Church, in which men as well as women might be freed from the constraints of rigid sex-roles, to live out their baptismal vocations, "all one in Christ Jesus."

### Background

The Committee for the Full Participation of Women in the Church (CFPWC) was appointed by the Presiding Bishop in the spring of 1986, in accordance with Resolution D027 adopted by the General Convention of 1985, "to appoint a broadly representative group to study women's participation in congregational, diocesan, provincial and national church bodies, and to review, evaluate, plan and propose policy on women's full participation in the life of this Church."

The committee met seven times during the triennium, to identify structural and attitudinal barriers to women's full participation in the mission and ministry of the Episcopal Church, and to seek a vision for the future in which women and men are equal partners in all aspects of our worshipping, serving and organizational life, and gender differences are celebrated as images of the richness of God. The committee conducted an action research project, the report of which will be issued separately. Recommendations for General Convention action arising from the research, and from the committee's other deliberations, appear below. Pamela W. Darling was consultant to the committee for the writing of this report.

### IMPACT OF 1985 GENERAL CONVENTION RESOLUTIONS PERTAINING TO WOMEN

Of the many resolutions passed by the 1985 General Convention, more than a dozen had special significance for women, including those dealing with such issues as: affirmative action, maternity leave, institutional sexism, the episcopate, violence awareness, and inclusive language. The Executive Council subsequently passed a resolution concerning sexual harassment. The subjects of women in the episcopate and inclusive

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## FULL PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN IN THE CHURCH

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language liturgies have been addressed during this triennium by General Convention committees. But most of the resolutions called for study and action by the dioceses, and the level of that action is almost impossible to measure. This suggests the importance of building mechanisms for reporting and accountability into resolutions if they are to produce concrete results for the whole Church.

### ACTION RESEARCH PROJECT—THE SURVEY

In order to describe the extent of women's participation in the congregations, dioceses, and the national Church at the present time, and to assess perceptions and values about this participation, an action research project, funded by the Lilly Memorial Trust of St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Indianapolis, was conducted by this committee and Adair Lummis of Hartford Seminary. Twelve dioceses, geographically representing the United States, participated and have received their own data to use in assessing the participation of women in their life and leadership, and in planning for improvements where indicated. The participating dioceses were: California, Indianapolis, Iowa, Kansas, Maine, Milwaukee, Newark, South Carolina, South Dakota, Southwest Florida, Texas, and Washington.

Three questionnaires were developed: one for a random sample of 350 women and 100 men from each diocese (37% return); an expanded form for 50 leaders in each of those dioceses (65% return); and a third for national level leaders such as Executive Council members, Church Center professional staff, national commission and committee members (54% return). Fact sheets with data from each participating diocese about the placement of ordained women and the representation of women on diocesan committees were also collected. Similar factual information was supplied by bishops of 90 other dioceses. The complete research report, including data summaries, analysis, and diocesan action reports, will be distributed separately.

In the twelve participating dioceses, there were consistently more men than women in the combined total serving on major diocesan committees. This imbalance ranged from 14% to 76% more men, with an average of 43% more men than women. This dramatic imbalance is partly due to the fact that so many diocesan positions go to clergy. Since women constitute as yet only a minority of clergy (from 0 to 36% of the priests in participating dioceses), there are significantly more ordained men than ordained women serving on these committees. Even among lay positions on these committees, however, men continue to have an advantage over women (from 0% to 54% more men, with an average of about 20% more lay men than lay women).

One of the survey's most significant findings was the correlation between the proportion of women who are priests in a diocese and favorable attitudes toward women in church leadership. This suggests that the dedication and witness of strong lay women, and their supporters among lay and ordained men, initially paved the way for the acceptance of ordained women in those dioceses, and that increasing exposure to the ministries of ordained women further breaks down the cultural stereotype that women can't (or shouldn't) be leaders in the community.

Survey respondents in dioceses with higher proportions of priests who are women were significantly more likely to approve personally of women as wardens, curates, rectors and bishops; to perceive that most in their congregations would approve of a woman as warden and as rector; to endorse the use of inclusive language; and to believe that women can enter the ordination process as easily as men. Diocesan leaders perceive their climate as more supportive of the leadership of all women, lay and ordained, in those dioceses which have more women who are priests than in those with few or none. Support for ordained women thus appears to have become a significant indicator of support for the ministries of all women.

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Three-fourths of all diocesan respondents agreed that “women and men should be drawn on equally to fill any church position for which they have the needed expertise,” and over 90% agreed that women and men are spiritually equal. There was strong support for encouraging lay women to take leadership positions (90%), and for the national Church to work for and educate about women’s concerns (70%). Only one in five agreed that women now have all the opportunities they need for full participation in the life of the Church. In the national leaders sample, only one in ten agreed that women now have all the opportunities they need.

However, approval of “special efforts” to secure more professional staff positions for women or approval of national church programs to assist women in becoming involved dropped to about 55% among women and only 40% among men. Thus we find an attitudinal split sometimes characterized as “sincere lip service”: broad agreement that something should be so, but only a partial commitment to the action which could make it so. Or in terms familiar to us from the secular world, there is widespread support for equal opportunity, but significant resistance to affirmative action.

### ATTITUDINAL BARRIERS TO THE FULL PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN OF WORDS AND IMAGES

In exploring the often subtle attitudinal barriers that impede the full participation of women in the Episcopal Church, the committee grew increasingly aware of how closely intertwined are language, thought, values, and culture. A society’s biases are reflected in its language and imagery. Some believe that exclusive language is of concern only to a few people; but growing awareness of the impact language and visual images have on shaping the lives of children and on the future of our society transforms the concern into a major justice issue. Awareness of the importance of language is linked to acceptance of the changing roles of women in Church and society, as is illustrated by the higher level of commitment to the use of inclusive language today in dioceses supportive of ordained women.

The powerful effect of hidden messages and the need to be watchful for problems of *commission*, including the blatant or subtle use of negative or narrow language and images; and of *omission*, the absence of positive, pluralistic images and language, have been well-documented. For example, the book *Guidelines for Creating Positive Sexual and Racial Images in Educational Materials*, issued by the Macmillan Publishing Company in 1975, shows that “we must focus on both implicit and explicit content. Women and minorities often get the message that there is something wrong with them” (p. 34). Careless use of language and imagery can assign objectionable and inaccurate roles and characteristics to races, ethnic groups, sexes, the very young and very old, persons with disabilities—anyone differing from the “norm” of the dominant group in a society. For example, many refer to an ordained man as a “priest” but call an ordained woman a “woman priest,” implying through such language that male priests are “normal” and female priests are not.

When writers, educators, speakers, artists—and preachers and other religious leaders—use language or visual images that place persons in narrow categories and stereotypes, they create a circle of unfairness. First, they may limit aspirations and opportunities for those individuals relegated to the stereotypes and thereby deprive them of developing their God-given gifts to the fullest. Second, they have limited the audience’s perceptions not only of those who may be different in some way, but also of God, in whose image all human beings are created. “And our language about God is

## FULL PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN IN THE CHURCH

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crucial: it clarifies and colors our views of who God is and how God relates to us." (*Language About God—Opening the Door*, United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., 187th General Assembly, 1975; p.3).

The influence of language on attitudes and behavior has been under serious study by many denominations during the past two decades. Within the Episcopal Church, there has been heightened sensitivity to the nature and power of language in our uses of such terms as "ministry," "priesthood," "clergy," and "lay." The Church, like the nation, has spent over a century intermittently debating when the word "men" includes blacks and women, and when it does not. The 1985 General Convention responded to rising concern about the language of our worship by instructing the Standing Liturgical Commission to "prepare inclusive language texts for the regular services of the Church." That commission's experiences, together with this committee's research findings, suggest that many Episcopalians are not yet aware of the ways in which language and imagery affect our attitudes, limiting or expanding our perceptions of one another and of God. We are still in an era in which our language and imagery tend to render women, if no longer invisible, at least considerably less visible than men, in worship, in preaching, in educational materials, in diocesan and national church publications.

The following resolution has the support of the Standing Liturgical Commission.

### Resolution #A073

*Resolved*, the House of \_\_\_\_\_ concurring, **That the 69th General Convention request the Presiding Bishop to appoint a Task Force for the coming triennium to:**

**A. develop, in conjunction with the Unit of Education for Mission and Ministry, an educational process that will help the Church at every level to become more sensitive to the ways in which language and images often perpetuate stereotypes of race, age, sex, and disabling conditions; and to**

**B. report results to the Executive Council and to the 70th General Convention in 1991; and be it further**

*Resolved*, **That the Executive Council be directed to approve funding for the work of the Task Force; and be it further**

*Resolved*, **That dioceses, congregations, educators, and trainers at every age level be requested to become actively involved in this Church-wide effort to understand the influence of language and imagery in shaping and communicating our biblical and theological tradition, and in affecting patterns of relationship and participation within the Church.**

### ORDINATION—A POWERFUL SYMBOL

The ordination of women continues to be a matter of controversy within the Church. It is a vital issue which both defines and reflects attitudes about all women: as the committee research project showed, dioceses which are more supportive of women ordained to the priesthood are the same dioceses that are also more supportive of the interests, ministries and leadership of lay women than those tending to preserve an all-male clerical leadership.

The debate about ordained women is cast increasingly in terms of "strategy," "unity," and "catholicity." In the process, the committee feels, there is a tendency to gloss over the sexism which lies at the heart of the refusal to accept ordained women, limiting opportunities for all women, and distorting men's and women's self-

perceptions and relationships. This bias, which is built into our culture, our social organizations, and our ecclesiastical traditions, must be named if it is to lose its power over us.

Sexism is like racism, pervasive in our society. The Church is somewhat more sensitive about racism than about sexism. If some dioceses refused to ordain black people or to recognize the ministries of black priests ordained elsewhere, or threatened schism if a black person were consecrated bishop, few Anglicans would consider their position defensible, because we understand that racism is wrong. We do not yet have a collective awareness that sexism is equally wrong, despite the statement of the House of Bishops' Pastoral Letter fifteen years ago from the Louisville Convention, that "the growing recognition of discrimination against women in the culture is very similar to our recognition of racism, and bears many of the same dimensions of sin." Wherever women remain excluded from any level of ordained ministry, the Church sends a message that women are inferior to men; conversely, where ordained women are affirmed, the Church affirms the worth and ministries of all women.

No canonical barriers remain to the ordination of women in the Episcopal Church, but attitudinal barriers still exist. In some dioceses, women are confined solely to diaconal ministries. In others, women ordained to the priesthood are slowly gaining acceptance but find it significantly more difficult than men with equivalent qualifications to find positions, especially in parish ministry above the curate level. By late 1987, only 117 of the Church's approximately 7,800 parishes were served by women as rectors, despite the fact that only about a quarter of the parishioners represented in the 12-diocese sample expressed unwillingness to have a woman as rector.

On the question of women in the episcopate, only about a third of the women, and 40% of the men, expressed unwillingness to have a woman as bishop in their diocese. Support was even greater beyond the parish level. Only 23% of diocesan leaders (35% of the men and 20% of the women) and less than 15% of the national leaders (15% of the men and 11% of the women) remained unwilling, in early 1987, to accept a woman as bishop in their dioceses. Attitudes are changing from the top down, as would be expected in a church which accords teaching authority to its leaders. This process of attitudinal change takes time, particularly for ordinary churchgoers who may not give as frequent or sustained thought to such issues as do active church leaders. This suggests the need for continued education, especially at diocesan and local levels.

A vital component of such education must be creating maximum opportunities for all Episcopalians to be exposed to the ministries of women ordained to the priesthood, to break down the barriers of strangeness and unfamiliarity. Preachers and teachers should regularly include sexism along with racism in discussing the structural evils within our society which Christians are called to overcome. All of us, men and women, must search our hearts and join in praying that the image of God, male and female, may be fully represented in the pulpits and at the altars of all our churches.

### **"REPRESENTATION" AND "PARTICIPATION"—SOME STRUCTURAL BARRIERS**

#### **Balance in Committee Appointments**

Some recent surveys confirm Sunday morning observations that the composition of the worshipping community in the Episcopal Church is more than 50% women (54% according to the 1981 State of the Church survey, 55% according to a Gallup poll of the same year), while the representation of women on committees, commissions and other agencies of the Church is, with few exceptions, well below 50%. For example, 1987

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## FULL PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN IN THE CHURCH

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figures for the 90-plus reporting dioceses showed a median of 21% women in diocesan leadership positions (see Figure 1 for breakdown by type of position). At the Episcopal Church Center, despite a number of recent appointments of ordained and lay women, barely one-third of the professional positions (33 of 93) were filled by women at the end of 1987 (Figure 2).

FIGURE 1

### CFPWC – Statistics re Women Percentage of Women in Diocesan Roles

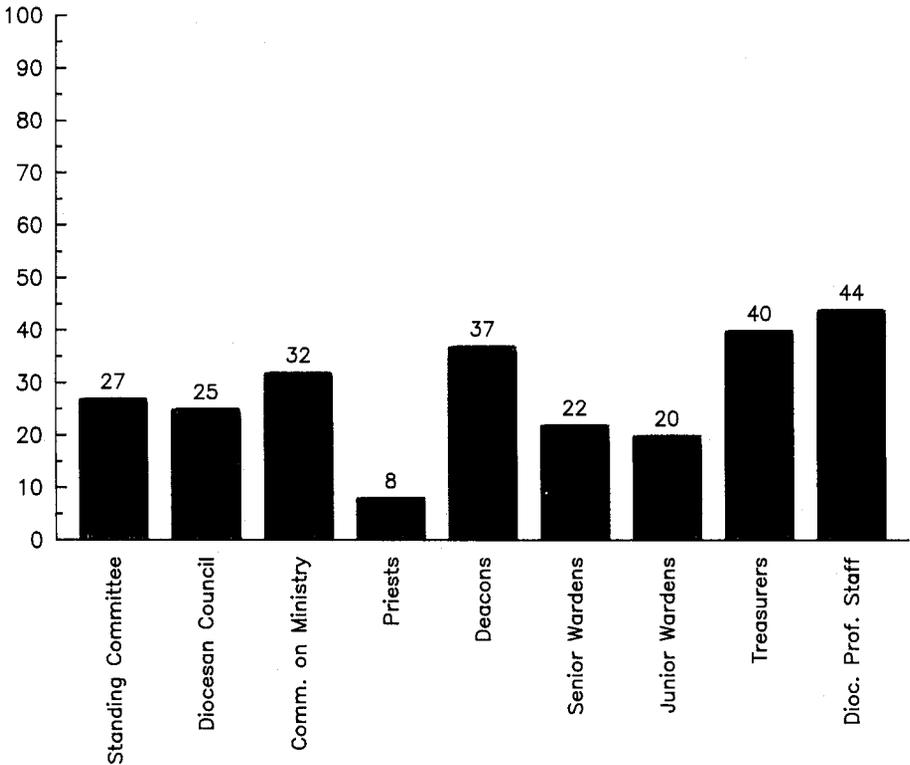
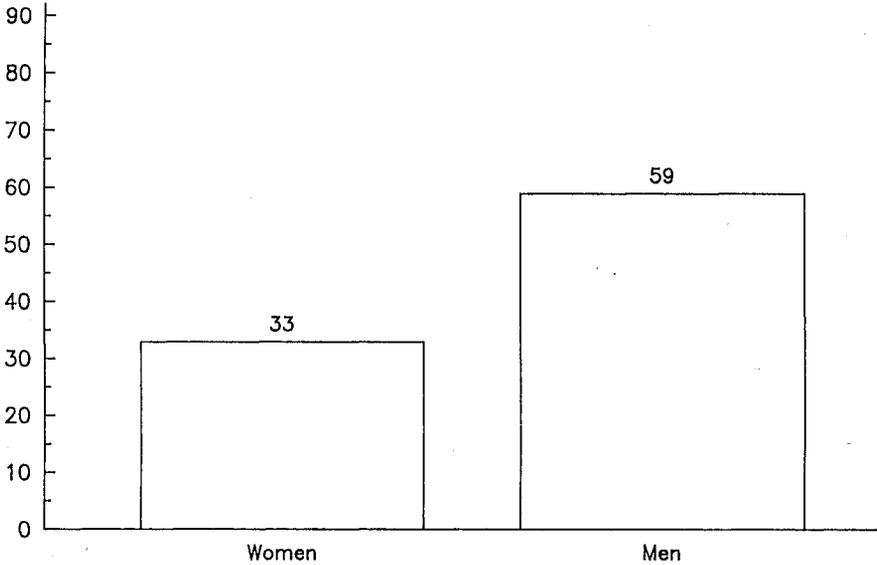


FIGURE 2

CFPWC – Professional Staff at "815"

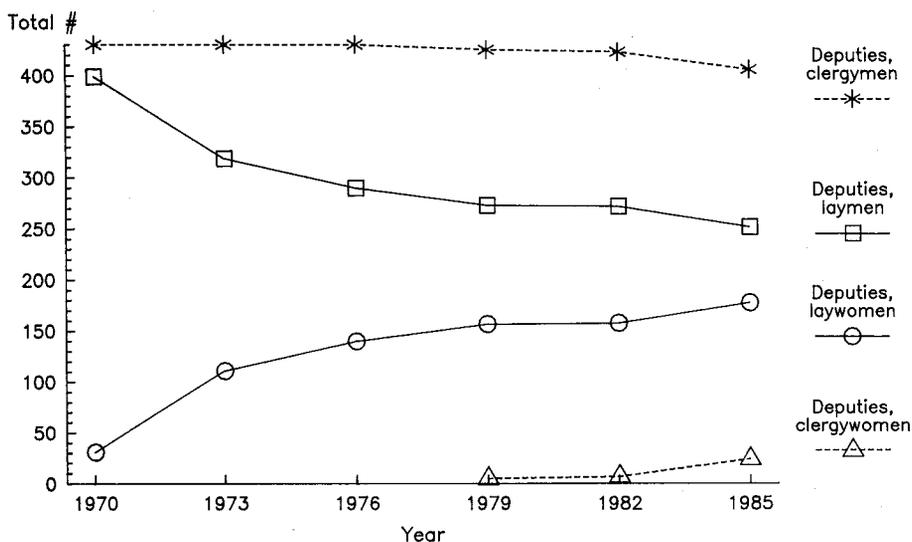


This imbalance reflects the historical fact that, until recently, women were constitutionally excluded from membership on a number of such bodies, and from the ordained ministry. Since such explicit barriers were dropped, there has been some improvement; see for example the accompanying charts displaying the number of women serving on Convention committees and interim bodies and as deputies to General Convention since their admission in 1970 (Figures 3, 4 and 5). These charts illustrate that after early gains, progress toward equal representation has slowed, especially in appointive positions. Eliminating a prohibition does not by itself insure full participation. Men continue to dominate the decision-making bodies at diocesan and national levels.

## FULL PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN IN THE CHURCH

FIGURE 3

### CFPWC – statistics re women General Convention Deputies



The survey results suggest that, while women form the majority of active members and are increasingly visible in local leadership, congregations tend to continue older patterns of electing men as convention delegates and suggesting the names of men for diocesan appointments. Partly explaining this phenomenon, among surveyed parishioners 20% of the men and 14% of the women felt that "most congregational and diocesan leadership positions should be filled by men." Consequently, the pool of women with experience at various levels of church leadership, though increasing, is still much smaller than the pool of similarly experienced men, and the informal ("old-boy") networks through which names of qualified people are referred for appointments are considerably less developed for women than are those for men. As one of many consequences, girls and young women are often discouraged from developing their capacities for active service and leadership by the scarcity of models of adult women in other than subordinate roles within church organizations.

While the resolution below is primarily addressed to the male/female balance of appointments within the Church, it is offered within the context of a much broader conviction: To maintain the vitality of the Church, it is essential that its leadership draw upon and reflect the rich diversity of gifts and conditions of its members—sex, race, age, and all the other factors which distinguish groups with the whole. Such a model of inclusive *representation* within the leadership builds an atmosphere which nurtures full *participation* at every level.

FIGURE 4

CFPWC –  
statistics re  
women

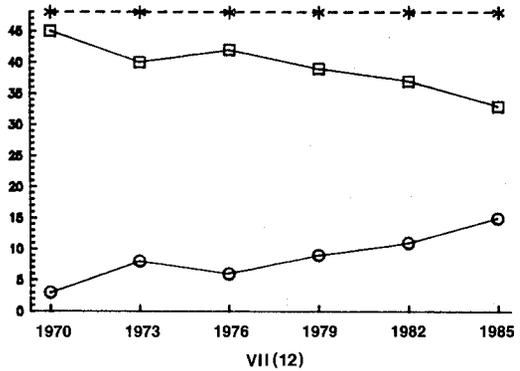
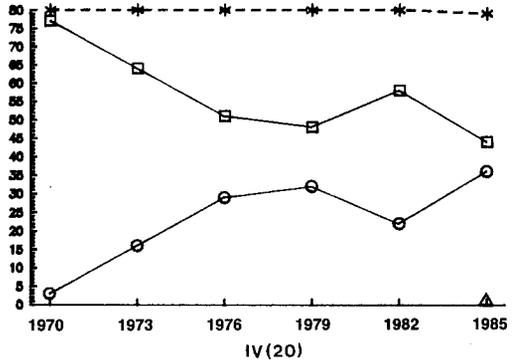
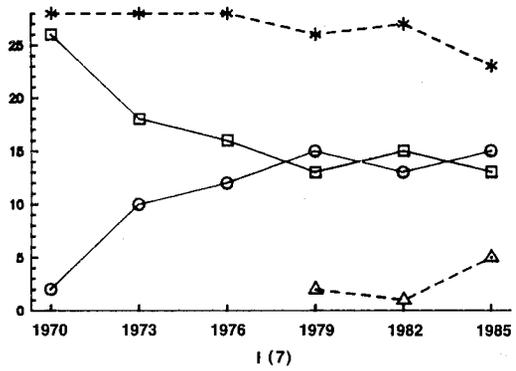
Deputies by  
Province

Deputies,  
laywomen  
—○—

Deputies,  
clergywomen  
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Deputies,  
laymen  
—□—

Deputies,  
clergymen  
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## FULL PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN IN THE CHURCH

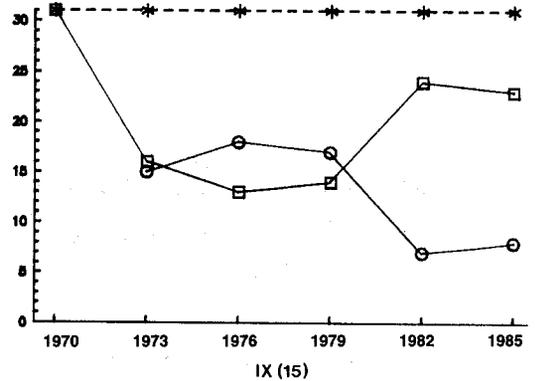
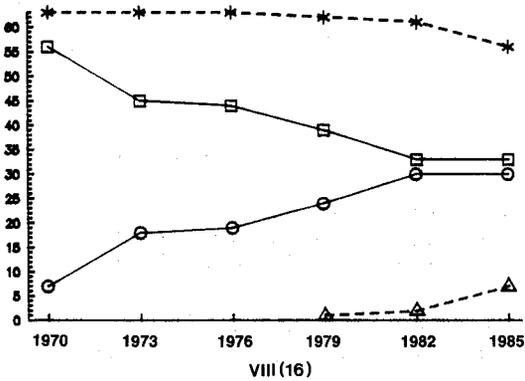
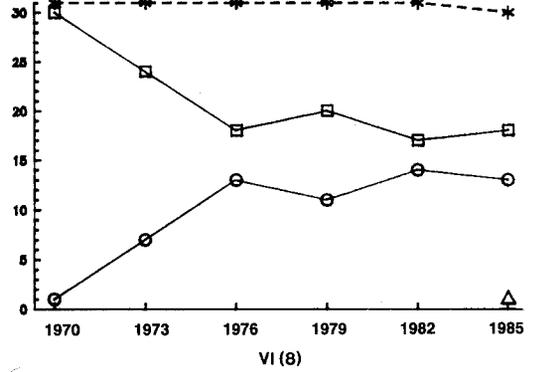
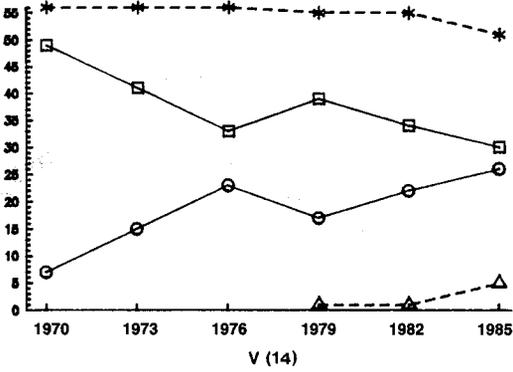
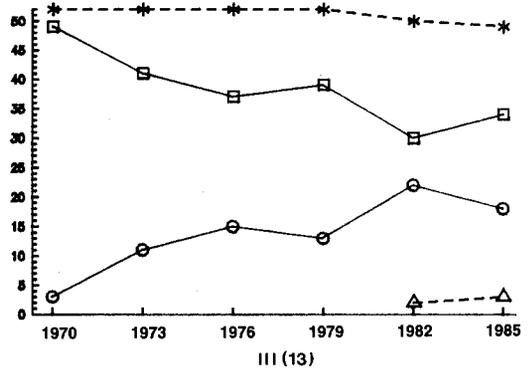
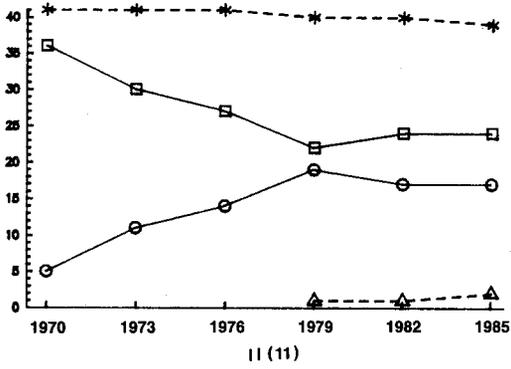
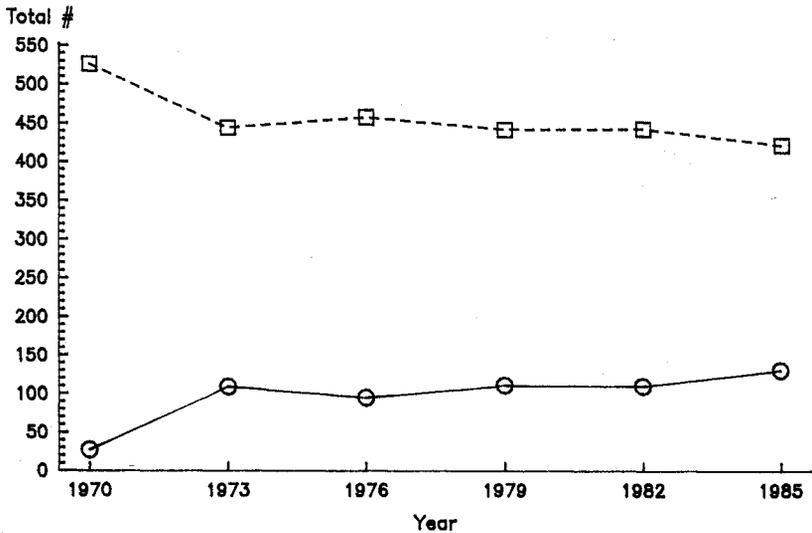


FIGURE 5a

CFPWC - statistics re women  
GC Standing Committees



|       |     |     |     |     |     |     |
|-------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Men   | 526 | 444 | 458 | 442 | 443 | 422 |
| Women | 27  | 108 | 95  | 111 | 110 | 131 |

Men                  Women  
 --□--              --○--

Resolution #A074

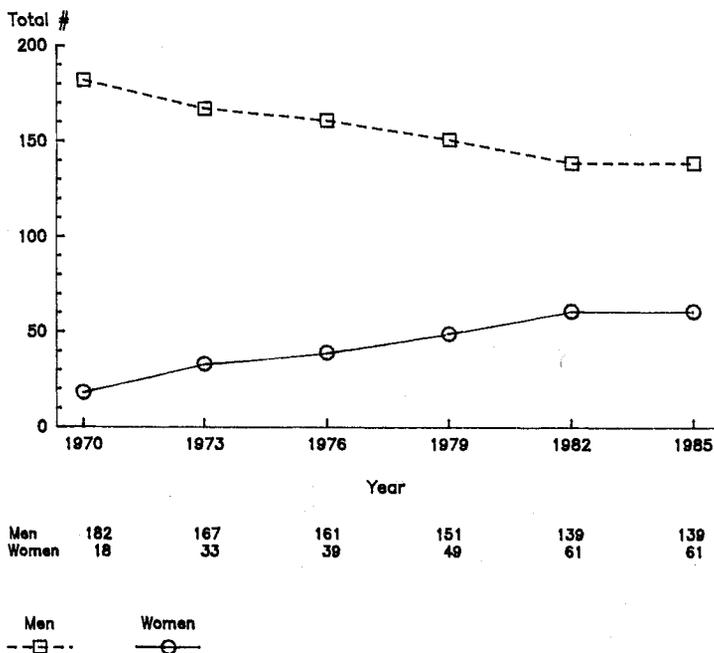
*Resolved*, the House of \_\_\_\_\_ concurring, That this 69th General Convention request the Presiding Bishop and the President of the House of Deputies to strive to achieve a balance of women and men appointed to all interim bodies, committees, commissions, boards and agencies of the Church, so that the demographics of the worshipping community will be reflected in those appointed bodies; and be it further

*Resolved*, That bishops, clergy, and appointing officers in dioceses and congregations be requested to work toward a similar balance of women and men appointed to local and diocesan church bodies, so that women's gifts for leadership may be raised up within the whole Church alongside those of men.

**FULL PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN IN THE CHURCH**

FIGURE 5b

**CFPWC - statistics re women  
GC Interim Bodies**



**Support for Volunteers**

The committee has identified another kind of barrier to the full participation of women in certain kinds of church leadership positions: the general lack of secretarial support provided to volunteers. Historically, national and diocesan positions were filled by clergymen and business and professional men who, in volunteering their services, were generally able to volunteer their secretaries as well. As a result, diocesan and national structures have developed which, while they depend on steadily increasing secretarial and technical support (typing, copying, assembling mailings, etc.), do not have mechanisms or budgets to provide that support for volunteer workers. Computerized communication networks promise some relief in this area, but only for those with access to computers. The mechanics of doing routine business in the information age become more and more complex, and more expensive.

Many volunteers, and especially women, do not have cost-free access to secretarial assistance or office equipment, and volunteers should not be required to assume responsibility for communication expenses in connection with their service to the Church. The Church needs to be able to call on the highest quality of leadership, women and men, lay and ordained, without regard for their typing ability or financial resources. Thus procedures need to be expanded for centralized support of the mechanics of church business.

### **Resolution #A075**

*Resolved*, the House of \_\_\_\_\_ concurring, **That this 69th General Convention request the Executive for Mission Support to insure that staff support and adequate funding are provided for volunteers serving the Church in leadership positions as the chairs and vice chairs of interim bodies, committees, commissions, boards, agencies and task forces; and be it further,**

*Resolved*, **That dioceses be urged to incorporate this policy into their own structures.**

### Statistics

Despite the assurance with which membership and other statistics are sometimes quoted, the committee has discovered that the Episcopal Church has at present no thorough or systematic methods for recording the numbers of men and women in its various statistical reports and data bases. This lack of comprehensive data limits ability to evaluate the current patterns of participation by women and men, and to monitor changes in those patterns over time.

Lack of systematic reporting also makes it increasingly difficult to monitor the progress of the rapidly growing number of ordained women. Voluntary efforts (see for example Figure 6) make some vital statistics available to the whole Church, but much more is needed to enable adequate monitoring and action as appropriate. For example, survey findings seem to support the growing sense that the Church is shunting many ordained women into low-paying positions in marginal congregations, with little of the mobility or advancement available to ordained men of the same initial qualifications. The committee's research also suggested that some dioceses have moved further than others in overcoming this pattern of implicit discrimination. Considerably more data is needed, however, to discover what patterns of discrimination in deployment and compensation actually exist, and what measures might be effective in overcoming them.

### **Resolution #A076**

*Resolved*, the House of \_\_\_\_\_ concurring, **That this 69th General Convention request the Executive Council and the Committee on the State of the Church:**

- (a). to develop methods for distinguishing between men and women in reports on church membership and leadership, so that overall patterns of participation can be identified; and**
- (b). to implement such a system in time to present figures for at least one full year of the triennium to the next General Convention.**

## FULL PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN IN THE CHURCH

Figure 6

### Statistics on Ordained Women

|                              | 1982       | 1983       | 1984       | 1985       | 1987            |
|------------------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|-----------------|
| Parish Rectors               | 24         | 34         | 47         | 70         | 117             |
| Parish Vicars                | 34         | 44         | 60         | 66         | 83              |
| Parish Interims              | 7          | 9          | 11         | 10         | 24              |
| Parish In Charge             | 11         | 11         | 15         | 24         | 30              |
| Parish Co-Pastors            | 7          | 6          | 8          | 11         | 11              |
| Parish Assoc/Assistants      | 222        | 226        | 363        | 434        | 533             |
| Parish Non-Stipendiary       | 55         | 55         | 57         | 56         | 30              |
| Cathedral Deans              | 0          | 0          | 0          | 0          | 1               |
| Cathedral Canons             | 5          | 7          | 7          | 7          | 15              |
| Cathedral Assistants         | *          | *          | *          | *          | 11              |
| Diocesan Staff/Consultant    | 40         | 35         | 50         | 57         | 44              |
| Seminary/College Fac., Staff | 15         | 17         | 13         | 11         | 21              |
| College/School Chaplain      | 33         | 35         | 36         | 37         | 37              |
| Hospital/Prison Chaplain     | 22         | 26         | 36         | 42         | 46              |
| Nursing Home Chaplain        | *          | *          | *          | *          | 12              |
| Pastoral Counselor           | *          | *          | *          | *          | 5               |
| Alcoholism Counselor         | *          | *          | *          | *          | 2               |
| Religious Order              | 8          | 8          | 7          | 7          | 8               |
| Retired                      | 36         | 32         | 29         | 27         | 32              |
| Unemployed                   | 6          | 11         | 10         | 5          | 1               |
| Other/Unknown                | 78         | 117        | 104        | 104        | 173             |
| <b>TOTALS</b>                | <b>603</b> | <b>713</b> | <b>853</b> | <b>968</b> | <b>** 1,236</b> |

\*Unknown: Statistics not broken down in this category in year indicated.

\*\*No statistics listed for 1986.

Prepared by the Rev. Sandra Hughes Boyd, Princeton Theological Seminary, and the Rev. Suzanne R. Hiatt, Episcopal Divinity School, "who have kept a computer list of women clergy since 1980. [They] gather data through clerical directories, journals, diocesan newsletters and papers, and through information supplied by the women themselves. Their statistics are reliable, though unofficial, they said, since the Episcopal Church does not keep statistics on women clergy and their assignments." Two-thirds (826) of the 1,236 clergywomen are priests.

An earlier version of this table was published in *The Witness* (October 1987, p.13). Updated 1987 figures, through November, were subsequently supplied by Sandra Boyd. Reproduced by permission.

### WOMEN IN MISSION AND MINISTRY—NATIONAL CHURCH SUPPORT

At the national level in the Anglican Church of Canada as well as in many U.S. denominations (such as Methodists, Presbyterians, Lutherans, United Church of Christ, Disciples of Christ), permanent staff support specific to women's ministries and issues provides significant resources in persons and programs. Both the Lutheran and Presbyterian churches, in recent mergers and restructuring, deliberately retained staff positions specific to women as part of working toward full participation of women in all aspects of church life. Methodists, Lutherans and Presbyterians have adopted policies committing them to achieve 50% representation of women on all decision-making bodies. The United Church of Christ has required equal representation in its national assembly for decades.

At present, the concerns of women in the Episcopal Church are specifically addressed by national church structures and budget in two ways:

First, there is an Office for Women in Mission in Ministry (WIMM) at the Episcopal Church Center, with one professional coordinator and two support positions (out of a total Center staff of 93 professionals and 116 support), and occasional consultant-assistance on a contract basis. The office was established in 1984 through an administrative transformation of the Women's Ministries Desk. The desk itself was all that remained of the national Church's programs identified with women after the General Division of Women's Work disbanded following the 1970 admission of women as deputies to General Convention. (The Executive Director became the Lay Ministries Coordinator; when she retired two years later she was replaced by a man.)

That historic shift and subsequent reorganizations were supposed to signal the full integration of women within the organizational life of the Church, rendering separate programs unnecessary. As is now clear, that optimism was premature, for no integrated program developed to carry out the extensive programmatic, educational and coordinating functions which the Women's Division and its predecessor, the Woman's Auxiliary, had performed. A preliminary study of other Church Center units in 1987 revealed considerably less attention to issues related to women, or programs designed with the specific needs of women in mind, than during earlier periods.

The understaffed WIMM office concentrates on two major areas of support for women's ministries throughout the Church: leadership training, and an innovative approach to networking through the development of the Council for Women's Ministries, a semi-annual gathering of representatives from 22 independent organizations of Episcopal women engaged in a variety of ministries (e.g., Episcopal Church Women, National Altar Guild Association, Daughters of the King, Episcopal Women's Caucus, religious orders, etc). WIMM assists Council members in developing coordinated programs, and the Council in turn has become an unofficial but vital constituency and support group for the WIMM staff.

Second, the 1985 General Convention mandated establishment of the Committee for the Full Participation of Women, with modest budgetary support during the present triennium. The committee, as a creature of the Convention, has only an indirect relationship with the WIMM Office, chiefly through several overlapping memberships on the committee and the Council for Women's Ministries.

Both the disappointing results of the shrinking of the former Women's Division to a token office—loss of coordination, visibility, perceived value, and access to budgetary and decision-making channels—and the research data about shifting patterns and attitudes in the Church at large, suggest the need for an expanded presence explicitly for women within the national structures. This is not to substitute for continued efforts to increase their participation in all other program areas, but rather to ensure that such

## FULL PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN IN THE CHURCH

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efforts continue, through an active program of monitoring and advocacy, training, preparation of guidelines and educational materials, coordination with women's units within other religious bodies, and so forth.

To insure a solid base of support, communication and accountability between the larger church and appointed staff, the organizational pattern should be consistent with that of the rest of our national structure. Such expanded operations, therefore, must be firmly related to an advisory body with official status and authority, while maintaining the vital network of the Council for Women's Ministries. The organizational model should be one of interlocking circles rather than a pyramid, although certain points of responsibility must be assigned.

### Resolution #A077

*Resolved*, the House of \_\_\_\_\_ concurring, That this 69th General Convention request the Presiding Bishop to appoint a Committee on the Status of Women, which would report to Executive Council. Its responsibilities would include:

- supporting and advising the Presiding Bishop on matters affecting the participation of women in the Church, including assisting in the identification of women for appointment to various Church bodies;
- serving as advisory body to the Office of Women in Mission and Ministry;
- maintaining advocacy for women's ministries, and for the justice issues which particularly affect women; and
- continuing the monitoring and analysis of patterns of women's participation in the Church; and be it further

*Resolved*, That the Committee be composed of not more than twelve (12) members, appointed by the Presiding Bishop and confirmed by Executive Council, with its members reflecting the diversity of the worshipping community of the Episcopal Church, and including a bishop, priest(s), deacon(s), and lay persons with specific interest in and concern for the participation of women in the mission and ministry of the Church.

### ANGLICAN COMMUNION

In July 1988, more than 500 bishops from all parts of the world will gather at the Lambeth Conference to discuss and debate issues of ministry, ecumenism, peace and justice, issues which affect women as well as men. The acceptance of women in the episcopate, pronouncements about women by other Christian bodies, the movements for disarmament, the elimination of the violence of apartheid, family violence, poverty—all affect women and need women's participation in the discussions and debate.

Some American bishops have elected to bring ordained women to Lambeth as their chaplains, and a very few women, lay and ordained, have been invited as official consultants or experts. These steps toward the wholeness of the Church are to be commended as helpful beginnings even as they are recognized as inadequate.

The report of Anglican Consultative Council Seven (ACC-7), *Many Gifts, One Spirit*, observed that "while the present forum of the Lambeth Conference expresses the collegial authority of the bishops, there is no forum to express their role as bishops-in-council. The Lambeth Conference does not allow for the presence of all bishops, nor any clergy or laity (women as well as men). The Anglican Consultative Council has provided a more representative forum of the membership of the Anglican Churches even though lay membership is minimal . . . and . . . bearing in mind the current inadequate representation of women and young people."

This committee endorses these observations of ACC-7, and encourages continued attention to the issues raised, as a way to increase the full participation of women in the Anglican Communion.

### **Resolution #A078**

*Resolved*, the House of \_\_\_\_\_ concurring, **That this 69th General Convention of the Episcopal Church commend the Presiding Bishop for his intention to convey to the Lambeth Conference assembled in July 1988 the deep commitment of this Church to the full participation of women in its life and ministry.**

### Ecumenical Decade in Solidarity with Women

In January 1987, the World Council of Churches (WCC) declared an Ecumenical Decade: Churches in Solidarity with Women. Launched on Easter Sunday, 1988, the Decade is in response to a WCC survey of its members which revealed the need for churches to become more deeply involved in the life-and-death issues affecting women in their surrounding societies and in the global community.

Following organizational meetings in Geneva, Switzerland, and Stony Point, New York, an ecumenical U.S. leadership team is planning events and developing resources to affirm and celebrate the mutuality of the ministries of women and men. Anglican women from the United States and Canada are exploring the possibility of several Western Hemisphere and worldwide gatherings of Anglican women.

### **Resolution #A079**

*Resolved*, the House of \_\_\_\_\_ concurring, **That the 69th General Convention join the Executive Council of the Episcopal Church in endorsing the Ecumenical Decade: Churches in Solidarity with Women.**

## **GOALS AND OBJECTIVES FOR THE NEXT TRIENNium**

The major goals of the proposed Committee on the Status of Women will be to monitor the status of women and to promote their full participation in the life of the Church, and to advise and make recommendations to the next General Convention on progress, policy, and program needs. Specific objectives include:

- (1). Support the Office of Women in Mission and Ministry in program and budget planning.
- (2). Monitor implementation of 1988 General Convention resolutions pertaining to women, including appointments to General Convention committees and interim bodies.
- (3). Prepare a follow-up program to build on the work of the 1987 action research survey.
- (4). Sponsor a comparative study of deployment and compensation patterns for male and female church employees, ordained and lay, in cooperation with the Church Deployment Office and the Lay Professionals Task Force.
- (5). Cooperate with the Standing Liturgical Commission and the proposed Task Force on Language to promote education about the effects of language in the Church.
- (6). Identify areas where additional work is needed to enable women's ministries and to overcome barriers to women's full participation.

## FULL PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN IN THE CHURCH

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### Proposed Budget for the next Triennium

|                                   | <i>1989</i> | <i>1990</i> | <i>1991</i>            | <i>TOTAL</i> |
|-----------------------------------|-------------|-------------|------------------------|--------------|
| Six (6) meetings of the committee | \$10,000    | \$10,000    | \$10,000               | \$30,000     |
| Office expenses                   | 500         | 500         | 500                    | 1,500        |
| Consultants                       | 1,000       | 1,000       | 1,500                  | 3,500        |
|                                   |             |             | Total Triennial Budget | \$35,000     |

### Resolution #A080

*Resolved*, the House of \_\_\_\_\_ concurring, **That there be appropriated \$35,000 for the triennium of 1989-91, to cover the expenses of the Committee on the Status of Women.**

### EPILOGUE

We believe that the actions proposed in this report are steps the Church is called to take now into the unfolding vision of the Body of Christ. As we live out the values of our baptismal covenant, male and female as image of one God, we move towards *Shalom*—reaching toward wholeness, through justice, peace and equality. With water and the Holy Spirit: making all things new.